ALL-75
STAKEHOLDER MEETING
February 17, 2005
Lima Senior High School 5:00 to 7:00 pm

The first stakeholder meeting was held on February 17, 2005. The purpose of this first meeting was to introduce the project team, present the project study area, and establish goals and measures of success which will be used as a guide in making recommendations throughout the life of the project. A total of 34 people attended the meeting.

Kirk Slusher, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) opened the meeting. He began the meeting with an overview of the Allen 75 study. K. Slusher explained why the project is being done, who is involved, and what ODOT is doing to develop the project.

The purpose of the I-75 project is to improve I-75 through Lima. I-75 was constructed in the 1950's, in phases. First the northbound lanes were constructed and then the southbound lanes were constructed. Originally, the I-75 pavement was designed for 5,000 vehicles per day. Currently, nearly 50,000 vehicles per day travel on I-75 through Lima. Since 1991, ODOT has resurfaced this section of I-75 three times (1991, 1996, and 2004). Due to the high traffic volumes on I-75 and poor pavement sub base conditions, ODOT has a difficult time maintaining the pavement surface. In addition, there are also numerous geometric deficiencies on I-75 throughout the corridor.

Federal funds will be used to make any necessary improvements on I-75. The Federal Highway Administration is requiring that ODOT bring I-75 up to current design standards. As a result, ODOT must perform a major reconstruction of I-75. Construction funding has been set aside for 2010.

The project is being developed following ODOT's Major Project Development Process (PDP). The study is currently in Step 1 of the PDP. The purpose of the Stakeholder meeting is to develop project goals.

Kirk Slusher introduced key members of the Allen 75 project team:

- Kirk Slusher – Project Manager for ODOT District 1
- Jennifer Graf – Project Manager for Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc.
- Kelly Brooker – ODOT's Central Office, Office of Corridor and Urban Planning
- Leonard Evans – ODOT's Central Office, Program Manager

Kirk Slusher discussed problems identified through previous public involvement and planning efforts:

- Deteriorating pavements and bridges
- Built to 1950's standards (geometrics)
  - Old standards allowed for the following: narrow shoulders, narrow bridges, low overhead bridge clearances, inadequate interchange ramp designs, sight distance deficiencies for 65 mph speeds, deficient banking on curves
- Congestion created during lane closures (maintenance, construction, crashes or vehicle breakdowns)

- Inadequate access at interchanges to and from crossing routes which include: crossing corridors that are congested, ramps and local roadways that share sections of roadway, access points on crossing routes that are too close to ramps
- Improper drainage at concrete barrier wall (there are drainage problems along the concrete barriers during rain and snow storms)
- Noise
- Increasing truck traffic
- Numerous crash sites
- High maintenance costs
- Lack of any context sensitive design (the I-75 corridor through Lima is ugly)
- Dysfunctional lighting (there is vintage lighting that needs to be replaced)
- Lack of a good north/south connection between SR 309 and SR 81

Kirk Slusher presented the project study area and explained how it was determined and the study limits.

Following the presentation, Kirk Slusher asked the stakeholders to identify any problems they have experienced in the study area and to ask any questions they have regarding the Allen 75 project. In addition, stakeholders were asked to develop measures of success that conceptual alternatives would be evaluated against.

The following is a summary of the questions, problem areas, and measures of success that were presented by the stakeholders during the meeting.

Questions

Q: Why does the project stop at Bluelick Road? Why doesn't the project include all of Allen County?
A: The project includes the area with the poorest bridge and pavement conditions. Bridge and pavement conditions north of SR 81 are good. The Beaver Dam Interchange will be replaced in 2006.

Q: Is there the possibility of making I-75 a six-lane highway?
A: The Allen 75 study includes investigating capacity on I-75 in the future, 2032 is the design years for the project. Traffic will dictate if additional capacity is needed.

Q: Will a bike lane along I-75 be considered?
A: Alternative transportation modes will be considered for the project.

Q: Is there money available to purchase extra land along I-75 for the purposes of open space preservation and noise mitigation?
A: ODOT can only purchase property required for transportation needs.

