



MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 24, 2018
Time: 12:30 – 4:00 PM CT
Meeting: I-69 ORX IAC Meeting #3, Bus Tour
Location: Evansville Project Office/Project Area; see attached maps (Attachment A)

LIST OF ATTENDEES

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AGENCIES		
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PRE-TOUR MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions – Dan Prevost, Parsons Environmental Lead for the I-69 Ohio River Crossing (ORX) project, opened the meeting and welcomed IAC participants.

- Housekeeping.
- Introductions around room.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION (ATTACHMENT B)

- Draft Purpose and Need – Parsons summarized the I-69 ORX project purpose and need.
 - Complete the I-69 connection between Indiana and Kentucky
 - Develop a solution to address long-term cross-river mobility
 - Provide a cross-river connection to reduce congestion and delay
 - Improve safety for cross-river traffic
- July 2017 *Screening Report* Corridors – Parsons briefly discussed the three corridors and the No Build alternative that resulted after the *Screening Report* and *Screening Report Supplement*.
- Bridge Scenarios – For each corridor, 3 bridge scenarios were considered:
 - Build a 6-lane I-69 bridge for all cross-river traffic and remove both US 41 bridges
 - Build a 4-lane I-69 bridge and retain one US 41 bridge for local traffic
 - Build a 4-lane I-69 bridge and retain both US 41 bridges for local traffic
 - A total of 10 scenarios were screened.
- Alternatives Development and January 2018 *Screening Report Supplement*
 - The Screening Report Supplement identified and evaluated interchanges, altered alternatives to avoid or minimize impacts to sensitive resources, evaluated US 41 corridor accessibility and visibility, adjusted cost estimates, estimated life-cycle maintenance costs, and used traffic models to evaluate bridge and toll scenarios.
- Minimizing Impacts
 - Parsons explained that adjustments were made to the alternatives to avoid or minimize impacts to sensitive resources identified during screening and agency coordination activities. These resources include: Vigo Coal Mitigation site, Eagle Slough Natural Area

(owned by Sycamore Land Trust), McClain House (determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, NRHP) and NRHP-eligible Lee Baskett House.

- Preliminary Build Alternatives
 - The three preliminary build alternatives were discussed. Each alternative has a specified bridge scenario, as illustrated on copies of a public meeting handout that was distributed (Attachment C):
 - West Alternative 1 would be west of US 41 and, within Henderson, it would include impacts to residential and commercial areas. This alternative would have a 4-lane I-69 bridge and retain one US 41 bridge for local traffic.
 - West Alternative 2 would be adjacent to the west side of US 41 and would include impacts to the Henderson “commercial strip”. This alternative would have a 6-lane I-69 bridge and both US 41 bridges would be removed from service.
 - Central Alternative 1 would be primarily on a new alignment east of US 41. It would include a new I-69 bridge and retain one US 41 bridge for local traffic.
- Paying for I-69 ORX
 - Funding issues were discussed. The build alternatives would require multiple sources, including traditional federal and state funding as well as tolling. More than 80% of the current cross-river traffic is local, and the local share is expected to be 65% in 2045.
 - The DEIS will consider consequences and mitigation for possible tolling policies. None of the scenarios being analyzed pay for 100% of the project.
 - I-69 will be tolled, and tolling along existing US 41 may be necessary. The final tolling policies would be determined following the DEIS, with a funding plan before construction.
- Timeline
 - Project timeline was discussed. There have been no changes to the project timeline. The DEIS will be published in the fall of 2018 and we will hold another IAC meeting at that time as well as public hearings on both sides of the river. The FEIS and ROD are expected for the fall of 2019.
- Bus Route
 - Parsons gave an overview of the bus route and a safety briefing. Copies of the tour maps were provided (Attachment A-1 to A-6).

BUS TOUR

There were two buses, and the Project Team split-up so comments and questions could be made during the tour. The tour was led by Dan Prevost and Steve Nicaise. Table 1 provides a summary of the comments made during the tour.

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF BUS TOUR COMMENTS.

