

I-81 SECTION 316 ASHLEY TO ARENA: Purpose & Needs

The purpose of the project is to improve Interstate 81 (I-81) from milepost 161.2 to Exit 168 (Highland Park Boulevard) to meet regional traffic and local needs, as well as support the Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS) and interstate travel within the northeastern United States, by providing a transportation facility that:

1 Reduces congestion

2 Improves highway geometry

3 Addresses mobility issues

•NEED 1

As part of the critical Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS), the I-81 corridor from milepost 161.2 to Exit 168 (Highland Park Boulevard) **does not have the vehicular capacity to accommodate the projected future traffic volume and composition at an acceptable level-of-service (LOS).**

•NEED 2

The acceleration or deceleration lengths and curvature provided at **multiple ramps in the project corridor contribute to operational issues.**

•NEED 3

On northbound I-81 between Exits 164 (PA 29 - Nanticoke) and 165B (PA 309 Bus - Wilkes-Barre), the arrangement and distance between highway ramps contribute to **operational issues.**

•NEED 4

Mobility is hindered when **less than two lanes of traffic** are maintained.

•NEED 5

The existing pavement and bridges on the I-81 Project corridor were constructed in the 1960s and have **reached the end of their serviceable life span.**