Q: Will property for the project be purchased as an easement?
A: No, property will be purchased as a warranty deed. ODOT may change existing easements to warranty deeds.

Q: Can traffic be moved off SR 309?
A: ODOT will investigate this possibility as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: Can ODOT investigate additional interchanges to serve industries in the area?
A: ODOT will investigate appropriate access points to I-75 as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: Why doesn't ODOT construct a new interstate around Lima?
A: ODOT will investigate this option as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: What is ODOT's plan for enabling disabled vehicles to move off the interstate? Currently, I-75 is too narrow to remove cars out of the travel lanes.
A: Wider shoulders could be constructed on I-75.

Q: Is there enough room along the quarry for more lanes on I-75?
A: Yes, it appears there is room to expand capacity on I-75 in the vicinity of the quarries, but the amount of available land needs to be determined.

Q: Can ODOT add collector-distributor roads between SR 309 and SR 81?
A: ODOT will investigate this option as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: Can interchanges be added to I-75 at Reservoir Road and McClain Road?
A: ODOT will investigate the possibility of additional interchanges as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: Has ODOT considered relocating the intersection of SR 117 and 309 away from the I-75 interchange?
A: ODOT will investigate this possibility as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: Can Fourth Street be extended to SR 117?
A: ODOT will investigate this possibility as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: Could the improvements at SR 81 include lighting, curbs, gutters and sidewalks?
A: ODOT will investigate this possibility as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: Will the overpass at Cridersville Road be reconstructed?
A: Currently, there are not any plans to reconstruct the overpass, but it will be investigated as part of the study.

Q: Will concrete barriers be used along the median of I-75?
A: Other options will be investigated such as a cable barrier. Cable barriers are effective in preventing cars from crossing over medians and are less intrusive than concrete barriers. They are also easy to maintain and inexpensive.

Q: What drives aesthetics of a highway project?
A: Funding and timing drives aesthetics of a highway project.

Q: Will the City of Lima's aesthetic standards be respected and followed by ODOT?
A: Yes

Q: How well do murals hold up on noise walls?
A: Murals on noise walls are relatively new for ODOT so it is too soon to determine their life span.

Q: In the area north of SR 309, does ODOT own enough right-of-way to provide for additional lanes on I-75, or will right-of-way have to be purchased?
A: It will depend on the area. In some areas ODOT will purchase right-of-way.

Q: How well do rumble strips work?
A: Rumble strips have proven to be very effective for drivers. Statistics have shown that rumble strips have reduced accidents.

Q: Are truck volumes considered in the design of an interchange?
A: Truck volumes are considered in designing the pavements and turning radii at the intersections of the interchange ramps with the local road.

Q: Will double decking lanes on the interstate be considered?
A: ODOT will investigate this possibility as part of the Allen 75 study.

Q: In the Bryn-Mawr area, ODOT has already analyzed and determined the need for a noise wall. Will the I-75 study prohibit the need for a noise wall in that area?
A: Regardless of the Allen I-75 study, noise abatement will still be required in the Bryn-Mawr area.

Problem Areas

- Breese Road Interchange – Northbound 75 to westbound Breese Road ramp has a poor sight distance
- Yoder Road and SR 65 Intersection
- Bryn-Mawr Avenue and Reservoir Road Intersection
- SR 309 Interchange – Southbound 75 to eastbound SR 309 ramp experiences delays with vehicles backed up on the interstate.
- SR 81 – has safety and congestion problems
- SR 309/Bellefountaine Avenue- has safety and congestion problems
- Hanthorn Road – the curve is the site of numerous accidents

Measures of Success

- Correct geometric deficiencies
- Improve bridge and pavement performance
- Beautify corridor
- Improve safety by eliminating high accident areas
- Improve travel time
- Consider alternative modes of transportation (i.e. bikes and trains)
- Reduce congestion/delay time on interchange exit ramps
- User satisfaction
- Eliminate motorist confusion in specific areas (i.e. improve signage in the area near Sam's Club)