

Chapter 7

**Comments and
Coordination**

7.0 Comments and Coordination

The Prairie Parkway Study's stakeholder involvement program seeks to increase stakeholder awareness, interaction, and information regarding possible transportation improvements in the study area. This program also satisfies the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its associated regulations, as well as the goals of the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) context-sensitive solutions (CSS) initiative. The CSS initiative seeks effective, multimodal transportation solutions by working with stakeholders to develop, build, and maintain cost-effective transportation facilities that fit into and reflect the project's surroundings—its "context." The resulting projects should improve safety and mobility for the traveling public, while seeking to preserve and enhance the scenic, economic, historic, and natural qualities of the settings through which they pass.

Prairie Parkway Study stakeholders include:

- Elected and appointed local, regional, state and federal officials;
- Local, regional, state and federal environmental, economic, historic, cultural and transportation agencies;
- The corridor business community, including farmers, professional associations, developers, small business and large corporations;
- Corridor land owners;
- Local, regional and state environmental, community and civic organizations;
- Local, regional and state-wide media firms, including print, electronic and broadcast representatives; and
- The regional, general public with emphasis on involvement of minority and low-income populations.

The Prairie Parkway Preliminary Engineering Study (study) and its stakeholder involvement program, to date, were divided into three parts. In Part A, existing travel volumes and conditions were documented and future travel volumes and conditions were forecast. This analysis was used to determine whether there was a need for transportation improvements. A need for transportation improvements in the study area was established and is documented in Chapter 1 of this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Potential transportation improvement alternatives were defined and evaluated in Part B, as documented in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3 of this DEIS. The outcome was the selection of two detailed build alternatives for additional engineering and assessment in Chapter 4 of this DEIS (Part C). Public and agency review of this DEIS will lead to the selection of preferred alternatives and the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement and a Record of Decision.

Stakeholder involvement is critical to the success of planning transportation improvements. This chapter describes stakeholder involvement for the preparation of this DEIS. This chapter presents first the study's scoping process. Second, it describes the date, purpose, and participants of various stakeholder involvement activities.

Finally, it discusses the components and outcomes of stakeholder involvement activities within the context of the three study parts.

7.1 Scoping

Scoping is an early and open process for determining the scope of a proposed action, such as the Prairie Parkway project. It focuses on the identification of potential environmental impact issues and potential improvement alternatives. Scoping helps those preparing a DEIS to know which issues deserve greater emphasis and which should receive less emphasis. All stakeholders are invited to participate in scoping.

Scoping on the Prairie Parkway project has included comments and concerns expressed by stakeholders since the beginning of the Prairie Parkway Study, including those regarding the Prairie Parkway corridor protected by the IDOT using the State of Illinois' Corridor Protection process.

7.1.1 Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agency Scoping

Environmental resource and regulatory agency scoping formally began with the publication of the Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in the *Federal Register* on September 10, 2004 (see [Appendix I in Volume 4](#)). An environmental resource and regulatory agency Scoping Meeting was held October 13, 2004. Materials associated with this meeting also are presented in [Appendix I in Volume 4](#). The following agencies sent representatives in addition to the IDOT and the FHWA:

- US Department of Agriculture—Natural Resources Conservation Service;
- US Department of Army—Army Corps of Engineers (USACE);
- US Department of Interior—US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA);
- Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA)—Bureau of Land and Water Resources;
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR);
- Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District; and
- Kane-DuPage County Soil and Water Conservation District.

During the meeting, representatives from the FHWA and the IDOT described the study purpose, location, background, and process; the stakeholder involvement program; the outcome of transportation system deficiency studies; the alternatives selection process; and the type and location of alternatives being considered. The following topics were discussed during the meeting:

- The logistics associated with evaluating a transit alternative in the DEIS should one be selected as a detailed build alternative;
- The need to evaluate the Protected Corridor established by the IDOT during the alternatives studies;
- The study area's imbalance in the forecast growth of population and employment;
- Measures of success in meeting project needs;

- The lack of information to realistically consider transportation needs beyond 2030;
- Potential use of new transportation technologies; and
- The potential for land use planning changes to eliminate the project's need.