LOCATION	POINTS OF INTEREST AND COMMENTS
Driving on I-69 between project office and Weinbach Avenue	At the time of the 2004 DEIS, this section of the road was still I-164. The route for I-69 had not yet been determined. There are landfills beneath the I-69 and US 41 interchange (#25 and #26 on Attachment A-1 to A-3). They would be impacted by West Alternatives 1 and 2.
Weinbach Avenue at the levee	Along much of I-69, the highway is the levee. Just to the east where the Central Alternative 1 interchange would be, the levee is a separate structure to the north. The team has coordinated with the levee authority.
Weinbach Avenue at I-69	The areas to the east and west include old landfills (#30 and #31 on Attachment A-2). Along with Tri-State Towing (#29), these hazmat sites would be impacted by Central Alternative 1.
Weinbach Avenue south of I-69	The original location of Central Alternative 1's interchange with I-69 would have impacted the Vigo Coal wetland mitigation site. The interchange was shifted to the west to avoid it.
Weinbach south of I-69	This entire area is part of the Ohio River floodway. The Central 1 alignment is about ¼ mile to the east. Central Alternative 1 would bridge much of this farmland.
Waterworks Road	Ellis Park is to the south, Eagle Slough Natural Area is to the north. State boundary: Kentucky to the south, Indiana to the north.
Stop 1 - Eagle Slough Natural Area and Ellis Park raceway (Attachment A-2)	Early concepts would have impacted the northern end of Eagle Slough. West Alternative 2 would include a bridge for Waterworks Road over I-69, which would require a strip of right-of-way from the south end of the property.
	West Alternative 1 and 2 were reviewed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New bridge would be built to the west of the existing bridges • West 1 keeps existing bridge – access to local roads Waterworks Rd, Nugent Dr, and Wolf Hills/Stratman Roads would be from existing bridge. • West 2 – access is via interchanges
	Wellhead protection areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellis Park and Trocadero Plaza have wellhead protection areas and Class V injection wells for commercial septic systems. West Alternatives 1 and 2 would impact these, including removal of Trocadero Plaza.
	Existing Bridges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northbound bridge – built 1932 • Southbound bridge – built 1966 Both recommended eligible for the NRHP Coordinated with Henderson County and City of Henderson regarding potential re-use for pedestrians/bicycles. Both indicated that they were not interested in taking ownership responsibility. West Alternative 1 and Central Alternative 1 would keep one bridge in service; however, no decision has been made regarding which one to keep. Discussion will continue with consulting parties through the Section 106 process.
Existing US 41 Bridges	Fix for 41 Project – There is a maintenance project for minor repairs to the Ohio River bridges and approach bridges.
Existing US 41 Bridges	Southbound bridge was designed to look like the Northbound

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LOCATION	POINTS OF INTEREST AND COMMENTS
	bridge, but uses different construction techniques (rivets vs. bolts, for example)
US 41, south bank of Ohio River (Attachment A-3)	To the east – John James Audubon State Park, including the wetland tract area that was recently acquired. No impacts to the State Park are proposed. To the west – Wetland Reserve Program parcel
US 41 and Wolf Hills/Stratman Roads	Land use transitions to the commercial strip
Stop 2 – US 41 and Watson Lane	US 41 Commercial Strip – mix of business types: retail, fast food, auto dealers, etc. Business Survey – sent 900 postcards to businesses and visited 100 businesses to gather info via survey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of opinions among business owners • Some more concerned about the direct impacts of West Alternatives 1 or 2 (especially West 2). Others concerned about “bypass effect” of Central Alternative 1.
	West Alternative 1 would impact more than 200 residences, many to the west of US 41 (such as those along Elm Street, which was next on the tour).
	Both West Alternatives would impact a number of UST and other hazardous material sites. (Attachment A-7 to A-8).
	Environmental Justice (EJ) was discussed. A number of census block groups that met our criteria for EJ populations are within the project area. Due to the potential for direct impacts (relocations) and for toll-related impacts, we developed an aggressive outreach program to gather their input. These activities include an EJ Subcommittee, a Public Survey, and Community Conversations.
Elm Street	West Alternative 1 would roughly follow Elm Street and directly impact these neighborhoods west of US 41.
Existing US 41/ US 60 Interchange (Attachment A-4)	This US 41/US 60 interchange would be utilized for West Alternatives 1 and 2. Central Alternative 1 would not impact this interchange.
Merrill Place Development	This is a developing commercial area with “big box” retail along with medical and general office buildings. There are plans for a residential subdivision also. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing Merrill Way Trail is the only City of Henderson multi-use trail and provides access from the retail to residences west of US 41.
	Original design for Central Alternative 1 included an interchange to the east with a new roadway connecting to US 41 through the Merrill Place development. Based on comments from local businesses, the interchange was redesigned to provide a more direct connection.
Stop 3 – Central Alternative 1 proposed US 60 interchange and the Lee Baskett House (Attachment A-5)	Two historic properties factor into the alignment and the design of the new interchange, the Lee Baskett House and McClain Property. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Interchange was shifted south to avoid direct impacts. • The space between the properties is narrow. The proposed alignment “threads the needle”.
	The alignment in this area largely follows an existing utility corridor in order to minimize impacts to residences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher level of impact to agricultural land.

