

MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 19, 2017
Time: 2 – 4 p.m. CT
Meeting: RCAC/EJ Subcommittee Workshop
Location: I-69 ORX Evansville Project Office

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Gale Brocksmith	CAPE
Bob Koch II	Koch Enterprises
John Blair	Valley Watch
Niles Rosenquist	Evansville Audubon Society
Todd Robertson	City of Evansville
Brian Bishop	Henderson Planning
Tony Iriti	Kyndle
Brittaney Johnson	Posey Co. Economic Develop Partnership
Justin Groenert	SWIN Chamber
Pam Drach	EMPO
Seyed Shokouhzadeh	EMPO
Maree Collins	City of Henderson
Debbie DeBaillie	EVSC
Ellen Horan	GAGE
Bill Hubiak	Henderson County
Steve Schaefer	City of Evansville
Diane Bies	Evansville Bicycle Club
Gina Boaz	GRADD

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Patricia Hayden	McClellan County
Dr. Tim Hobbs	Community Baptist Church
Donna Stinnett	City of Henderson
Silas Matchem	Evansville Promise Zone
Carolyn Nelson	FHWA
Michelle Allen	FHWA
Duane Thomas	FHWA – KY
Eric Rothermel	FHWA- KY
Marshall Carrier	KYTC
Gary Valentine	KYTC
Tony Youssefi	KYTC
David Waldner	KYTC
Janelle Lemon	INDOT
Susan Harrington	INDOT
Laura Hilden	INDOT
Dan Prevost	Project Team
Brian Aldridge	Project Team
Amber Schaudt	Project Team
Tony Hunley	Stantec
Erin Pipkin	Project Team
Mindy Peterson	Project Team
Ken Sperry	Project Team



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- 1) Welcome – Mindy Peterson welcomed everyone to the workshop and the informal presentation began at 2:05 p.m.
- 2) Workshop Overview – Janelle Lemon thanked everyone for their participation and provided a high-level overview to the workshop agenda.
 - Goals – The goal of this meeting is to help RCAC and EJ members learn more about the components that must be considered during the analysis. As members of the RCAC and EJ Subcommittee, members can help the Project Team build project understanding and engagement in the community. Today’s feedback will help shape outreach efforts moving forward. The workshop is designed to be interactive, with members of the Project Team leading discussions during breakout sessions. Project Team leaders are available for questions and conversations during each session.
 - Topics to be discussed – Three very important topics - the short list of corridors, the future of the existing U.S. 41 bridges and tolling – will be the focus of this meeting. Members of the Project Team will provide an overview of each subject, to be followed by a 20-minute breakout session on each topic. The breakout sessions are encouraged to gather feedback, generate ideas and promote conversation among RCAC and EJ members. Members are broken into four groups for the purpose of the breakout sessions. Feedback gathered will help guide the work of the Project Team, as it continues to develop alternatives in each corridor.
 - Environmental Justice overview and considerations – The intent of this meeting is to address issues of joint concern for the RCAC and EJ committees. There is not a breakout session that focuses solely on EJ issues, but attendees should leave with a better understanding of EJ. To that end, an infographic at each table describes environmental justice and shows the difference between equality and equity. Equality results in everyone receiving the same benefit. Equity provides an even playing field. Environmental justice is an important point to consider during all of today’s conversations and breakout sessions.
- 3) Breakout Session 1 – Short list of corridors – Dan Prevost and Ken Sperry
 - The three corridors moving forward – West Corridor 1, West Corridor 2 and Central Corridor 1 – have the greatest potential to satisfy the project’s purpose and need. The purpose and need of the project is to complete the I-69 connection between Indiana and Kentucky, improve long-term cross-river mobility, reduce congestion and delay and



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improve safety. A key performance measure is identifying a cost-effective solution. Details about each corridor were released in July in the Screening Report, which is available on the project website.

- The next step is to develop alternatives within each corridor. When developing these alternatives, the Project Team will consider cost, impact, community support and financial feasibility. No decisions have been made on a preferred corridor or alternative, and no corridor is favored over the other two.
- In the coming months, Project Team members will be in the field for engineering and environmental studies.

- Member feedback
 - Western Alternatives 1 and 2
 - Both corridors would address the aging Twin Bridges.
 - The public understands the existing U.S. 41 bridges are old, but could use more information on the future costs of maintaining one or both of them.
 - West Corridors 1 and 2 have the potential to impact low-income individuals. There are some elderly residents toward the north end and down by U.S. 60. Where will displaced low-income residents go?
 - There are many new businesses that could suffer because they aren't well-established. What type of assistance will people receive for relocations?
 - There would be an impact on the type of businesses that would do well in the area (food, entertainment).
 - How would access to US 41 be impacted?
 - If one of the West Corridors is selected, will consideration be given to creating gateways for each city?
 - Both have high impacts to businesses and residences.
 - There are pro and cons to having interstate traffic in front of businesses.
 - Access to businesses could be affected.
 - Having the interstate run through the area would split downtown Henderson in half.
 - Must consider replacement housing – where would low-income residents go?
 - It's easier for businesses to relocate, than for residents to move.
 - Many people use US 41 for access to healthcare/doctors and shopping.