Potential environmental issues also were discussed, including:

- Changes in protected species lists and Indiana Bat summer habitat evaluation methods, as well as the need for updating protected species lists as the project progresses;
- Changes in the USACE's permit guidelines;
- The availability of funds for construction;
- The availability of information from the USEPA's Superfund Division;
- Identification of impaired streams and the function and value of wetlands;
- The availability of advance identification of disposal areas (ADID) information in Kane County;
- Secondary impacts methods; and
- The components of the alternatives analysis used to select the detailed build alternatives (see Section 3.3 in Chapter 3).

During the scoping period, formal scoping letters were received from the Rock Island District of the USACE, the US Department of Health and Human Services, the US Department of the Interior, and the IDNR. These letters are presented in [Appendix A in Volume 2](#). The USACE had no additional comments beyond those stated orally at the scoping meeting. The Department of Health and Human Services had no specific comments but asked that the following issues be addressed: air quality, water quality/quantity, wetlands and floodplains, hazardous materials/wastes, non-hazardous solid waste/other materials, noise, occupational health and safety, land use and housing, and environmental justice. The US Department of the Interior provided an updated list and description of protected species. They also suggested consideration of non-traditional transportation solutions, approaches to the assessment of wetland impacts (including high value wetland sites), and avoidance of nature and forest preserves. The IDNR suggested that ecological resource information in the study area be kept up-to-date as the study progresses.

7.1.2 Other Stakeholder Scoping

In addition to the formal Scoping Meeting for environmental resource and regulatory agencies, ongoing coordination was maintained with the broad spectrum of stakeholder groups identified above. The entire stakeholder involvement program described in this chapter was viewed by the Study Team as scoping because as DEIS preparation progressed and potential transportation improvements were evaluated, refined, new, and more specific issues, concerns, and preferences were raised by stakeholders. Following the identification of transportation deficiencies and development of purpose and need, a public scoping meeting was held to review these items, collect input on evaluation factors important to the public, and collect input on additional alternatives. The following sections summarize stakeholder involvement.

7.2 Stakeholder Involvement Activities

The IDOT developed a stakeholder involvement plan to engage stakeholders in the study (see [Appendix K in Volume 5](#)). This section describes the date, purpose, and participants of the various stakeholder involvement activities, including:

- Technical Advisory Group;
- Corridor Planning Group;
- Local, state, and federal agency coordination, including the NEPA/Section 404 (of the Clean Water Act) merger process;
- Elected officials coordination;
- Focus groups;
- Interest groups;
- Public information meetings; and
- Other activities, including newsletters (mailed to more than 1,500 addresses at key decision points), a phone survey, and a web site.

7.2.1 Technical Advisory Group

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was comprised of 14 individuals representing a broad range of local governments, elected officials, and public and private organizations who brought differing perspectives to the project. The TAG provided opinion and consensus on some of the planning issues, such as population and employment forecasting. In the rural counties such as Kendall, LaSalle, Grundy, and DeKalb, where the jurisdiction of regional planning agencies do not extend for purposes of population and employment forecasting, the TAG helped develop those numbers, as well as the purpose and need statement. Members of the TAG were:

- John Church, Kendall County
- Max Dieber, Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission
- Dick Ellis, Grundy County Mayors and Managers
- Frank Halpin, Grundy County
- Larry Kinzer, LaSalle County
- Don Kopec, Chicago Area Transportation Study
- Mike McCoy, Kane County
- Brook McDonald, Prairie Alliance for Sensible Transportation
- Paul Miller, DeKalb County Plan Commission
- Hugh O'Hara, Will County Governmental League
- John O'Holleran, Illinois State Chambers of Commerce
- Art Prochaska, Kendall County Mayors and Managers
- Tom Rickert, Kane County Council of Mayors
- Ronald Warfield, Illinois State Farm Bureau

The TAG met five times during the project's transportation system performance studies, the development of the statement of purpose and need, and at the start of alternatives studies for the purposes indicated in [Table 7-1](#). Materials associated with these meetings are presented in [Appendix J in Volume 5](#).

