

Erie Bayfront Intermodal Integrator Study



Prepared for
**PennDOT District 1-0 and PennDOT Bureau of
Planning and Research**



February 28, 2007

by:

Baker Jr., Inc.

Prepared



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16. Abstract The Bayfront area in Erie, PA is undergoing a renaissance from its previous port/industrial heritage into a mixed use neighborhood incorporating recreational, commercial, industrial, residential, and transportation uses. The transformation is causing congestion and potential for additional future congestion on the Bayfront Parkway. An extensive stakeholder interview process and research on public authority structure in other cities was undertaken. The results of the interviews and research led to development of an intermodal integration plan to more efficiently move people to and through the Bayfront and to create a more efficient structure for public authorities involved in providing transportation services.			
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1. Introduction

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) District 1-0, in association with the PennDOT Bureau of Planning and Research, has undertaken a research project to study intermodal integration in Erie, PA. The study was undertaken to improve the transportation system, and thus improve the quality of life in the region, by taking advantage of an emerging renaissance in the Downtown and Lakefront area. A change in the way of doing business, resulting in a truly integrated intermodal transportation system, could be one key to facilitating this renaissance. Economic development organizations in the region such as the Downtown Improvement District and the Erie Regional Chamber Growth Partnership have come forward in support of developing such a system.

The Erie lakefront is evolving from its previous port/industrial heritage into a sparkling, mixed use neighborhood that incorporates many different recreational, commercial, industrial, residential and transportation uses. This transformation is geared toward improving the economy and quality of life for the area's residents while providing attractions for growing numbers of tourists. Vehicular access is provided by the Bayfront Parkway, a two to three lane roadway which runs east-west along the Bayfront. The recent completion of the Bayfront Connector, connecting the Bayfront to I-90, has increased traffic volumes on the Bayfront Parkway. A convention center, hotels, the new Presque Isle Racino, and potential future attractions will likely bring more people to the area. In addition to the recent highway system expansion and the existing and proposed lakefront developments, other modes of transportation may bring more people to Erie and its Bayfront. A runway extension is planned at Tom Ridge International Airport, and a ferry system is proposed across Lake Erie to Canada. These projects would increase interconnectivity between Erie and international markets as far away as Germany. The Seaway Trail (Bicycle PA Route Z) brings increasing numbers of bicycles and pedestrians through the area. All these elements will increase the number of people to the Bayfront, but the capacity of the Bayfront Parkway to accommodate them in single occupancy vehicles is limited. A recent transportation study of the Bayfront Parkway showed that east-west movements through Erie require approximately seven to eight lanes of arterial roadway, and there are presently 15 lanes available, so roadway widening is not a consideration. Balancing traffic across the entire system and moving increased numbers of people, not vehicles, are the keys to successfully bringing more people to and through the Bayfront.

A system that efficiently connects the Airport, Presque Isle, downtown, the Bayfront, the Racino and other attractions in Erie via automobiles, buses, trucks, shuttles, ferry boats, water taxis, pedestrians and bicycles is essential to the economic growth and quality of life the region. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technology that provides travel information including road conditions, bus locations, flight schedules and delays, and emergency response information could enhance the efficiency of such a system. The planning and implementation of such a system will require unprecedented cooperation among a large number of agencies and stakeholders in the region. The purpose of this Intermodal Integration study is to develop a business model for providing such an integrated system.

The study consisted of four elements:

- Data Collection
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Intermodal Integration Plan Development
- Public Authority Coordination Plan Development

2. Data Collection

Numerous traffic and transportation studies have been done in the Erie area in recent years. These studies were collected and reviewed to provide background information and to avoid repeating previous work. Table 1 summarizes the documents that were collected. Appendix 1 contains a synopsis of each study.

Table 1 – Previous Studies

Report	Author	Sponsoring Agency	Year
ITS Traffic Management Study	Edwards and Kelcey, Inc.	PennDOT	2006
EMTA Traveler Information Study	Edwards and Kelcey, Inc.	Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority (EMTA)	2006
Bayfront Parkway Corridor Design Workshop	Glatting-Jackson Inc.	PennDOT	2006
Intermodalism... An Erie Perspective (presentation)	PennDOT	PennDOT	2004
Downtown Erie Access and Circulation Study	Urban Engineers	Erie County Department of Planning	2004
Bayfront Parkway Traffic Study	Urban Engineers	Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority	2003
Congested Corridor Improvement Program: SR 5 Corridor	Urban Engineers	PennDOT	2003
Transportation Authority Coordination Study	The Hill Group	Erie County Department of Planning	2002
East Side Access Highway Traffic Study	Urban Engineers	PennDOT	2001
Gateways and Greenways in Erie, PA	PennDOT	PennDOT	2001
Erie East Side Access Study Transit System Analysis	PennDOT	ICF Kaiser Engineers	1995

3. Stakeholder Interviews

A key element of the study was to gather input from stakeholders in the Bayfront area. This input was gathered in a series of 23 interviews that took place between April and August 2006. The stakeholders represented a cross section of interests, including land-owners or businesses on the Bayfront, neighborhood organizations, regional development organizations and councils, regional and city authorities, Erie city government staff, the Mayor of Erie, major employers, and the Erie County Planning Commission. Each interview was approximately one hour long, and was conducted by PennDOT and consultant staff. The interviews were structured somewhat to generally include the following topics, but the stakeholders were also allowed to discuss other transportation or related topics as the interviews progressed:

- Identify existing and future intermodal needs
- Review long term business models
- Identify funding resources and requirements
- Discuss how to structure the mix of the intermodal modes so they better serve the existing and future needs of the community
- Identify other partner stakeholders and the interaction with other stakeholders
- Discuss operational plans and homeland security efforts / plans
- Identify challenges and weaknesses of the current system
- Discuss opportunities for improvement

The interviews tended to gravitate toward issues relating to traffic operations and congestion, roadway facilities, parking, transit service, pedestrians, other modes such as rail and air, and the structure and function of the regions' public authorities. Table 2 summarizes the themes and suggestions that emerged from the interview process. Appendix 2 includes summaries of all the interviews.

Table 2 – Stakeholder Themes

	Observations on Existing System	Ideas for Future Changes
Bayfront Parkway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AM and PM peak congestion • Alternate route needed (12th) • Public education needed on the true intent of the Bayfront—to bring people into the heart of the city, not as a throughway • Unsafe for pedestrian travel • Lack of traffic signal coordination leads to poor traffic flow and congestion both along Bayfront and in entering and exiting adjacent streets/businesses/venues • Isolates residents from waterfront • Speeding is an issue along the Bayfront 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic signal coordination at intersections along Bayfront Parkway • Better signage • Roundabouts for pedestrian flow—particularly in front of Hamot and the Convention Center • Promote alternate routes
12th Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best alternative to Bayfront Parkway • Needs aesthetic improvements and better signal coordination (12th Street signaling project in the works) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote traffic on 12th Street with signal improvements, aesthetic improvements, boulevard concept, bike lanes, etc. • Signage needed to encourage motorists to use 12th • Electronic signing system to inform motorists at what speed they should travel to make all lights along 12th • Provide indication on 12th that motorists are approaching the Central Business District
Other Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peach Street • 8th Street • French Street • State Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need signal coordination on Peach Street • Improve 8th Street east and west

Table 2 (continued)

Bay Front/ Ports/ Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GAF location undesirable – explore opportunities if it moves• Convention Center location questionable• New development may lead to the need for circular routes to service lake front and attractions• Amphitheater events expected to increase traffic—planned to grow every year• Applying for casino license and considering bus service from Dover malls to lakefront attractions• Expanding Perry’s Landing Marina• Currently five (5) summer cruises out of Erie• Trying to create a “mini-town” around the marina• Liberty, Parade and State Streets were once intended to be the primary connections to the bay front	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on Bayfront Parkway improvements and inter-authority coordination
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good neighborhood transit service• Need transit to connect suburban residents to Central Business District• Location of Intermodal Transit Center not optimal; utilization not at peak• EMTA trolley system to begin operation in October 2006; bus service to remain the same• Frequency is the key to trolley ridership• EMTA route restructuring to be complete October 2006• EMTA looking for site to house regional traffic control center to consolidate LIFT and EMTA facilities• Buses have difficulty turning onto the Bayfront due to lack of signaling• Longer [local] bus trips generally require multiple transfers• Want to be a resource for transportation needs for special events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trolley service every five (5) minutes• Traffic signal needed at entrance to park and ride lot• Coordination between EMTA and other authorities needed to meet anticipated transit service needs for events• Bus routes should be restructured to lessen the need for multiple transfers on longer trips• Implement intelligent system/real time technology• Pre-emption system for buses would be helpful• Consider EMTA free trial period to encourage ridership• Residents need education about the transit system• Consider developing a regional transportation authority

Table 2 (continued)

Transit (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligent system/real time technology will aid service—first phase has begun • Transit priorities include Glenwood Park Project, agreements with local universities for student transportation and tourism • Pedestrian traffic expected to increase with planned development • Park and ride underutilized—especially due to difficulty of entering and exiting lot • Cruise boat terminal opening will increase the need for transit • Passenger summer ferry service to begin in 2007 • Greyhound doing a lot of business and creating demand for taxi service • Questionable linkages between the Central Business District and the bay front • Erie airport is growing—no longer have to connect in Pittsburgh • Concern for transportation from the airport to the Central Business District or the Convention Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess linkages between the CBD and the bay front
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily water, rail, and truck transport • Year-round truck ferry service to begin within next two (2) years • Need signals at access points for ease of movement (truck traffic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on Bayfront Parkway signal improvements/additions
Downtown (CBD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractive downtown housing could help decrease need for parking • Need to reassess quality of life and vibrancy in downtown area • Perceived parking issues • Would like to see Bluff connected to bay front • Attracting convention center traffic is key to the survival of the Central Business District • Parking is currently a major problem for Hamot—anticipated hospital expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need ramps, as opposed to surface lots • Need attractive, market-rate housing for professionals • Add metered parking to Peach, French, and Sassafras Streets

Table 2 (continued)

Overall		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authorities need to coordinate and follow-up on the various studies conducted• Need intermodal integrator plan (and/or staffed position)• Need public education on what is happening in other places
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3. Development of Intermodal Integrator Business Plan

After the completion of the stakeholder interviews, the consulting team met with District staff in August 2006 to review the results of the interviews and to begin formulating the framework of an intermodal integration plan. Many of the suggestions that emerged from the interviews were for projects that are imminent or already underway, such as a new coordinated traffic signal system on 12th Street or coordination of existing signals on the Bayfront Parkway, and thus are not included in the plan shown below. The consulting team also presented the results of internet research on public authorities in other cities that either perform more than one function or share resources among more than one public authority. This research was done as a result of numerous comments made during the stakeholder interviews that combining functions or sharing resources among public authorities may be desirable in Erie. District staff expressed significant interest in the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) in Buffalo, which runs both the airports and the transit system in the Buffalo region. The consulting team was directed to meet with NFTA representatives to learn more about their operations. This meeting took place in late October 2006. Following that meeting, a draft Intermodal Integrator plan was developed and reviewed with District staff in December 2006. Authority structure became a major focus of the plan, and is discussed in more detail in the next section of this report. The overall plan is shown in the following Table 3. Cost estimates are taken from previous studies (updated to 2007), existing planning documents, including the region's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and Twelve Year Plan (TYP), or were estimated by the consultant based on experience elsewhere. The table also shows whether the action is currently on the TYP. Those that are not would require that they go through the region's planning process to be put on the plan and be programmed for funding. Items with a numeric superscript notation are keyed to the downtown map in Figure 1.

