

Meeting Summary

IMPROVE I-70 ADVISORY GROUP

8th Meeting

Gentry Middle School
4200 Bethel Street
Columbia, Missouri

October 23, 2003

This is a summary of the key informational and action items from the eighth meeting of the Improve I-70 Advisory Group

GENERAL

Members Present

Members of the Advisory Group attending the meeting: Craig Adams, Jeff Barrow, Bob Bechtold, Susan Clark, Dave Griggs, Chris Janku, Kory Kaufman, David Mink, Larry Moore, Bud Moulder, Lowell Patterson, Justin Perry, Garry Taylor, and Bob Walters.

Dennis Donald and John Huyler of The Osprey Group facilitated the meeting.

Materials Available

Materials available at the meeting in addition to the agenda included:

- Project update showing status of socioeconomic and other environmental studies
- Cover letter sent to prospective business interviewees
- Brief description of the business survey purpose and approach
- Press release describing activities of the Improve I-70 project through the end of the year.

Meeting Goals

The overarching goal for this meeting was to understand, discuss and receive input about the significant advantages and disadvantages of the emerging widening alternatives.

Specific meeting goals included: 1) review current status of study, including the business survey; 2) understand and discuss the emerging improvement alternatives; 3) engage in informed discussion about widening challenges, community values and tradeoffs.

While there was some information available at the meeting, most of the discussion centered around several alignments the consulting team had developed. This was one of the first meetings where the proverbial “lines on the map” were being presented to illustrate the

differences between the three widening concepts. After presentations from the consultants using large maps, a block of time was devoted to Advisory Group discussion and input.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND ADVISORY GROUP INPUT

The meeting opened with the mention of a couple of public outreach efforts. One was a drop-in center that would take place on November 4 at the Days Inn Conference Center. The other is a public open house that is scheduled for December 11 at the ARC.

Overview: Status of Planning

Buddy Desai from CH2M Hill opened the substantive portion of the meeting with an overview about the status of the planning. He mentioned that the evaluation matrix, presented as a conceptual evaluation tool at the previous meeting, would not be presented at this meeting, but he anticipated a largely complete version being available at the November meeting.

Mr. Desai noted that while much of what has been presented to the Advisory Group to date has emphasized the engineering aspects of the project, such as traffic analysis, there are a host of other studies proceeding concurrently as required by the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA. The handout provided an update about the status of these investigations. He also highlighted specific information related to wetland studies, cultural resource investigations, and hazardous materials evaluations. He mentioned that noise studies will occur as the study moves forward and the preferred improvement alternative is more precisely defined.

Business Survey

The business survey was discussed from several dimensions. Mr. Desai was asked to talk about the purpose of the business survey and to describe how the information from the survey will be used to help hone and evaluate the various alternatives that are under consideration. Secondly, Mr. Roy Dudark, Columbia City Planning Director, was asked to speak to the city's plans to evaluate the fiscal impacts related to I-70. Thirdly, Mr. Gary Vandelicht from the Berger Group was present to speak to the specifics about the business survey.

Mr. Desai began his remarks by thanking those on the Advisory Group who provided input on the initial version of the survey questionnaire. The input from the Group helped modify and improve the survey instrument. He continued by noting that the economic impacts of a project are a very important part of the whole process. The business survey is a tool to help gauge the magnitude of the business and economic impacts of the construction and expansion of the highway. He mentioned that the "footprint" of the various alternatives under consideration is increasingly becoming more exact so that it is possible to pinpoint the businesses that are likely to be impacted. The survey focuses on those businesses along the I-70 corridor that might be impacted by the construction and expansion. He reinforced that those being interviewed will not necessarily be impacted, but they might be depending upon the ultimate decisions about the alternatives and their associated footprint.

The goal of the survey is to determine who the businesses are, what they do, why they do it, how many people they employ, and so on. No information is being gathered related to

income and the data will be presented in an aggregate format to preserve confidentiality. The information about the characteristics of the business community along this corridor will help the consultants select the preferred alternative. This will be one of a number of factors that goes into making that decision. And, once an alternative is selected, the data will be used to refine the alternative and minimize impacts both during and after construction.