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- People want redundancy for safety and traffic flow.
 - o Central Corridor 1
 - If Central Corridor 1 is identified as the preferred alternative, the businesses along U.S. 41 could suffer. How will business be interrupted during construction and after? Would it be possible for new businesses to thrive along U.S. 41 if most traffic is diverted to the new I-69 route?
 - The viability of US 41 would be affected. Must keep a US 41 bridge(s) to keep the area viable.
 - Bypasses Henderson, with no reason to stop.
 - If Central Corridor 1 is selected, is there a chance for future economic development along the interstate?
 - Central Corridor 1 has lower construction costs.
 - It also has the highest impacts to the natural environment.
 - Gateway to Henderson and Evansville.
 - There's a concern about drainage. Canoe Creek drains about 30% of the water in Henderson County, so Central Corridor one could have a significant impact.
 - Elevate through the wetlands.
- 4) Breakout Session 2 – U.S. 41 bridges – Brian Aldridge and Tony Hunley
- All conversations about improving long-term cross-river mobility between Evansville and Henderson must include the future of the U.S. 41 bridges. One bridge is more than 50 years old and the other is 80 years old. Maintenance costs are high, totaling more than \$50 million since 2005. The future maintenance costs are currently being evaluated. The Project Team is working closely with the Coast Guard about the location and size of the potential new I-69 bridge.
 - Multiple scenarios are being evaluated: the removal of one bridge from service, the removal of both bridges, removing truck traffic from the existing bridge(s), tolling the I-69 bridge and possibly tolling the existing bridges to balance traffic usage.
 - Redundancy was a major theme in the public feedback we received after the last public open houses. Each member received a handout that provides an overview of the number and type of feedback received for each corridor. Thirty comments specifically expressed the need to keep at least one of the U.S. 41 bridges open.

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- Member feedback – Each table was asked to discuss why redundancy is important. Do residents believe a toll-free option must be provided? What weight should redundancy have in the decision-making process for the new bridge? And how can the I-69 project be leveraged to address the operations and maintenance of the existing U.S. 41 bridges?
 - Redundancy gives people options.
 - When there is a major accident, there are significant traffic backups.
 - It's safer, especially in case there's a natural disaster and one bridge must be closed.
 - If the bridges are built right next to one another, is there really a benefit in case of a natural disaster?
 - More information is needed on the cost of operations and maintenance. What condition are the bridges in, and how much will it cost to maintain one or both? What impact does removing truck traffic have on those expenses?
 - It's important to get operations and maintenance costs down on the US 41 Bridges and traffic up on an I-69 bridge.
 - Removing one bridge would reduce costs.
 - Removing truck traffic would reduce wear and tear/damage.
 - Maintaining the U.S. 41 bridges and keeping U.S. 41 in its current configuration supports the businesses along the corridor by allowing traffic to continue flowing through Henderson.
 - Do residents want redundancy enough to pay tolls on all cross-river traffic?
 - Prefer to keep only one of the US 41 bridges, with weight limits.
 - There could be a safety concern for traffic using I-69 that is used to driving on U.S. 41. They'll need to learn new traffic patterns and how to drive at higher speeds.
 - Could one bridge be maintained for bicycle and pedestrian access?
 - How do you limit truck traffic? Is it worth it if only about 10 percent of traffic on current U.S. 41 is truck traffic?
 - Commercial vehicles will use the new I-69 bridge.



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5) Breakout Session 3 – Tolling

- If this bridge is going to be built, tolling is expected to be part of the funding equation. The DEIS in 2004 halted because it wasn't financially feasible, so it's an important focus this time around.
- Tolling would be all-electronic tolling, with no toll booths, no coin buckets and no waiting in line. Many tolling scenarios are being considered. Those include a tolled I-69 bridge, tolls on both the I-69 and existing U.S. 41 bridges, and a higher toll rate on the I-69 bridge and lower rate on the existing U.S. 41 bridges. As a starting point, the team is looking at a similar rate structure to the Louisville bridges: \$2 for cars, \$5 for medium vehicles and \$10 for large vehicles. There's an additional \$2 charge for each vehicle that doesn't have a transponder.
- The Project Team has been updating the travel demand model. It assigns a value to time saved. It's estimated that by 2040, if I-69 is tolled and both U.S. 41 bridges remain a free option, only 12,000-15,000 vehicles would use the I-69 bridge, while nearly 40,000 vehicles would use the existing U.S. 41 bridges. That's an estimated 25 percent of cross-river traffic using the new I-69 bridge.
- Tolling is unlikely to be able to fund this entire project. Most average debt loads for construction are financed for 35 years.
- Member feedback
 - Do the travel demand models account for increased interstate traffic once Sections 5 and 6 of I-69 are complete? There's a good chance traffic traveling through Indiana would use I-69 instead of I-65.
 - The public needs to be educated about modern tolling. People envision a toll booth while most of today's tolling is all-electronic.
 - The possibility that the existing U.S. 41 bridges must be closed to finance this project was new to some attendees. Was there a similar conversation during the planning and construction of the Ohio River Bridges project in Louisville?
 - Spending money on tolls could be a hardship to low-income residents.
 - Would there be a reduced toll for US 41 traffic, if any toll at all? What are residents paying for, getting for their money?
 - Will there be a reduced toll for local residents?

