

Advisory Group Role and Responsibilities

Following welcomes and introductions, Ms. Burry and Michael DeMent walked the Advisory Group through a discussion of expectations, roles and responsibilities (please refer to packet handout). Mr. DeMent requested that group members assume the following roles and responsibilities in the EIS process:

- Articulate clearly and candidly the interests they bring to the table;
- Discuss fully their issues and concerns with other group members;
- Seek out and fairly evaluate the opinions and interests of others;
- Provide MoDOT with clear, accurate and actionable feedback about the project; and
- Keep their agencies, organizations or communities accurately informed of the group's work.

I-70 Update

HNTB Project Manager Steve Wells and study team member Buddy Desai provided group members with background information on the Improve I-70 Second Tier Environmental Studies, SIU 4 decisions affecting Columbia, and activities that have taken place since the completion of the Second Tier Study in Columbia in 2005.

Mr. Desai presented a review of the decisions and recommendations that emerged from the Second Tier Environmental Study through Columbia. The presentation included examples of typical sections for the Preferred Alternative through the city. Following Mr. Desai's portion of the presentation, John Glascock asked how Mr. Desai would define a local trip. Mr. Desai provided a Columbia-specific example of a local trip.

Following Mr. Desai, Mr. Wells provided an overview of the corridor-wide decisions made during the Second Tier Environmental Studies and a discussion of the ongoing activities since completing the studies in 2005. During his presentation, Mr. Wells' discussed the timeliness of the supplemental study as another key step in the process to rebuild the interstate system for the next 50 years. Reconstruction of the highway is an economic and infrastructure need at a national level. Mr. Wells noted that Missouri is now competing nationally and globally with other nations. Nations such as China, India and members of the European Union are investing 6 to 9 percent of their Gross Domestic Product in infrastructure, whereas the United States is investing less than 2 percent. Changes in the way freight is distributed also strains existing I-70. With just-in-time delivery, freight warehousing now takes place on truck trailers and I-70 through Missouri is central to that system.

Mr. Wells noted that with the work on I-70, Missouri is ahead of where other states are in addressing the needs of their interstate system. Missouri is also working with Illinois, Indiana

and Ohio on a multi-state coalition for I-70 as part of the FHWA Corridors of the Future program.

Mr. Wells provided an overview of what the study team will address during the Supplemental EIS. Among the reasons for considering truck-only lanes, Mr. Wells cited the following:

- Safety – separate cars and trucks
- Constructability – easier to construct while maintaining traffic on existing I-70
- Operational redundancy – ability to keep I-70 open during incidents (construction & accidents)
- Freight efficiencies – more reliable delivery, could allow longer, heavier trucks

Preliminary estimates indicate that implementing truck-only lanes would cost 10 percent more than the \$3 to 3.5 billion estimated previously to reconstruct I-70. The Supplemental EIS will not assess the best way to pay for the improvements; determining how to pay for it is a decision that needs to go through the political process. In the end, a plan will be in place, so that when funding becomes available, MoDOT can implement the Preferred Alternative.

In conclusion, Mr. Wells stated that the study process would not revisit past decisions. The study team will test the original Preferred Alternative in comparison to truck-only lane concepts. The study team will need to make sure that the new concepts can avoid project impacts in excess of those previously identified. The study schedule is fast moving and the study team hopes to have the process wrapped up by the end of the year.

Prior to opening the meeting to a question and answer session, Mr. Wells played a new video that presents the truck-only lane concept and potential applications for it on I-70.

Q&A

Bernie Andrews asked if any other states were implementing the truck-only lane concept.

Mr. Wells replied that, no, other states have yet to construct the concept in a manner similar to what is under review for I-70, although there are limited truck-only segments in California, Texas and New Jersey. However, other states are looking to apply the concept, including Virginia on I-81. Georgia is studying their entire system and developing criteria for identifying locations/facilities on which to apply the truck-only lane concept. Texas is also looking at truck-only lanes associated with the Trans-Texas Corridor project. Truck-only lanes are an emerging trend for the nation and Missouri is at the forefront for studying and considering this concept.

Vicky Curby asked if High Occupancy Vehicle lanes were under consideration for I-70 and noted that the truck-only lane concepts presented in the video look problematic due to the weaving necessitated by using slip ramps to access one part of the facility from another.

The study team discussed that there could be some application of these types of lanes in urban areas like Columbia where right of way is constrained. One way to implement this involves separating long-haul trucks from the general-purpose lanes using a paint stripe separation, similar to high-occupancy vehicle lanes. The study team envisioned slip ramps only where truck volumes are relatively low, therefore reducing the weaving.