Table 7-1. Technical Advisory Group Meetings

Date	Purpose
8/27/2003	Discussion of 2030 social/economic forecasts.
10/30/2003	Discussion of Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) Regional Travel Model for use in Part A of the study.
1/27/2004	Discussion of the results of the transportation performance study for the study area.
6/10/2004	Discussion of the study approach for identifying and screening alternatives (Part B).
11/30/2004	Discussion of the project purpose and need, potential alternatives, the National Environmental Policy Act and its scoping process, and public involvement activities.

7.2.2 Corridor Planning Group

In 2005, as the study focus changed from examining project purpose and need to the development and assessment of alternatives, the TAG was replaced by a Corridor Planning Group (CPG). The CPG includes representatives from local jurisdictions within the project area. These jurisdictions include: Grundy, Kendall, and Kane counties; and the municipalities of Elburn, Minooka, Morris, Lisbon, Yorkville, Plano, Sugar Grove, and Big Rock.

The CPG is supported by three technical task forces. The technical task forces are organized for transportation, environmental, and land use topics. The technical task force members were selected from interest groups, municipal staff, and county staff having experience and qualifications to provide technical input and recommendations to the CPG.

Responsibilities of the CPG are to:

- Offer guidance for the Prairie Parkway project design development.
- Provide a framework for and coordinate local government cooperation on land use planning.
- Provide a forum to debate the merits of and forge compromises for issues requiring trade offs between competing goals and objectives. For example, the addition of project enhancements requiring a larger project footprint that conflicted with goals of minimizing environmental impacts.
- Recommend prioritization for items that could be eligible for enhancement or mitigation of impacts funding.
- Develop intergovernmental agreements among various local jurisdictions when needed.
- Determine and set agenda priorities for the Task Forces.

Table 7-2 indicates the CPG and task force meetings that were held prior to the release of this DEIS.

Table 7-2. Corridor Planning Group Meetings

Date	Purpose
11/16/2005	CPG: Organization, membership, and responsibilities.
12/15/2005	CPG: Study update, storm water management, design features, non-motorized trail, road closures, interchanges, access control, noise mitigation, and intelligent transportation systems.
1/12/2006	Transportation Task Force: Membership and responsibilities, pedestrian/bicycle path, potential road closures, grade separations, and median widths.
1/16/2006	Environmental Task Force: Membership and responsibilities, pedestrian/bicycle path, storm water management, and water quality.
1/18/2006	CPG: Task Force discussions and update on the status of the studies.
2/6/2006	Environmental Task Force: Update on the status of the studies.
2/8/2006	Transportation Task Force: Discussions with affected communities and resource agencies; pedestrian/bicycle path, potential road closures, grade separations, and median widths.
2/15/2006	CPG: Meeting summaries of workshops with Kane and Kendall counties covering storm water management.
3/6/2006	Environmental Task Force: Study update
3/15/2006	CPG: Study update
3/23/2006	Land Use Task Force: Membership and responsibilities, update on other task forces, indirect and cumulative impacts, context sensitive solutions, and public meeting schedule
4/12/2006	Transportation Task Force: Grade separation/road closures, non-motorized trail and varying median width.
5/1/2006	Environmental Task Force: Status of DEIS, draft initial environmental procedures, review of April 2006 public meeting exhibits, preliminary location of storm water basins, review wetland impacts and mitigation options.
5/4/2006	Land Use Task Force: Population and forecast assumptions, Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) overview, and development of corridor themes. Study update
6/1/2006	Land Use Task Force: Update on the status of the studies, Context Sensitive Solutions.
6/21/2006	CPG: Update on the status of the studies, Context Sensitive Solutions, storm water engineering issues.
7/10/2006	Environmental Task Force: Review of Kendall County Forest Preserve letter, Storm water management engineering issues, preliminary location of storm water basins, Context Sensitive Solutions; image and identity.
8/3/2006	Land Use Task Force: Road closures, interchange design, stream crossings.
8/16/2006	CPG: Update on the status of the Task Force Meetings, status of the Technical Committee, Context Sensitive Solutions, Fox River crossing visualization, water quality basin renderings, Prairie Parkway Realignment at IL-71, and IL-47 corridor.
10/11/2006	Land Use, Environmental and Transportation Task Forces (joint meeting): Context Sensitive Solutions, Fox River crossing visualization; DEIS schedule.
10/18/2006	CPG: Context Sensitive Solutions, DEIS schedule.

