

ALL-75
CONCURRENCE POINT #1 PUBLIC MEETING
Holiday Inn
1920 Roschman Avenue
Lima, Ohio
March 29, 2006
5:30 to 7:00 pm

The Concurrence Point #1 public meeting was held on March 29, 2006, to present the results of steps 1-4 of the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) major project development process to stakeholders and the public. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the purpose and need; project goals and measures of success; and conceptual alternatives recommended for further study. A total of 81 people attended the meeting.

The public meeting was scheduled from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn located at 1920 Roschman Avenue in Lima, Ohio, near the SR 117/SR 309 exit of I-75. The meeting was an open house format with a presentation at 5:30 pm. Displays of the purpose and need, red flag information, conceptual alternatives, and project documents were available for viewing.

Kirk Slusher (ODOT) opened the meeting with an overview of the Allen 75 Study. The primary reason for the project is the deteriorating condition of the pavement. I-75 through Lima was built between 1952 and 1955. At that time, the pavement was designed for 5,000 vehicles per day. The main purpose of the project is to improve pavement conditions on I-75. The need to improve I-75 through Lima is documented in *Access Ohio*, which is ODOT's long range plan. In addition to the pavement conditions, the Allen 75 Study will improve:

- Geometric deficiencies within the I-75 corridor. The narrow shoulders and horizontal curvature are two examples of design features that do not meet current highway design standards.
- Traffic capacity on I-75. Currently the level of service (LOS) on I-75 is C and the 20 year projection indicated a LOS D.
- Safety on I-75. There are sections along the corridor with high accident rates.

Kirk Slusher explained the conceptual alternatives considered and evaluated for the project. These included the no build alternative, mass transit alternative, transportation system management alternative, transportation demand management alternative, and six highway build alternatives. Each of the highway build alternatives was described. The evaluation and analysis of the conceptual alternatives were discussed. A two step comparative analysis was developed to identify alternatives for further study. The reasons for eliminating the modal alternatives and three of the build alternatives were explained.

The three highway build alternatives recommended for further study are Alternatives 5, 6 and 7. These conceptual alternatives propose various combinations of roadway improvements, widening I-75 to six lanes, and reconstructing interchanges to current design standards. Reconstructing the interchanges to current design standards would include a 600 foot limited access right-of-way from the end of the interchange ramps.

K. Slusher explained each of the three recommended alternatives in detail and asked the meeting participants for comments on the alternatives. He asked if there were any other issues that ODOT should consider for the Allen 75 Study.

The project schedule was summarized. Construction is scheduled for 2012. Prior to construction, final plans and right-of-way acquisition need to be completed.

Following the presentation, K. Slusher asked the meeting participants for their questions, ideas and comments regarding the conceptual alternatives. He also stressed that the stakeholders should review the information provided in the handouts and submit their comments to ODOT on or before by April 14, 2006. The following questions and comments were raised by the meeting participants:

Q: What is the capacity of SR 309?

A: The level of service on SR 309 is LOS C or worse. The traffic is congested and the traffic signals need to be coordinated better along SR 309. This would alleviate some of the traffic congestion.

Q: Concern about the 600 foot limited access right-of-way from the interchange ramps was expressed. Will there be exceptions to the 600 foot setback?

A: The federal requirement is 600 feet for the limited access right-of-way. It is a safety requirement to prevent conflicts between vehicles. This requirement must be met since the project is using federal funds. Sometimes there are minimal exceptions (i.e. 25 feet) to this setback requirement.

Q: Is there a variance process for the 600 foot requirement?

A: Sometimes there is a minimal variance from the requirement. All cases are considered on an individual basis.

Q: Has the Fort Shawnee Industrial Park Road issue been studied?

A: The Fort Shawnee Industrial Park Road issue has been studied at a conceptual level. The next level of study will include a more detailed analysis.

Q: Delong Road which is located east of I-75 off of Breese Road will need to be considered for the 600 foot set back.

A: ODOT will look at Delong Road.

Q: Will the reconstruction of the interchanges and overpasses be part of the Allen 75 Study?

A: Yes, ODOT may advance improvements of the overpasses before the I-75 mainline reconstruction, because of their poor condition.

Q: Will the curves on I-75 northbound be improved.

A: Yes, these curves will be made shallower.

Q: Is the safety study on Bellfontaine Avenue and Kibby Street related to the I-75 Study?

A: No, the safety study is east of I-75 and construction for that project is scheduled for 2009.

Q: What is the difference in right-of-way width for a four-lane highway compared to a six-lane highway?

A: The right-of-way width depends on whether or not there is a median barrier or a grass median. If there is a median barrier, the pavement would extend to the barrier and right-of-way takes would be limited. The right-of-way width will vary throughout the I-75 corridor.

Q: Will the SR 309 interchange remain for Alternative 7?

A: Yes, this interchange will remain for Alternatives 5 and 7. All the interchanges will remain in their current locations for these alternatives.

Q: Do the concrete median barriers increase safety problems versus grass medians?

A: Safety improves when 12 foot shoulders are provided next to median barriers because of the large recovery area.

Q: How does the 600 foot limited access right-of-way affect businesses?

A: Kirk Slusher explained how access roads function. He explained that each situation is different.

Q: How is fair market value determined?

A: Fair market value is determined by appraisals conducted by professional appraisers.

Q: What are the decision process and the schedule for the project?

A: The next phase of the project is to advance the three alternatives forward into more detailed engineering and environmental studies. ODOT will hold meetings with the stakeholders and the public to determine feasible alternatives from which a preferred alternative will be chosen.

Q: What is the cost range of the alternatives?

A: The costs range from \$100 million to \$150 million, depending on the interchange design and impacts.

Q: There are a lot of businesses located in the Breese Road and Fort Shawnee Industrial Park area. A convenient access to I-75 must be provided for these businesses.

A: ODOT will work with the stakeholders to develop the best solutions for the corridor.

Q: Who are the stakeholders?

A: Stakeholders include state, local, and county officials, business leaders, neighborhood organizations and utility companies. Tonight's meeting participants will be put on the project mailing list. A website will be established to disseminate project information.

Q: Where will aesthetic input come from?

A: An aesthetics committee will be developed for the I-75 corridor to help develop aesthetic concepts. All citizens are invited to participate on the committee.

General Comment: The change planned for the I-75 corridor is exciting.