Dave Mink asked Mr. Desai how MoDOT could implement truck-only lanes through Columbia.

Mr. Desai replied that the study team would consider a number of concepts for Columbia. Mr. Desai noted that a truck-only bypass of Columbia is probably not feasible, but that the study team would re-assess previous bypass assumptions and decisions to ensure they remain valid. From a traffic standpoint, trucks, not general traffic would use a Columbia bypass. Likewise, the study team will assess previous assumptions and decisions to ensure they remain valid.

In response to a follow up question, Mr. Desai stated that one scenario would direct trucks wishing to use a local exit in Columbia to make a decision as they approached the city. Trucks traveling through Columbia would stay in the truck-only lane. Trucks wanting to make a local stop would move to the general-purpose lanes via slip ramps and exit the highway to reach their destination. The study will need to look at how the truck-only concepts work in Columbia and across the 200-mile I-70 corridor across in Missouri, with a goal of staying within the footprint cleared previously with the Second Tier Environmental Studies.

Mr. Wells noted that although this study will not get to the same level of detail as the Second Tier Environmental Studies, the study team would test various concepts across the 200-mile corridor. Columbia will provide a challenge for applying the concepts, as will the Overton Bottoms and Loutre Valley – each will require flexibility.

Council member Janku asked what types/classes of vehicles MoDOT would permit on the truck-only lanes.

Mr. Wells replied that the threshold for vehicle types allowed on the truck-only lanes was not yet determined. However, the working assumption was that the lanes would accommodate 18-wheelers, thereby creating a separation between the majority of long-haul trucks and general vehicle traffic.

Mr. Mink asked if two lanes in each direction for trucks would prove sufficient over the long term.

Mr. Wells replied that the Second Tier Environmental Studies determined that six lanes would suffice through 2030, but that the Preferred Alternative included flexibility to add a lane each direction at some point. Noting that the study team will have to check the continued validity, Mr. Wells was confident that an eight-lane facility would work into the foreseen future.

Mr. DeMent asked if, with implementation of truck-only lanes, tractor-trailers would also use the general-purpose lanes.

Mr. Wells replied that, yes, the general-purpose lanes would allow trucks, as it may be the only way for trucks to access any interchange. It is important to avoid creating out-of-distance travel for others due to limiting truck access at a given interchange.

Professor Praveen Edara asked what, if anything, would prevent passenger cars from using the truck-only lanes.

Mr. Wells responded that it would be a matter of enforcement and that he did not anticipate MoDOT allowing it. However, future applications, such as tolling or congestion pricing could possibly someday allow cars paying tolls to use the truck lanes. This is not how the study team envisioned truck-only lanes operating.

Mr. Edara followed by inquiring what options were under consideration for the study – mentioning two to three lanes of travel in each direction plus two truck-only lanes.

Mr. Wells pointed out that the study was just commencing and that the study team will look at numerous truck-only concepts to compare against the Preferred Alternative from the Second Tier Environmental Studies.

Mr. Glascock mentioned that the Second Tier Study's Preferred Alternative included continuous outer roads across state. He then asked if the truck-only lanes would contain a similar feature.

Mr. Wells noted that the Preferred Alternative included outer roads originally to meet incident management needs. With truck-only lanes, continuous outer roads are unnecessary for incident management, because of the redundancy provided by the new lanes. The new facility would maintain some outer road access for businesses and homes along the corridor. Mr. Desai mentioned that in Columbia, the one-way frontage roads selected in the Second Tier Environmental Study would most likely remain because there is still the proven need for access and separation of local and through traffic.

Mr. Andrews wondered if the median cable barriers would remain a feature of a rebuilt I-70.

Mr. Wells explained that issues like the median barrier cable were a design level of detail that the study team would likely consider later.

Mr. Andrews also asked that if trucks account for 30 percent of the traffic, what percent of crashes currently involve trucks.

Kenny Voss replied that MoDOT is starting to pull that data and that the study team will consider it during the study and provide more information on this during future Advisory Group meetings. The team will also be reviewing the data compiled in earlier I-70 studies.

Mr. Griggs wondered how one would enforce truck (truck-only lanes) use – for example, how to keep trucks in truck lanes.

Mr. Wells replied that trucks would need to stay in the general-purpose lanes for local access and that it is an enforcement strategy to consider as the study moves forward.

Susan Clark asked how soon it would be before trucks outgrow the capacity of a truck-only lane.