7.2.3 Local, State, and Federal Agency Coordination

The Study Team maintained ongoing coordination with local, state, and federal agencies. Some of this coordination was done through regularly scheduled meetings, such as meetings with the environmental resource and regulatory agencies (RAG). The RAG is comprised of the agencies that participated in the Scoping Meeting (see Section 7.1.1). [Appendix I in Volume 4](#) presents materials and correspondence associated with the RAG meetings. [Appendix K in Volume 5](#) presents meeting summaries and correspondence with other agencies.

Other coordination efforts were conducted on an as-needed or as-requested basis. [Table 7-3](#) presents coordination events with local, state, and federal agencies.

Table 7-3. Local, State, and Federal Agency Coordination Meetings

Date	Participants	Purpose
Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies (Federal and State Agencies)		
8/27/2003	RAG	Introduce the project to agencies
2/5/2004	RAG	Present Transportation System Performance Report findings
10/13/2004	RAG	Resource Agency Scoping Meeting
3/1/2005	RAG	Seek and receive agency concurrence on project purpose and need (Concurrence Point 1)
4/12/2005	RAG	Update agencies on the status of the project and visit potential Fox River crossings in the field to obtain comments on potential natural resource impacts at crossing alternatives
9/9/2005	RAG	Seek and receive agency concurrence on project alternatives (Concurrence Point 2)
12/13/2005	RAG	Update agencies on alternate Fox River crossings and scope of proposed geotechnical investigations
2/07/2006	RAG	Update agencies on the results of geotechnical analyses in the vicinity of the Fox River
9/7/2006	RAG	Update agencies on project and DEIS status
State Agencies		
9/24/2003	Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA)	Introduce the project to agency
1/9/2004	IDOT	Update on study progress
9/10/2004	ISTHA	Update on study progress, discussion of the next steps to be taken, and discussion of proposed improvements that meet the Purpose and Need
4/8/2005	ISTHA	Update on study progress
8/22/2005	ISTHA	Update on study progress

Table 7-3 (concluded). Local, State, and Federal Agency Coordination Meetings

Date	Participants	Purpose
Local Agencies		
5/19/2003	Grundy County #2 [Engineer]	Discussion of other transportation projects to be built by 2030
5/19/2003	Kendall County #2 [Engineer]	Discussion of other transportation projects to be built by 2030
5/20/2003	LaSalle County #2 [Engineer]	Discussion of other transportation projects to be built by 2030
5/20/2003	Kane County #2 [Engineer]	Discussion of other transportation projects to be built by 2030
5/22/2003	DeKalb County #2 [Engineer]	Discussion of other transportation projects to be built by 2030
5/22/2003	Will County #2 [Engineer]	Discussion of other transportation projects to be built by 2030
10/15/2003	Joliet Arsenal Development Authority	Update on the status of the project
10/20/2003	Kane County Forest Preserve District #3	Update on the status of the project
10/20/2003	Kendall County Forest Preserve District #3	Update on the status of the project
11/24/03	City Of Yorkville	Population and employment forecast
9/16/2004	Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)	Update on study progress, discussion of the next steps to be taken, and discussion of proposed improvements that meet the Purpose and Need
9/30/2004	Pace Suburban Bus	Update on study progress, discussion of the next steps to be taken, and discussion of proposed improvements that meet the Purpose and Need
4/27/2005	Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) and Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS)	Update on study progress, discussion of the next steps to be taken, and discussion of proposed improvements that meet the Purpose and Need
8/5/2005	City of Yorkville	Update on the status of the project
1/5/2006	Kendall County Engineer	Update on study progress, discussion of the next steps to be taken, and discussion of proposed improvements that meet the Purpose and Need
3/21/2006	Kane County Township Highway Commissioners	Update on study progress, discussion of the next steps to be taken, and discussion of proposed improvements that meet the Purpose and Need
6/22/2006	Kane County Coordination Meeting	Discussion of Kane County design issues.
8/28/2006	Kane County Transportation Committee	Context Sensitive Solutions Image and Identity

The IDOT, the FHWA, the USACE, the USFWS, the USEPA, the IDNR, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), the IDOA reached an agreement that provides for concurrent NEPA and Section 404 processes on federal-aid highway projects in Illinois. The purpose of the agreement is to ensure appropriate consideration of the concerns of the USACE, the USEPA, and the USFWS as early as practical in highway project development, especially regarding compliance with the Section 404(b)(1) (of the Clean Water Act) guidelines. These agencies and the IEPA and the IDNR are particularly involved in concurring with project decisions at three key points. These concurrence points are: Purpose and Need, Alternatives to be Carried Forward, and Preferred Alternative. The first two have occurred, as indicated in [Table 7-3](#). The third will occur after public and agency review of this DEIS. NEPA/404 concurrence meetings were conducted as part of the regularly scheduled RAG meetings.

