

Appendix E: Summary of Input from Agencies at April Webinars on Alternatives Screening



**MEETING SUMMARY
MILTON-MADISON BRIDGE
AGENCY COORDINATION
SCREENING WEBINAR
April 9, 2009**

The Milton-Madison Project Team held an agency coordination webinar/conference call on April 9, 2009, at 1:30 a.m. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the first screening of location alternatives to a smaller set for detailed study.

Meeting participants included the following:

Gary Valentine, KYTC
Tim Foreman, KYTC
Susan Neumeyer, KYTC
Steve Smith, INDOT
Linda Lytle, Madison Visitor's Center
John Carr, IN SHPO
Virginia Laszewski, EPA Region 5
Mike Litwin, Fish and Wildlife Service
Randall Embry, KIPDA
Michele Curran, National Park Service
Nick Chevance, National Park Service
John Carr, WSA
Tim Sorenson, WSA
Rebecca Ramsey, WSA

Tim Sorenson welcomed callers and asked for introductions. He indicated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the screening of bridge location alternatives on new alignments, following a similar format used at the Project Advisory Group (PAG) #5 meeting. Participants will work through a screening against the project purpose, followed by a screening against the secondary considerations.

Additional project information has been gathered since the previous round of agency coordination. Environmental data from a variety of resources has been gathered and mapped to identify constraints in the study area. The 2008 Fracture Critical Inspection on the US 421 Bridge was finalized and the bridge has been posted. Repair work is scheduled for the summer of 2009, to be followed by in-depth inspection. The Project Purpose and Need Statement has been finalized, pending a legal sufficiency review by FHWA.

Also new, a simplified schedule of involvement opportunities was sent out electronically to agencies and Section 106 parties earlier this morning. Currently, we are between PAG

Meetings #5 and #6. The team is working to screen the number of location alternatives to a smaller set for detailed study.

Screening by Purpose: The first discussion during the meeting focused on screening the alternatives against the project purpose. An alternative must meet the purpose to be a valid alternative. Based on the Purpose and Need survey distributed at the February public meeting, 88% of responses agreed that the purpose addressed the importance of the project “very well” or fairly well.”

The Do Nothing (Alt 1), Rehabilitation (Alt 2), and Superstructure Replacement (Alt 3) alternatives will be carried forward through the screening process unless they are proven infeasible. Today, we are only going to be discussing the screening of the new location alternatives (Alternatives 4-14).

The first Purpose, to “improve or replace a functionally obsolete/structurally deficient bridge,” is met by all the new location alternatives.

The second Purpose, to “improve or maintain cross-river mobility and community connectivity,” received the most discussion by PAG members at the March meeting. Feedback from PAG members led the project team to include travel time as a performance measure and to consider the visual linkage between both communities, instead of just a physical roadway linkage. Based on this criteria, the Bypass (Alt 4), Lonesome Hollow (Alt 13), and Eagle Hollow (Alt 14) do not reduce travel times/distances between the intersections of US 421/KY 36 and US 421/SR 56/Jefferson Street. The Bypass and Eagle Hollow Alternatives do not maintain a linkage between Milton and Madison.

The third Purpose, to “improve safety,” does not differentiate between the alternatives on new alignments. A new bridge would be designed to meet current standards.

The next step at the PAG #5 meeting was to discuss this purpose screening in small groups. Minor revisions to the original screening presented were made based on this input. These are noted above.

At the February public meeting, attendees were surveyed to determine initial preferences for location alternatives. The data did not indicate any strong preference patterns, but several alternatives were disliked, including the Do Nothing (Alt 1), Rehabilitation (Alt 2), Superstructure Replacement (Alt 3), and both Jefferson Street Alternatives (Alt 5-6).

Screening by Secondary Considerations: At the March meeting, PAG members were given a second screening table listing the secondary considerations listed in the Purpose and Need Statement. PAG members were asked to work in groups to populate this matrix. Each small group reported on 2-3 alternatives they preferred which should be moved to the next level for detailed study.

The following discussion at the Agency webinar step through these criteria individually, including comments made by participants.

1. Minimize Costs. The project team will develop detailed cost estimates and quantify environmental impacts later in the process. Based on length and required approach investments, the Bypass (Alt 4) is likely far more expensive than other alternatives on new alignments.

2. Quality of Life. Impacts to access and disruptions to the communities will be considered both during construction and afterwards. The Rehabilitation (Alt 2) and Superstructure Replacement (Alt 3) alternatives will likely have large impact during construction.