Table 3 -Erie Bayfront Intermodal Study Draft Plan

Category	Action	Period	On TYP?	Cost (\$000)	Primary Agency	Supporting Agency(s)	Comments
Traffic Engineering	Striping of additional westbound lane through Holland and State intersections ¹	0-2 years	No	\$10	PennDOT		Stakeholder recommendations and Bayfront Parkway traffic study
	Static Signing to encourage use of 10 th and 12 th St. to Downtown	0-2 years	No	\$100	PennDOT	City of Erie	Stakeholder recommendations
	Remove unneeded signals from 12 th Street ²	0-2 years	No	\$50	City of Erie	PennDOT	Stakeholder recommendations
	Coordinate signals on 10 th Street ³	4-12 years	No	\$1500	City of Erie		Stakeholder recommendations
	Coordinate signals on 26 th Street ⁴	4-12 years	Yes – (Design)	\$1500	PennDOT	City of Erie	Stakeholder recommendations
	Convert 8 th Street to 2-way traffic ⁵	0-4 years	No	\$50	City of Erie		Glatting-Jackson plan

Table 3 (continued)

Category	Action	Period	On TYP?	Cost (\$000)	Primary Agency	Supporting Agency(s)	Comments
Roadway Improvements	Construct east-west service road from Park and Ride to Waterworks, with signal at potentially extended Liberty St. at Bayfront ⁶	4-12 years	No	\$1,900	Port Authority	City of Erie, PennDOT	Stakeholder recommendations and Bayfront Parkway Traffic Study
	Construct SB right turn lane on Bayfront Parkway at 8 th St., or consider roundabout ⁷	4-12 years	No	\$50	PennDOT		Stakeholder recommendations and Bayfront Parkway Traffic Study / Glatting-Jackson plan
	Reconstruct/narrow 12 th Street between Sassafras & French with amenities ⁸	0-4 years	No	\$1,500	PennDOT	City of Erie	City recommendation
	Reconstruct 12 th Street to 5 lane Boulevard with median, amenities, Sassafras to I-79 ²	4-12 years	No	\$10,000	PennDOT	City of Erie	Glatting-Jackson plan
	Reconstruct Bayfront Parkway into 2 lane Urban Boulevard with amenities, I-79 to East Side Access Highway. ⁹	4-12 years	No	\$15,000	PennDOT		Glatting-Jackson plan
	Construct aesthetic improvements on 10 th Street ³	12 +	No	\$5,000	City of Erie		Stakeholder recommendations
	Construct aesthetic improvements on 26 th Street ⁴	12+	No	\$5,000	PennDOT	City of Erie	Stakeholder recommendations

Table 3 (continued)

Category	Action	Period	On TYP?	Cost (\$000)	Primary Agency	Supporting Agency(s)	Comments
Intermodal Transfer	Car to Bus – Develop and integrated Park and Ride system with transit service, Waterford, McKean, Edinboro, Walnut Creek	4-12 years	No	\$4,000	EMTA	PennDOT	Stakeholder recommendations
	Car to Walk – More ramps, fewer surface lots downtown to increase density.	4-12 years	No	N/A	Parking Authority	City of Erie	Stakeholder recommendations
	Rail/Truck/Air – Develop rail spur with container service at Finestra site	4-12 years	No	\$1,000	Airport Authority		Airport Authority plan
	Ship to Rail – Provide rail to Erie Shipbuilding and Port ¹⁰	0-2	Yes	\$1,000	Port Authority	PennDOT	Stakeholder recommendations
Operations Center	Develop operations center, possibly 12 th at Cherry, consolidate LIFT, EMTA, Erie signals	0-4 years	Yes – (Signals)	\$20,000	EMTA		EMTA plan
	Add PennDOT ITS, 911	4-12 years	Yes	\$18,000	City of Erie	PennDOT	Stakeholder recommendations

Table 3 (continued)

Category	Action	Period	On TYP?	Cost (\$000)	Primary Agency	Supporting Agency(s)	Comments
Transit Operations	Implement planned route/service restructuring	0-2 years	Yes	\$1,000	EMTA		EMTA plan
	Implement AVL and Kiosk or message board countdown systems	4-12 years	Yes	\$2,000	EMTA		EMTA plan
	Reinstitute Presque Isle buses	4-12 years	No		EMTA		Stakeholder recommendations
	Utilize water taxis for commuting	4-12 years	No	\$300	EMTA		Stakeholder recommendations
	Consider Bus Priority on signalized arterials	4–12 years	No	\$500	EMTA	City of Erie	Stakeholder recommendations
	Consider Bayfront Busway if GAF Rail Spur is removed	4–12 years	No	\$10,000	EMTA		Stakeholder recommendations

Table 3 (continued)

Category	Action	Period	On TYP?	Cost (\$000)	Primary Agency	Supporting Agency(s)	Comments
Authority Structure	Hold one day retreat to explore ideas for efficiencies	Early 2007	No	\$5	PennDOT	Airport, EMTA, Port, Parking, Convention, Water	Do under Baker contract
	Combine Websites	0-2 years	No	\$50	Airport, EMTA	Port, Convention, Parking	
	Combine common Authority functions – Grants, Marketing, Procurement,	0 - 4 years	No	(\$500)	Airport, EMTA, Port, Parking, Convention, Water		Hill Group Study and Stakeholder recommendations
	Community Participation.	0 - 4 years	No				Get support / coordination from groups such as Chamber
	Hire Intermodal Coordinator	0-4 years	No	\$100 annual	Airport, EMTA, Port, Parking, Convention, Water		Possibly secure state planning funds for this initially.
	Consider Formation of Regional Transportation Authority	8+	No		Airport, EMTA, Port		Possibly follow Buffalo model



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4. Public Authority Coordination

As noted previously, the first phase of the study included an extensive program of interviews with stakeholders in the Bayfront area. These stakeholders included private business interests along the Bayfront; City and County government agencies; business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Improvement District and the regional Technology Council; neighborhood representatives; large institutions such as Gannon University and Hamot Medical Center; and representatives of the various public authorities in the region. These authorities included:

- Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority (EMTA)
- Erie Municipal Airport Authority (EMAA)
- Erie – Western Pennsylvania Port Authority (EWPPA)
- Erie Parking Authority
- Erie County Convention Center Authority
- Erie Water Authority

In general, the authorities and other stakeholders that are users of the transportation system in the Bayfront area, such as the Port, Convention, and Water Authorities, reported that the transportation system works well in meeting their needs, although there is some traffic congestion along the Bayfront Parkway. Due to this congestion, they have pushed for more traffic signals on the Bayfront Parkway. Transportation providers, such as EMTA and EMMA, indicated that their organizations are generally healthy, growing in number of users, and are generally meeting the needs of the region. However, most of the authorities indicated that they have minimal interaction with each other, and during the interviews it became evident that they each have many similar functions within their respective organizations. These functions include marketing, human resource management, planning, procurement, vehicle maintenance, grant writing, information technology, security, finances and legal applications. It was also reported that a study was undertaken in 2001 - 2002 to study the possible integration of some or all of these functions, but the effort lost momentum after the September 11 attacks as agencies became preoccupied with their own security efforts and the impacts of the attacks on the economy and their operations.

While this current study has identified a range of actions to improve transportation in the Erie area, PennDOT and the Study Team decided to look further into the idea of increased cooperation and coordination between the authorities as one of those possible actions. This effort has included internet research of authority structures in other cities, a review of the work that was done in Erie in 2001 – 2002, and followup review of current authority governance.

4.1 Authority Structure in Other Cities

A data search was conducted to determine areas where authorities for transit, port, airport, water, convention, and parking are combined in an effort to operate more efficiently. The data search was conducted using the Internet.

Key Findings:

- 1) Few examples of combined authorities were found. The majority of authorities service only one industry.
- 2) Of those authorities that involve multiple services, the most frequent combination is airports and ports.
- 3) The following authorities were found to operate multiple services:
 - Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) (Buffalo, New York) – airports, transit system and port.
 - Massachusetts Port Authority (Boston, Massachusetts) – airports, port, and one toll bridge.
 - The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (New York City area) – airports, toll bridges, tunnels, bus terminals, commuter trains and terminals, port
 - Delaware River Port Authority (Southeast Pennsylvania & Southern New Jersey) – toll bridges, ferries, cruise terminal, intermodal rail center, one commuter rail line.

Given that NFTA is located on a nearby Great Lake city in Buffalo, the study team looked further into this example. Their website was researched, and a meeting was held with a member of their senior management team. NFTA can be summarized as follows:

The authority was formed in 1967 by the State of New York. It covers two counties, Erie and Niagara. The Authority is responsible for the transit system, including the bus system and a 6.2 mile Light Rail Transit line, and the region's two airports. Prior to the formation of the Authority, transit was provided by private bus companies and the airport was owned by the City of Buffalo. The Authority originally also included port operations, but most port activity is gone and what remains is now private, although the Authority still owns land on the waterfront.

NFTA has an 11 member board. The governor recommends 9, the Erie County Executive and Erie County Board recommend one each. The Board members are approved by the State Senate. Current Board members include attorneys, an engineer, a school superintendent and a representative from the Board of Education, a trucking business owner, and a representative from a private sector development fund.

The Authority has 1500 employees and a total annual operating budget of approximately \$150 million and capital budget of \$78 million. A review of their org chart shows that they maintain separate Aviation and Surface Transportation (Transit) groups, but functions such as Engineering, Grants, Accounting, Information Services, Procurement, Human Resources and Legal are handled by departments that serve both transportation groups.

NFTA sits on the MPO Board (Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council) (GBNRTC) and actively participates in their meetings. They cooperate with NYSDOT on an as-needed basis. They work similarly with the City of Buffalo – the two are currently working on a project to bring vehicular traffic back to the Transit Mall. The Authority also sits on the Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition (NITEC) Board and participates in their operations. NITEC includes NYSDOT, the Peace Bridge Authority, the Thruway Authority, and the DOT on the Canadian side of the border to coordinate ITS and other technology activities in the region.

4.2 Review of Previous Erie Authority Study

In June, 2002, The Hill Group, Inc. of Pittsburgh completed a study to determine potential coordination opportunities between the three transportation authorities in Erie County, Pennsylvania. The Port Authority, Airport Authority and Transit Authority participated in the study which was commissioned by the Erie Conference on Community Development (ECCD) and the County of Erie through the Erie Metropolitan Planning Organization (EMPO). The study was motivated by a desire to utilize these public transportation assets to enhance economic development, improve public service delivery, manage and utilize public assets efficiently, reduce operating costs, and optimize revenues.

An operational analysis was conducted within each authority to study and identify potential complementary missions, opportunities for synergies, and operational redundancies. The analysis was conducted through interviews with regional stakeholders, department managers and supervisors at each authority. Financial and operational data was provided by each authority to the consulting team. The data provided by the authorities was unaudited by the consulting team and utilized at face value for the purpose of this study.

Eight functional areas, common to all three transportation authorities, were identified as potential areas for coordination. The eight areas were:

- Finance
- Grants Management
- Legal Services
- Lobbying
- Marketing
- Operations
- Planning
- Public Safety

A series of coordinated activity options on a continuum of minimal to significant coordination activity was developed as a set of alternatives for consideration. Each functional area was evaluated against a series of evaluation criteria for each coordination option using a scorecard evaluation matrix to determine appropriateness and benefit. The scorecard matrices were dynamic decision making tools because the authorities could

adjust weights and ratings for the various alternatives and criteria based upon changing needs, values, and preferences.

The authorities possessed the ability to evaluate several options for potential coordination using the scorecard matrices. It was recommended that the authorities formally engage in coordinated activities in the areas considered. The levels of coordination ranged from increased information exchange and inter-authority contracting of services to the formation of a Shared Services Group to perform uniform, non-mission-critical services for all three authorities.

Coordination offers enhanced service delivery and opportunities to leverage human capital, resources, and assets. In addition to these benefits, there were also significant direct cost savings identified to all three authorities. Conservatively, there was a potential for all three authorities to save up to \$472,000 on an aggregate basis, annually, if a Shared Services Group model was adopted. A series of moderate recommendations outlined in this study could yield an annual cost savings of \$427,000, on an aggregate basis, across all three authorities.

