

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

**ALL-75
PID 76691**

April 2005

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This plan summarizes the public involvement efforts for the reconstruction of Interstate 75 (I-75) in Allen County, Ohio for Steps 1 through Step 4 of the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) Major Project Development Process (PDP). The public involvement effort will include solicitation of ideas and input from area stakeholders and the community as a whole. A coordinated public involvement program will inform and involve the public on the benefits of this project, such as, infrastructure improvements, travel safety and economic development.

The public involvement plan will be coordinated with ODOT District 1 and Central Office, and will follow ODOT's guidelines. The Draft Performance Measures are found on page 5 of this plan. The Performance Measures will be updated and followed throughout all phases of project development and introduced to Stakeholders in Step 2.

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

As proposed, the reconstruction of I-75 and improvements to interchanges are intended to improve mobility and transportation efficiency throughout Allen County. This project is identified on both the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission (LACRPC) Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). In addition to gathering public input and ideas, the public involvement plan will consider elements from the project's purpose and need statement, and communicate those issues in a consistent manner. Any environmental justice needs will be met with inclusive public involvement activities.

3.0 GOALS OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Public involvement is an important effort in project development. Public involvement for this project will include the following:

- A public involvement plan that creates a clear understanding of the project needs, and identified conclusions, among the project team and stakeholders.
- Review and consider all public involvement activities in regards to this project.
- Define and engage the stakeholders.
- Strive for consensus on alternatives identified for consideration.
- Inclusive of all people in the community, specifically environmental justice populations.

3.1 Public Involvement - Steps 1 - 4

Public involvement will be planned for each step of the project development process. The following describes work to be completed in each of the first four steps.

3.1.1 Step 1

Provide a draft (interim) public involvement plan through Step 4. This plan will evolve and be revised as the project progresses through developmental stages. It may be revised after the level of environmental documentation has been determined. The draft public involvement plan will include preliminary measures of performance for the project.

- Develop stakeholder list and submit to District 1 for approval.
- Hold stakeholder public meeting in conjunction with an MPO meeting.
- Revise the public involvement plan and measures of performance for the project as necessary throughout the project, specifically at Step 5.

3.1.2 Step 3

Following the development of the purpose and need statement, red flag summary, and the conceptual alternatives another stakeholder meeting will be held.

The public involvement plan will be revised according to stakeholder input gathered from the second stakeholder meeting.

An open house public meeting will be planned. The purpose of the public involvement meeting is to introduce the project to the community, introduce the project team and present conceptual alternatives for comment.

Exhibits will be produced and a traffic model will be available if authorized by the project manager. The traffic model will be a computer generated model that the public can view to see current and future traffic conditions for the no-build alternative. In addition, any reports produced at this time, such as the purpose and need statement, will be available. The project team will be present to explain the work that has been done to date and take comment.

Exhibits for the open house public involvement meeting will include:

- Study area
- Conceptual Alternatives
- Performance Measures
- Traffic data and model

A comment table will be available for the public to either give comment or provide written comments.

3.1.3 Step 4

A public meeting will tentatively be held in June 2005. This public meeting represents Concurrence Point 1.

Following the public meeting a summary will be provided as formal documentation of Concurrence Point 1. Based on information generated and public input received, ODOT and the project team will determine further project development and the level of environmental documentation necessary to proceed. The public involvement plan will be updated accordingly and future public involvement will be defined.

The detailed format for the Concurrent Point 1 public meeting is attached.

Exhibits/Stations for open house format:

Registration/Project Material

Staffing: To be announced
Displays: Welcome sign
Material: Sign-in sheets, project handout, comment form

Project Study Area

Staffing: To be announced
Display: Study area map (2) sides on exhibits
Attendees will have the opportunity to comment on any environmentally sensitive areas. Notes can be given to project team or we can provide flip charts for notation of any comment.

Project Team

Display: An organizational chart to show the project team and contact list available for distribution

Project Development Process and Tentative Schedule

Staffing: To be announced
Display: PDP graphic and schedule

Project Conceptual Alternative Solutions

Staffing: To be announced
Display: Conceptual alternative map (2) sides on exhibits
Attendees will have the opportunity to comment on the shown solutions and offer their own solutions, either by comment or again the use of a flip chart to note any changes.

Performance Measures:

Staffing: To be announced
Display: Performance measures (listed on a graphic)
Attendees will have the opportunity to comment on the measures and again, be able to offer either their own comments or use of flip chart.

Comment Table

Staffing: To be announced
Display: Comment Area
Materials: Table, chairs

**Draft Performance Measures
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Safety/Traffic Related Issues

- Update to today's design standards (geometrics)
 - Widen shoulders on pavement and bridges
 - Provide for wider clearances at overhead bridges
 - Provide for appropriate vertical clearances at overhead bridges
 - Provide a mainline pavement profile that meets 70mph design speed
 - Provide appropriate pavement cross slopes for curve banking
- Remove or relocate objects away from traveled lanes
- Assure efficient traffic flow and design at interchanges
- Separate ramp traffic from local roadways
- Apply access management techniques near interchange ramps
- Provide sufficient capacity for future traffic
 - Accommodate long-distance freight movement
 - Provide for local commuting traffic
 - Consider improvements to crossing routes
 - Provide for vehicle pull-offs during emergencies
 - Reduce confusion with better signing at cross routes

Community Impacts

- Minimize property impacts
- Preserve neighborhood cohesiveness
- Consider aesthetic opportunities
- Consider local community master plans
- Consider safety services locations and access
- Consider north/south connection between SR 309 and SR 81
- Provide for pedestrian/bicycling needs

Economic Development

- Consider commercial and industrial development plans
- Retain consistency with LACRPC's long-range plans
- Assure appropriate access to interstate
- Consider existing and future public utilities (water/sewer)

Environmental

- Avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental resources National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
 - Archaeological/Historical sites
 - Threatened or endangered species
 - Hazardous materials
 - Water resources (wetlands, streams, etc...)
 - Noise impacts
 - Minority/low income populations (Title VI)
 - Recreational/public resources
 - Air quality

Constructability/Fiscal Constraint

- Consider cost-effective design
- Maintain two lanes of traffic in each direction during construction
- Consider private utility relocations
- Consider use of innovative construction materials/techniques

Maintenance

- Improve bridge and pavement conditions
- Provide for appropriate traffic-carrying capacity during maintenance operations
- Correct drainage issues
- Upgrade highway lighting
- Consider intelligent transportation system (ITS)
Components (i.e. bridge deck sensors, permanent traffic counters, traffic cameras, fixed message display boards, etc...)