Mr. Dudark said that Monday night the city manager gave a report to the City Council about the likely fiscal impact on the city of the construction and improvements to I-70. The concern is about the businesses and their contributions to the community's tax base through sales taxes, hotel/motel taxes, gross receipt taxes, various other kinds of revenue streams that could be affected by a disruption or the displacement of businesses. Once the footprint of the preferred alternative is known and there is a better sense of the businesses that will be impacted, it is expected that a more refined analysis could be developed about the nature and magnitude of the fiscal impact. The city manager asked for the Council's authorization in seeking outside support to help answer these fiscal impact questions.

Mr. Vandelight indicated that the business survey started the previous Monday. The process involved identifying the appropriate contact person and sending along a packet of information about the project and the survey. The packet included the Pathways for Progress booklet that MoDOT has developed for property owners that might be impacted by transportation improvements. At the time of the meeting, Mr. Vandelight said that over 100 businesses had been contacted. The level of interest and cooperation from the business community was reportedly quite high. He said that, by the time of the November Advisory Group meeting, they expect to have the survey results available at least in a preliminary fashion.

Three Emerging Alternatives: One-Way, Two-Way and CD Systems

Since the overall goal of this meeting was to, "understand, discuss and receive input about the significant advantages and disadvantages of the emerging widening concepts," the Advisory Group experimented with a new format. Large maps were spread out on the table and posted on the wall and the Advisory Group huddled around them.

Mr. Kevin Nichols of CH2M Hill described each of the widening concepts in detail by walking the Group through the maps from west to east. The purpose was to illustrate, at the macro level, how each concept might function, how the "rural" sections of the corridor are different from the compact "urban" portions, how the impact to the community of each widening concept might vary, where significant constraints exist, and some of the hard choices and tradeoffs that need to be addressed at specific illustrative "pinch points." It was hoped that the questions and discussion that followed the explanation of the concepts would begin to elicit information about the community's values and important tradeoffs.

Two-way frontage road system. The Group began by focusing on a large map that illustrated the two-way frontage road concept. At the end of the introduction to this concept, Mr. Desai summarized some of its advantages and disadvantages. He did the same for the other two concepts after the illustrative maps had been explained in detail.

Advantages:

- maintains access in both directions

- essentially maintains existing access patterns
- provides full access to abutting properties because businesses and residences can be accessed by both left and right turns. Thus access is, for the most part, the same as today.

Disadvantages:

- doesn't provide a very efficient facility to separate local trips from through trips
- because this is still two-way travel you still have to negotiate left turns in front of you which diminishes safety
- with so many access points, the speeds on one-way frontage roads are quite slow
- weaving issues are not alleviated on I-70

One-way frontage road system.

Advantages:

- provides a new local roadway to provide mobility from east to west
- is a little bit safer than the two-way system
- will operate at slightly higher speeds than a two-way system

Disadvantages:

- right-in/right-out only means that some traffic needs to circle around
- because of the Texas turnarounds, weaving on I-70 is improved, but it is not completely eliminated

Collector-Distributor system.

The CD system shown on the illustrative map covered about a six-mile stretch of I-70 through Columbia's urban core. Access to and from the freeway was shown in the middle at about the three-mile point. The CD system does not allow much access; it is too fast and much access would be unsafe.

Advantages:

- does the very best job of separating through and local traffic
- does a very good job of moving weaving movements off of I-70

Disadvantages:

- provides no access to abutting properties
- has the widest footprint

General discussion.

In the urban core area six interchanges are shown. There are also two western and two eastern interchanges that are best served by a two-way frontage road system that currently exists and is more consistent with driver expectations in a more rural environment. The fact

that federal monies have been put into Cosmo Park means that it's afforded additional protection under law.

There was an illustration of several "pinch points." The first example was a CD configuration that showed that with the investment of a great deal of money it would be possible to take an interchange and squeeze it together by putting in retaining walls. In another illustration, if standard appropriate slopes are used to change elevation between ramps it produces a ramp that is high and a CD road that is low. With the need to put a drainage ditch, clear zone and dealing with safety issues the footprint becomes increasingly wide.

