

APPENDIX V-E

Agency Scoping Meeting Summary



Route 65 EA

Agency Scoping Meeting - February 6, 2006

ATTENDEES:

Peggy Casey/FHWA	Melissa Scheperle/MoDOT
Jane Beetem/MoDNR	Carole Hopkins/MoDOT
Steven Smith/EPA	Bree McMurray/MoDOT
Randy Potts/MoDOT	Bob Reeder/MoDOT
Mike Schupp/MoDOT	Rob Miller/CH2M HILL
Bruce Green/MoDOT	Buddy Desai/CH2M HILL
	Tim Page/CH2M HILL

FROM: CH2M HILL

DATE: February 8, 2006

On Monday, February 6th, the Route 65 EA study team conducted an agency scoping meeting at MoDOT's Central District office.

Items distributed at the beginning of the meeting included an agenda, purpose and need memo, project newsletter, alternatives summary memo, and draft typical sections. Alternatives maps and crash data maps were also displayed at the meeting.

Introductions

Buddy Desai began the meeting with brief introductions, thanking everyone for taking the time to participate. He noted that this meeting was intended to be as informal as possible to allow for constructive dialogue amongst the team. He briefly described the project team communications protocol. He and Mike Dusenberg, MoDOT project manager, are the "clearinghouse" for all issues. Buddy and Mike are responsible for all coordination/communication amongst their respective study teams. Technical team members are encouraged to have direct conversations with technical counterparts without Mike or Buddy, but any resulting decisions should be documented and copies should be sent to Mike and Buddy.

Project Scope

Using the project strip maps on the tables, Buddy gave a brief description of the project area. He noted that the City of Lincoln has expressed a very strong desire for the new route to stay on its existing location through town. Buddy also described the Benton County Transportation Corporation (formerly the Benton County Coalition) and their desires for the route, and their active involvement in the project thus far.

Buddy noted that the project schedule is fairly aggressive. Completion of this study is anticipated in January 2007. The schedule is driven by a number of issues including the fact that funding for design and construction is in place, with construction scheduled to begin in 2009.

Q: Does the Benton County Transportation Corporation favor a through-town alternative as well? (Peggy Casey/FHWA)

A: Yes. The project team met with the coalition a few times already to describe the process required as part of this study, emphasizing that bypasses must be examined in order to be fully comprehensive in the development and evaluation of alternatives.

Q: When you say that the City and the Coalition favor a through town alternative, does that mean an alternative on the existing route? (Steven Smith/EPA)

A: Yes.

Buddy went on to describe some of the general engineering issues associated with the project. Four-lane divided roadways would have a maximum 60-foot-wide median and a posted speed limit of 60 mph. North and south of Lincoln, the widening would be accomplished on either the east or west side of the existing roadbed, which would remain largely unchanged.

Q: Will this project improve all substandard geometry?

A: Only in those substandard areas with substantive safety or capacity problems dictate that improvements are required.

Rob Miller/CH2M HILL spent a few minutes describing the known constraints in the project corridor. He mentioned the Truman Dam Reservoir, the Minuteman missile silos, auto salvage yards, and several other features in the project area. Buddy added that the team conducted a field investigation on the Mead's Milkweed species last summer. This endangered species should not be a constraint to the development of alternatives within the study area. However, the project team will continue tracking this issue.

Bree McMurray/MoDOT noted that she would be the threatened and endangered species contact for this project. She also noted that Truman Lake has a fair amount of habitat for bald eagles, all though not in close proximity to the project study area. She also mentioned that Indiana bats are not common in Missouri, but potential habitat for summer roosting can occur in any forested area of Missouri. Indiana bats are federally endangered, and we generally handle Indiana bat issues in cases with clearing and grubbing of forested habitat with a habitat assessment and possible tree clearing restriction dates for suitable habitat. Bree encouraged the team to include an assessment of potential Indiana bat habitat in the project study area in the environmental document.

Buddy concluded the project scope portion of the agenda by noting that the City of Warsaw continues to "encourage" the project team to consider extending the project further south. Buddy and others on the team have reinforced the fact that the project will not go further south

due to the fact that traffic volumes on existing Route 65 drop significantly south of Warsaw, and that the crossing of the Osage River would constitute a significant impact. Peggy Casey commented that it seems like logical termini have been established for this study.

Purpose and Need

Rob Miller gave a brief summary of the purpose and need elements included in the handout at the meeting: 1) Improve safety; 2) Enhance operations; and 3) Achieve regional and local continuity goals. Rob emphasized that these elements and their corresponding evaluation criteria/measures were in draft form and that comments on this draft are encouraged.

Peggy Casey commented that the team should establish the purpose and need in a way that would not contradict a through-town alternative if that became the preferred alternative in the Lincoln area. She also encouraged the team to consider how economic feasibility/impact might be included into the purpose and need elements.

Review of Data Received and Analysis Performed

Tim Page/CH2M HILL described the various data received and analysis performed, focusing on two subjects: crash analysis and operational analysis.

Crash analysis: The team shared a crash map with MoDOT to visualize the crash location along the corridor. Tim Page noted that the team is looking for trends in the corridor that can be linked to characteristics of existing Route 65. He noted that the vast majority of fatal crashes were a result of head-on collisions (all except one). The provision of a 4-lane facility with divided median would drastically improve this condition. He also noted that the crash rates are comparable to the state wide average rates for two-lane roads, but added that there are several “hot spot” locations which appear to be problematic.

