



Stakeholder Involvement Plan

For Public and Agency Involvement

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Version I

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PREPARED FOR

Illinois Department of Transportation
Region 5, District 8

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ACRONYMS

BDE	IDOT Bureau of Design and Environment
CCA	Community Context Audit
CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions
EA	Environmental Assessment
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
IDOT	Illinois Department of Transportation
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
PSG	Project Study Group
SIP	Stakeholder Involvement Plan
SOL	Statute of Limitations

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background and History

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is conducting a Preliminary Engineering Study to evaluate the potential improvements to approximately three (3) miles of Illinois Route 127 from the Illinois Route 127 and Illinois Route 15 intersection and continue north to the westbound I-64 ramps and includes one (1) additional mile of side roads along the route. The study will investigate how to address traffic growth while decreasing congestion and improving safety concerns along the route. Please see the Location Map below for your reference.

The proposed project will examine transportation needs within the study area to accommodate current and future traffic demands. This section of Illinois Route 127 serves as a main North-South corridor connecting the adjacent communities of New Minden and Nashville. The existing Illinois Route 127 roadway cross-section varies throughout the study area. Currently, there are two lanes with shoulders throughout most of the project limits. Turn lanes are present at some of the intersections.

The study area includes mostly industrial and commercial areas with residential areas and limited agricultural areas.



LOCATION MAP

In coordination with the FHWA Illinois Division, this project is being processed as a Federally Approved Categorical Exclusion. The processing of the study as such was based on that, at the time of the initiation of the study, there are no known significant environmental issues that will be encountered within the study area. Once the environmental surveys are completed, and if significant environmental issues are identified, the level of environmental processing may be changed as a result.

2.0 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT PLAN

2.1 Stakeholder Involvement Plan Goals and Objectives

The Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP) serves as a guide for implementing stakeholder involvement activities during the Illinois Route 127 from Illinois Route 15 to I-64 WB Ramps Phase I Study. The goal of the SIP is to outline a program of activities to actively engage stakeholders throughout the planning process. The objectives of the SIP are to:

- Identify stakeholders.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of the lead agency.
- Establish the timing and type of outreach activities with all stakeholders.
- Establish stakeholder requirements for providing timely input to the project development process.
- Provide an approach for evaluating the effectiveness of the public-participation program and refine, as appropriate, to respond to public needs and concerns.

The SIP provides the framework for achieving agreement and communicating the decision-making process between stakeholders to enhance awareness and understanding of the project. The tools and techniques outlined in the SIP will build on established relationships and create new partnerships to enable informed stakeholder involvement and meaningful participation.

2.2 Stakeholder Identification

A stakeholder is identified as anyone who has an interest in the project; this could include residents or property owners, business owners, local, state, and federal governmental agencies, elected/community officials, civic and community groups, environmental preservation, and special interest groups; media outlets, schools, and commuters.

Early coordination and/or meetings will be conducted with city, county, state, and federal organizations within the study area as a means of identifying interested parties and stakeholders, including individuals, businesses, community leaders and organizations. The identification of stakeholders will be done through a combination of research and input from local community leaders and the public. It is anticipated that new stakeholders will be added to the initial stakeholder list throughout the study. All stakeholders expressing interest in the study will be added to the study mailing list and will be able to participate in the process through various public outreach opportunities. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, the study website, project study groups, public meetings, newsletters, and media announcements. The study mailing list will be updated and maintained throughout the duration of the study.

The project team will work with IDOT and the Project Study Group (PSG) to identify stakeholders and to develop an initial mailing list.

2.3 Project Study Group (PSG)

The Project Study Group (PSG) is a multi-disciplinary team that is involved in stakeholder identification and outreach activities, as well as ensuring that all federal, state, and local requirements are met. The PSG includes appropriate District, Federal Highway Administration, Planning and Programming, Bureau of Design and Environment (BDE), consulting staff, and other representatives as appropriate to the project. PSG meetings are held in coordination with monthly standing FHWA coordination meetings and throughout the project to discuss activities related to key project milestones.