4.3 Authority Governance and Function

In conducting the stakeholder interviews and comparing the authority governing structures and sizes today, it is evident that imbalances exist. The three major transportation related authorities in the region range from approximately 20 employees to 200 employees, yet all have similar executive staff sizes and positions. Moreover, a comparison to NFTA in Buffalo shows a similar executive structure for an agency of approximately 1,500 employees. Table 4 compares the size, annual budget, and board governance of the three major Erie authorities with that in Buffalo. Table 5 shows which positions exist within each of these four agencies.

Table 4 – Authority Size and Governance

	Employees	Annual Budget (\$ million)	Board of Directors (x/xx) = number of members / who appoints them
Airport Authority	37	\$5 (operating) \$10 (capital)	5 / Erie City Council
Port Authority	20 (permanent) 50 (seasonal)	\$9.4	9 / Erie Mayor 1 / Governor 1 / PennDOT Secretary
Transit Authority	200	\$14	6 / Erie Mayor 3 / Erie County Executive
NFTA (Buffalo)	1,500	\$150 (operating) \$78 (capital)	9 / Governor 1 / County Executive 1 / County Board

Table 5 – Authority Executive Structure

Position	Airport Authority	Port Authority	Transit Authority	NFTA (Buffalo)
Executive Director	x	x	x	x
Operations Director	x	x	x	
CFO / Controller	x	x	x	x
Public Safety Director	x			x
Director of Strategic Development	x			
Manager / Director of Human Resources	x			x
Grants Manager	x	x	x	x
Public Affairs / Marketing Director			x	x
General Counsel		x		x
EEO Director				x
Engineering Manager				x
Surface Transportation Group Director				x
Aviation Group Director				x

For the most part, the positions shown in Table 5 reflect most or all of the professional staff of the Erie authorities, while many of the Directors or Managers shown at NFTA also have additional professional support staffs. Overall, NFTA's management staff consists of approximately 50 out of 1,500 total employees, while the three Erie authorities have combined management staffs of approximately 17 for 250 employees. In addition, each Erie authority has a board of directors consisting of 5 to 11 members, for a total of 25 board members, compared to one 11 member board in Buffalo. Table 4 shows that most of the Erie authority board members are appointed by the mayor or city council of Erie, even though the authorities have regional significance. Tom Ridge Airport is not even located within the City of Erie. These comparisons support the conclusion of the Hill Group Study that there is overlap in governance and functions among the Erie authorities that could be combined efficiently under fewer managers and board members as is inherent within NFTA's structure in Buffalo. Using the Hill Group's estimated savings of \$427,000 in Year 2002 dollars, the estimated annual savings today (based on 3% annual inflation) is \$500,000.

4.3 Summary

Stakeholders in the Erie area continue to identify better coordination among the various authorities in the region as a possible method to improve services while gaining cost efficiencies. A previous study of this subject in Erie identified specific measures that could be taken, but was never followed on. A current review of the authorities' governing structures along with review of other cities, such as Buffalo, where functions are combined very successfully, supports the conclusion of the previous study. At the state level, where most transportation funding is generated and administered, PennDOT is currently putting increased emphasis on intermodal coordination. Given the local and state recognition that coordination is desirable, this may be an ideal time to pursue this idea. Such an initiative would likely be able to save money, as was shown by the previous study in Erie, and could bring additional new planning funds into the region through state support of demonstrating the desirability of increased intermodal coordination.

The first step in this initiative could be a workshop including the Authority managers, key board members, PennDOT District 1-0 and Central Office, and other key stakeholders such as the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership. This workshop agenda could include:

- identify commonalities among the authorities;
- identify previous and existing barriers to cooperation;
- provide information about an example or examples of combined functions or authorities elsewhere (such as Buffalo);
- receive input and guidance from PennDOT Central Office on the state's position and increased funding possibilities;
- identify resources for research support to reveal new opportunities for intermodal integration ranging from local to the international arena;
- identify and develop performance measures and goals for a coordination effort, such as:
 - Generation of new investment capital,
 - Job creation,
 - Implementation of a technology integration plan,
 - Administrative cost savings or service leverage (example: administrative services available as a result of consolidated functions such as accounting, legal services, labor relations, purchasing etc.),
 - Special or new Federal or State funding eligibility achieved through an intermodal project proposal, and
- develop and agree on next steps in a strategy to increase coordination.

5. Conclusions and Next Steps

Erie's Bayfront area is undergoing an exciting transformation into a mixed use area that will include many different recreational, commercial, industrial, residential and transportation uses. This transformation, along with the recent completion of the East Side Access Highway, have put increasing traffic demands on the Bayfront Parkway, the primary roadway facility serving the Bayfront area. Stakeholders in the Bayfront area are concerned about the increasing congestion on the Bayfront Parkway and recognize the need to improve the ability of the region's transportation system to move people and goods to and through the area. These stakeholders recognize that such improvements are critical to the continuing economic development of the area and the overall quality of life in the region.

Through review of previous studies, in-depth interviews with stakeholders, and consultation with PennDOT District 1-0 staff, an intermodal integrator business plan was developed for the area. The plan includes a series of actions, who would be responsible for them, when they could be done, and a budgetary cost estimate. The plan includes a series of traditional transportation improvements including traffic operations improvements, minor roadway improvements, transit service expansion, and development of intermodal transfer facilities such as park and rides and railroad spurs. It also includes elements for increasing coordination between the numerous public authorities in the region to save money through operational efficiencies and to provide improved services by better coordination and integration.

The next steps for developing and carrying out the plan include:

- Continue to develop projects and actions that are currently included in the region's transportation plans, such as the development of multi-agency integrated operations centers to create a state-of-the-art Intelligent Transportation System for the region.
- Undertake planning efforts to move needed traffic operations and minor roadway improvements onto the transportation plan to maximize the operation of the Bayfront Parkway and improve operations along other east-west routes in the area to provide relief for the Bayfront Parkway.
- Bring the region's public authorities together to explore and undertake better coordination and sharing of functions, including the consideration of ultimately forming a single regional transportation authority.

Appendix 1

Synopsis of Previous Studies

1 Bayfront Parkway Corridor Design Workshop

Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin Lopez Rinehart, Inc.
January, 2005

PennDOT recently received ownership of the Bayfront Parkway and therefore has a deep interest in preserving the efficiency of the roadway while enhancing the character of the surrounding bayfront and Downtown area. The process used to execute this study was a multi-day workshop format. Workshop participants included representatives of PennDOT, Erie Pennsylvania Port Authority, Erie County, Erie Downtown Improvement District, and the consulting team. Goals of the workshop included:

- Explore alternative routes for east-west traffic
- Meet the transportation needs and planning goals
- Increase pedestrian access to the Bayfront
- Identify potential solutions that support land use goals.

Analysis showed that Erie has 15 lanes on the four primary east-west corridors in downtown, but only 7 to 9 lanes are needed to carry the volume of traffic. The study recommends that better dispersion of traffic be achieved by improving the attractiveness and efficiency of 8th, 10th and 12th Streets through better signalization, operational changes, and aesthetic improvements. The study also recommended improved connectivity to the Bayfront Parkway, and conversion of the Parkway to a 2-lane urban boulevard with a landscaped median and roundabouts at several key intersections. Overall urban design improvements and pedestrian improvements for the area were also recommended.

2 Bayfront Parkway Traffic Study

Report For: Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority By: Urban Engineers
June 2003

The Bayfront Parkway quickly became a preferred east-west corridor. Because of the high cross-town traffic volumes, the operation on portions of the Bayfront Parkway has deteriorated. Over the next 10 years, proposed/planned developments along the Erie Bayfront will generate additional traffic.

This study addresses a 3-mile section of the Bayfront Parkway from 8th Street to Port Access Road. The planning study is to identify traffic problems associated with the combination of projected volumes and general traffic growth and to recommend changes to improve operations.

The intersections study include four signalized intersections (8th Street, State Street, Holland Street, and Port Access Road/East Bay Drive), five unsignalized intersections (Cranberry Street, Park and Ride West Entrance, Park and Ride Liberty Street Entrance, Water Works Road/Erie Water Works (EWW) Driveway, and Sassafra Street Pier), and one future intersection (Ore Dock Access Road).

The short term improvements focused on repairing/upgrading equipment and optimizing the signal timings. Short term improvements are recommended for 8th Street, and for State Street and Holland Street. The long term improvements are divided into two types: access improvements and capacity improvements. These improvements focused on improving the ability of the minor street traffic at unsignalized intersections to turn onto Bayfront Parkway and concentrated on better utilizing the available pavement. Long term improvements are recommended for 8th Street, Cranberry Street, Park and Ride Liberty Street Entrance, EWW Driveway, Water Works Road, Sassafras Street Pier, State Street, Holland Street, Ore Dock Access Road, and Northbound I-79 and East Side Access Highway (ESAH). Widening along the entire length of the Bayfront Parkway was considered outside the scope of the long term improvements because of the many physical constraints and limited right-of-way.

As new development increases along the Bayfront Parkway, high volumes of cross-town traffic will become a more significant problem. The public must be made aware of the change of function for the Bayfront Parkway. Cross-town traffic needs to be directed to other routes such as 12th Street (PA 5). Operation on 12th Street (PA 5) also needs to be improved to handle the traffic demand.

3 + Congested Corridor Improvement Program

PA 5 Corridor

Report For: PennDOT By: Urban Engineers

March 2003

PennDOT initiated the Congested Corridor Improvement Program (CCIP) to identify several congested corridors in the Commonwealth and, in conjunction with its partners, define and implement the needed improvements. The goal of CCIP is a 20 percent reduction in peak hour travel time on the improved transportation corridor. Seventeen (17) corridors throughout the state of Pennsylvania were selected based on a nomination by the local planning organizations. This report specifically addresses the study of the PA 5 (12th Street) corridor.

The PA 5 corridor extends from Asbury Road in Millcreek Township to Franklin Avenue in the City of Erie. The corridor is approximately nine miles long with 33 signalized intersections. Also, included is one future signalized intersection that will be added once the East Side Access Highway is open to traffic and one interchange at I-79.

Improvements are listed in three categories: immediate, short-term (0-3 years), and long-term (4-10 years). Immediate improvements identified equipment malfunctions that require immediate repair or maintenance in order to reestablish coordination in the existing system and to implement optimizations identified as short-term or long-term improvements. Short-term improvements focused on optimizing the operations of the existing operations of the existing signal equipment. Long-term improvements included analysis of 2012 No-Build conditions as a baseline for comparison and focused on identifying upgrades to equipment to allow increased flexibility or operations and optimization of those operations.

A summary of the adverse conditions include the intersections and issues for each of the PA 5 intersections.

Recommendations are summarized for the various improvements. Tables for each improvement category list the issues, next steps, completion dates, and costs.

3 + Congested Corridor Improvement Program PA 5 Corridor

Supplemental Report

12th Street Widening Feasibility Study: I-79 to Cranberry Street

Report For: PennDOT By: Urban Engineers

October 2003

This study has three main purposes:

- 1) identify improvements needed to remove the “bottleneck” on 12th Street in the vicinity of Greengarden Road
- 2) identify other desirable improvements and other issues PennDOT should consider addressing if a major roadway reconstruction and widening project is initiated

- 3) estimate construction costs for implementing recommended solutions

The limited capacity of through lanes between the I-79 interchange and Cranberry Street is the cause of the congestion observed in the vicinity of Greengarden Road. The proposed solution is to widen 12th Street to three through lanes in each direction which would result in 84 feet width to match the existing width east of Cranberry Street.

