



I-40/I-81 Corridor Feasibility Study

Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The purpose of this Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan is to establish a framework for the **open communication and the exchange of information with key stakeholders who are responsible for transportation provisions and transportation-related decisions** and with the public throughout the state relative to the Interstate 40/Interstate 81 (I-40/I-81) Corridor from Bristol to Memphis. The intent of this communication and information exchange is to forge a partnership on the identification of corridor deficiencies, refine feasible multi-modal solutions, and prioritize projects.

This Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan:

- Describes the process for stakeholder and public coordination;
- Describes the communication methods that will be implemented to involve and inform stakeholders and the public; and
- Describes the number of key stakeholder interviews and the purpose of the interviews, the number of stakeholder and public meetings to be held, a description of what will be presented at each meeting, and anticipated dates and locations of meetings.

The Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan will be updated periodically to reflect updates to the schedule and other items that change over the course of the project. The Plan will not be considered a completed document until the end of the project.

2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2005 the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) completed the State's first 25-Year Long Range Transportation Plan (PLAN Go). A major component of the 25-Year Vision Plan included the advancement of a 10-Year Strategic Investment Plan. The 10-Year Strategic Investment Plan established three interrelated core investment initiatives: Congestion Relief, Transportation Choices, and Key Corridors.

The Interstate 40/Interstate 81 (I-40/I-81) Corridor from Bristol to Memphis was identified through the statewide planning effort as a strategic statewide corridor (a corridor that is significant to Tennessee's economic development, particularly with regard to freight movement) and included in the 10-Year Plan. The purpose of the I-40/I-81 Corridor Feasibility Study is to begin to develop a more detailed understanding of the deficiencies of the corridor and to develop corridor level multi-modal solutions to address these deficiencies. The study will consider improvements to the I-40/I-81 corridor, as well as looking at parallel arterials to I-40/I-81 that could be used for local travel, as well as rail lines that could be candidates for freight diversion from the interstate, and will also consider major inter-modal hubs located along the corridor.

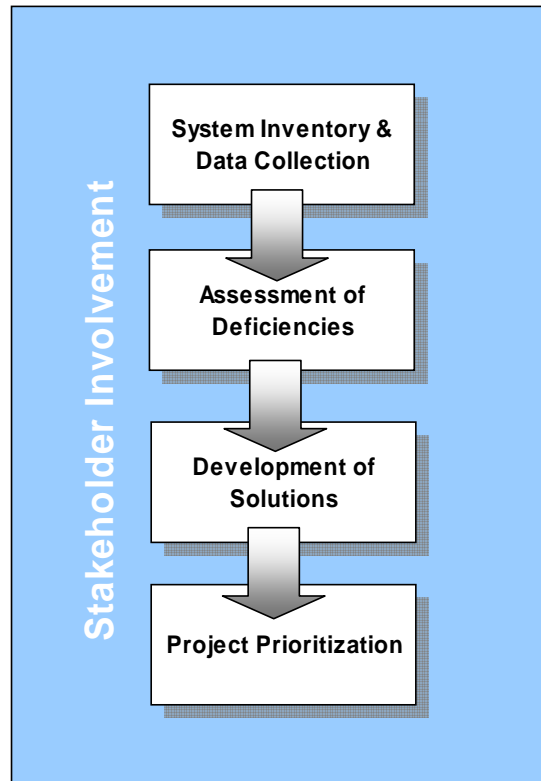
The study area for the I-40/I-81 corridor extends from Bristol to Memphis, a distance of about 550 miles and traverses 27 of the 95 counties within Tennessee falling within nine of the 12 Rural Planning Organization (RPO) boundaries and 8 of the 11 Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) areas. Numerous cities including Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Lebanon, Cookeville, Crossville, Knoxville, Sevierville, and the Tri-Cities are dependent upon this corridor for commerce, tourism, and daily access. The I-40/I-81 study area also includes parallel Class I railroads and their junctions with short-line railroads.

The study's final product will be a prioritized listing of multi-modal projects that can be considered by TDOT for the Department's transportation improvement program, as well as by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RPOs) throughout the state relative to their respective local and regional planning programs. Identified multi-modal solutions will address capacity, operations and maintenance, safety, freight movement, inter-modal connections, and economic access issues along the study corridor.