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LOCATION	POINTS OF INTEREST AND COMMENTS
	North Fork Canoe Creek floodway also has factored into the alignment in the area.
Braxton Park Subdivision (Attachment A-6)	<p>The Central Alternative 1 alignment follows a utility corridor about 300 feet east of this subdivision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids direct impacts to residences but potential noise/visual impacts.
WFIE Transmission Tower/Gas transmission line	Central Alternative 1 will squeeze between the two to minimize/avoid impacts (Note, these are not labeled on the attached maps).
Stop 4 – Ohio River barge depot and Proposed Green River National Wildlife Refuge	<p>The existing floodplains/floodway and forested wetlands along Green River/Wolf Hills Road were discussed.</p> <p>There has been a proposal for many years to create a federal wildlife refuge along the Ohio and Green Rivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed an Environmental Assessment in 2001. Supplemental EA prepared in 2010. • Recent Federal Legislation directs USFWS to begin acquiring property for the refuge. However, the legislation specifically states that process should not start until an alignment for I-69 is selected. • Green River State Forest will not be impacted.
	<p>This area of the Ohio River is situated between two locks that maintain its flow under non-flood conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area is known as the “John T. Myers Pool”. • The Newburg Locks and Dam is approximately 8.5 miles upstream; John T Meyers is approximately 59 miles downstream.
	<p>The Ohio River and Green River in this area are heavily used for barge traffic and storage. The Project Team has been coordinating with the Coast Guard regarding navigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simulations were conducted at Seamans Church Institute to assess how various bridge configurations would impact river navigation. • The project has preliminary clearance for two 650’ navigation spans or one 800’ navigation span. Under West Alternative 1, the bridge would match the spans on the existing US 41 bridge that would remain.
	<p>Public water supplies were discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The municipal supplies for Evansville and Henderson are Ohio River surface water intakes and their “Zone 1 of Critical Concern” extends 25 miles upstream. • The project area, including US 41 and the three build alternatives, are within this zone.
Wolf Hills Road	<p>This area of bottomland was recently added to Audubon State Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes some areas purchased through the Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund. • Wolf Hills also contains a closed underground coal mine. • There are landslides mapped by the Kentucky Geologic Survey.

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

STOP 1

- Why was East Corridor dropped?

The East Corridor would have negative, long-term impacts to Angel Mounds State Historic Site, a National Landmark, and Ashumbala Nature Preserve. Local stakeholders/consulting parties, the NPS, and the SHPOs were opposed to the route. It also had the highest number of acres with a high probability of archeological sites, the highest amount of prime farmland, the second highest amount of residential relocations, the greatest impact to rivers/streams, including a bridge over the Green River (a Section 10 waterway), and was the most expensive to build and maintain.

- Is pedestrian/bicycle use allowed on the existing US 41 bridges?

Although it is legal for pedestrians and bicycles to use the bridges, they are very narrow and often congested. Therefore, it is not a common route for bicycle/pedestrian travel. We have not received public/stakeholder comments that indicate there is non-motorized use of these bridges.

- What if a barge strikes a bridge, under the West Alternatives would that be different than the Central Alternative?

Presently, barge strikes and other extreme incidents can create temporary closures to cross-river traffic (nearest crossing is 30 miles upstream). A newly designed bridge would be designed to current standards (wider, resistant to seismic events, etc.) therefore it would be less likely to require full closure. Central Alternative 1 would provide more separation and should decrease the likelihood that both bridges would be affected by the same incident. West Alternative 1 would retain one of the existing bridges, so that would improve reliability compared to West Alternative 2, where only the new bridge would be in service. [For reference, according to US Coast Guard data, the existing bridges have been struck 21 times since 1997.]

- Are you considering tolling scenarios in your EJ analysis?

Yes, we are including tolling scenarios on the EJ analyses and outreach activities. Although the toll policy has not been decided, the potential for tolling is being discussed and evaluated. For example, the EJ Survey had several questions relating to the potential effects of tolling.

- Have you considered keeping one of the US 41 bridges open for bicycle/pedestrian use?

Yes, since the bridges are NRHP-eligible, the Team has offered the potential to transfer one of the bridges to local authorities so they could use and maintain it. We have already received responses declining this option. If a build alternative is selected as the preferred, the bridge(s) will be advertised for purchase so a nongovernmental organization, or person, could take ownership and either maintain or relocate the bridge(s) for reuse.

- Could the new bridge have bicycle/pedestrian access? The Gordie Howe International

Bridge added pedestrian access after the Record of Decision (ROD).