Other improvements include:

- 1) changes to Ramps E and G at the I-79 interchange
- 2) widening the EB 12th Street bridge over Lincoln Avenue
- 3) vertical realignment of 12th Street in vicinity of Greengarden Road to modify sag curve
- 4) traffic signal modifications required at 12th Street intersections with Lincoln Avenue, Greengarden Road, and Weschler Avenue
- 5) one signal eliminated at Ramp E intersection with EB 12th Street
- 6) modifications to storm water collection system
- 7) utility relocations
- 8) replacement of sidewalks
- 9) bituminous overlay
- 10) possible concrete pavement repairs
- 11) removal of existing retaining walls and abutments at the location of the removed railroad bridge

Figure 5 in the report shows proposed improvements in relation to its location. Plans and profile drawings detailing proposed improvements are included. Construction of the recommended improvements is estimated to cost approximately \$4,600,000.

3 + East Side Access Highway Supplement Traffic Study

Report For: PennDOT By: Urban Engineers

July 2001

The East Side Access Highway (ESAH) will provide a direct connection from I-90 to the Bayfront Parkway. PennDOT is concerned that a large portion of drivers will use the Bayfront Parkway to access downtown rather than using the various east/west corridors intersecting the ESAH. The purpose of this study is to identify major attractions and the roadway improvements needed to help distribute traffic from the new ESAH onto these east/west corridors and to relieve some of the traffic load on the Bayfront Parkway. A related goal of the study is to develop ways to encourage truck traffic to use the East 12th Street.

Two steps were taken:

1. Identify trip destinations and determine a preferred designated east/west route for each
2. Analyze three east/west corridors to determine necessary improvements: East 12th Street (SR 5), East 10th Street, and East 6th Street and East Lake Road (SR 5A)

To encourage drivers to use these corridors instead of the Bayfront Parkway, destination signing should be developed and roadway improvements made. Any signing program for ESAH and the east/west corridors should be coordinated with the Erie County Signage Committee, since a regional attraction – signing program is currently being considered. Roadway improvements are listed for East 12th Street, East 10th Street, East 6th Street and East Lake Road, Parade Street, Gilson Avenue, and the City traffic signal system.

4 Intermodalism – The Next Frontier (?)... An Erie Perspective
PowerPoint presentation By: PennDOT 2004

How can PennDOT, EWPPA, the Erie International Airport Authority (EIAA), and EMTA collectively broaden the intermodal perspective?

The presentation listed the top five needs, the top five priorities, and the relevant performance measures for EWPPA, EIAA, and EMTA.

The Erie Perspective Pilot Proposal = fund a local “Intermodal Integrator” position. The performance measures are directly tied to economic development. The measures include job creation, funding increase, reduced subsidies, positive customer perspective, and opportunity.

5 Downtown Erie Access and Circulation Study

Report and Technical Supplements – hardcopy and CD

For: Erie County Department of Planning By: Urban Engineers

June 30, 2004

This study has two purposes:

- 1) identifies near-term planning and transportation management priorities for road agencies
- 2) provides needed analysis of several identified problem location on the city's transportation network

The study focused on the area from I-79 to Franklin Avenue and from Bayfront Parkway to 26th Street. Recommendations are grouped into five categories: transportation planning, traffic signal operations and maintenance, non-motorized transportation, traffic management, and capital improvements.

Transportation Planning recommendations include:

- 1) develop a transportation master plan or map
- 2) develop corridor access management plans for 12th Street and the Bayfront Parkway
- 3) adopt a site access and traffic impact ordinance

Traffic Signal Operations and Maintenance recommendations include:

- 1) implement a traffic signal removal program
- 2) improve traffic signal coordination
- 3) upgrade traffic signal equipment
- 4) increase emphasis on pedestrian signals and operation
- 5) maintain and expand city-wide traffic models
- 6) hire another traffic engineer and traffic signal technician

Non-Motorized Transportation recommendations include:

- 2) provide non-motorized links
- 3) implement a sidewalk inspection and repair program
- 4) clearly delineate sidewalks
- 5) add bicycle facilities to existing streets and future roadway plans

Traffic Management recommendations include:

- 1) "Streetscape" State and Parade Streets
- 2) Provide additional on-street parking downtown
- 3) Evaluate 1-way street operations
- 4) Adopt a new speed management policy
- 5) Convert all-way stop control to 2-way at selected intersection
- 6) Update the truck route ordinance
- 7) Install left-turn lanes at selected intersections
- 8) Increase use of staggered business/office hours

Capital Improvements for Design and Construction recommendation include eight proposed capital improvements. The improvements are intended to reinforce and supplement the TIP.

The study supports advancement of all recommendations as resources allow, but with so many it is vital that some be given priority for near-term implementation. The report lists the priorities, the lead agencies, and the time frame for each recommendation.

6 Transportation Authority Coordination Study
Report on CD For: Erie County By: The Hill Group
June 3, 2002

This study was conducted to determine potential coordinating activities between the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority (EWPPA), the Erie Municipal Airport Authority (EMAA), and the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority (EMTA). The benefits of such activities are the enhancement of economic development, the improvement of public service delivery, the management and utilization of public assets efficiently, the reduction of operating costs, and the optimization of revenues.

Eight functional areas, common to all three transportation authorities, were identified as potential areas for coordination. The functional areas are operations, public safety, grant management, lobbying, planning, marketing, finance, and legal services.

Each functional area was compared to varying levels of coordination and criteria. Scorecard matrices, a decision-making tool that provides a detailed picture of the various functional areas at the authorities, were used to determine the varying levels. The levels of coordination are status quo, conservative, assertive, aggressive, and shared services.

The three authorities and the citizens of Erie County may benefit primarily from a combination of assertive coordination strategies to the use of a Shared Services Group (SSG) model. A table of coordination strategy recommendations for the functional areas is provided.

Operations are fundamentally mission-specific and therefore, there are not many opportunities for scale economies or leverage. Opportunities for cost savings are available if EWPPA and EMAA would contract out to EMTA for vehicle maintenance services. Project management and property management are other operational areas where cost savings may be realized by assertive coordination.

Public safety is an area where all three authorities may benefit from enhanced service and lower cost through assertive coordination. EWPPA may realize a significant cost savings if it contracts out to EMAA police.

None of the authorities has a human resources professional. With a combined workforce of over 300 employees, the authorities would benefit significantly from a human resources professional.

Coordination offers enhanced service delivery and opportunities to leverage human capital, resources, and assets. There are also significant cost savings to all three authorities.

The functional areas, finance, grant management, legal services, lobbying, marketing, and planning, are recommended for shared services among the three agencies. The Shared Services Group is the most aggressive of all the coordination strategies. In this scenario,

the three authorities would essentially downsize administrative functions that are duplicative in nature. The authorities could implement the SSG incrementally or all at once, depending upon current needs and priorities. The authorities would utilize the SSG for their administrative activities to reduce overall costs, minimize duplication, increase inter-authority communication, create efficiencies of public assets, improve coordination efforts, and assist to position the authorities for enhanced service delivery.

An Inter-Authority Steering Committee would need to be formed to review the Transportation Authority Coordination Study and develop coordination strategies on a yearly basis.

7 Erie Eastside Access Study, Transit System Analysis
Report For: PennDOT By: ICF Kaiser Engineers
June 1995

The EMTA bus system was studied to enhance its service and make it more efficient. The study leads to recommendations for improving system performance and service in the East Side Corridor. All improvements were developed as part of the overall program to relieve traffic congestion and improve the air quality of Erie.

The goals of the study are:

- 1) enhance the mobility of the Erie community
- 2) optimize the effectiveness of transit services
- 3) optimize the efficiency of transit services
- 4) provide quality transit services

There are five transit service options for improving the existing transit system:

- 1) Do-Nothing Option
- 2) System Efficiency Option
- 3) System Restructing Option
- 4) System Expansion Option I
- 5) System Expansion Option II

Each option builds upon the previous option except for the System Expansion Option II which builds upon the System Restructing Option. Depending on additional funds available either System Expansion Option I or II would be implemented.

The Do-Nothing Option is the base condition and is a continuation of existing services without any modifications.

The System Efficiency Option eliminates unproductive service and reallocates service to areas warranting an increase in service.

The System Restructing Option would make downtown Erie, Millcreek Mall, and West Erie Plaza the focal points of the system. Others changes include 15-minute service on Peach Street, new crosstown service from Westside of Erie to Millcreek Mall, and increased service frequencies.

The System Expansion Option I includes improvements in frequency of service on urban routes, new crosstown service, and daily service on rural county routes.

The System Expansion Option II will have several new crosstown routes and the system would be reconfigured into a grid system with Peach Street as the spine. Other changes include service operated at 10-minute headways on Peach Street, 15-minute headways within central area of Erie, and 30- to 60-minute headways in outlying areas.

Evaluation of the options was concentrated in four impact areas: system operations, system productivity, operating costs, and capital costs. No preferred option was selected.

All options improve traffic flow, reduce vehicular delay, increase bus operating speeds, and make schedules more attractive and increase ridership. The selection of an option will depend upon the funding available.

8 Erie County: New Era, New Erie

PowerPoint presentation By: PennDOT

July 19, 2004

This presentation is an overview of intermodal transportation in Erie County. Intermodalism involves three key aspects: connections, choices, and coordination and cooperation. The elements of intermodalism in Erie are Erie County Demographics, Corridors and Connectors, Key Transportation Projects, Rail and Rail-Freight, Public Transit – Bus/Trolley, Aviation – Airports, Water-based – Port/Ferry/Water Taxi, and Trail – Bike/Pedestrian. Each element is discussed in the presentation. As seen in the presentation, opportunities for intermodal connections, choices, coordination, and cooperation are plentiful in Erie County.

+ Intermodalism

PowerPoint presentation By: PennDOT

April 4, 2003

The District's goal is to move people and goods in an energy efficient and economic way to gain optimum yield from the transportation system. The District's Intermodal Plan is split into three sections: public education/public awareness, relationship building, and District structure.

+ Land Use / Transportation Linkage

PowerPoint presentation By: PennDOT

September 20, 2004

The Department has placed a high priority on three areas:

- 1) examining the land use – transportation connection
- 2) improving the coordination of future land use and transportation planning
- 3) being a part of the decision-making process that will ultimately affect our roadway network

Decision concerning transportation and land use must be made conditional of one another, not independently. The main goal is an improved quality of life. This can be attained through early coordination efforts, public involvement, and current study stakeholders.

The presentation gives information on Route 19 and Route 62 study areas.

+ Gateways and Greenways in Erie, Pennsylvania – a Great Lake Community
Report; PennDOT
July 2001

PennDOT sponsored a workshop of Erie's community leaders to seek their collaboration on a plan to enhance Erie's "Gateways and Greenways". This report is a culmination of that effort and it proposes themes, prototypes, and strategies that can be applied to future transportation projects, visitor sites, and development initiatives. The desired results are a stronger regional identity, increased pride and quality of life, and an increase in tourism. Central to the success of this initiative is the concept of context sensitive design, which places emphasis on engaging the community in the process of planning transportation projects, resulting in improvements that are responsive to the community's character and needs.

The first step in applying context sensitive design to Erie's infrastructure is developing a consistent theme and related icons. The underlying nautical theme that was agreed upon is "Erie, Pennsylvania: a Great Lake Community". The icons that support this theme are Lake Erie, Erie Land Lighthouse, Presque Isle, U.S. Brig Niagara, Commodore Perry Monument, port buildings, sailboats/ferries/motor boats, fish/fishing, sunsets, railroads (Erie and Lackawanna), Seaway Trail, maritime museum, Bicentennial Tower, and Erie Zoo.

The next step is to make the nautical theme consistent throughout the community. Ten prototype gateways and greenways are presented in the report. Each prototype contains fact sheets and drawings that present "typical" elements of gateways and greenways that can be incorporated throughout the Erie region. The prototypes are interstate highway greenway, urban streetscape, roadside planting, bridge enhancements, greenway trail, boulevard with median and side trail, scenic overlook, trail rest areas and site furnishings, wall treatments, and landscape planting specifications.

