



Why is a truck stop a bad idea on Grand Island?

Because we live on an island, the ecosystem is fragile and changes to it affect the land, water, air, birds, and other wildlife who live on the Island and around us. A major hazardous spill on Grand Island would not only affect our community, but the towns, waterways, and people all around us and downstream. This is such an important ecological location that the Niagara River Corridor, within which Grand Island resides, has been designated a *Globally Significant Important Bird Area* and is recognized as one of the most important and threatened bird habitats on Earth.

Grand Island is currently engaged in a long-range planning process to define its cultural, social, and economic vision for the future. A truck stop is inconsistent with our goals, our plans, our health and wellness, and our responsibility to protect and enhance our environment for future generations!

Love's Travel Stops and Country Stores has created a concept plan (dated January 2018) to build a truck stop on Grand Island at the Whitehaven exit of the 190 Thruway. They are meeting with Town officials and board members, and have assembled a team of lawyers, public relations staff, and engineers to defeat our community's opposition to the project and to force their proposal through.

They have more than 50 years of predatory action against communities like ours and have built an empire of more than 400 travel centers in 40 states nationwide. They are a \$16 Billion industry, ranked #18 on Forbes list of the largest private companies. They will describe themselves as a family-run company that makes charitable contributions and supports local organizations. But their proposal for Grand Island states that they will budget \$450/year for local donations—the equivalent of a donation of less than a penny from a \$50,000 business.

They are not here to help our community or to bring visitors to the Island. They are a one-stop center (showers, restaurants, gas stations for cars and trucks, convenience store, gift shop... and they would like to build a hotel, public laundry service) that aims to meet every need of the driver passing through so that no other businesses benefit. In fact, Grand Island businesses (restaurants, stores, gas stations, hotels, motels) will suffer because of them and drivers will never visit the Town Center.

Here are a few of the biggest concerns and why we need to stop this proposed development:

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT!

- Our Community's Water Quality: The run-off from acres of paved parking lots with fuel pumping stations and underground storage tanks, mixed with oil and other chemicals consistent with trucks, cars and RVs, will contaminate the soil and the run-off will end up in the Niagara River.
 - The result is potential degradation of the entire tributary system, including the Niagara River, from discharges of oil, grease and road salt laden waters.
 - Salt laden runoff can change the composition of the insect populations along receiving freshwater creeks and streams, allowing costal salt marsh mosquitos to gain a foothold here.
 - Potential degradation of the riparian zones – river banks, plant life and vegetation – of communities along the Niagara River on Grand Island and beyond.
- Air Quality: The proposed project would concentrate diesel powered vehicles within a small footprint. Trucks are often left idling, spewing carcinogenic pollutants and micro-particulates into the atmosphere. Although NYS law prohibits the idling of diesel engines for more than five minutes, enforcement is random at best.
 - Since this facility will introduce heavy truck and vehicle traffic to the Whitehaven Road interchange with Route 190, trucks will have to accelerate down the access ramps to achieve highway speed. Diesel exhaust releases large amounts of micro-particulate matter that has the potential to embed itself in the deep tissues of our lungs causing respiratory distress in children, adults and senior citizens.
 - Downwind to this truck stop there is a large apartment complex, an amusement park, public campground, a senior citizens living facility and an elementary school.
 - The additive effects of the fast moving traffic on Route 190 and the slowly accelerating diesel truck traffic will likely deteriorate localized air quality within the Grand Island Town Center.
 - Diesel fumes are carcinogenic (cancer-causing)! There are 40 different toxic compounds found in diesel exhaust that can cause immediate and serious health concerns and environmental impacts.
 - These air quality dangers led NYS to transform our toll system to cashless tolling at the GI Bridges.

PUBLIC SAFETY!