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- The Project Team should consider surveying local residents to see what rate people would be willing to pay.
- Many of the people who use the bridge take voluntary trips from Henderson into Evansville for shopping and dining. Tolling the bridge could hurt businesses in Evansville, because Henderson people will seek a local option without a toll.
- With the increased gas tax in Indiana, is tolling needed to pay for the project?
- Is there a difference between generations' willingness to pay tolls?
- How much time do you need to save during your commute to pay a toll?
- Find a way to require interstate traffic to pay for an I-69 bridge, not locals.
- Consider transit options.
- Tolls may hurt Evansville businesses more than Henderson because people will find another option for non-work trips.
- People getting from Point A to Point B on the East side are more likely to pay a toll to save time.
- People will pay a toll to avoid traffic congestion and save time.

6) Closing

- Upcoming EJ community meetings – The Project Team will reach out to several community organizations that serve EJ populations to offer to present project information at an upcoming meeting. Following the next open houses this winter, the Project Team will host EJ community meetings in areas where EJ populations are concentrated.
- The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.



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Invitees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Steve Schaefer	City of Evansville
Bruce Ungethiem	Vanderburgh County
Pam Drach	Evansville Metro Planning Organization (MPO)
Bobby Howard	Warrick County
Gale Brocksmith	Community Action Program of Evansville (CAPE)
Amy DeVries	Congregations Acting for Justice and Empowerment (CAJE)
Daniela Vidal	HOLA Evansville
Brant Flores	Latino Chamber Alliance
Todd Robertson	Metropolitan Evansville Transit System (METS)
Rev. Gerald Arnold	NAACP, Evansville Chapter
Chris Cooke	United Neighborhoods of Evansville (UNOE)
Mike Linderman	Angel Mounds State Historic Site
Jared Florence	Deaconess Health System
Niles Rosenquist	Evansville Audubon Society
Diane Bies	Evansville Bicycle Club
Debbie DeBaillie	Evansville – Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC)
Ellen Horan	Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville
Justin Groenert	Southwest Indiana Chamber of Commerce
Shane Davidson	University of Evansville
Mark Bernhard	University of Southern Indiana
John Blair	Valley Watch
Russell Sights	City of Henderson
Brian Bishop	Henderson City-County Planning Commission
Bill Hubiak	Henderson County

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Bobbie Jarrett	Housing Authority of Henderson
Deborah Jackson Hoda	NAACP, Henderson Chapter
Dr. Tim Hobbs	Community Baptist Church
Mark Kellen	Audubon State Park
Jeff Hall	Ellis Park Race Course
Robert (Bob) Koch II	Gibbs Die Casting/Koch Enterprises
Dr. Kris Williams	Henderson Community College
Marganna Stanley	Henderson County Schools
Tony Iriti	Kyndle
Jack Hogan	Methodist Hospital
Jeff Troxel	U.S. 41 Business Owner
Guy Young	Kentucky Trucking Association
Gary Langston	Indiana Motor Truck Association
Bob Johnson	Warrick County Representative
Stephanie Tenbarga	ECHO Housing Corporation
Silas Matchem	Evansville Promise Zone
Gerald Bledsoe	Gibson County Representative
Brittaney Johnson	Posey County Representative
Maree Collins	City of Henderson Representative
Brandon Harley	Audubon Area Community Services
David Smith	Daviess County Representative
Rev. Charles Johnson	Greater Norris Chapel Baptist Church
Gina Boaz	Green River Area Development District
Patricia Hayden	McLean County Representative
Jody Jenkins	Union County Representative
Steve Henry	Webster County Representative





OHIO RIVER CROSSING

Indiana and Kentucky are committed to improving the I-69 corridor by creating an I-69 Ohio River Crossing between Evansville and Henderson.