3.0 PROJECT PROCESS

The Work Plan for the development of the I-40/I-81 Corridor Feasibility Study will generally follow the process detailed below.

I-40/I-81 Corridor Feasibility Study Work Plan Process



Stakeholder involvement will occur throughout the complete project planning process combined with key points during the development plan for public involvement meetings. The Study Schedule for this project is provided in Appendix A and details the extent of these meetings relative to specific task deliverables.

4.0 STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The overall outreach and coordination efforts for this project are described below.

4.1 INITIAL STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The primary purpose of the initial interviews with key stakeholders is to establish a collaborative framework for working together in the development of feasible multi-modal solutions for the I-40/I-81 Corridor. MPOs, RPOs, various State agencies as well as surrounding state DOTs play a vital role in transportation and will be interviewed as stakeholders in this corridor. These initial interviews will be used to engage these stakeholders early in the planning process and to validate key planning assumptions prior to the plan being developed as well as garner input on potential project needs/solutions. General categories of discussion at stakeholder interviews will pertain to corridor issues of:

- Capacity and Congestion
- Freight Movement
- Maintenance and Operations
- Economic Access
- Safety and Security
- Intermodal Facilities

The following organizations have been identified for initial stakeholder interviews. Individual action plans will be developed outlining the process and protocol for interviews with each respective organization.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

- Memphis Area MPO
- Jackson Area MPO
- Nashville Area MPO
- Knoxville Area TPO
- Lakeway Area MPO
- Kingsport Area MPO
- Johnson City Area MPO
- Bristol Area MPO

Interviews will occur with staff of each of these organizations as well as with members of their respective technical committees. In general one to two interview meetings per MPO/TPO will occur and will be face-to-face interviews.

Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs)

- Memphis Area RPO
- Northwest RPO
- Southwest RPO
- Greater Nashville RPO
- Center Hill RPO
- Dale Hollow RPO
- First TN RPO
- East TN South RPO
- East TN North RPO

Interviews will occur with staff of each of these organizations as well as with members of their respective technical committees. In general, one to two interview meetings per RPO will occur and will be face-to-face interviews.

Tennessee State Agencies

- Tennessee Department of Safety
 - Highway Patrol
 - Commercial Vehicle Compliance
- Tennessee Economic and Community Development
- Tennessee Department of Transportation
 - Regional Directors and Incident Management Programs (Regions 1, 2, 3, & 4)

Interviews will occur with appropriate staff from each of these organizations and will be initiated by a Commissioner-to-Commissioner request. Because TDOT operations and maintenance functions are decentralized, interviews will be conducted with the Regional Director and the Incident Management Programs in Regions 1, 2, 3, and 4. All interviews will be face-to-face interviews.

Surrounding States

- Mississippi
- Virginia
- Arkansas
- North Carolina

Interviews will occur with appropriate staff from each of the respective State's department of transportation (DOT) and will be initiated by a Commissioner to Commissioner request. Interviews will most likely be conducted by phone.

Additional Stakeholder Contact

While not part of the initial stakeholder interview process, individual meetings and interviews will occur during the project with other various stakeholders, as necessary to specific project tasks. Interviews will occur with Tennessee Road Builders and freight-related organizations, such as Tennessee Trucking Association, Tennessee Shortline Alliance, CSX, and Norfolk Southern, TVA, COE, and others freight related industries. Additionally, as part of Task 3 - Environmental Project Screening, the TN Environmental Advisory Council and various environmental resource agencies will be contacted and invited to participate in this task. All contact with other stakeholders will be coordinated and agreed upon by TDOT. Rail advocates will be invited to participate through MPO freight subcommittees or freight representation on the MPO, where they exist. In areas as Cookeville, not covered by an MPO, it may be necessary to have a meeting to which rail advocates are invited to participate.

4.2 PUBLIC OFFICIALS OUTREACH

It is anticipated that project briefings will need to be held throughout the course of the project with local and state elected officials. Local elected officials will be accessed through formal meetings of the MPO/RPO Executive Boards. Legislative briefings to State representatives will also occur throughout the development of the corridor study as directed by TDOT.