3. Sensitivity to Local Resources. The next round of screening will include detailed impact analysis for each of these environmental categories.

Mike Litwin: As indicated in previous comments submitted, the screening criteria should include terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

Rebecca Ramsey: These are covered in the Environmental Overview Report and will be considered during the screening process. To keep the matrix compact, not all criteria were listed in full detail.

Susan Neumeyer: It may not be possible to determine definitively which footprints contain all historic resources including unknown archaeological sites this early in the process. We can probably answer “no” for footprints with no known historic resources, but the survey has not been completed yet.

Tim Sorenson: This screening only represents the information we have available at this time. A detailed survey will be coming later in the process. An archaeological survey is scheduled for next level of screening, although the actual order in the timeline still needs to be determined.

Virginia Laszewski: The team should consider hazardous materials and contaminated areas in screening the alternatives. Why doesn't this factor appear in the screening matrix?

Rebecca: This information is presented in the Environmental Overview Report and will be considered in the alternatives screening process, even though it doesn't show up in the matrix.

Virginia: Should the secondary considerations be prioritized? For example, factors requiring permits seem to be more significant - if an alternative doesn't meet the required Coast Guard clearances, it isn't going to be constructible. How

will the team evaluate these environmental factors? Are you considering mitigation, avoidance, etc?

Tim: Basically, the team is looking for fatal flaws at this level of screening, and qualitative impact levels. The screening matrix is used to gather input and perspectives, not to be a detailed examination of impacts. We aren't trying to rank alternatives, just to identify which don't need to move forward for detailed analysis.

John Carr, WSA: We are trying to gather enough info to single out the best alternatives to move forward.

Virginia: How many alternatives will move forward for detailed development?

Tim: A number of alternatives to move forward was picked in consultant scope of work, but this was just to help determine the cost to complete the work. The team will pick however many alternatives are needed to move forward in order to meet the preferences of both state DOTs.

Virginia: Table 2 in the Purpose and Need document seems to lack definitive numerical criteria.

Tim: That is why we are not ranking the alternatives or screening criteria. We are keeping notes about who likes which alternatives and who dislikes which alternatives to help us understand the thought processes and priorities of stakeholders.

Virginia: Do you know dollar values to evaluate the cost-based screening criteria? Has a budget been determined?

John Carr, WSA: We don't know the actual dollar values yet; we are just comparing relative costs primarily based on the alternatives relative length of roadway and bridge. We are comparing relative impacts for other screening factors, looking for fatal flaws. As we move through this process, the project team will be able to quantify these in the next stage of detailed study.

Virginia: What is the fatal flaw for cost?

John Carr, WSA: That depends on how much funding INDOT and KYTC can secure for project.

Virginia: KYTC and INDOT don't know budget yet either?

John Carr, WSA: The budget has not been set yet. Once the alternative cost estimates are developed, both states can look at their budgets and find out if and how much money is available for the project.

Virginia: Then cost is not a limiting factor?

John Carr, WSA: It will be a limiting factor, but the dollar value isn't known yet.

Virginia: Will the costs be known in time for the Draft Environmental Assessment?

John Carr, WSA: We should know by then.

Virginia: The Secondary Consideration performance measures are just screening for fatal flaws? For example, reducing access to markets is not necessarily a fatal flaw but an alternative that doesn't meet this criteria isn't necessarily eliminated.

John Carr, WSA: We want to identify any alternatives that are far superior or inferior to identify the most competitive options. Both states will decide together which should move forward for detailed study.

Virginia: Will the Table 2 performance measures consider drinking water, floodplains, wells, etc?

Tim: These factors will be discussed in the Environmental Overview Report.

4. Hilltop Connection. This consideration asks how the bridge location provides an opportunity to get to the top of the ridges in either state. Can a connection get to Upper Milton and avoid Milton Hill in Kentucky? Can it create a bypass in Indiana to move traffic – especially trucks – to the hilltop faster? Neither state has a plan in place now to build either of these roadways, but we don't want to preclude a future connection.

Virginia: What potential impacts are considered in this performance measure?

Tim: This evaluation does not include a detailed environmental assessment, just what we know from the Environmental Overview Report, based on readily accessible databases.