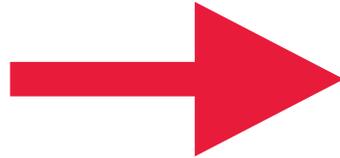
Project Update – Fall 2017

Short List of Corridors

West Corridor 1

West Corridor 2

Central Corridor 1



Greatest potential of meeting project’s purpose and need to:

- Complete the I-69 connection between Indiana and Kentucky
- Improve long-term cross-river mobility
- Reduce congestion and delay
- Improve safety

The Project Team is developing alternatives in each corridor.

US 41 Bridges - The bridges are more than 80 and 50 years old. Maintenance costs are high, totaling more than \$50 million since 2005. Future major rehabilitation costs are being evaluated.

Tolling - Identifying funding is critical to moving this project forward, and getting a new I-69 Ohio River Crossing built. Tolling is expected to be part of the funding solution.

Future of US 41 bridges to be evaluated

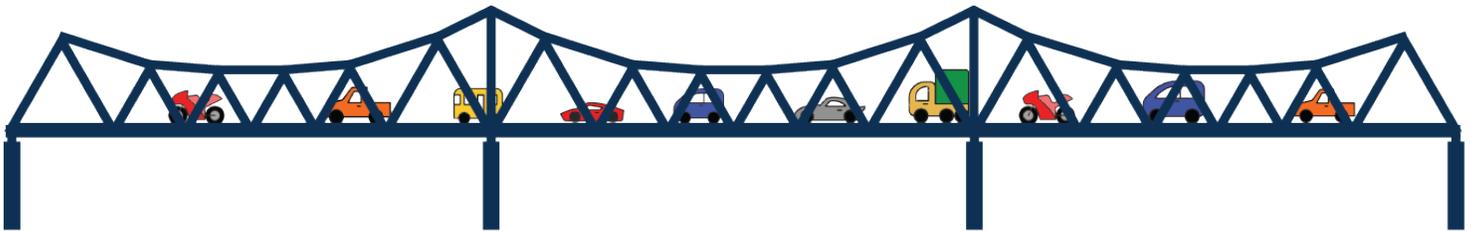
- Keep one bridge open
- Keep both bridges open
- Close both bridges

Tolling options to be evaluated

- Toll the new I-69 bridge
- Toll the new I-69 bridge and US 41 bridge(s)
- Potential tolling rates

Traffic modeling is underway. Preliminary data shows if an I-69 bridge is tolled and US 41 is untolled, in 2045, only 20-25% of cross-river traffic is expected to use the new bridge.

US 41: 75-80% of cross-river traffic



I-69: 20-25% of cross-river traffic



Public Outreach - EJ and RCAC Workshop - Sept. 19, 2017

River Cities Advisory Committee (RCAC): Representatives of government, business, environmental interests, education and environmental justice communities from both sides of the river

Environmental Justice Subcommittee (EJ): Representatives from both sides of the river that provide a voice for low-income or minority individuals when discussing potential effects of the project

What We Heard - Comments Made and Questions Asked

Short List of Corridors

West Corridor 1 and 2

- High impacts to businesses and residences.
- Address operations and maintenance for aging Twin Bridges.
- There are pro and cons to having interstate traffic in front of businesses.
- Access to businesses could be affected.
- Would split downtown Henderson in half.

Central Corridor 1

- Would have the least impact on homes and businesses.
- Bypasses Henderson, people wouldn't have a reason to stop.
- Could encourage growth in the new corridor.
- Lower construction costs.
- Higher environmental impacts.

West Corridor 1

- Greatest impact to residences, which includes some elderly and retired residents.
- Where will displaced low-income residents go?

West Corridor 2

- Greatest impact to businesses.
- New developments impacted.

US 41 Bridges

- Retain one or both of the US 41 bridges to provide redundancy for cross-river traffic.
- Redundancy is absolutely necessary for safety and traffic during accidents.
- Must reduce operations and maintenance costs. Removing one bridge would reduce costs.
- Must keep at least one US 41 bridge to keep businesses in the area viable.
- Do people want redundancy enough to pay a toll on an I-69 bridge and US 41 bridge(s)?
- What are the future maintenance costs for the US 41 bridges?
- Consider removing truck traffic from US 41 bridge(s) to reduce maintenance costs.
- Is it possible to remove truck traffic from the bridges? What are the implications?

Tolling

- Must get more traffic on I-69 bridge to generate more toll revenue for the project.
- A lower-toll option on the US 41 bridge(s) could help distribute traffic.
- It's important to increase public knowledge of all-electronic tolling.
- Spending money on tolls will be a hardship for some residents.
- Survey the public regarding toll rates.
- Will there be a reduced rate for locals? Will the time saved on I-69 be worth the toll?
- What accommodations can be made for low-income residents?
- Tolls may hurt Evansville businesses more than Henderson businesses because people won't make as many discretionary trips.



I69ohiorivercrossing.com



I-69 Ohio River Crossing



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