Discussion ensued about: the value of park land the possibility of diverting a creek into a culvert, the importance of good access to businesses, the fact that "locals" would likely figure out how to make the best of any access road configuration but that through traffic on I-70 might avoid stopping in Columbia if access is too difficult or confusing, the best ways to relieve congestion around Stadium, and the fact that pedestrian access will be provided at the various bridges except where doing so does not make sense because of safety or other important considerations.

Mr. Nichols explained the approach to developing hybrid or combination alternatives. He said that the work will involve systematically evaluating each of the three major concepts relative to the six central interchanges. Through the evaluation process and feedback from the Advisory Group and others it will begin to become apparent that certain configurations work better in one location than another. He went on to make the point that "with the CD system you are adding the two-way frontage, improving your operations on the freeway. But the two-way system is still intact. We have not taken that out of the mix. The same is true with the one-way system. We have added the one-way system to the two-way system. . . . If you want to improve some of the local access and some of the freeway operations, maybe you go to a one-way system in addition to the two-way and then the CD further enhances that. So it is kind of a step-wise thing."

Mr Desai added, in response to a question, that the CD system works better to keep traffic moving if there is a major shutdown on the interstate. In response to a question about cost comparisons the point was made that CDs tend to be a little more expensive because the bridges are longer since the CD roads need to go under the bridges. But generalizations are difficult since so much of the cost depends on specific circumstances. Several Advisory Group members related their good experience with "Texas turnarounds" in other states.

At the close of the discussion Mr. Desai reiterated that the Study Team does not have a preference at this point, "I know from our study team's standpoint . . . we don't have a preference. And one of the reasons why we wanted to spend so much time of this meeting just talking and having this general discussion is for people to raise issues such as you have raised . . . eventually we will have a set of systems that work and then it boils down to the tough decisions of what is more important, are the relocations more important than separating the through and local traffic? The speed of local traffic, is that more important than this? And that is where we need your help so you can tell us what is important and we can make educated decisions."

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

It was suggested that the information presented on the maps might be shared using CD's or that the maps be made available for viewing at other locations in Columbia. There was strong interest from virtually everyone on the Advisory Group in receiving a CD so that they could review the alignments more carefully. Mr. Desai indicated that CD's could be made and distributed. He also noted that the table with advantages and disadvantages by concept could be included on the CD as well.

Some of the public outreach efforts were described. The November 4th drop-in center and the December 11th open house were noted. The next meeting of the Advisory Group is scheduled for November 20th and it will be at the ARC.

The November 20th meeting was briefly previewed. It was noted that the preferred alternative will not be available at that time, but that the alignment alternatives will be refined and there will be more cost, traffic, and economic data to help evaluate the options. Some of this analysis will likely set the stage for the creation of hybrid concepts that mix and match the various concepts that have been shared with the Advisory Group. The business survey findings or highlights, at least in a preliminary form, will be available for review. Finally, it was recommended that an individual knowledgeable about the property acquisition process be available at the November meeting.

Upcoming Advisory Group
Meetings

November 20, 2003
January 29, 2004

Agenda

IMPROVE I-70 ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting 8
4:00-6:30 p.m.
October 23, 2003

Gentry Middle School
4200 Bethel Street
Columbia, Missouri

Overall Goal: Understand, discuss and receive input about the significant advantages and disadvantages of the emerging widening alternatives.

Specific Meeting Goals: 1) Review current status of study, including the business survey; 2) Understand and discuss the emerging improvement alternatives; 3) Engage in informed discussion about widening challenges, community values and tradeoffs.