Organization	Title
IDOT – District 8	Program Development Engineer
IDOT – District 8	Studies and Plans Engineer
IDOT – District 8	Location Studies Engineer
IDOT – District 8	Senior Project Studies Engineer
IDOT – District 8	Environmental Studies Manager
IDOT – District 8	Geometric Engineer
IDOT – District 8	Hydraulics Engineer
IDOT – District 8	Phase I Project Manager
IDOT – District 8	Land Acquisition Manager
IDOT – BDE	Regional Field Engineer
IDOT – BDE	Environmental Coordinator
FHWA	FHWA Oversight
Volkert	Principle-In-Charge
Volkert	Project Manager
Volkert	Environmental Studies Lead
Volkert	Environmental Studies
Volkert	Project Engineer
Volkert	Public Involvement
Added Dimension	Public Involvement
EFK Moen	Drainage Engineer
Horner & Shifrin	Environmental Engineer
Lin	Structural Engineer
Millennia	Hydraulic Engineer
Stanley	Project Support

3.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS

3.1 Stakeholder Identification

Project stakeholders will be identified as individuals or institutions that have an interest or concern in the project. Governmental agencies such as Washington County, the City of Nashville, and local legislators are among potential project stakeholders. Along with these, school district officials, railroad officials, motorists, business owners, etc. will be considered.

Organization	Title
Washington County	Board Chairman
Washington County	Sheriff
Washington County	County Engineer
Washington County	Zoning Administrator
City of Nashville	Mayor
City of Nashville	Police Chief
City of Nashville	Fire Chief
City of Nashville	Street Supervisor
Nashville Township	Supervisor
Beaucoup Township	Supervisor
Nashville C.C. District 49	Superintendent
Nashville H.S. District 99	Superintendent

3.2 Stakeholder Outreach Meetings

A variety of meeting types will be used throughout the study to engage different stakeholder groups such as elected community officials and leaders, civic and community groups, and others as appropriate. The Project Study Team will conduct one-on-one meetings, small group meetings (if requested), and public meetings.

3.3 Public Meetings and/or Hearing

Public meetings represent an important opportunity for direct engagement with the larger, general public. At these meetings, study team members are available to discuss, explain, and help participants understand the information presented.

Three (3) public informational meetings will be held at locations in the project study area that are convenient and accessible to the public during the planning process at critical project milestones. There is potential for one or more of these public meetings to be virtual. Attendees will have the opportunity to discuss the project with team members, view project displays, and submit written and/or verbal comments and concerns.

3.4 Small Group Meetings

Small group meetings with chambers of commerce, community/civic groups, interest groups, business owners and additional stakeholders may be planned in coordination with other stakeholder meetings or in response to requests from

local community groups. Meetings held early in the process may help with identification of community context issues, while later meetings may provide input as the process progresses to address emerging issues related to project alternatives. The project team will also be available to meet with organizations on a one-on-one basis throughout the project as requested. These stakeholder conversations are another important aspect of engaging the community throughout the planning process as it ensures that this project fits into and reflects the project's surroundings.

3.5 Mailing List

A project mailing list consisting of project stakeholder contact information will be maintained throughout the project and used to distribute notifications about upcoming public participation opportunities and provide project updates. Items such as newsletters, postcards, and email notifications may be distributed to the mailing list to provide project information and announce upcoming public meetings. Anyone can be added to the mailing list at any time by contacting the Department via email, written, or verbal request.

3.6 Project Website

A project website is being developed and will be hosted on the IDOT Featured Projects page when available. The website will support broader outreach and provide access to project information to accommodate regional and national interest in the project.

This will serve as a comprehensive information resource for the project as materials will be made available on the website. The materials include newsletters, public meeting announcements, public comment summaries, documents, frequently asked questions, meeting materials, and other information.

