



Staten Island Advance

The following article is part of our archive

Transit issues drive economic breakfast

Thursday, January 29, 2009

By MAURA YATES

STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- The borough's economic outlook for 2009 constituted the menu, but the conversation at yesterday's breakfast meeting was dominated by Staten Island's transportation needs.

Agita was guaranteed by the traffic congestion and woefully inadequate roads and transit infrastructure that discourage new businesses here.

In his keynote address during the Staten Island Economic Outlook Breakfast, Port Authority executive director Christopher Ward highlighted the authority's plans to address some of the problems by replacing the obsolete Goethals Bridge sometime in the next decade and working on a plan for the Bayonne Bridge, which is too low for some container ships to pass beneath.

Ward was asked what traffic impact the new Goethals will have on the already-jammed Staten Island Expressway when the new three-lane bridge starts funneling more vehicles into the borough than the current two-lane bridge. He gave a seemingly flip response -- suggesting the standstill, which typically forms because of the incline in the road, can be easily remedied if Staten Islanders simply tromp on the accelerator.

"Coming through the toll plaza, you wonder if people can just press the pedal a little harder," he said.

Quickly realizing that such a suggestion wasn't going to cut it in a room of Islanders for whom traffic jams are a way of life, he offered some other ideas, including leveling some of the steepest stretches of the roadway, or running limited-stop bus service along the expressway to lure drivers out of their cars.

But the future of the expressway is in the hands of the state Department of Transportation, which runs the borough's highways, and it is exactly that disconnect that state Sen. Diane Savino would like to see changed. She called for better coordination among transportation agencies like the Port Authority, the MTA and the DOT, to make better, more cohesive choices and bring about the most effective improvements for the region during this time when projects must compete for limited resources....

Read the Full Article
Visit our Archive



©2010 SI Advance

© 2010 SILive.com All Rights Reserved.