


81' Below Syracuse

- Re-Route I-81
- Develop Old I-81 Footprint
- Public-Private Partnership for Financing



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The I-81 corridor through the City of Syracuse, NY has existed in its present footprint since the 1960's. Portions of I-81 in the City of Syracuse are nearing the end of their lifespan. Currently, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) are planning for a future I-81. The planning must take into consideration the relationship between the community and highway and what the community wants and needs from a transportation system, now and in the future. In response to this planning for a new I-81 we have developed the **81' Below Syracuse** concept for the community's consideration.

The **81' Below Syracuse** project takes advantage of Syracuse's natural topography which will allow for tunneling below University and Northside hills within the bedrock. The project consists of re-routing 81 one mile to the east via tunnels, building a modern 81/690 interchange and utilizing 690 as the main traffic distributor to downtown. Some of the advantages of re-routing 81 via tunnels include: maintaining high volume of traffic close to the City core, minimal traffic and economic disruption during the construction phase, achieving several miles of interstate through the City which would not have weather related traffic accidents or snow removal.

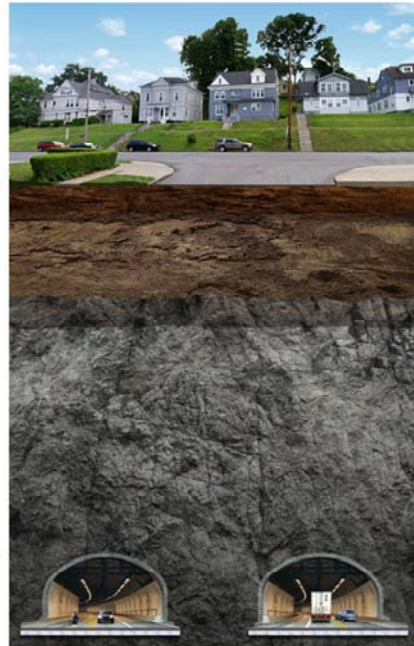
The **81' Below Syracuse** project would re-route 81 and allow for the development of the existing 81 footprint. The existing 81 footprint bisects the City of Syracuse and is approximately 150 feet wide by 6 miles long. Development of this space would present opportunities for commercial, residential and recreational uses. With careful planning, sustainable development of the old 81 corridor could revitalize and rejuvenate the City and surrounding communities.

A Public-Private-Partnership agreement could be utilized to leverage the highly valuable reclaimed space to both finance and partially fund the construction of the **81' Below Syracuse** project.

81' Below Syracuse

- Depth to Bedrock 20 Feet
- Depth to Tunnel Crown at Least 81 Feet
- No Impact to Neighborhood Above

81'

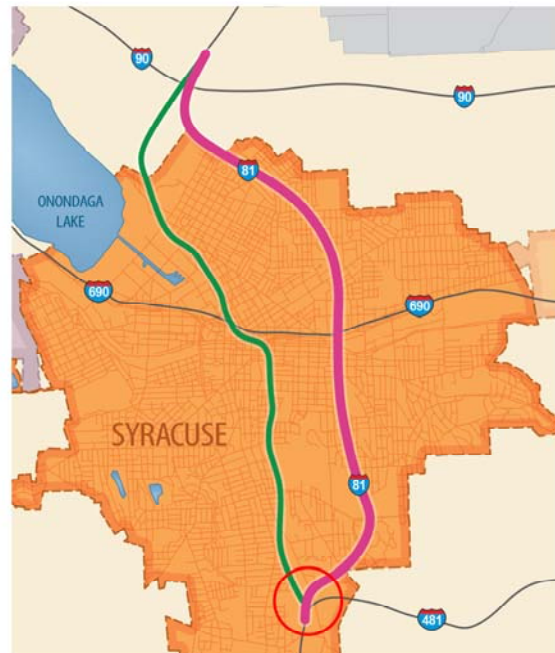


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This is a typical cross section of what **81' Below Syracuse** looks like. 81 would be comprised of two parallel tunnels, a northbound and a southbound, each with two or three lanes of traffic. On the University Hill and in the north side neighborhoods the tunnel crown, or roof, would be at least 81 feet below the neighborhood street level. These neighborhoods have relatively shallow bedrock which is very favorable for rock tunnel construction. The tunnels would be so far below the neighborhood street level, within the bedrock, that they would have no impact to the communities above.

81' Below Syracuse

81/481 Interchange



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Let's explore the areas of the new 81 system that would be visible from the street level. There are three areas, the 81/481 interchange, the 81/690 interchange and the 81/90 interchange.

Starting from the south and working north we have the 81/481 interchange.