The report discussed a range of "early win" concepts or projects that can provide an opportunity to involve the community in a partnership to expand the applications of themes and context sensitive design. These "early win" projects include Wayfinding Signage, Gateway Projects, Go Fish Project, Gorge Bridge Enhancements, and Presque Isle Connector Trail.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder Interview Summaries

Stakeholder No.1

Monday, April 3, 2006 – 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM

W. (Bill) Krats

Erie Sand & Gravel Co./Oglebay Norton Co.

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Core business: aggregates and sand; sell approximately one (1) million tons of aggregates and sand yearly – likely to stay at this level
- 35 employees – none use transit as no stop near their facility – most live between Edinboro and Erie – not likely to switch to transit even if provided better options
- All raw materials come to facility via Lake Erie (50,000 deliveries yearly concentrated in April to October)
- Operate storage and re-handling facility for GAF
- Move some steel that comes in to facility via rail car/transload onto trucks for General Electric
- Ready mix plant/15 year contract to operate on property
- Supply asphalt and ready mix industries primarily
- No air freight/only 5 or 6 railcar shipments weekly
- Official port for Port Authority – 300 ton stiff leg crane
- All aggregates and sand go out by truck (up to 400 daily) – between 6:30 to 9:00 AM
- No opportunities for increased use of rail because those they supply don't have rail access
- Truck routes – Exit Orr Dock Road, from there...utilize State, 12th, Parade, Ash, 26th, Bayfront Parkway, 8th, I-79 – very little use of I-90
- Eastside Connector has brought noticeably more traffic to Bayfront Parkway
- Potential impact to business in the future – container traffic from Ontario – this facility would be the port this traffic would come into and out of, would result in more truck traffic coming into and out of their facility because they are the only commercial facility to accept these container shipments
- All aggregates and sand/GAF traffic come into facility via Orr Dock Road – no light at this location
- Connection off of Bayfront Parkway to Orr Dock Road not having a light creates difficulty for movement into and out of facility but not an adverse effect to their business; actually better because of Bayfront Parkway access
- A better alternate route to the Bayfront Parkway could eliminate some of this congestion

Stakeholder No. 2

Monday, April 3, 2006 – 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

Del Birch (for Sue Moyer)

Bayfront Eastside Task Force (BEST)

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Non-profit devoted to revitalizing Erie's oldest neighborhood; boundaries State to Wayne and East 6th to Bayfront
- Biggest success – home ownership and housing construction for low to moderate income
- Plans: 3rd and Parade new commercial development/corner store and beautification/welcome sign/flowers – aimed at creating an urban walk able neighborhood; "new urbanism"
- Have seen a lot of reinvestment in neighborhood as a result of city's investment into Parade Street
- Transit service in neighborhood – good; no complaints heard from residents
- Biggest problem on Bayfront Parkway only during AM and PM peak
- A better alternate route to the Bayfront Parkway could eliminate some of this congestion – need to maximize 12th Street as a route and coordinate traffic signals better – people don't think 12th Street as quick as Bayfront Parkway to get across Erie so its use is minimal
- Urban plan completed for this neighborhood – can be obtained from BEST
- New convention center/hotel wonderful for Erie and encouraging reinvestment in the community
- Public education needed to explain the true purpose of Bayfront Parkway – not a freeway to quickly move traffic through Erie but instead to bring people into the heart of Erie
- New development in lakefront might lead to the need for some circular routes in that area to service the lakefront and its attractions
- Cross marketing needed between Erie's key points of interest – Upper Peach Street, Presque Isle, and Erie's downtown district/lakefront
- Consider making a dedicated right turn lane to Holland Street from the Bayfront Parkway – pavement already present, maybe just re-stripe the area
- Enhanced taxi service in Erie sufficient to take people between airport and other locations – not that large of a town where mass transit dedicated routes needed
- Problem with GAF on lakefront but need to co-exist because they are a major employer in Erie
- Better landscaping along the bluff overlooking the Bayfront Parkway is a request of BEST so it does not just collect trash during the winter months, improvements would add to the overall environment/aesthetics of the Bayfront

Stakeholder No. 3

Monday, April 3, 2006 – 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Jacob Rouch

Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Hill Group Study completed that looked at consolidating services/cost saving efforts between the various authorities in Erie
- Port Authority does not have traditional port goods movement functions instead it is a real estate development agency and real estate land holder – might be opportunity to change perspective of what their role is and their functions as a result of potential leadership change in several years
- Good that ship building/ship repair back on the lake front also more goods movement would be helpful – likes the idea of having a working port but likely will not dominate the landscape so a mix between port and tourist destination ideal
- Is there a market for moving cargo through the airport? If so, need a legitimate cargo facility/runway extension to handle what the market will bear – not likely to effect need to have a connection between the Bayfront and airport
- If GAF moves from lakefront, an analysis of how much rail access is needed would be critical to complete
- Service issues within transit system connecting people to jobs in the suburban areas and available work force in the city
- Mass transit not a day to day relevance in Erie but if they can make transit reliable, quality system downtown professionals will start connecting to that and it will orient more and more people to the system including tourists
- 12th Street needs to become a better alternate route/viable corridor to the Bayfront Parkway – make it more attractive and also connect the traffic signals better to encourage higher use
- Intermodal Center utility not being achieved as it exists today – location is not optimal to connect different modes
- Cruise boat terminal not currently viable because high speed ferry service does not currently exist
- Above utilities could become utilized amenities if meaningful thought/strategy given to how to connect them together
- Unified community effort essential for moving projects forward successfully and avoiding fatal flaws; coordination at the highest level critical and currently is not happening
- To correct lack of coordination force integration of projects and unified agenda; no financial support unless that coordination/communication demonstrated

- Suggest looking at boards and their skill sets and how that relates to the agenda they are trying to achieve – start looking more for appropriate and representative skill sets (i.e. architect, lawyer, accountant, human resources, etc.) to populate boards

Stakeholder No. 4

Monday, April 3, 2006 – 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

John A. “Casey” Wells
Erie County Convention Center Authority

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- 12th Street along with 26th and 10th Streets need improvements (i.e. better signal timing, aesthetic improvements) which discourages local and through traffic from using these routes – making the improvements will likely lead to more use of these routes
- New convention center is under construction and expected to be completed Summer 2007 – authority anticipates about a five (5) year start up period to get the new convention center competing with others in their market
- Authority is considering that it may need on site traffic control for their bigger events when large numbers are arriving and departing at the same times
- Authority will be coordinating with EMTA about transit service but it must be dependable and easy to use to encourage wide spread use
- Targets for the new convention center will be the following: social, military, education, religious, fraternal, and social groups; targets will also be the ‘drive to convention center’ markets
- Currently, Bayfront Parkway is great access to Erie and the lake, much better than 12th Street
- Does not see traffic as a major issue in Erie, instead considers it exciting as it makes Erie a real city
- Connectivity with airport should not be an issue, likely will coordinate shuttle service for patrons that need it, also taxis will be notified when an event calls for their services

Stakeholder No. 5

Monday, April 3, 2006 – 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Dennis Solensky
Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- EMTA has two (2) of five (5) 35-foot low floor trolleys (1st of their kind in this country) in their possession – remaining three (3) should be arriving shortly – these trolleys are much more comfortable and accessible than traditional trolleys – unique design and very cool
- Will be running these in line/daily service in downtown area; developed route structure for them to start in October 2006
- Also restructuring entire route service to be completed in October 2006
- Routes growing over the last three (3) years but a lot of transfers needed to get long distances within the county so need to take a comprehensive look at the routes was needed
- Are serving all of the venues within the county but the timing of the routes, numbers and frequencies have needed considerable changing (i.e. provide service when baseball games
- New trolley routes key for the Bayfront – will be unveiled using a marketing campaign so this information needs to be confidential to the public until plan unveiled
- New trolleys will run frequently – would run more frequently if a new traffic signal installed at the park-n-ride lot on the Bayfront (this is a huge problem because buses can not currently make a left turn onto the Bayfront)
- Have offered to purchase equipment to install an accentuated light (used from the buses) only when the buses need to turn onto the Bayfront
- If people are going to ride the trolleys frequency is the biggest issue so service every 15 minutes is not acceptable instead every 5 minutes makes it more convenient and easy to use
- Current Plan:
 - Five (5) red trolleys (now) – ‘see trolley, get on trolley’ – will run loops around downtown – route between State Street, Convention Center, park-n-ride
 - Additional three (3) green trolley routes (trolleys will be ordered later) – will run a spine route from downtown to Millcreek Mall with minimal transfers – will have to know the schedule to use these trolleys because there will be various green routes to chose from
- Bus service will remain the same throughout their service area with trolleys being additional service
- Part time EMTA employee will be hired to handle convention center, airport activities services based on their unique requests and schedules

Want to be a conduit to help people get around when special events happening in Erie (i.e. have asked convention center and airport to let EMTA know when people are coming so they can decide whether or not they need to send buses, call taxis, etc. – need to know

(Stakeholder No. 5 continued)

- expected volume of people traffic to help accommodate – feel responsible to manage the land transportation)
- Confidential – EMTA working to purchase Gunnite site on 12th Street/Cherry – site would house regional traffic control center facility – consolidate their LIFT and EMTA facilities (currently they are too small because of recent growth; also need to consolidate these hubs to decrease costs and be more effective and efficient) into central office and house traffic control in that building (open to community to use)
- Goal for EMTA is installing message board system for trolleys, all service – automated vehicle location system will be used to develop message board system – will show how long until next trolley, bus, etc. arriving (i.e. 3 minutes)
- 1st phase of message board installation – Edinboro University's new service and downtown service
- EMTA interested in Glenwood Park project but the need to prioritize/strategize projects has moved that as a top project – will likely be picked back up at a later time but on a smaller scale than previously scoped
- Center of service area is 10th and State Streets so consolidated traffic control center for their LIFT and EMTA services should be the closest to this location as possible – most cost efficient option – other hub locations can and will be considered in the future as applicable
- Interconnectivity between Erie's authorities – enhancing communications between them – tremendous opportunities for working more closely together but currently not facilitating this interaction – there is a lack of communication between all of the authorities so would consider having some facilitated forums/discussions to encourage this enhanced interaction
- Two (2) additional opportunities/goals for ridership growth – 1) student transportation with local universities/no agreements currently in place and 2) tourism; will not ignore other areas of business but want to focus on universities and tourism for increasing ridership – at the center of this is the trolleys, message boards, real time technology

Stakeholder No. 6

Monday, April 3, 2006 – 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Israel Gray

City of Erie, Department of Public Works

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Expects pedestrian traffic to increase as planned development within Erie continues – one of his biggest concerns as he already hears significant complaints from residents is safety trying to cross Bayfront Parkway – currently not very easy to do
- Pedestrian push buttons currently exist at some locations but more education necessary to share crossing tips
- Another Bayfront Parkway problem – traffic signals at State and Holland Streets not coordinated – can be coordinated but anytime that happens State and Holland Streets traffic back ups several blocks (PM peaks)
- Bayfront Parkway owned by PennDOT but Erie is responsible for maintaining signals – currently on closed loop system so they could be coordinated but because of traffic volumes currently are not coordinated
- Current 12th Street signaling project (between State and Wessler Streets) should help alleviate some traffic on Bayfront but Bayfront is more aesthetically pleasing so it gets more use
- Also looking at changing 8th Street to two-way traffic so travelers can use this route to get all the way into downtown – must look at parking to see if they can accommodate this altered traffic flow – signals on 8th Street already pre-timed so it should not be too difficult to do but must go through official approval process
- Signaling along 12th Street can be improved but must keep in mind that there are some sight distance issues along that corridor because of the size of several of its buildings that make removing some signals unsafe
- Some changes have been made to East 12th Street (similar to what might happen on West 12th Street) resulting in noticeable traffic condition improvements as a result
- Would make sense to have a county wide traffic managing center but currently City of Erie has no plans for a center of this type although considers this a good idea but would like to offer input into its development
- Traffic signals are maintained by the city electricians within the Fire Department (Three (3) total) – use all LEDS so bulb replacement not a large issue
- Erie has a pre-emption system (very old) but used by police, fire, EMS – public safety all values the system tremendously – some work being done to upgrade their system (committee) but no recent activity towards that upgrade work
- Buses currently do not have pre-emption – if it were provided upgrades would be needed as the current system currently operated by driver and providing bus drivers this responsibility not ideal
- If park-n-ride lots were more conveniently located at remote locations it might be considered a more viable option for use – currently have to come all of the way downtown to use park-n-ride lot
- A traffic signal will be added at Sassafras Street at the Bayfront Parkway