Updates will be made as the study progresses at key project milestones.

3.7 Media

An effective way to reach a larger audience and inform community members who are not on the project's mailing list is to utilize various local media outlets such as newspaper, social media, television, and radio stations to inform the public of upcoming participation opportunities. It is important that coordination with IDOT regarding media outreach be consistent to ensure that all media outlets have current, relevant, and accurate information regarding the project's progress.

All press releases will be developed by the project team and will adhere to IDOT media guidelines. Legal notices will also be posted as required by policy. Social media will be used to announce milestones and upcoming public meetings.

3.8 Newsletters

Newsletters will be distributed to provide project information and solicit input and will contain project and public meeting information. Hardcopy newsletters will be sent to stakeholders who have provided a mailing address, and e-newsletters will be distributed to those who have provided an email address. Each newsletter will be posted on the project website.

3.11 Comment Summary Database

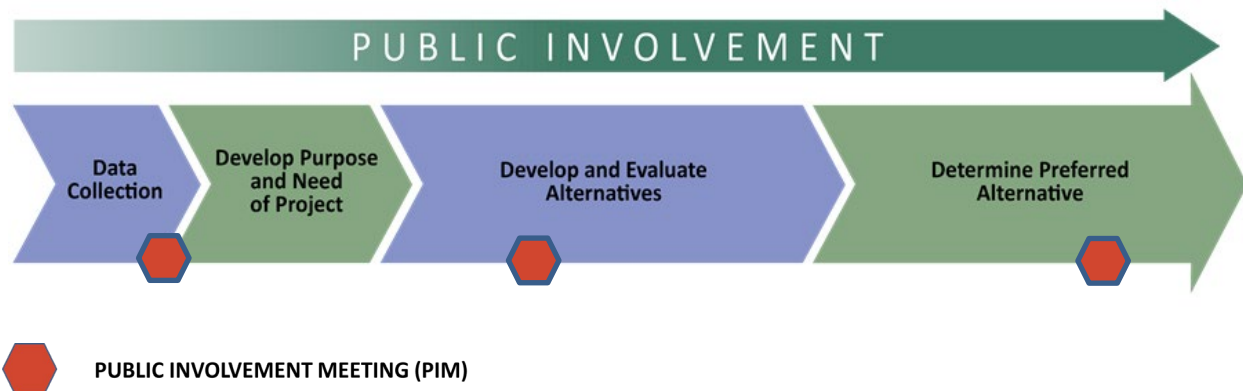
A Comment Summary Database will be used to record comments received from the public. Comments may be obtained through e-mail, postal mail, phone calls, and comment forms from meetings and briefings. The database will be used to enter, sort, and develop comment summaries. Comment summaries will be used to incorporate public comment into the planning process.

4.0 MEASURING PROGRESS AND EVALUATION

The SIP will be made available for review and input at stakeholder meetings and posted to the project website.

The effectiveness and success of the SIP will be monitored throughout the project. Measures will include levels of participation in various public and community meetings, as well as feedback on the effectiveness of outreach (e.g., feedback from participants, targeted questions on comment forms). Public comment summaries prepared at various points during the process will be reviewed with respect to the goals identified in this SIP. Progress will be reviewed through internal team meetings and prior to and following key public outreach milestones. Evaluation results have and will continue to demonstrate the usefulness of techniques and the benefits achieved in communications with stakeholder communities.

The program design will be modified, as needed, throughout the project to respond to stakeholder feedback and to meet project needs. Additional outreach activities may be incorporated or planned activities may be modified as needed.



5.0 CONCLUSION

Through both public involvement and outreach, the overall goal of this phase of the study is to investigate how to address traffic growth while decreasing congestion and improving safety concerns along the route. This public engagement plan details the tools and techniques the study team will employ to offer stakeholders and the general public the opportunity to learn about and provide feedback on the Illinois Route 127 from Illinois Route 15 to I-64 WB Ramps Preliminary Engineering Study.