John Carr, WSA: We are not going to go into in-depth studies for this level of screening. Conceptually, we will identify general mitigation/avoidance options along a corridor for these connections, to be considered for a project as much as 30 years in the future. At a basic level, we want to be able to answer: does a hilltop connection for this

alternative make sense? States will have to consider the feasibility of a connection when selecting preferred alternative(s).

Virginia: Is engineering feasibility the primary consideration for a hilltop connection?

John Carr, WSA: Yes, plus the general environmental impacts, based on information readily-accessible in databases and GIS formats.

Virginia: Does the hilltop connection environmental screening include consideration of threatened/endangered species habitats?

Tim: Yes.

Virginia: Are you looking at the possibility for multiple connection corridors as a performance measure?

Tim: Not at this point.

Randall Embry: There is a cemetery on Milton's hilltop.

John Carr, WSA: We identified this site while gathering data for the Environmental Overview Report. We also looked for known archaeological sites, etc.

5. System Reliability. There is concern with the narrow bridge that crashes and repairs lead to bridge/lane closures and travel time becomes unreliable. A new bridge should reduce the times the bridge or a travel lane must be closed.

6. Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing. This criteria considers if a cross-river connection is possible and how it should be connected. Existing and planned bike/pedestrian facilities are described in the Needs and Deficiencies Report. There is no current bike/ped passage on the existing bridge.

7. Safety. Known safety problems exist on both the bridge and the immediate approaches. An alternative should improve safety on these links.

Michele Curran: Are the bridge approaches included as part of this project?

Tim: Alternatives 4-14 include improvements to the approaches, from the bridge ends to a connection with SR 56, KY 36, or US 421 on either side of the river.

John Carr, WSA: The Rehabilitation Alternative (Alt 2) will not include any approach work. Some approach improvements may be included with the Superstructure Replacement Alternative (Alt 3) because we'll have to

connect a wider bridge to narrow roads. The team hasn't determined that level of detail yet for the alternatives.

Virginia: Why wouldn't you include approach improvements with the Rehabilitation Alternative?

Michele: Because you are dealing with historic structures.

Gary Valentine: The main problem is bridge itself.

Tim: Because the bridge is the main problem, we focused the project purpose on addressing this element.

John Carr, WSA: Approach improvements would be a separate project if the Rehabilitation Alternative (Alt 2) is selected.

Virginia: So there are no problems with the existing approaches?

John Carr, WSA: Incorrect. But we can't fix all the problems in the study area with one transportation project.

Virginia: Do the Table 1 screening criteria apply to rehabilitation?

Tim: Alternatives 1-3 will move forward unless we find a fatal flaw.

John Carr, WSA: If the existing bridge were not historic, we would probably eliminate the Rehabilitation option, which would be in line with AASHTO guidelines (described in *Guidelines for Historic Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement*, November 2008). This alternative will be carried forward to the final decision-making step in the environmental process because the bridge is historic and its historic context. But the Rehabilitation (Alt 2) does not meet purpose and need.

Virginia: Do historic bridges get their own performance measures, separate from Table 1)?

John Carr, WSA: No, because a historic bridge is still part of the transportation system. The AASHTO guidelines go into detail about when to rehabilitate and when to replace historic structures.

Virginia: Will environmental document cover this discussion item?

John Carr, WSA: It will, but we aren't ready to screen out this alternative out yet.

Virginia: Does the SHPO agree with keeping Alternative 2?

John Carr, IN SHPO: We are still considering this strategy.

John Carr, IN SHPO: How far beyond the bridge would the approaches need to be improved? All alternatives that build a new bridge upstream of the existing would add additional northbound traffic onto SR 56 westbound. East of Madison, SR 56 is a substandard, narrow road with buildings close to right-of-way. How realistic is it to say project will stop at northern approach when added traffic on SR 56 will likely require improvements? Won't a project be needed immediately to improve connection on SR 56 to Madison?

Tim: Improvements to connect SR 56 back to Madison are a consideration. The Kentucky side would include similar issues, plus has floodplain concerns.

John Carr, WSA: The detailed analysis of the alternatives will take a look at this. Both states will have to come to a decision on this.

Virginia: Will this broaden the scope of project?

John Carr, WSA: I don't think so. We won't know what approaches/connections should be included until we start looking at the refined alternatives and detailed analysis.

8. River Navigation. The project team has been coordinating with the Coast Guard on vertical and horizontal clearance issues regarding a bridge rehabilitation/replacement.

Virginia: Is the Coast Guard a 106 Party for this project?

