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**Environmental Justice
Task Force**
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Statement of Findings
Jersey City, Hudson County
Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project Petition
June 15, 2005

1. Introduction

On Friday, January 28, 2005 and February 24, 2005, the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) reviewed the November 14, 2004 Environmental Justice Petition (the EJ Petition) submitted by **Jersey City Environmental Commission on behalf of the following community groups:**

- The Morris Canal Resident Area Development Corporation, (Lafayette Community)
- Tenants of the Jersey City Housing Authority
- General Residents of Jersey City from various neighborhoods and faith-based groups.

The EJ Petition was submitted to the EJTF pursuant to Executive Order No. 96, and a total of 854 residents of Jersey City signed the petition (the Petitioners).

2. Background

The petition focused on the proposed plan of the New York City Economic Development Corporation and US Department of Transportation to build either a single tunnel or double tunnel from Brooklyn to Greenville Yards in Jersey City. The project, known as the Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project, will cost an estimated \$4 billion to \$7 billion depending on if it were one or two tunnels. Construction would begin around 2015 and would be completed by 2025. Most of the funding would come from the federal government, though no money has been allocated yet.

Staff from the NJDEP's Environmental Justice Program met with the Jersey City Petitioners on January 11, 2005 to review the issues raised in their EJ Petition.

3. Summary of the EJ Petition

The Petitioners have requested assistance from the EJTF agencies in reviewing and correcting the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project.

4. Findings of the EJTF

The EJTF has carefully evaluated available information pertaining to the petitioners' claims and finds that although the issues raised in the petition fall within the scope of Executive Order No. 96, the petitioners' request to have EJTF agencies review the DEIS was already addressed by the NJDOT and the NJDEP. Both agencies provided comments to the New York City Economic Development Corporation during the public comment period, which was closed on November 30, 2004. The New York City Economic Development Corporation is currently compiling, reviewing and evaluating all comments received, and a revised EIS will not be issued for several months until this effort is completed. The EJTF finds that at this time, the Petitioner's request is being addressed by appropriate agencies and that additional effort by the EJTF will not substantially contribute to the current process to resolve the Petitioner's issues. In addition, this project is in early feasibility stages and is not currently funded.

For the reasons stated above, the EJTF has determined that this petition will not be selected for Action Plan development at this time. In making this determination the EJTF has

considered the Environmental Justice Advisory Council's recommendation to further this petition. However, the EJTF will monitor the progress of this project and the petitioners can request that the petition be reactivated in the event that the current process becomes ineffective or no longer appropriate. In addition, the EJTF will make recommendations to the following State Agencies as follows:

NJDOT:

The NJDOT will review and provide comments on any additional revisions to the DEIS for the proposed Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project and will provide an update to the EJTF on the status of this project on a quarterly basis.

NJDEP:

The NJDEP's Office of Permit Coordination and Environmental Review and the Environmental Justice Program will review any additional revisions to the DEIS and will provide an update to the EJTF on the status of this project on a quarterly basis.