Stakeholder No. 7

Tuesday, April 4, 2006 – 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Paul D. Vojtek
Erie Water Works

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Have been impacted by increased traffic so have tried to encourage different alternatives for paying utility bills rather than coming to facility (i.e. internet, credit card, etc.) – estimate; 10% walkup customers (typically the elderly population) thus a little less than 100 visitors a day on average
- 40 employees – north side of Bayfront is where people can pay bills; the south side is maintenance facility
- Pedestrian signal just west of their entrance
- Have worked out a deal with GAF – they are adding an entrance west of their facility between their property and Erie Water Works – Water Works has looked at moving their entrance but does not currently have funding for the project so they will wait and see
- Not much pedestrian access into Bayfront
- Tours of 'Big Bertha' currently happen several times a month, may slightly increase with the new convention center
- Parking for all employees on site – no significant transit use by employees
- Poorly timed traffic signals along 12th Street discourage its use for travel – it will slow you down; also, the aesthetics of 12th Street corridor could be improved to encourage its use
- Their operations may expand in the future to comply with new Safe Drinking Water Act regulations but no increase in traffic is expected as a result – also, no truck traffic associated with their operations
- Port Authority security patrols Water Works property after 5:45 PM thus there is sometimes pedestrian conflicts with access to walkway near their property – post 9/11 have forced increased security of their property
- Possible future solution, is it still being considered – creating a back up, secondary access road to service all north Bayfront facilities – creating a traffic signaled/access point where all traffic could enter and exit Bayfront Parkway more safely and conveniently
- Water Works has another facility on 12th and Myrtle – would not be suited for collecting payments

Stakeholder No. 8

Tuesday, April 4, 2006 – 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Ed Kissel

Citizen Advocate

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Bayfront Parkway isolated residents from the water because it eliminated safe access points
- Bayfront Promenade should be completed in several weeks (started almost 20 years ago) last area to be completed Frontier Park
- Current areas for safe crossing include 8th Street, State Street, Holland Street
- Aerial crossover/at grade crossing at Liberty Street – in deed to provide this if property ever developed
- Coordination of lights along Bayfront Parkway makes it almost impossible to exit Water Works property
- Recommended improvements – signage at key locations to get people around easier – also coordinate 12th Street traffic signals to move vehicles more efficiently through the corridor
- Consider a beautification effort for the 12th Street corridor and key intersections
- Park-n-ride not currently utilized – this could change when parking becomes a premium with increased tourism populations visiting Erie
- Cruise boat terminal opening would likely increase the need for transit use because people would need to get around once arriving in Erie
- Consider one-way traffic on Bayfront Parkway during major events – ‘reversible lanes’ with proper signage – also consider re-striping certain lanes around Bayfront to make travel more efficient
- Speeding is an issue along the Bayfront Parkway
- The need exists to get all authorities together for a facilitated discussion – more interaction is critical for successfully advancing projects

Stakeholder No. 9

Tuesday, April 4, 2006 – 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Donald Inderlied
Hamot Medical Center

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Third largest employer in Erie County – 3000 people; just under 400 beds in hospital; Hamot will celebrate its 125th anniversary this year
- Hamot is the regional medical and trauma center serving 13-county area (doing everything but transplantation) – 60% of business comes from outside Erie County
- Bayfront Parkway is the highway to Hamot – has significantly opened both the eastern and western parts of market area
- Parking is a major problem for Hamot – not enough spaces; with hospital expansion not enough parking to accommodate their needs
- Some employees park at a remote park-n-ride lot and then use a shuttle (15 passenger van) to get to hospital – never used that much because it is so difficult to enter and exit Bayfront Parkway
- Concerned about what increased traffic will do for its visitors, staff, emergency vehicles, etc.
- Typically park 5000 cars yearly
- Hamot rents space from Erie Parking Authority – also uses various surface lots around their campus
- If more housing options were available in the downtown area this could potentially eliminate the need for some parking for its professional staff

Stakeholder No. 10

Tuesday, April 4, 2006 – 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Ned Smith
Erie Shipbuilding L.L.C.

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Started October 2005
- Build, convert, dry dock, and repair Great Lakes vessels (tugs and barges); also, steel fabrication and assembly (not currently doing this business)
- Second 1000 feet dry dock in Great Lakes next to Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin
- Working with CSX and PennDOT about bringing some rail into their property – probably two trains every couple of days
- In October 2006 – big project anticipated (building an 840 feet tug barge to deliver limestone – 16 month project); as a result employees will likely increase from around 65 to 200
- With new project – there is room to park but it will add new traffic to Bayfront Parkway during shift changes – will start with one shift but will likely turn to two shifts with new building)
- Truck traffic will also increase as a result of the large amounts of steel (8,000 tons) that will be needed for the new tug barge building project – a lot easier to receive their supplies with rail access so they will continue to work with CSX and PennDOT to make that happen
- No significant interaction with airport but could change slightly with the development of their new robotics business (Lincoln Electric, Cleveland) for their steel fabrication – barge module development very cost effective
- Employees could increase (reaching peak of 300) because more workers on fabricating side are needed to keep up with the robotics
- Difficult locations along the Bayfront Parkway – no left turning lanes at Holland and State; also difficult to enter Bayfront Parkway from bayfront properties

Stakeholder No.1

Monday, May 1, 2006 – 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

**Ray Schreckengost
Erie Western Pennsylvania Port Authority**

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Supportive of intermodal integrator plan
- Was involved in study to combine Airport Authority, Port Authority and Transit Authority—Airport Authority bowed out
- Port Authority has a good working relationship with EMTA and the Convention Authority
- Expect increased traffic along bayfront in next five years
- Anticipate year-round truck ferry service within next two years- drop trailer operation from Erie to Ontario
- 100-120 trailers daily in and out of Erie
- Currently carry 12-15 trailer loads daily of shingles from GAF to Canada
- Current bill in Department of Congress to change cargo inspection law
- Passenger summer ferry service will begin June 15, 2007 (to run Jun 15 through September 15 annually)—two runs daily (one in morning and one in afternoon), 49 passengers each
- Larger ferry service desired—42 cars and 250 passengers—depends on cooperation from Canadian ports
- Applying for casino license on Dover waterfront and considering tour bus service for mall traffic from Dover
- Anticipate increased traffic for amphitheater events—will hold 16 amphitheater events this year, generating 4,000-5,000 people each—will get bigger every year—large buses are used for concerts
- Talking to talk to Hamot about using their lots for some amphitheater events
- Adding a new park-n-ride lot on property leased from PennDOT at 12th and Lincoln
- No light to get in and out of existing park-n-ride lot
- Erie Parking Authority is narrow-minded—could be a proactive force, but will not—need to talk to Mayor and City Council
- Envisions intermodal integrator as a high-level executive from the transit industry who is experienced with local government agencies, will begin to put together a planning process and seek funding—need a good long-range intermodal plan (need 5-15 year larger picture)—one-person staff
- Intermodal integrator needs to use political processes to make agencies proactive
- 12th Street could work well with the right signage and coordination of traffic lights
- Currently working with Pepsi on a train shuttle to run on bike paths from east side of campground to Liberty Park in summer—32 passenger cars
- Additional ferry stop on camp grounds
- Ferry was profitable this year
- Houseboats to go in between Chestnut Street (boat rental location) and Cherry Street (marina)

(Stakeholder No. 1 continued)

- Expanding Perry's Landing Marina—50 new boat slips
- Need active light at Liberty Park
- Must work with the Airport Authority for air charter service for cruises out of Erie—part of long-range plan
- Currently have five summer cruise lines out of Erie
- Would like to see cruises from Erie to Montreal and Quebec City
- Limited by regulations concerning foreign ships and rules for stopping at US and foreign ports
- Transit boating facility on State Street booked every weekend
- Greyhound doing a lot of business—has created a higher demand for cab service
- Intermodal Transit Center almost completely rented—mostly economic development—may not work to have higher-end business with Greyhound bus station
- Local businesses unable to hold large meetings because of lack of meeting space—convention center needed
- All EMTA buses run through Transit Center
- Will not see a lot of heavy industry coming back Erie—local focus in travel, tourism and healthcare
- Need to give professionals attractive amenities in Erie—quality of life

Stakeholder No. 2

Monday, May 1, 2006 – 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Perry Wood

Technology Council of Northwest Pennsylvania

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- The Technology Council is a trade organization that represents tech-based businesses, runs the Governor's Keystone Innovation Zone program (targets 12th Street corridor), fosters entrepreneurial development and unites universities to provide research and development for the private sector
- Focus on job creation
- Sample start-ups: "Renewergy" (extracting oil energy from algae), "Spinworks" (create a ceramic furnace ring to increased energy efficiency) and "Emersamap" (anti-terrorism mapping)
- Look at quality of life and vibrancy in the downtown area—want to see 12th Street revitalized
- Weaknesses of transportation system: inability to move around the central business district and lack of linkages between the central business district and the bayfront—need to work with and support EMTA to solve
- Tie redevelopment effort to parking strategies—need ramps and stop building surface lots in the central business district to maintain density
- Park-n-ride lots are a fantastic idea
- Issues with regularity and reliability of public transit service—need digital countdown systems
- People may not know that a commuter system is needed—education component necessary
- Favor 12th Street boulevard concept—bike lane in either direction, narrow driving lanes (reduce to four lanes and use trees and shrubs) to slow down traffic and allow for signalization—bike lanes can also be used as snow lanes in the winter
- Need signage to coerce motorists to use 12th Street—Intelligent Transportation System at I-79 to let motorists know if they should take 12th or the Bayfront Parkway
- East side access to the highway is fantastic
- Signage at beginning of 12th Street to inform motorists at what speed they can travel to make all lights along 12th Street
- Roundabouts favor pedestrian flow—would like to see one in front of bayfront convention center
- Reach out to progressive and "new urbanist" thinkers—public relations
- Hometown Streets program is a great idea
- MPO's are functioning well

Stakeholder No. 3

Monday, May 1, 2006 – 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

John Britton
Bay Harbor Marina

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Represents Marina Holdings, Ltd.—the holding company for Bay Harbor Marina
- Two marinas off of the Bayfront Parkway
- Owns first-class marinas Bay Harbor East and West
- Owns 3.25 acres on Liberty Street—currently leased by Port Authority
- Little truck traffic/deliveries
- Growth=more traffic
- Bayfront Parkway most congested early morning to about 8:15am and after 4:00pm-4:15pm—marina members complain about access—locals know to avoid
- Parkway very active on weekends, but traffic is not as bad
- Would like to see synchronization on 12th Street
- Peach Street is a viable shortcut if you “hit the lights right”
- Port Authority said it would conduct a study looking at congestion at intersections and a possible trip light to alleviate congestion in morning and afternoons (about three years ago)
- Bayfront feasibility study conducted six years ago in conjunction with American Express
- Considering future development in bayfront—retail, boat brokerage, outlets, indoor aquarium(s)
- Build a new restaurant/entertainment facility to complement Junior’s on the Bay, along with chain restaurant
- Trying to create “mini-town” around the marina—customers currently relax, stay on boat, or look for recreation activities
- Does not currently offer boat sales, but works directly with RCR Boat Sales—looking at parts sales and service as marina amenities
- Marina would be a destination point for EMTA trolley buses
- Would like to see a year-round market—transients are a minor market
- Convention center and hotels will create a traffic impact—safety is an issue
- Frontage road by Bay Harbor East—old Cherry Street
- Signal at park-n-ride location—close proximity to marinas and Liberty Street pier
- Identification of proper and sensible signal locations needed
- Taxi service generally not in demand
- Good communication with City Hall and Port Authority—both are willing to sit down and listen

- Need solid long-range plan
- How can locating the convention center on the bayfront be justified given the current traffic congestion?