Mr. Wells replied that the study team would review the traffic and make sure we identify concepts to last to 2035 or longer, but it gets tough to be accurate past that timeframe.

Mr. Glascock asked how to maintain an eight-lane facility.

Mr. Wells noted that the study team would probably not address that level of detail during this study. Some concepts make more sense than others for our climate when considering winter maintenance issues. The Improve I-70 team includes resource members from various MoDOT divisions, and they will be reviewing the documents and have input into the final recommendations.

Bob Walters inquired about what other states were doing for their part as participants in the Corridors of the Future program and wondered how much information MoDOT was sharing across state lines?

Kathy Harvey noted that she is engaging the other states as the primary MoDOT contact and sharing information. The four states are working together and discussing how the partnership would work and identify the roles and responsibilities. Ms. Harvey stated that the program would move slowly until establishing a memorandum of understanding across states and FHWA. States have been meeting for about a year now.

Mr. Walters then posed the following questions:

- Is Missouri farther along than the other states? Ms. Harvey replied that, yes, Missouri is further along in the NEPA process. The other states will apply lessons learned from us as they apply it within their states. The first step is a feasibility study across the four states.
- What happens in St Louis and Kansas City? Mr. Wells noted that the study would need to figure out what happens to trucks when they arrive in the Kansas City metro area. The study will look at what happens to trucks when they arrive in Kansas City from a secondary and cumulative impact perspective. The study team will work with the Kansas City freight industry to understand origins and destinations. The study team is also looking at routes and issues associated with getting cars and trucks around the St. Louis metro, as it is part of the 800-mile corridor.
- How much does a truck contribute to the expenses associated with the highway? Ms. Burry referred group members to the fact sheets in their packets. Mr. Wells opined that

truckers would argue they pay their fair share – the numbers exist, the study team just did not have them on hand. Mr. DeMent stated that the study team would either include the information in the notes or bring them to the next meeting.

Cameron Dunafon asked if truck distribution percentages fluctuate during the day.

Mr. Wells noted that trends indicate that trucks provide more movement of freight at night due to highway capacity issues. Mr. Wells indicated that currently truck percentages were higher during evening hours, possibly within an average of 70 percent of the vehicle mix. The study team does not have specific numbers at this time though. Kenny Voss replied that MoDOT could provide more information on truck percentages at a future Advisory Group meeting.

Ms. Curby asked for a map of the existing footprint (the area cleared environmentally during the Second Tier Environmental Studies).

Ms. Burry referenced Ms. Curby to the Improve I-70 website for maps of the study area. Mr. Desai suggested Advisory Group members refer to the SIU 4 document for maps of the Columbia portion of the study area.

Mr. Mink asked if the study team would consider the possibility of using a standard four-lane section without separation – utilizing striping to label the truck-only lanes.

Mr. Wells replied that the study team would consider that type of section as a possibility, especially in urban sections. He referenced a couple examples using paint stripes or rumble stripe separation.

Mr. Mink then continued, asking if the future median identified in the previous study would go away if the study moved forward with truck-only lanes.

Mr. Wells replied that yes, the truck-only lanes would constitute an example use of the future median. Truck-only lanes would limit MoDOT's ability to do other things in the corridor. It does not prohibit options such as High Speed Rail for example – it just would not happen within the I-70 right of way if MoDOT implemented truck-only lanes.

Conclusion

Ms. Burry thanked the Advisory Group and public for attending the meeting. Ms. Burry then provided further project contact information, including the project website at www.improveI70.org and her email address at bburry@hntb.com.

Mr. DeMent also thanked the group and requested that they send any questions or ideas to Ms. Burry. Mr. DeMent then asked the group to save March 26 as a potential date for the next Advisory Group meeting.

The meeting concluded at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Action Items	Responsibility	Deadline
Future meeting dates	HNTB	March 4
Response to questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps showing Improve I-70 north/south recommendations: www.improvei70.org/pdf/SIU4pdfs/WesternColumbiaMap-RteBBtoStadium.pdf www.improvei70.org/pdf/SIU4pdfs/CentralColumbiaMap-StadiumToUS63.pdf www.improvei70.org/pdf/SIU4pdfs/EasternColumbiaMap-US63ToRteZ.pdf 	HNTB	Below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % trucks involved with accidents 	MoDOT	Next Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % funding trucks provide for highway 	MoDOT	Next Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % trucks during the daytime versus nighttime 	MoDOT	Next Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAQs for group and web site 	HNTB	Next Meeting