4.3 REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

The next step in the stakeholder and public outreach process is to hold a series of regional meetings across the State. The purpose of these meetings is to engage the MPO and RPO stakeholders throughout the state in the development of the plan at key points. MPOs and RPOs work closely with TDOT in addressing similar transportation deficiencies throughout the state and offer an established stakeholder forum specifically charged with addressing multimodal transportation issues. They offer a broad and comprehensive transportation forum that is universal across the state.

In addition to the Regional Stakeholder meetings with MPO and RPOs, regional public meetings will be held as well with the intent of offering other stakeholders, (e.g. representative groups, advocacy groups, special interest groups, and private industry) who may not be part of the formal MPO/RPO organizations as well as the general public, an opportunity to participate in the planning process. The regional public meetings will be held in the evening to encourage participation by the general public who may not otherwise be able to attend during a daytime meeting.

For purposes of the regional meetings, the State has been divided into six regions: Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Cookeville, Knoxville and the Tri-Cities area.

4.3.1 Round I - Regional Stakeholder Meetings & Public Meetings

The first round of the regional stakeholder and public meetings is intended to provide a project overview, a listing of corridor deficiencies, and an initial array of potential solutions. In each of the six regions, the regional stakeholder meetings will be held during the morning/afternoon and the public meetings will be held on the same day in the evening.

Regional Stakeholder Meetings # 1

- Locations: Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Cookeville, Knoxville, Tri-Cities
- Invitees: MPO and RPO Staff and Technical Committee Members
- Purpose: Project Overview, Corridor Deficiencies and Initial Array of Solutions
- Number of Meetings: Six total (one for each geography)

Regional Public Meetings # 1

- Locations: Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Cookeville, Knoxville, Tri-Cities
- Invitees: Other Stakeholders including the General Public and Invitations to MPO/RPO Executive Board Members
- Purpose: Project Overview, Corridor Deficiencies and Initial Array of Solutions (Evening of Stakeholder Meetings)
- Number of Meetings: Six total (one for each geography)

4.3.2 Round II – Regional Stakeholder Meetings and Public Meetings

The second round of stakeholder and public meetings is intended to gather meaningful input on the draft prioritization of projects.

Technical meetings with the MPO and TPO stakeholders will be obtained through teleconferences and individual meetings with these groups. Feedback will be solicited and incorporated in study deliverables before the second round of public involvement meetings. It is anticipated that the regional stakeholder meetings with MPOs and TPOs will occur during the month prior to the regional public meetings.

Regional Stakeholder Meeting #2

- Locations: Memphis/Jackson, Nashville, Knoxville, Tri-Cities
- Invitees: MPO Staff and Technical Committee Members
- Topic of Discussion: Draft prioritization of projects
- Number of Meetings: Four total (teleconferences or individual meetings), held during the work day.

Regional Public Meeting #2

This round of regional public meetings will be held to review the draft prioritization of projects.

- Locations: Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Cookeville, Knoxville, Tri-Cities
- Invitees: Stakeholders including the General Public and Invitations to MPO/RPO Executive Board Members
- Topic of Discussion: Draft prioritization of projects
- Number of Meetings: Six total (one for each geography); held during the evening hours.

4.4 Communication Methods

Effective communication is essential to the on-going success of the project. Below is a description of the communication methods that are planned for the project.

4.4.1 Project Database

PB will assist TDOT in collecting the names of stakeholders and interested individuals and organizations and in maintaining the database with names and addresses. This database will be used to communicate project information to key MPO and RPO stakeholders and interested persons.

4.4.2 Project Fact Sheets

As appropriate, project Fact Sheets will be prepared to keep stakeholders, the public, local agency officials, and local public officials informed of the status of the project. The Fact Sheets will be prepared at the following milestones:

- Project Overview & Purpose
- Concluding Fact Sheet & Solutions

The project fact sheets will be distributed via the project website; mailed to stakeholder groups including the MPOs, RPOs, and other agencies/organizations; provided to media contacts; and handed out at project stakeholder meetings.

4.4.3 Project Website

The website for the project will be updated with project fact sheets, public meeting announcements, and other project information as needed. The TDOT website will be used for the project, and TDOT's Webmaster will upload the material and manage the site.