John Carr, WSA: No, they are serving as a Cooperating Agency. The Coast Guard will be making a federal decision as a Cooperating Agency; FHWA will be responsible for any Section 106 issues. The Coast Guard has not been involved in the Section 106 process on any other Ohio River bridge project.

Susan Neumeyer: Section 106 is set up so that one federal agency takes the lead. Typically, one agency will defer to/accept the lead agency's decisions though they may have nominal input.

Virginia: Would the Coast Guard be asked to sign the MOA?

Susan: Required signatories usually are FHWA and SHPO. Other signatories invited would be KYTC, INDOT, and anyone else who has legal role defined in the MOA. The Coast Guard could be involved if they want to jump in. However they have chosen not to at this point.

Next Steps and Other Discussion Items: For the next element at the PAG #5 meeting, the small groups picked 2-3 alternatives that best addressed their interests. The project team wanted to understand why the groups chose alternatives. Information will be included in *Alternatives Screening Report*, along with summaries of your input from the webinar today and the one on Monday. In a couple of weeks, agencies will be receiving a copy of the draft Screening Report and the draft Environmental Overview Report for your formal comments.

Virginia: Will the summary include input from Monday's agency webinar too?

Tim: Yes.

Mike: Will Agencies have the draft Environmental Report in time to use these to develop our formal comments?

Tim: Yes. Agency comments that were submitted in the previous coordination round (on Purpose and Need) regarding alternatives were used in screening decisions and while developing the Screening Report.

John Carr, IN SHPO: There are conflicting values between Table 1 and Table 2 in the Purpose and Need Statement. For example "maintaining/reducing travel times" eliminates anything but a downtown/near downtown alternative and conflicts with "reducing neighborhood truck traffic" and "minimizing impacts to historic resources." It looks like the team will end up with fewer alternatives that won't include the Bypass (Alt 4), or either of the far eastern hollow alternatives (Alt 13-14). This will result in a lot of traffic being routed through downtown Madison. It will lead to comparisons between the remaining alternatives that have fewer differences between these metrics. From a historic preservation perspective, some serious impacts could be avoided by going farther upstream or downstream.

John Carr, WSA: While I don't disagree with that, we haven't eliminated any alternatives yet. I was at a Sustainable Madison meeting yesterday, which included historic interest groups and economic development representatives from Madison. Attendees at this meeting went through the same screening as PAG members and concluded that a bridge linking downtown Milton and downtown Madison is vital to survival of Madison. From what I heard, they didn't want a bridge farther removed from the downtown areas. The Bypass (Alt 4) and Hollow (Alt 13-14) alternatives have detrimental impacts to the communities and the historic communities and would not support survival.

Michele: Does the group have data or studies to support this?

John Carr, WSA: Some data is available based on closure of bridge and limited traffic flows during the 1997 rehabilitation project. This provides

information regarding what would happen if the US 421 bridge were to go out of service and how that would economically impact the two communities. They also consider the impact of the recent weight restriction has on the communities. It's primarily a qualitative assessment, plus some numeric data.

Tim: Outside of the western Bypass (Alt 4) and Jefferson St Alternatives (Alt 5-6), all the alternatives require traffic be routed along KY 36 and SR 56. All the alternatives have potential ways to get to either hilltop if necessary. We will demonstrate these opportunities as part of this study.

John Carr, WSA: Based on the criteria we have defined, the extreme eastern and western alternatives will likely fall out during this initial screening. That is usually what happens with any bridge replacement project. Typically, farther upstream or downstream alternatives are often too far away to serve the communities that are currently served by the bridge.

John Carr, IN SHPO: Is an improved hilltop connection feasible for either Canip Creek Alternative (Alt 11-12)?

Tim: Yes, a hilltop connection could travel up through Lonesome Hollow or Eagle Hollow on the Indiana side. There is no reason you can't connect the bridge to SR 56 and travel east to get up one of the hollows. Impacts to SR 56 would have to be taken into consideration.

Mike: Looking at the simplified schedule sent out today, a round of agency coordination about the "Environmental and Screening Reports" is coming up, followed by the "Draft Impacts" in September 2009. What are the draft impacts for – all the alignments or the smaller set for detailed study?

Tim: After this round of screening coordination, we will develop detailed alignments for the subset of alternatives that is carried forward. The team will field evaluate the corridors. We will then quantify impacts and present this information on impacts. We will update the simplified schedule to clarify this.