- 4:00 Convene Meeting, Agenda Review, and Updates**
The Osprey Group
- 4:10 Overview: Status of Planning**
Buddy Desai, CH2MHill
- 4:20 Business Survey**
Buddy Desai and Gary Vandelicht, The Louis Berger Group
- 4:40 Overview of Three Concepts: Pros, Cons, and Challenges**
Buddy Desai and Kevin Nichols, CH2MHill
- 5:00 Three Emerging Alternatives: One-Way, Two-Way, and CD Systems**
Buddy Desai and Kevin Nichols, CH2MHill
- 5:50 Advisory Group Discussion**
The Osprey Group
- 6:20 Closing and Next Steps**
The Osprey Group
- 6:30 Adjourn**



Columbia Area Project Update October 23, 2003

In conjunction with the engineering functions associated with the Improve I-70 project, numerous environmental studies are also underway. These studies are intended to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which prohibits significant and avoidable negative impacts. The identification of important man-made and natural resources will assist in the process of developing and evaluating alternatives that achieve this goal. Below is a brief status report of the various, on-going environmental activities:

Preliminary Wetland Investigations – Field reviews are complete. Executive Order 11990 requires that projects with wetland encroachments demonstrate that there are no practical alternatives to construction in wetlands.

Cultural Resource Investigations – Field studies to identify architectural resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are underway. To date, five eligible or potentially eligible NRHP sites have been identified. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that every Federal undertaking take into account how it could affect historic properties.

Social, Economic and Community Investigations – Among the on-going investigations are a Business Survey and a Business Inventory. The Business Survey is intended to engage those businesses within the immediate vicinity of the anticipated I-70 improvements to determine how they might be impacted by the project. This will assist the project team in developing and evaluating alternatives that minimize impacts to the extent possible.

Hazardous Materials Investigations – A "Screening-Level" survey has been completed for the study area. It identified approximately 40 properties that, if impacted by the I-70 project, will require further investigation.

Noise Investigations – As the project alternatives emerge, a noise investigation will be conducted to examine the noise impacts associated with the project. The Federal Highway Administration requires that noise abatement must be considered when there are specific levels of noise impacts.

Endangered Species Investigations – This project is subject to both the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts. Coordination with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been undertaken. A population of the State endangered bristled cyperus has been identified in close proximity to I-70. Transplantation efforts are being coordinated by the Missouri Department of Transportation.

Section 4(f) Investigations – Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act requires that special consideration be given to historic resources and publicly owned public park/recreation facilities. Impacts to Section 4(f) resources are prohibited unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. Because of the proximity of Cosmo Park to I-70, coordination with the park’s administrators has begun.

Agricultural Resource Investigations – The Farmland Policy Protection Act (FPPA) is intended to minimize the unnecessary conversion of farmland during federal projects. FPPA coordination with the National Resources Conservation Service has been initiated for the I-70 project. Among the important findings has been the identification of farmland in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The CRP is a voluntary farmland set-aside program.

Displacement Investigations – The emerging alternatives are being evaluated for the amount and type of displacements that they cause. The improvement of I-70 will require the purchase of private property. The displacement evaluations are intended to minimize the impacts to existing landowners to the extent possible.

Visual Impact Assessments – The emerging alternatives will undergo a Visual Impact Assessment in accordance with FHWA policy, procedures and guidance. This assessment will describe the visual character of the project area, identify existing sensitive visual resources, quantify impacts and discuss mitigation.

Environmental Justice Investigations – Environmental Justice is the term used to describe the concept of identifying, addressing and avoiding disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low income populations. Executive Order 12898 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act are the primary guidance documents for Environmental Justice. The identification of applicable populations and an evaluation of impacts are underway for the emerging alternatives.

Land Use Investigations – The impacts of the emerging alternatives are being evaluated for how they impact established land use and zoning plans.

Stream and Floodplain Investigations – Section 404 of the Clean Water Act establishes a permit system to regulate the discharges of fill to the Waters of the United States. Section 401 of the Clean Water Act authorizes Water Quality Certifications for projects requiring Section 404 permits. The necessary investigations and coordination to successfully comply with Sections 404 and 401 are underway for the Improve I-70 project.