Stakeholder No. 4

Monday, May 1, 2006 – 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Kim Green

City of Erie, Department of Economic and Community Development

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Assumed new roles as Director in January, 2006
- Impressed with and supportive of the MPO's plans for 12th Street and the Bayfront Parkway
- EMTA has indicated a need for a larger bus garage close to 10th and State Streets—may be hard to find a larger site
- Mayor working closely with state on "Impact Erie" (has not been publicly announced)—centering around 14th and States Streets down to Perry Square and to Sassafras to Holland Streets—first phase 12th Street to 14th Street along State Street—money in capital budget to include market rate housing, condominiums, office space, park improvements, streetscaping—work with outside developers
- Other residential housing development and streetscaping plans won't have much effect on traffic
- Would like to see 12th Street corridor from Sassafras to French narrowed and more walkable
- 12th Street currently provides no indication that motorists are approaching downtown Erie and provides a horrible first impression of downtown
- Possibly position 12th Street as a historic industrial corridor with signage
- Safety concerns at 12th and State Streets
- Like boulevard concept
- Resources should be concentrated on the downtown Erie—working outward from the center
- Looking at improving 8th Street east and west
- Would like to see a traffic circle at State Street by Hamot—effective traffic control
- Possible Parking Authority garage at 4th and Peach Streets
- Surface lot at 13th and State Streets is underutilized
- Erie residents seem to prefer on-street parking
- Should talk to Erie mayor, Erie Economic Development Corporation and Erie Parking Authority representative—can help arrange
- EMTA provides good service between downtown and the bayfront
- Would like to see a park-n-ride lot in Waterford, Edinboro, McCain, and Water Creek for the commute to downtown Erie—energy conservation
- Erie Management Group bringing in five new businesses near old IP site—unsure of future transportation needs
- Residents have the conception that the Bayfront Parkway should be a faster expressway
- City of Erie is struggling with a record budget deficit and limited Community Development Block Grant funding
- Location of the intermodal transit center not conducive to pedestrian traffic

Stakeholder No. 5

Monday, May 1, 2006 – 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Emily Beck

Erie Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- The Convention and Visitors Bureau promotes tourism and conventions among people outside Erie—new money to Erie—promotes economic development
- Markets Erie County, Pennsylvania and works with the entire region—lake regions
- Work with motor coach planners on group tours, meeting planners for conventions, and directly with consumers
- Promote the Bayfront Parkway as a route to downtown Erie
- Main attractions are the Tom Ridge Environmental Center, convention center, gaming attractions and Splash Lagoon
- Avalon Hotel markets itself as being in the vicinity of over 50 bars and restaurants
- Motor coaches often use Exit 24 and bypass downtown—need signage on interstate
- Corridor Management Plan addresses gateways and greenways
- Route 5 identified as national scenic byway, Ohio by-way designation and Seaway Trail in New York—811 miles of contiguous national scenic byway
- Bayfront Parkway needs to connect with 8th Street and Peninsula Drive
- Bayfront Parkway pedestrian crossing unsafe—motorists not accustomed to red lights on Bayfront Parkway
- Bayfront promenade and east pier locations need better markings
- Need easy convention center access (in and out) for visitors and deliveries
- Streets surrounding convention center need egresses for motor coaches to pull over
- Conventions usually have park-n-ride systems in place
- Need connection between Peach Street and Exit 24
- Snow is an issue, but PennDOT does a good job with snow removal
- 14th and State Street entertainment district—brewery opening at Peach and 14th—also many dining opportunities in the area of 2nd and 6th Streets
- Peach Street works well if you can catch the lights—alternates are 12th Street, French Street and State Street
- Bayfront Parkway is convenient because there are few stops—make 12th Street like this
- EMTA should consider a free trial week to increase ridership and add bicycle racks to the front of buses
- Buses to Presque Isle failed in the past—may be worth trying again
- Water taxi to Presque Isle could be used for more than sight seeing—needs more advertising
- Greyhound recently moved in to intermodal transit center
- Need to improve train travel time

(Stakeholder No. 5 continued)

- Airport Authority is on the board of the Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Erie has one of the largest growing airports in the United States—no longer have to connect in Pittsburgh for air travel
- Two cruise lines coming to Erie in the summer of 2006
- Parking will have to be addressed—convention center, downtown and bayfront
- Parking ramp being proposed near 4th and State Streets
- Park-n-ride lots desirable
- Extend train tracks to park-n-ride for trolley service
- There has been talk of community going south—route around Peach Street
- Be careful of sprawl
- Lack of congestion is a selling point for Erie—five minute delay=congestion
- What's being done at 38th and Glenwood Park Avenue (near the zoo) is fabulous
- Concern for exiting the convention center onto the Bayfront Parkway—congestion and safety

Stakeholder No. 6

Tuesday, May 2, 2006 – 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

**John Elliott
Erie Redevelopment Authority**

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Background in civil engineering—spent nine years in consulting—involved in previous transportation studies in Erie
- On the board of the Erie MPO
- Neighborhood revitalization component—\$3.8 million in housing in 2005
- Commercial revitalization—implementing Downtown Strategic plan—\$12 million mixed use commercial development
- Transportation enhancement projects—\$1.7 million Parade Street project
- MLK/Bayfront NATO area houses mainly students and residents
- Bluff area residents not progressive, disjointed neighborhood—not open to new ideas
- Connection from Bluff to bayfront will require enormous political will
- Construction of new apartments close to downtown—low income apartments and market rate housing
- Hamot owns a number of ground parking lots in town—anticipates pressure for development of structured parking due to shortage of office space and class A home ownership downtown—high-value land being used for parking
- Erie ordinance does not allow hospitals to build ramps—only the Parking Authority
- Neighborhoods need a better connection to downtown
- East side neighborhood is a success story of grass roots resident-driven development—Erie Insurance has committed \$100,000
- Healthier part of downtown is north of 6th Street—major anchors include Erie Insurance, Gannon University, government institutions, park and financial institutions
- Parking Authority is an important but weak player due to poor finances and politics—in an operating mode, not a development mode
- City of Erie almost in Act 47 status—no money for parking ramps
- Redevelopment Authority working on private development of a 300 space ramp
- Add parking along Peach, French and Sassafra Streets—currently too wide
- Evaluate potential of metered street parking before constructing ramps
- Park-n-ride lot should be located at 12th and I-79
- No congestion in Erie—traffic is a matter of perception
- Land too inexpensive in Erie—no real incentive to structure parking and get people downtown
- Land use issues—Planning and Zoning undisciplined
- Drop Liberty Street and connect to the Bayfront Parkway, changing the way Liberty Street works

(Stakeholder No. 6 continued)

- Three 12th Street studies have already been conducted—unwarranted signals exists, signals are not in synch and the corridor is unattractive
- Previous studies have resulted in no follow-through—ensure the MPO understands the studies so they can look at funding opportunities—retreat?
- Must invest in 12th Street if you want to see people use it—until then, people will use the Bayfront Parkway
- Citizens need to be educated and see what happens in other places
- Many agencies/authorities conduct independent planning efforts—worth having a regular meeting to coordinate municipal and authority planning efforts with comprehensive representation

Stakeholder No. 7

Tuesday, May 2, 2006 – 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Ken Joint
GAF Materials Corporation

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- GAF manufactures roofing material for resident and commercial use—up to 700 pallets daily (65-70 truckloads of finished material)
- About 183 employees—majority day shift—salaried and hourly
- GAF utilizes some off-site storage
- Outbound rail shipments—varies by season—approx. 27 shipments daily when busy
- Receives shipments of raw materials (granules) inbound by rail daily
- 2-5 customer pick-ups daily
- Existing transportation system usually works well
- Often takes a long time to make a left turn—majority of GAF traffic makes a left turn to get to warehouse on other end of Bayfront Parkway
- Truck traffic can get backed up during heavy periods and due to Hamot and Gannon traffic
- Currently one way in and one way out of facility
- GAF plans for new entrance on west side of building—proposed loop road
- No plans to relocate in the foreseeable future—has invested millions in building and plans for future investment
- No current plans for boat transport
- GAF Warehouse in Canada—interested in ferry cargo container service to Canada
- Current container service by rail to California
- Have been working with other developers—good relationships
- Signal at Sassafras would be helpful
- Losing parking on Sassafras and storage space because of convention center construction—employees would probably not use a park-n-ride lot
- Would like to work with the convention center on GAF employee parking
- Concern for rail service interruption because of development—interruption would be very problematic for GAF
- Do not currently foresee any big transportation issues

Stakeholder No. 8

Tuesday, April 4, 2006 – 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Laura Eaton

Erie Downtown Improvement District

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- President of Downtown Improvement District (DID)—Downtown business owner for 24 years (owns floral shop with café)
- DID is 1 ½ years old—596 property owners—self-taxed—five year term
- Seeking a new Executive Director
- Pushed for removal of Transitway Mall—worked with Parking Authority for funding to rip out Transitway Mall and construct metered parking
- DID focuses on street maintenance/cleaning, security, promotion and development funding
- Three parts of revitalization: 1) working to strengthen current businesses, 2) rehab second and third floors of vacant buildings for middle and upper income resident apartment rentals and 3) bring new businesses—will create demand for transit
- DID will sponsor 22 special events—black tie parties, classic car nights, motorcycle parties
- 12th Street unsafe for pedestrians—should be five lanes—needs beautification (boulevards)
- Some buildings on 12th are occupied
- Can not get onto the Bayfront Parkway in the morning—congested all day
- Need light at Cranberry Street
- Excited about bike path and round-about at State Street
- Convention center will increase bayfront traffic
- Need to attract convention center traffic to downtown business district through use of 12th Street, round trip EMTA trolley bus service—key to survival of downtown
- Residents need education about transit system
- Concern for reliability of taxi service
- Need more parking in town based on business owner concerns—ramps at 5th and State and 11th and Peach
- Parking Authority in a poor financial situation
- Not fan of ramps, but can be attractive if built correctly
- People may be interested in saving money by using a park-n-ride lot
- Parking ticket fines are high compared to what people are paid in Erie
- Erie is tough to sell on new ideas
- Have not heard complaints about EMTA—but see many empty EMTA buses
- Very few people know the city owns the airport
- Transportation from the airport to town or the convention center will be a problem
- Erie residents reluctant to walk
- Who owns the taxi company and where are they located?