Operational analysis: Tim shared some of the preliminary results of the operational analyses performed. In 2030, a four-lane facility will provide sufficient capacity for the expected volumes along mainline ROUTE 65. The team is currently focusing on the various at grade intersections to identify any movements that may experience significant delay in the future. Preliminary results indicate that all intersections will function sufficiently as crossroad stop controlled intersections in 2030, with one exception. Route C/Main Street in Lincoln will experience significant delay (LOS E) under a crossroad stop control solution. A 4-way stop control or signal would alleviate that delay and allow both mainline 65 and Route C to operate at LOS C or better.

Q: Does MoDOT have any plans for this section of Route 65 becoming a freeway in the future?

A: No, not expected at this point.

Alternatives

CH2M HILL shared the initial range of alternatives on aerial mapping with the group. Various constraints were also shown on the map. The group discussed the preliminary alternatives, the mapping, and the constraints. Tim Page explained the various alternatives under consideration

in the corridor, with the help of draft typical sections that were distributed to the group. North of Lincoln, alternatives under consideration are widening existing Route 65 to the east or west as a 4-lane divided roadway with a 60-foot-wide median. The same options are being considered south of Lincoln. In the Lincoln area, the team is looking at bypass alternatives and through-town alternatives. The bypass alternatives would be new 4-lane roadways divided by a 60-foot-wide median. The through town alternatives would have a narrower typical section, either a 5-lane road with a center two-way left-turn lane (TWLTL) or a 4-lane road divided by an 18-foot-wide raised median (with channelized turn lanes provided at key locations). Through-town alternatives will also have to deal with the issue of how to handle drainage. The existing drainage is conveyed via ditch flow. An enclosed system would likely be costly to construct given the very flat topography through that section of the project study area.

Q: Are TWLTL's acceptable solutions in MoDOT's opinion?

A: While in the past MoDOT has looked unfavorably on TWLTL's, the recent guidance on practical design states that TWLTL's are a solution to consider in the right conditions.

Q: If we have more than sufficient capacity on ROUTE 65 in the design year, should we consider a facility with less capacity, such as a "two-plus-one" roadway?

A: Yes. It will be important to do so now, so our initial range of alternatives can be fully comprehensive. We wouldn't want to have to revisit this issue further into the project schedule after decisions had been made to screen out certain alternatives.

Randall Potts/MoDOT stated that such an alternative could be portrayed with a typical section and would not necessarily require a separate "footprint" on the alternatives exhibits.

Q: Through Lincoln, are the buildings close to the traveled way or are they set back further? What type of "downtown" area is this?

A: The buildings are set back away from the road and relocations are expected to be minimal.

Q: What type of pedestrian activity is there along Route 65 through Lincoln?

A: The center of town exists primarily west of existing Route 65 and as a result most of the pedestrian activity takes place away from Route 65. There is continuing residential growth, however, on the east side of Route 65 which may increase the amount of pedestrians crossing from one side to the other.

Q: Should we consider implementing wider medians at intersections with higher turn volumes?

A: Yes, we should consider whether such an improvement is appropriate.

Public Involvement

Buddy gave a short summary of the public involvement efforts currently underway, including:

- First public information meeting on February 22nd
- Media involvement
- Civic coordination
- Project newsletter

Kristin Gerber/MoDOT noted that the information for the first public involvement meeting has been posted on the website for MoDOT Central District.

Bob Reeder/MoDOT encouraged the project team to always be receptive to public input regarding cultural resource constraints information (such as family cemeteries and other sensitive resources in particular). He also suggested that individual maps be provided to the public for written comments so they don't feel uncomfortable divulging potentially private/sensitive information.

Dialogue

The final portion of the meeting was open for other discussion not on the agenda. Buddy asked if DNR or EPA had any specific issues at this time.

- DNR: Jane Beetem said that DNR had no specific issues at this time but that her agency would be looking closely at issues of water quality, geology, etc.
- EPA: No issues at this time.

Bree McMurray/MoDOT stated that the team should consider whether there might be any Section 6(f) issues associated with the conservation land in the vicinity of the fish hatchery at the south end of the project area.

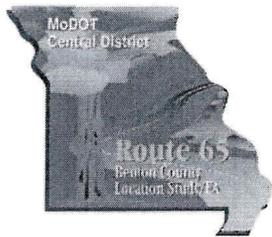
Bob Reeder announced that MoDOT intends to bring representatives from the State Historic Preservation Office on their next field survey of the study area. Buddy Desai requested that Bob let him know when that takes place so he could also attend.

List of Known Environmental Constraints in Project Corridor

For reference purposes, the following is a list of some of the environmental constraints known to exist in this project corridor:

- 2 local airports
- Former Minuteman missile silos
- Truman Lake
- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- MDC Fish Hatchery ("Lost Valley")
- City of Lincoln

- City of Warsaw
- Cultural resources
- Mead's milkweed
- Auto salvage yards
- Potential Indiana bat habitat
- Bald Eagle habitat
- MoDOT maintenance facility in Lincoln



Route 65 EA - Benton County

Sign In Sheet Agency Scoping Meeting February 6, 2006

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