7.2.4 Elected Officials Coordination

Multiple meetings were held with local, state, and federal elected officials. [Table 7-4](#) presents the meetings that were conducted and their purpose. Materials and comments associated with elected officials meetings are presented in [Appendix F in Volume 3](#). County meeting materials and comments are presented in [Appendix G in Volume 4](#).

7.2.5 Focus Groups

As part of the transportation needs analysis, the IDOT conducted four focus group meetings at the Fox Valley Mall in Aurora on September 30 and October 1, 2003. The primary goal of the meetings was to understand how the people who live, work, and travel in the general study area perceive the transportation issues and needs. Qualitative data was gathered on current and future transportation issues and needs. The focus groups were divided four different participant categories:

- Group 1: Business owners/managers;
- Group 2: Property owners/farmers;
- Group 3: Drivers; and
- Group 4: General interest.

The 41 focus group participants were recruited from Grundy, Kendall, Kane, DeKalb, LaSalle, and Will counties.

7.2.6 Interest Groups

The project Study Team met with numerous interest groups since early in 2003. The meetings were generally held at the groups' request to provide information on the status of the project. Interest groups included:

- Farm Bureaus;
- Public interest groups;
- Economic Development Corporations/Commissions;
- Chambers of Commerce;
- Industrial Associations;

Table 7-4. Elected Officials Meetings

Purpose	Officials	Dates
Part A: Determination of Project Purpose and Need		
Overall study introduction (including discussion of data collection, project needs identification, relationship to corridor protect study, and study process and timeline)	Study area elected officials	1/16/2003
	Kane County, Elburn, Grundy County, Aurora, DeKalb County, LaSalle County, Marseilles, Seneca, Channahon, Joliet, DeKalb, Sycamore, Kendall County, Sandwich, Somonauk, Batavia, Sugar Grove, Montgomery, Leland, Newark, Minooka, Plano, Yorkville, Hinckley, Cortland, Plainfield, Shorewood, Illinois House of Representatives, Illinois State Senate, Morris, Genoa, Oswego, Naperville, Lisbon, Geneva, Will County, Ottawa, Millington, Speaker Hastert, North Aurora, Millbrook, Big Rock, Aurora Public Works Committee, Kendall County Mayors and Managers, and DuPage County	45 meetings from 2/10/2003 to 12/8/2003
Discuss Transportation System Performance Report results	Study area elected officials	3/1/2004
Part B: Selection of Detailed Build Alternatives		
Discuss Part A study results, next steps, and type of improvements to meet purpose and need	Aurora, Kane County (twice), Morris, Grundy County, Minooka, Big Rock, Sugar Grove, Montgomery, Shorewood, Plano, Elburn, Plainfield, Will County, Kendall County, Grundy County, Yorkville, Kendall County Mayors and Managers, Oswego, Joliet (WiKaDuKe Trail update), and Batavia	19 meetings from 5/10/2004 to 11/9/2004
Potential alternatives	Study area elected officials	12/6/2004
Study update	Senator Lauzen	2/28/2005
Study update	Yorkville, Oswego, DeKalb County, Kane County Board, Elburn, Montgomery, Will County, Minooka, Sugar Grove, Morris, Kendall County Mayors and Managers	11 meetings from 4/8/2005 to 5/4/2005
Potential alternatives	Study area elected officials	5/9/2005
Study update	Kane County, Plano, Sandwich, Kendall County (four times), Grundy County, Representative Gordon, Elburn, Yorkville, Kane County	12 meetings from 5/12/2005 to 8/18/2005
Final alternatives	Study area elected officials	10/3/05
Part B results	Elburn, Minooka, Morris (twice), Grundy County Board, Kane County Board, Yorkville, Kendall County Board, Big Rock, Newark, Sugar Grove, Grundy County, Minooka, Yorkville, Kane County, Morris, Sugar Grove, Kendall County, Plano (three times), Newark, Big Rock, Hinckley, Plano, Kane County Transportation Committee, Kane County (workshop on storm water management, road closures, and median width), Kendall County (workshop on storm water management), Big Rock Township, Kane County (including bicycle trail and storm water management), and Kendall County Township Highway Commissioners (including road closures)	31 meetings from 10/20/2005 to 4/6/2006
Alignments for detailed build alternatives	Study area elected officials	4/3/2006