- Receiving calls from other states about people interested in purchasing condos in downtown Erie—none available

Stakeholder No. 9

Tuesday, May 2, 2006 – 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Jake Welsh

Erie County Department of Planning

Tom Hoffman

Erie Metropolitan Planning Organization

The following represents the various discussion key points recorded during the interview:

- Parking situation in Erie is arguable—depends on expectations—congestion and parking not a problem
- Anticipate long range plan in 2007
- Upon creation of the Parking Authority, city of Erie agreed to cover payments on the Parking Authority bond issue—agreement may still be in place
- City's credit rating is poor, but still has the authority to tax
- The MPO sponsored an effort to coordinate the authorities a few years ago
- MPO has 21 voting members—MPO structured for municipalities to come together to advocate for the needs of their respective service areas, but also think regionally—mix of political representation
- The County Executive wants constituents to feel they are represented by county government
- Rail inefficiencies—not enough utilization of rail service to port
- Rails have intermodal stations at other cities bordering Erie and are not interested in investing in one in Erie
- Hard for Erie to break into existing markets
- Need intersection improvements at the airport
- 12th Street improvements have no value to the commercial transportation network on the bayfront
- Orth-Rodgers previously studied transportation needs in Erie
- The Bluff is the biggest barrier separating downtown from the bayfront
- Liberty, Parade and State Streets were supposed to have been the primary connectors to the bayfront
- “Dead space” on State Street approaching the bayfront
- Erie residents have a feeling of insecurities that keeps them from using transit—want to be near their cars
- Think about moving beyond the bayfront area for consideration of intermodalism
- Original intention of Bayfront Parkway was for large trucks not to have to travel through the city
- People have to live with a certain amount of traffic/congestion

Kelly Fredericks
Erie Airport Authority

July 13, 2006, 10:00 AM at Airport Authority Office

Attendees:

- **Kelly Fredericks, Erie Airport Authority**
- **Erin Wiley, PennDOT District 1-0**
- **Max Heckman, Baker**
- **Tracey Cullen, Baker**
- **Jack Baker, DMJM+Harris**

Summary by Max Heckman

The following represents the various discussion key points during the interview:

- Erie Airport is the fastest growing in Pennsylvania, but has room for growth and expects to grow. Enplanements are currently 190,000 per year, forecast to grow to 275,000. Cargo was 701 tons last year, but could grow to 25,000 due to planned International Trade Center and runway extension project.
- Runway extension project cost is \$56 million, road system improvements around airport (improvements to Asbury Road, 12th, other intersections) are \$50 million, so the airport will generate \$100 million in investments over the next several years.
- There are three major development sites around the airport. The International Trade Center would start on a site at Asbury & 12th, but could later expand to the Finestra site on south side of property. That site could also include a rail/container intermodal center by reconnecting the rail spur. Urban Engineers has done some site analysis.
- Access to the airport is pretty good – he would rate it a “B” for air passengers. The poor aesthetics of W. 12th Street is the biggest negative factor. Good flow from 12th to Bayfront to East Side is critical to maintain. He personally does not use 12th, due to the signals not seeming to be interconnected. He recognizes that it is not really congested. Bus service is frequent and reliable, there is also cab service and hotel vans service. Kelly feels that wayfinding signing is lacking. Erin noted that a program is underway, current focus in the City but it will move out. Most airport employees drive to work, accessibility is good. There had been talk of a light rail line in the past, but Kelly recognizes that this is highly unlikely.
- In terms of Cargo, Air Cargo would not likely go from boat to plane. Several trucking companies have formed a venture called Erie Aviation Logistics, LLC, to capitalize on 12th Street warehouses.
- He feels that the GAF site is a significant interference to Bayfront development, but recognizes the high cost of relocating it.
- A report referred to as the “Bosworth Report” completed in 2001 noted that the region is under-served by multimodal logistical capability. (A copy was later provided to Baker).
- Kelly supports the idea of working closely with other authorities and finding ways to consolidate activities. He recognizes there is not enough dialog among the agencies and

(Erie Airport Authority Interview – continued)

their boards. He feels the relationships are good, but everyone is busy and they have not been motivated to interact more. The previous study that looked at consolidation came at a bad time – if followed 9/11.

There was not active opposition to it, it just lost momentum. This type of idea needs to be championed to be successful - this did not happen previously.

- Grant writing and marketing are areas that are done by many different agencies, could possibly be streamlined.
- A joint transportation authority could be looked at, and he feels the Airport Authority and/or any other transportation authority needs to be regional.

**Ray Massing
Erie Parking Authority**

June 28, 2006, 9:00 AM at Parking Authority Office

Attendees:

- **Ray Massing, Erie Parking Authority**
- **Mariah Hanson, PennDOT District 1-0**
- **Erin Wiley, PennDOT District 1-0**
- **Max Heckman, Baker**
- **Jack Baker, DMJM+Harris**

Summary by Max Heckman

The following represents the various discussion key points during the interview:

- The Authority has 9 garages, 8 metered surface lots (650 spaces), 2 non-metered monthly lease surface lots, and 1,350 on-street meters. There are currently approximately 3,750 monthly lease-holders.
- Most of the lots are in the CBD.
- The authority used to have the financial ability to do projects, primarily through small increases in monthly lease rates. Previous mayor then instituted a "Municipal Services Agreement" (MSA) fee, \$500,000 per year out of a \$5 million budget. City also tried to implement a 15% parking tax, which the authority never collected. However, they have substantially raised rates (\$0.75 to \$1.40/hour at meters, \$30 to \$58/month for leases) to pay the MSA. Hamot pays \$70 for non-reserved spots monthly and \$76 for reserved spots. Tenants are unhappy about the increases, therefore the ability to raise rates any further for projects is very limited.
- Also, the City used to routinely co-sign bond issues. They started asking for a fee for that, but eventually it was incorporated into the MSA.
- Parking Authority does enforcement, but the fines go to the City.
- The Parking Authority has 5 board members, all appointed by the Mayor.
- The Authority has a better relationship with the new administration.
- Vacancy rates – hospitals have waiting lists, downtown garages generally close to 90% occupied except 10th/State, which is 65-75%. Downtown had waiting lists prior to rate increases. Surface lots vary widely, but are full at times.
- Hamot has two garages, older 589 space, new 553 space on east side of French. Now doing a feasibility study for another garage due to expansion plans. Currently about 75 on waiting list at Hamot.
- St. Vincents, 2 side by side garages with 1,020 spaces. 200-300 on waiting list. Office Building with 800 space garage under construction by private developer. Hospital wants Authority to buy the garage and operate it after completion.
- Convention Center - originally proposed 800 space garage, now 350 spaces. Port Authority declined to do it after feasibility study questioned convention activity projections. They may be asked to take it over at some point.
- A feasibility study is being done for a garage at 5th/Peach.

(Parking Authority continued)

- The Authority has 33 full-time employees, 15 part-time, all non-union. Mostly cashiers and maintenance. Administration staff is only 3 people, including Ray.
- Not much interaction with other Authorities, mostly Convention Authority and Redevelopment. Authority.
- Remote lots with shuttles? Ray feels people in Erie would not use unless the shuttle service is perfect. He cited the Park and Ride on Bayfront Parkway, which gets limited use. Gannon will be doing shuttling this fall until mid-December while 560 space garage is down for rehabilitation – this could be, in effect, a test case for park and rides with shuttles.
- Ray doesn't agree with convention center location, feels more commercial/retail is needed on the waterfront. He agrees with idea of improving 12th Street for east-west traffic, doesn't have other ideas for improving transportation.

Joseph Sinnott, Esq.
Mayor of Erie

August 7, 2006, 11:00 AM at Erie City Hall

Attendees:

- **Joseph Sinnott, Mayor of Erie**
- **Kim Green, Erie Department of Economic & Community Development**
- **Erin Wiley, PennDOT District 1-0**
- **Max Heckman, Baker**
- **Jack Baker, DMJM+Harris**

Summary by Max Heckman

The following represents the various discussion key points during the interview:

- The mayor believes the Bayfront Parkway and East Side Highway have been the biggest facilitators of development in the region in recent years. However, the Bayfront Parkway was not intended to be an east-west through connector, but to serve as access to the Bayfront. The biggest issue he hears from his constituents is pedestrian access, especially along the lower west side.
- The mayor partially supports the Glatting-Jackson recommendation for narrowing 12th Street. He likes the idea close to downtown, where they want to make the area more walkable. Further out, it is critical that 12th Street must work effectively for trucks, so any possible narrowing must consider truck movements. The City doesn't see much funding being available for 12th Street streetscape improvements, so they suggest the project be staged starting downtown and working its way out based on funding availability. He supports the idea of signing and/or use of ITS information systems to encourage east-west traffic to use 12th Street.
- The mayor feels the transit system works well with no glaring deficiencies. It does not seem to be an issue that comes up with citizens.
- The mayor's perception is that most of the authorities in the region operate pretty effectively, but he is supportive of the idea of greater interaction and/or sharing of functions.
- Kim Green asked whether the rail spur for Erie Shipbuilding is part of the study, and that it is critical. Erin Wiley noted that PennDOT is looking at it under a separate project.
- The mayor is concerned about the Convention Center and the ability of the transportation infrastructure to accommodate traffic and parking for it.

Douglas Hartmayer
Director of Public Affairs
Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority

October 31, 2006, 1 PM at NFTA Offices

Attendees:

- **Douglas Hartmayer, NFTA**
- **Max Heckman, Baker**
- **Jack Baker, McCormick Taylor**

Summary by Max Heckman

The following represents the various discussion key points during the interview:

- Max Heckman and Jack Baker explained the reason for the visit – to learn about NFTA, which based on our internet research, may be a possible model for consolidation of Erie's transportation related Authorities or some functions of those Authorities.
- Doug Hartmayer provided some background about NFTA. It was formed in 1967 by the State of New York. It covers two counties, Erie and Niagara. The Authority is responsible for the Transit System, including a 6.2 mile Light Rail Transit line, and the airports. Prior to the formation of the Authority, transit was provided by private bus companies and the airport was owned by the City of Buffalo. The Authority originally also included Port operations, but most port activity is gone and the port is now private. The authority does own property on the waterfront that the region wants to develop. A government appointed commission is looking at the property and may take it over.
- The Authority has an 11 member board. The governor recommends 9, the Erie County Executive and Erie County Board recommend one each. The Board members are approved by the State Senate. Current Board members include people such as attorneys, an engineer, a school superintendent and a representative from the Board of Education, a trucking business owner, and a representative from a private sector development fund.
- The Governor is Republican, as are the two County Executives, so the Board is heavily Republican right now. This could change with the upcoming election, but Board members serve staggered 5 year terms so the Board composition can only change slowly over time.
- The Authority has three divisions – Property, Surface Transportation and Aviation. The Board has five committees – one for each of the three divisions, plus one for Human Resources and one for Audit & Governance. The committees meet monthly. Resolutions start at committee level, then go to the full board. The Executive Director of the Authority is very proactive about keeping the Board members involved in Authority business.
- The Authority has 1500 employees and a total annual operating budget of approximately \$150 million and capital budget of \$78 million. Doug provided some handouts (attached) including the budget, an org. chart, information about the Board committees and information about the original formation of the Authority.
- The Management team, i.e., the top row of the org. chart, meets monthly for 2 to 3 hours and interacts continuously as needed. The org. chart shows that many functions, such as

Human Resources, Public Affairs, Grants, Procurement, and MIS, cover both the Aviation and Transit side of the organization. Many of the employees are unionized – 10 unions (biggest is ATU - transit operators and mechanics). They have one website that integrates transit and air, receiving approximately 100,000 hits per month.

- When asked if he could think of a good example of intermodalism within the Authority, he noted that they built a parking lot at the airport in 2001 due to growing passenger traffic. After 9/11, airport passenger traffic decreased rapidly and the spaces became unnecessary. They turned it into a free park and ride lot for an express bus service to downtown, which has been very successful. He doubted this would have happened if the airport and transit authorities had been separate.
- He indicated that the Authority cooperates well with other transportation agencies. They sit on the MPO Board (Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council) (GBNRTC) and actively participate in their meetings. They cooperate with NYSDOT on an as-needed basis, and he characterized that relationship as being good. They work similarly with the City of Buffalo – the two are currently working on a project to bring vehicular traffic back to the Transit Mall. The Authority also sits on the Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition (NITEC) Board and participates in their operations. NITEC includes NYSDOT, the Peace Bridge Authority, the Thruway Authority, and the DOT on the Canadian side of the border to coordinate ITS and other technology activities in the region.