This is a plan image of what the new 81/481 interchange could look like. The re-routed 81 would enter the ground below the Skytop area of Syracuse University. A bridge would be constructed for 81 to traverse over existing 481 lanes and a new interchange constructed to allow for access from and to all directions. The existing 81 footprint would either be reduced to that of a typical City street or could be eliminated and local traffic diverted to East Brighton Ave or other existing City streets.

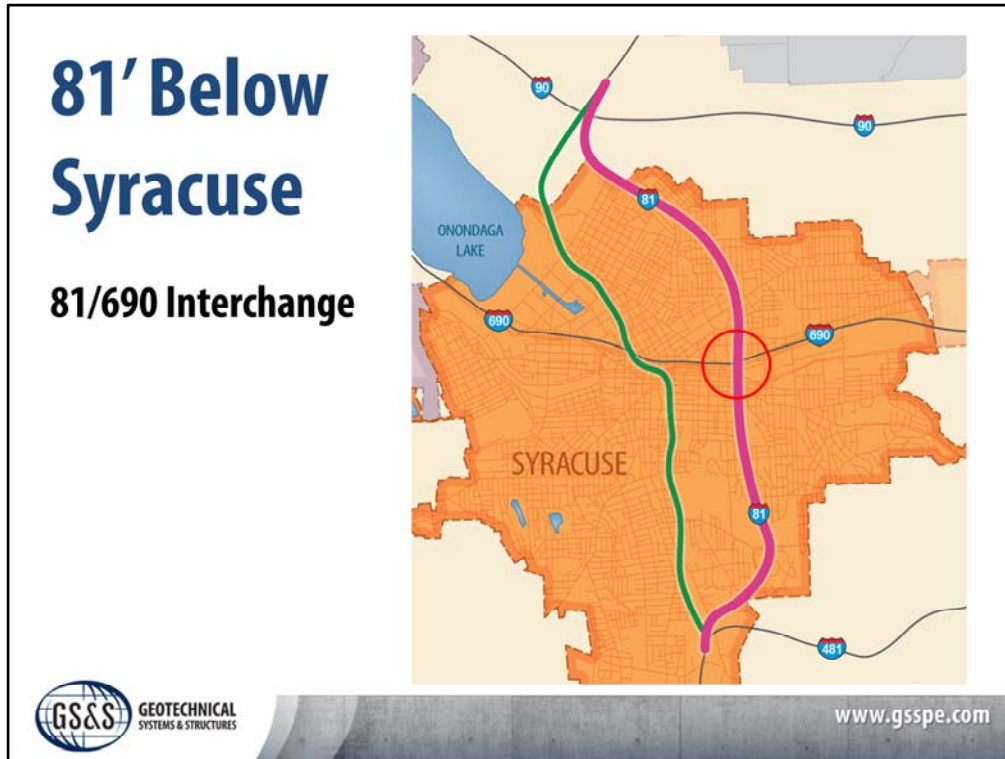
81' Below Syracuse

81/481 Interchange



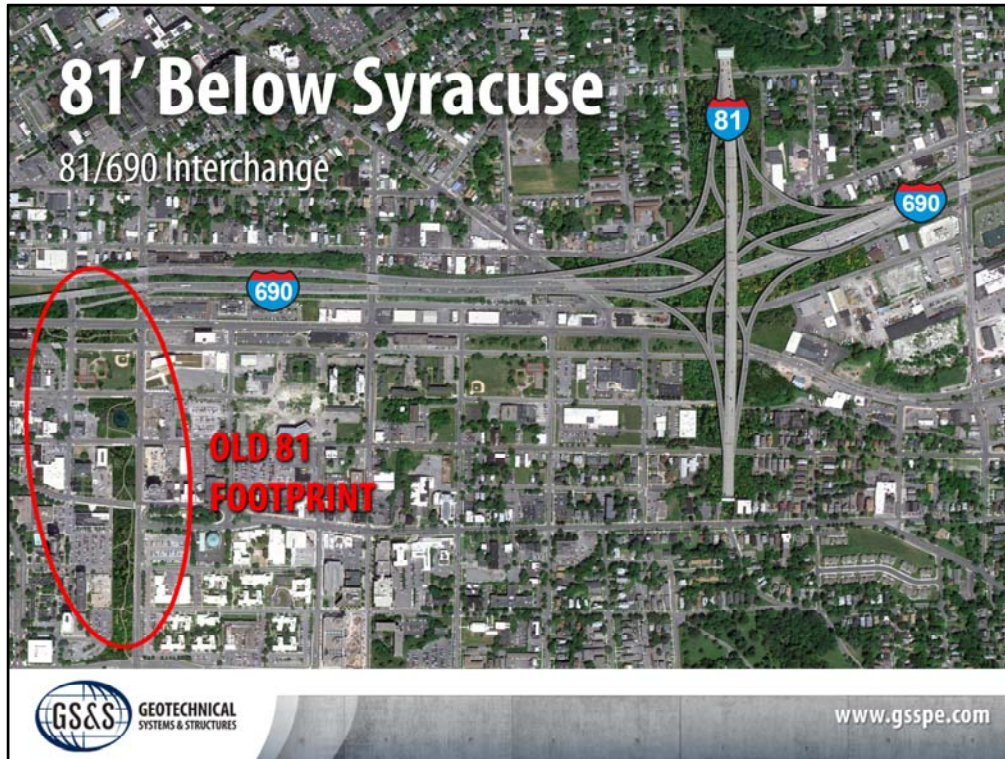
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This is a street view image of what the new interchange and tunnel portals could look like at the 81/481 interchange. Notice how the topography allows for a natural portal location below the Skytop hill.