Virginia: Is any special coordination with Environmental Justice communities planned?

Tim: The Environmental Overview Report identifies Environmental Justice communities within the study area. If the alternatives carried forward are expected to have an impact on these communities, we will coordinate with them specifically. Environmental Justice communities were identified in the hollows, along Schoolhouse Road, and near the existing bridge.

Tim: Is the simplified schedule easier to understand?

Michele/John Carr, IN SHPO: Yes.

Tim: We will keep this version up to date and work from it in the future.

John Carr, IN SHPO: When will you know if you are preparing for an EA or an EIS?

Tim: The decision will likely be made in late 2009. The alignment will likely determine which level of environmental document is necessary.

John Carr, WSA: We are doing the same level of impact assessments, regardless of the format of the environmental document. It is possible the project could even go to the CE level, depending on alternative chosen and its associated impacts. We will do the same level of environmental assessment that goes with an EIS in either case.

Virginia: Which alternatives could lead to CE?

John Carr, WSA – Possibly the Rehabilitation (Alt 2) or Superstructure Replacement (Alt 3).

As a reminder, the team will send out the Environmental Overview and Screening Report in a couple of weeks for agency comments and input. There will be a 30-day input window that ends in late May. The next PAG meeting is scheduled for April 28 in Madison; we expect a large turnout to discuss the screened alternatives. We will also have a webinar/comment meeting for agencies during the 30-day window. An open house/web-based live forum are scheduled for next round of public involvement in late May.

John Carr, IN SHPO: Our office is often asked when next 106 meetings will be. The schedule shows consultation in late June.

Tim: In late June, we will host a webinar to discuss Area of Potential Effect (APE) with Consulting Parties. We plan to have an eligibility meeting in August. This may last two days and include field work in order to cover the breadth of material. It would also provide a chance to review resources in the field, if necessary.

John Carr, WSA: Section 106 parties are always welcome to come to the PAG meetings and public meetings.

Tim: The team plans to start the mitigation coordination early to coincide with Bridge Type Selection step 2. We have planned an extensive coordination process. The way the schedule is laid out, it lets us focus on

the approaches and the bridge structure itself as two separate elements. We are still figuring out where archaeological investigations fit into the Section 106 process. This may require minor revisions to the schedule.

Virginia: The September document discussing refined alternatives and their impacts won't consider impacts associated with existing bridge? For example, will it address whether the existing bridge is going to be dismantled?

John Carr, WSA: Alternatives 2-3 would require the existing bridge to stay at the same location, either to be fixed or for the piers to be reused. For the other alternatives, KYTC and INDOT have made a policy decision to maintain one bridge; the bridge will either have to be removed or a third-party will have to take over responsibility. We likely will not know this by September.

Virginia: Will you know about archaeological findings by then?

Tim: Some archaeological work occurs in each step of the process. At this point, the actual digging is not scheduled to occur until after one final alternative has been picked.

Michele: Are you doing the Section 106 process independent of the NEPA process?

John Carr, WSA: These are separate processes, but occurring simultaneously.

Virginia: I would like to see a table that shows these two processes together as a schedule.

John Carr, WSA: It was shown on our original time line that you were provided previously (Timeline Exhibit shown by Tim). This overlay gets complicated quickly and is hard to follow. That is why it was broken out into the four page timeline distributed earlier.

With no further discussion, the meeting was dismissed at about 3:15 p.m.



**MEETING SUMMARY
MILTON-MADISON BRIDGE
AGENCY COORDINATION
SCREENING WEBINAR
April 13, 2009**

The Milton-Madison Project Team held an agency coordination webinar/conference call on April 13, 2009, at 1:30 a.m. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the first screening of location alternatives to a smaller set for detailed study.

Meeting participants included the following:

Tim Foreman, KYTC
Amanda Abner, KYTC
Danae Peckler, KY Heritage Council
Kary Stackelbeck, KY Heritage Council
Danny G???, Indiana DNR, Fish and Wildlife
Randy Stevens, Trimble County Judge
Ramona McConney, US Environmental Protection Agency
Tim Sorenson, WSA
Rebecca Ramsey, WSA

Tim Sorenson welcomed callers and asked for introductions.

The Purpose and Need and Needs and Deficiencies Reports have been finalized, pending FHWA legal approval. Additional project information has been gathered since the previous round of agency coordination: environmental data from a variety of resources has been gathered and mapped to identify constraints in the study area. The 2008 Fracture Critical Inspection on the US 421 Bridge was finalized and the bridge was recently posted.