MEMORANDUM

CH2MHILL

727 North First Street, Suite 400
St. Louis, MO 63102-2542
314-421-0313
Fax-314-421-3927

DATE: October 14, 2003
TO: Improve I-70 Advisory Group Members
FROM: Buddy Desai, CH2M HILL Project Manager
CC: Improve I-70 Project Team, Advisory Group
SUBJECT: Business Impact Survey

RE: **CHECK APPROPRIATE JOB WITH "X"**

SIU No. 1 - J4I1341D	
SIU No. 2 - J4I1341E	
SIU No. 3 - J4I1341F	
SIU No. 4 - J4I1341G	X
SIU No. 5 - J4I1341H	
SIU No. 6 - J4I1341J	
SIU No. 7 - J4I1341K	

Now that widening concepts and alternatives are beginning to emerge, the Project Team is identifying parcel owners and businesses that might be affected by various widening proposals. As indicated in an e-mail to the Advisory Group in early October, one of the next steps is to survey potentially impacted businesses to learn more how construction and widening of I-70 might affect them in the short- and long-term. This information will be used to inform the decision-making process and refine alternatives to avoid and/or mitigate impacts. A separate process will be initiated to contact affected neighborhoods and residents.

The business impact survey is being conducted by the Louis Berger Group, a member of the CH2M HILL Project Team. The following is the process they will use:

Survey Process

- 1) Identify business parcels within the footprint of emerging alternatives (approximately 250 businesses)
- 2) Seek input on the survey instrument from business members of the Advisory Group and make adjustments as needed.
- 3) Call targeted businesses to discuss the survey and to identify appropriate recipient and schedule interviews, if possible.
- 4) Mail/fax/e-mail survey to business in advance of telephone or face-to-face interview.
- 5) Call appropriate recipient to conduct telephone interview or schedule face-to-face interview. Requests for face-to-face interviews will be accommodated to the extent practical or when requested by a business.



MEMORANDUM

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- 6) The businesses to be surveyed will be subdivided by location and the survey calls will proceed in "waves".

Anticipated Outcomes

- 1) Data that will assist the Advisory Group and Project team understand, quantify and evaluate possible impacts on businesses. The goal is to share survey results at the November 20th Advisory Group meeting.
- 2) Data that will help the Project Team refine the emerging alternatives to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to the extent possible. While a 100 percent response rate is not anticipated, the survey results will identify general trends, concerns and opportunities that will inform the decision-making process.

We anticipate this survey will prompt many questions -- and possibly concerns -- by the business community. As you know, precise alignments have not been selected, and funds for widening I-70 are not available yet. So any property purchases will be years away. When it is time to acquire property, MoDOT will comply with the policies and provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, which provides for fair and equitable treatment of persons whose property will be acquired or who will be displaced because of programs or projects financed with Federal funds.

To address widening concerns and seek feedback from businesses, residents and others who might be affected, MoDOT and the Project Team will host a day-long **"drop in" session on Tuesday, November 4, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., at the Days Inn located at 1900 I-70 Dr. SW.**

n e w s

Missouri Department of Transportation



For more information, contact Project Development Outreach Coordinator Bob Brendel, (573) 751-8717.

*Release available @
www.modot.org*

October 16, 2003 – For immediate release

No. 53L

‘Improve I-70’ Activities Accelerate For Remainder of 2003

JEFFERSON CITY – The pace of opportunities for members of the general public to offer input into the Missouri Department of Transportation’s plans for widening and rebuilding Interstate 70 in the Columbia area is about to accelerate. Several outreach efforts will take place in the next few months, including advisory group meetings, a public meeting, small group events and one-on-one interviews with business owners in the corridor to better assess the project’s impacts and their affects.

The advisory group’s next two meetings will be Oct. 23, and Nov. 20 as they continue to examine widening alternatives that are being developed by the project team. The October meeting will be held in the Media Center at Gentry Middle School, 4200 Bethel. The November meeting will be held at the Columbia Activities and Recreation Center, 1701 W. Ash. Both meetings run from 4-6:30 p.m.

On Nov. 4, the Improve I-70 team will host a “drop-in center” at the Days Inn, 1900 I-70 Drive SW from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Members of the public are invited to stop by at any time to visit with study team members and to view the latest available information. Also during the coming weeks, team members will be in the field conducting surveys within the I-70 corridor to assess the characteristics of business located there and any potential impacts that may be generated by construction of major I-70 improvements.

Finally, a public meeting will be held from 4-7 p.m. Dec. 11 at the ARC. By that meeting, it is expected that the range of proposed alternatives for I-70’s through lanes and its

associated interchanges in the Columbia area will have been reduced to those that are most reasonable.