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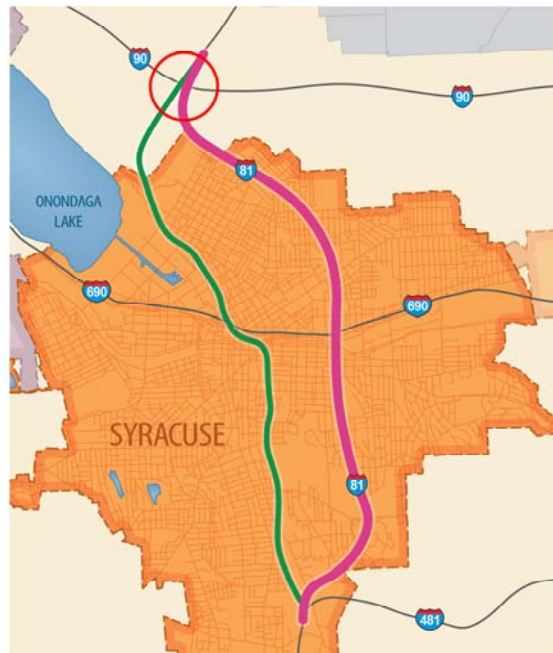
The new interchange would be located approximately one mile east of the existing 81/690 interchange. This is an ideal location for this interchange as it would no longer be located in the downtown district City core but just one mile to the east. The interchange could be constructed as a bridge to minimize the impact and footprint. The interchange would be designed and constructed to allow access from any direction to any direction, which is a needed improvement from the existing interchange.

You can see the location of the two 81 portals, the south portal emerging from the hill just below Genesee street and the north portal entering the hill on the other side of the valley at the base of Lincoln Park.

To the west you can see the old 81 footprint shown here with a continuous community park and mixed-use development.

81' Below Syracuse

81/90 Interchange



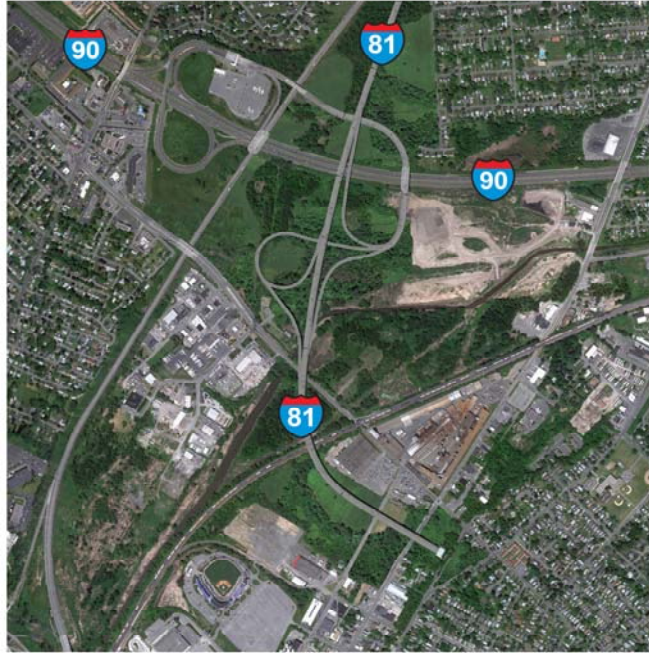
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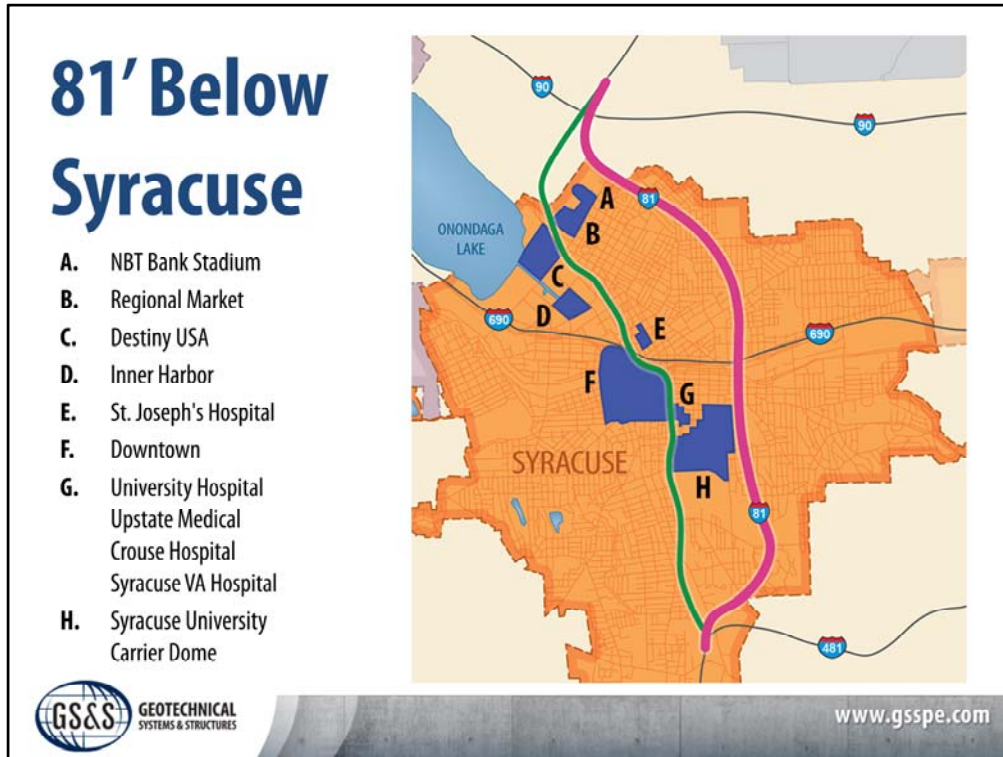
81' Below Syracuse