Also new, a simplified schedule of involvement opportunities was sent out electronically to agencies and Section 106 parties last Thursday. We will update this version of the schedule (and fill in elements from the first months of the project) and use this version to keep track of where the project is in the process.

At the PAG Meeting #5, PAG members worked through the blue and green screening matrices (provided to the agencies) to screen the new location Alternatives 4-14. Participants will go through the results of the PAG screening and have opportunities to provide input throughout this webinar.

Screening by Purpose: The first discussion during the meeting focused on screening the alternatives against the project purpose. An alternative must meet the purpose to be a

valid alternative. Based on the Purpose and Need survey distributed at the February public meeting, 88% of responses agreed that the purpose addressed the importance of the project “very well” or fairly well.”

The Do Nothing (Alt 1), Rehabilitation (Alt 2), and Superstructure Replacement (Alt 3) alternatives will be carried forward through the screening process unless they are proven infeasible. Today, we are only going to be discussing the screening of the new location alternatives (Alternatives 4-14).

The first Purpose, to “improve or replace a functionally obsolete/structurally deficient bridge,” is met by all the new location alternatives.

The second Purpose, to “improve or maintain cross-river mobility and community connectivity,” received the most discussion by PAG members at the March meeting. Based on this criteria, the Bypass (Alt 4), Lonesome Hollow (Alt 13), and Eagle Hollow (Alt 14) do not reduce travel times/distances between the intersections of US 421/KY 36 and US 421/SR 56/Jefferson Street. The Bypass and Eagle Hollow Alternatives do not maintain a linkage – physical or visual – between Milton and Madison.

The third Purpose, to “improve safety,” does not differentiate between the alternatives on new alignments. A new bridge would be designed to meet current standards.

At the PAG #5 Meeting, PAG members were divided into groups based on location and interest. Each group was asked to review and comment on the screening against purpose and need. Minor modifications to the screening were made based on input received.

There were no comments on the screening against the project purpose.

Screening by Secondary Considerations: At the March meeting, PAG members were given a second screening table listing the secondary considerations listed in the Purpose and Need Statement. PAG members were asked to work in groups to populate this matrix. Each small group reported on 2-3 alternatives they preferred which should be moved to the next level for detailed study.

The following discussion at the Agency webinar steps through these criteria individually, including comments made by participants.

1. Minimize Costs. The project team will develop detailed cost estimates and quantify environmental impacts later in the process. Based on length and required approach investments, the Bypass (Alt 4) is likely far more expensive than other alternatives on new alignments. Aside from that, it is hard to differentiate between the other new location alternatives based on cost.

2. Quality of Life. Impacts to access and disruptions to the communities will be considered both during construction and afterwards.

3. Sensitivity to Local Resources. The next round of screening will include detailed impact analysis for each of these environmental categories.

Danny G: What information is available on the environmental impacts at this point?

Tim: We have readily accessible information from GIS and databases at this point. For the detailed analysis following this round of screening, these impacts will be developed in more detail.

Danny: Alternatives 1-3 haven't necessarily been selected, but they are moving forward for more analysis?

Tim: Yes. We will consider these in the next round of screening unless they are determined to be infeasible.

Danny: It looks like the Bypass (Alt 4) is not going to pass this level of screening. Are there other alternatives that will be eliminated?

Tim: We are trying to gather input on this today to determine which alternatives you think should or should not advance. Then, we will work with the M3T to build consensus on which alternatives should pass forward. It is likely that more than just one alternative will be removed.

4. Hilltop Connection. This consideration asks how the bridge location provides an opportunity to get to the top of the ridges in either state. Neither state has a plan in place now to build either of these roadways, but we don't want to preclude a future connection.

Danny: What is meant by "hilltop to hilltop?"

Tim: The current topography places the bridge low over the river, between two taller ridgetops along either shore. This screening criteria considers an improved connection, in the future, from the downtowns of either community (at lower elevations) to the tops of the ridges in either state to improve the connection to/along US 421. The natural hollows provide an opportunity to make these connections with reduced grading/earthwork elements.

5. System Reliability. There is concern with the narrow bridge that crashes and repairs lead to bridge/lane closures and travel time becomes unreliable. A new bridge should make travel times more predictable for motorists trying to cross the river.