Concepts shown at the workshop, though, will not determine which properties will be affected by future construction. Establishment of new right of way needs for the I-70 corridor will not occur until much later in the process, when a preferred alternative is selected.

Questions, comments and concerns about I-70 are welcome. Those interested in the project may contact the Improve I-70 team by phone at 1-800-590-0066, by mail at Improve I-70, P.O. Box 410482, Kansas City, MO 64141, or by email at comments@ImproveI70.org. Citizens may also visit the project web site at www.ImproveI70.org and register electronically to be placed on the Improve I-70 mailing list.

Displays from previous public and advisory group meetings are also contained on the web site in the “Local Focus” section.

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I-70 Widening Concept Comparison

The following table was developed to display how four widening concepts compare to each other according to a number of factors important in the widening and reconstruction of I-70 through Columbia. All four concepts have basic advantages and disadvantages. This table is not meant to reflect any concept as more preferable than another.

Comment Categories	I-70 Widening Concept Comparison			
	Basic Widening Concept	One-way Frontage Road Concept	Two-way Frontage Road Concept	Collector-Distributor (C-D) Concept
Travel/Access Patterns <i>Does the concept change how a motorist travels through and around Columbia, or how they access properties in and around Columbia?</i>	Maintains same travel patterns and basic access as today.	Concept results in some out-of-direction travel (with Texas Turnarounds), and maintains only one direction of existing access	Maintains same travel patterns and basic access as today	Concept results in some out-of-direction travel but maintains same basic access as today
Local Connections <i>Does the concept enhance connections to and within the existing roadway network?</i>	Provides no additional local connectivity in key areas (e.g. Perche Creek)	Provides additional local connectivity in key areas (e.g. Perche Creek)	Provides additional local connectivity in key areas (e.g. Perche Creek)	Provides additional local connectivity in key areas (e.g. Perche Creek)
Access to Abutting Properties <i>How does the concept provide access to properties located along I-70?</i>	Maintains current access to abutting properties	Allows only right turns into and out of abutting properties	Maintains current access to abutting properties	No access is provided between the CD roads and abutting properties. Concepts uses the existing road system as full-access backage roads
Local Road Capacity Parallel to I-70 <i>Does the concept provide for increased levels of traffic on local roads parallel to I-70?</i>	Does not provide any additional local road capacity	Provides some additional local road capacity	Does not provide any additional local road capacity	Provides some additional local road capacity
Freeway Access <i>How does the concept allow motorists to get onto and off of I-70?</i>	Access is the same as today	Access to I-70 would be slightly more limited than today, with most but not all interchanges having direct connections with I-70	Access is the same as today	Access to I-70 significantly more limited than today, providing only 2-3 exits and 2-3 entrances to/from I-70 within the core area of Columbia.
Local vs. Through Traffic Mix <i>Does the concept improve I-70 operations by separating local travelers from those traveling through Columbia?</i>	Does not provide facilities to separate local trips from "through" trips on I-70	Concept has ability to separate local trips from "through" trips on I-70, but does not provide facilities for full separation	Concept has ability to separate local trips from "through" trips on I-70, but does not provide facilities for full separation	Concept does the best job of separating local trips from "through" trips on I-70
Operating Speeds for Local Traffic <i>How does the concept affect the speed of local traffic?</i>	Operating speed is no different than from today	Improvement from today as one-way frontage roads with well-timed signals provide for higher speed than local streets	No improvement from today.	Improves speed of local trips that use C-D roads. CD roads operate at speeds faster than one-way frontage roads.
Right of Way Requirements <i>How much space is needed to build this concept compared to others and compared to the existing footprint of I-70?</i>	Requires more right of way than the existing footprint of I-70, but the least amount of any other concept.	Requires more right-of-way than basic widening	Requires more right-of-way than basic widening and one-way frontage road	Requires more right-of-way than any other concept
Weaving <i>Does the concept address the problem of vehicles crossing paths as some are getting on and some are getting off of I-70?</i>	Existing weaving problems remain	Weaving on I-70 is improved but not eliminated	Weaving on I-70 is improved but not eliminated	Moves weaving from I-70 onto CD roads where it can be better managed