81/90 Interchange



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The tunnels would emerge from the north side hill near Wolf street, north of NBT Stadium and south of 7th North Street. The new 81/90 Interchange could combine the 7th North St. and 90 exits into one exit. This would provide a new boulevard access south along the old 81 alignment and would not require any reconfiguration of the 90 toll plaza and ramps. Impacts to traffic during construction would be limited with this alignment for the new 81.



Once construction of the new 81 has been completed and traffic transferred, the existing 81 alignment will be available for development. This provides significant development opportunities practically unheard of in modern cities.

The existing 81 footprint is located adjacent to many of Syracuse's community assets. Development of this space could tie these assets together in a planned and deliberate fashion. This footprint that snakes through the center of Syracuse is approximately 150 feet wide and 6 miles long representing 110 acres of prime real estate that could be reclaimed from the highway.

The community can decide the future use and development opportunities for the 110 acres. Is it possible to give the community a continuous park stretching from south of Syracuse University all the way to Onondaga Lake? If this land was reclaimed from the highway would businesses want to relocate to this footprint? Would developers build residential units within this footprint? How could this opportunity change Syracuse and the surrounding communities?

81' Below Syracuse

Harrison & Almond Streets



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This is a rendering of what a developed cross section of the old 81 footprint may look like. This view is from Harrison and Almond Street looking north on the old 81 footprint. This development scenario provides the desired link between University Hill and Downtown. Public transportation and bike lanes along with a continuous pedestrian walk provide access along the corridor.

81' Below Syracuse

Onondaga Lake Front



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This is a bird's-eye view depicting development of the old 81 footprint adjacent to Destiny USA. The western edge of Northside could be bordered by green space. The corridor would allow interconnection between the Creekwalk and Onondaga Lake Park. An area once known as "Oil City" would be completely revitalized with a combination of commercial, residential and recreational opportunities.

81' Below Syracuse

- Public-Private-Partnership (P3)
 - Leverage Value of 81 Footprint to Finance Construction



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The reclamation of the 110 acres from the old 81 footprint would allow innumerable scenarios for development of that space. One thing that is certain is the 110 acres represents a great deal of value.

Public-Private-Partnerships are referred to as P3s. P3s are a contracting mechanism used by Public Entities to leverage community assets to fund public infrastructure. For the **81' Below Syracuse** project, the development rights of the 110 acres of old 81 footprint could be leveraged to finance and fund some of the construction of the project.

The right P3 relationship would yield a reduced price for construction of **81' Below Syracuse** project and also development guarantees for the old footprint.

P3s are currently in place for other large infrastructure projects and highly encouraged by both the NYSDOT and the Federal government.

81' Below Syracuse



The **81' Below Syracuse** concept is ambitious and represents a game-changing scenario for the City of Syracuse and surrounding communities. The **81' Below Syracuse** concept can only happen through the collective will of the community. If you think this is the correct plan for the future of our community then you should talk with your neighbors, talk with your elected representatives, talk with the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and talk with the NYSDOT. Please let them know what you think. Thank you for viewing our presentation.