Ramona McConney: It seems like travel time reliability will rely on the number of lanes, lane widths, etc. Has the bridge design been determined yet?

Tim: Neither the bridge type nor the cross-section have been determined yet.

6. Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing. This criteria considers if a cross-river connection is possible and how it should be connected. There is no current bike/ped passage on the existing bridge.

7. Safety. Known safety problems exist on both the bridge and the immediate approaches. An alternative should improve safety on these links, even though they are not part of the bridge itself.

8. River Navigation. The project team has been coordinating with the Coast Guard on vertical and horizontal clearance issues regarding a bridge rehabilitation/replacement.

PAG preferences and input on these criteria are documented in the PAG summary, available on the project website.

Tim asked if any of the participants has concerns, issues, or preferences regarding the alternatives or screening criteria.

Kary Stackelbeck: Has the mound site 15CL5 been located? It is shown in state records but the exact location may be off. This should be field verified.

Tim: We will follow-up.

Kary: Taking into consideration that this project will include both archaeological and above-ground surveys, plus additional work, is the revised schedule realistic?

Tim: We are currently working on fitting archaeology into the schedule. We will plan to recommend a preferred alignment at Public Meeting 3 in December. We will be conducting the Section 106 Mitigation discussions at this point. We will know about the Eligibility and Effects as of late 2009. The scope shows that we will begin archaeological field investigations at this point. Predictive archaeology is included in scope, but we are going to have to figure out how archaeology fits in without holding up the process.

Danny: Did you receive a comment letter in March from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water? We included comments on Alts 1-14 in this letter. Alternatives 1-3 have the lowest impacts while the Bypass (Alt 4) has the most. The hollow alternatives (Alt 13-14) impacts create environmental concerns for forests due to the necessary earthwork.

Tim: The comments provided were taken into account during the development of the Location Alternatives Screening Report and during the NEPA decision-making process. We will be sending out the draft report

for your review and comments later this month. There will be a PAG meeting shortly after this document is mailed and public meeting in late May, with an online forum component, to gather additional input on the Draft Screening Report. We hope to begin the detailed alternatives development in early June.

Randy: From the local government's perspective, KY 36 (Alt 8) and Parallel (Alt 7) are preferred. Alternatives 1-3 don't meet the local needs. The Superstructure Replacement (Alt 3) could be supported by the community but should include approach work; the approaches are just as much of a problem as the bridge itself.

Tim: Are you concerned about the relocations that would be required with the Parallel Alternative (Alt 7)?

Randy: Most of the impacted businesses could be relocated to the top of the hill, where growth is more likely to occur.

Tim: With Alt 7, how would you prefer to connect back to US 421?

Randy: The connection should make a sweeping curve to avoid any 90-degree turns. We do not want to duplicate the stop conditions that plague the Indiana side.

Tim: With Alt 8, are there concerns with losing downtown?

Randy: The loop of traffic west of the existing bridge to/from Carrollton may increase traffic stopping at retail businesses, but would have little to no impact on commercial services (bank, post office). Our preference would be to avoid the abrupt stops that exist today for traffic coming to/from KY 36.

Next Steps and Other Discussion Items: We will update the latest version of the schedule to keep people involved in the process.

Ramona: Are you still planning to do an EA or is this an EIS?

Tim: We are planning on an EA right now. The level of work we are doing for the project will be usable for an EIS, EA, or CE, depending on what happens at the final decision point. We will likely wait to make that decision until November 2009.

All the documents required under Section 6002 and/or Section 106 will be provided to agencies/consulting parties before they are finalized. We want to get your input before these documents are released.

Randy: A tremendous amount of resources are involved in this effort and the local constituents are grateful for your investment. A couple weeks ago, the bridge weight limit applied, removing most commercial traffic. This shows the condition of the existing structure; the communities are in dire need of an improved river crossing.

Agencies should expect to receive copies of the draft Environmental Overview Report and draft Initial Location Alternatives Screening Report later in April.

Tim Foreman: What is the status of archaeology white paper edits?

Rebecca Ramsey: We are making those corrections currently and hope to have it ready to send to the SHPOs by the end of the day.

Ramona: When do you expect results on the piers investigation for the Superstructure Replacement Alternative (Alt 2)?

Tim: Hopefully by May or June. We will make a decision about the feasibility of Alt 2 at that time.

With no further discussion, the meeting was dismissed at about 2:20 p.m.