Yes, but that's not currently part of the alternatives being analyzed, due to cost and lack of connectivity.

STOP 2

- What are the types of concerns that resulted from the EJ outreach activities?

The main concerns we've received are 1) displacement of residents and 2) tolling . The team has received many comments to keep a free crossing for local use. There is little concern over tolling the new I-69, as long as the community members can still commute and shop across the river for free.

- What about air quality concerns? Is this area in non-attainment of air quality standards?

The region is an attainment for air quality standards, except there is a recent lawsuit that affects how the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) completes their analysis for ozone. The MPO is currently working on that; it may not be complete for the DEIS but we do anticipate that to be worked-out by the time we get to the FEIS.

- How would the alternatives affect access to Audubon State Park?

Access to the US 41 business strip and the state park will be maintained under all of the scenarios; they all maintain US 41 as a local highway.

STOP 3

- Where is the newly-discovered cemetery?

That is located west of Walmart, abutting US 41 to the east and south of the US 60 interchange (Attachment A-4). It is a stand of trees on the aerial photograph and too small to show-up on the scale of these maps. A recent revision to the design of West Alternative 1 and West Alternative 2 have eliminated impacts to the cemetery.

- What is the difference in the number of proposed residential versus commercial relocations for the alternatives?

Rough estimates (from memory) were provided. Below are the quantities calculated for the Screening Report, which will be updated for the DEIS (due to minor revisions in the alignments).

- *West Alternative 1 would relocate 213 residences and 21 businesses*
- *West Alternative 2 would relocate 119 residences and 58 businesses*
- *Central Alternative 1 would relocate 2 residences and 0 businesses.*

- Who owns these transmission lines? What about other utilities, have you been coordinating with them?

Yes, we have been coordinating with the various utilities. There is a radio tower (WFIE) and a natural gas transmission lines along Central Alternative 1 that are constraining. Utility coordination is ongoing and will be considered in the projected costs in the DEIS.

- What about the floodway in the area of the proposed I-69/US 60 interchange on Central Alternative 1?

If Central Alternative 1 is selected, the interchange area will have to be modeled. At this time, there is no detailed mapping of the floodplain in this area.

- Why is the Lee Baskett property NHRP-eligible?

Jonna explained – mainly for architecture, and also Lee Baskett was an important farmer. Below is a quote from the referenced historical survey report:

The property was recommended as eligible for inclusion in the NRHP under Criterion B for its association with locally significant Lee Baskett and under Criterion C as an example of a significant architectural form on the 1999 survey form and in the “A Cultural Resource Survey for I-69 South in Henderson County, Kentucky” report completed in 2002 (Powell 2002)... Although the property has lost historic integrity of setting, the remaining house and garage retain sufficient historic integrity to remain eligible for inclusion in the NRHP under Criterion B and C as they are representative of the history associated with Lee Baskett and with the buildings’ architectural significance. (Source: *History/Architecture Survey for Henderson, Henderson County, Kentucky – I-69 Ohio River Crossing Project, December 7, 2017; prepared by Gray & Pape, Inc. on behalf of INDOT and KYTC*).

STOP 4

- How does this river channel here compare with the Louisville area?

This pool of the river is approximately twice as wide as the Louisville area where the new I-65 bridge was recently constructed.

- How much of this floodway/floodplain will be spanned versus filled?

Under Central Alternative 1, almost all of the floodway and much of the floodplain would be spanned. Under West Alternatives 1 and 2, the existing fill and span sections would likely match US 41. The flood impact analyses are ongoing.

- What about potential spills of petroleum/hazardous substances?

A new I-69 bridge would be constructed with best management practices (BMPs), such as catch basins, designed to mitigate spills on the bridge. During construction, all work will be conducted under a spill prevention, control and countermeasures (SPCC) plan that will include notification of the water supply operators (when applicable).

POST TOUR WRAP-UP

Janelle Lemon, INDOT Project Manager, thanked the attendees for their time, and requested that any official comments or questions be made in writing to Dan Prevost and/or Juliet Port of Parsons since it was not possible to record all comments and questions made during the bus

tour.

A copy of the list of attendees was requested. This list and copies of the handouts were distributed to the IAC approximately one week following the tour (Attachment D).

COMMENTS

One written response was received, prepared by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources – Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (IDNR-DHPA), dated June 20, 2018 (Attachment E). IDNR-DHPA stated it's unlikely the archaeological impacts, if any, of these alternatives will influence the selection of the preferred alignment and discussed concerns regarding potential impacts to City of Evansville historic districts under various bridge and tolling scenarios. IDNR-DHPA concluded it seems possible up to six historic districts could be affected.