- With a truck stop in place, hazardous materials won't just cross the Island, they will stay here!
 - Example: 9/28/15 - *The City of Cullman Hazmat Team and the Jasper Fire Department contained a hazmat situation at **Love's Travel Stop** following a substance leak. Hazmat officials say that Dimethyl Amino Ethyl Acrylate, a liquid plastic substance was leaking from a truck stopped at Love's. The substance is described as "very dangerous." The scene has been contaminated. The substance had been leaking every 40 seconds. The chemical can be fatal if it is inhaled.*
- At a facility where millions of gallons of diesel fuel and gasoline are stored and pumped, it is not a question whether some accidents will happen it is a question when they will happen. The fuels contain Toluene, Xylene, and known Carcinogens Benzene and Methyl Tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE), just to name a few.
 - Truck stop companies are regularly fined for fuel spills.
 - A truck stop between bridges invites catastrophe! The risks associated with trucks that can be confined to the Island during disasters or incidents are high.
- Crime studies across the nation show dramatic increases in and around truck stop locations. Truck stops are linked to drug trafficking, theft, prostitution and violent crimes. Increased crime means more tax expense paid for by citizens for additional law enforcement patrols.

CONGESTION AND HAZARDOUS DRIVING CONDITIONS!

- The proposed truck stop will introduce a large number of commercial vehicles into the Whitehaven Road interchange with Thruway Route 190. The existing interchange is often congested and has very poor sight lines, leading to many motor vehicle accidents. To accommodate the increase truck traffic the entire interchange would have to be redesigned and traffic control signals would have to be added. The addition of those signals would cause trucks to back up on the existing ramps where they would idle for a period of time.

IMPACT ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT!

- The truck stop has no legal authority to connect to the existing municipal sewer district on the east side of the Thruway. The boundaries of that district are defined by law and can only be changed through a comprehensive public review process — something we should all oppose!
 - The volume of sewage that would result from connecting the truck stop to the municipal sewer district would foreclose economic opportunity within the Town Center, insuring that Grand Island continues to have an underdeveloped business district.
- Self-driving rigs mean **truck stops may be obsolete** in a few years.
 - In 2016 the White House released a report that said 1.3 million to 1.7 million heavy truck drivers could lose their jobs in about a decade; that levels out to 80% to 100% of all truck-driving jobs. If trucking declines, what does this truck stop become?
- The mayors of major cities around the world (Paris, Mexico City, Madrid, Athens) have proposed banning diesel vehicles by 2025 because of the adverse health effects.
- The Long Range Planning Committee of Grand Island is developing plans for protecting open/green space west of the Thruway — the environmental and economic risks and costs of a truck stop are not consistent with this vision!



Montana residents protesting a Love's Truck Stop in 2017!

The Town of Grand Island can oppose this through the following steps:

- The Town Board needs to go on record opposing this project
- The Town Board needs to deny any requests for extension of the sewer district across the Thruway
- The Town of Grand Island needs to require a State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). A comprehensive environmental impact statement should be the minimum standard for the review.
- The Town Board needs to commission or require a year round air-quality study, along with a four-season ecological baseline study of the tributary system that will receive treated sewage effluent and/or runoff from this facility.
- The Town Board needs to commission or require a comprehensive traffic study to assess congestion, air quality impacts, and the potential to degrade future business opportunity within the Town Center
- The Town Board needs to commission or require noise, odor, and ambient light studies to determine potential effects on wildlife and the surrounding community. Idling trucks may exceed regulations for daytime and nighttime allowable levels of noise.
- If, during the course of planning for this project, the New York State Thruway Authority determines that the Whitehaven interchange has to be redesigned and that Federal Highway funds could be used for the project, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) enters into effect. Should that become a reality the Federal Highway Administration would have to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

What can our community do?

- Let Town Officials know that you oppose this project.
- Support the efforts of Town Officials to stop this project.
- Attend Town Board and Advisory Board Meetings to monitor activities on this proposal and to voice your opposition.

Together we can define a future for Grand Island that we can be proud of, and protect our community and environment for future generations!