- Developers; and
- Conservation organizations.

Table 7-5 presents the interest group meetings held. Interest group meetings minutes and correspondence are presented in Appendix H in Volume 4 and Appendix K in Volume 5.

Table 7-5. Interest Group Meetings

Purpose	Interest Group	Dates
Part A: Determination of Project Purpose and Need		
Overall study introduction	Illinois Road Builders , Conservation Foundation (twice), and Prairie Alliance for Sensible Transportation (PAST) (twice), Citizens Against the Sprawlway, DeKalb County Farm Bureau, American Farmland Trust , Kane County Farm Bureau, Kendall County Farm Bureau, Will County Farm Bureau, Yorkville Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Big Rock Creek Watershed, Oswego EDC, Metra, Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, DeKalb County EDC, Plano EDC, Plano Chamber of Commerce, Big Rock Historical Society, Sierra Club (Fox Valley Chapter), Citizens for Aux Sable Creek, DeKalb County Farmland Foundation, Will County Center for Economic Development, Grundy County Farm Bureau, Grundy County EDC, Grundy County Chamber of Commerce, League of Women Voters, LaSalle County Farm Bureau, and Park 88 Industries	26 meetings from 5/27/2003 to 11/20/2003
Part B: Selection of Detailed Build Alternatives		
Potential Improvements and study update	Conservation Foundation, PAST (three times, including purpose and need), Kane County Farm Bureau (twice), Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC) (twice), Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Metropolis 2020, Kendall County Farm Bureau, Big Rock Creek Watershed, and Waubonsee Community College	14 meetings from 5/18/2004 to 10/4/2004
Part B results and Coordination	Kettle Creek Area Residents, Illinois Society of Professional Engineers (ISPE) (including context sensitive solutions), Aux Sable Watershed, Conservation Foundation, Kane County Farm Bureau, ITE, Kendall County Farm Bureau, Big Rock Creek Watershed, Friends of the Fox River, ComEd, Lakewood Homes (twice), Pulte Homes, and Corbin and Kingsland Development Corporation, Young Leaders	15 meetings from 6/23/2005 to 3/22/2006

7.2.7 Public Information Meetings

Public involvement is a key component of the Prairie Parkway Study. Public information meetings were one of the methods used to keep the general public informed on the progress of the study and to provide a forum for comment. The IDOT conducted 12 public information meetings and one workshop between January 2003 and April 2006. The information workshops were held in pairs to make it easier for the general public to attend the meetings. [Table 7-6](#) presents the purpose and date the public meetings and workshops were held. Materials from these meetings, including handouts, attendance sheets, presentations, and comment summaries are included in [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#).

Table 7-6. Public Information Meetings/Workshops

Date	Purpose of Meeting	Format
Part A: Determination of Project Purpose and Need		
1/22/2003	Study introduction	Open Forum
1/23/2003	Study introduction	Open Forum
3/17/2004	Present results of the transportation system performance studies	Presentation and open forum
3/18/2004	Present results of the transportation system performance studies	Presentation and open forum
Part B: Selection of Detailed Build Alternatives		
6/16/2004	Discuss potential study area transportation improvements	Workshop with breakout groups
12/8/2004	Discuss potential alternative highway improvement corridors	Presentation and open forum
12/9/2004	Discuss potential alternative highway improvement corridors	Presentation and open forum
5/10/2005	Discuss potential alternative highway improvement corridors	Presentation and open forum
5/11/2005	Discuss potential alternative highway improvement corridors	Presentation and open forum
10/4/2005	Discuss detailed build alternative corridors	Presentation and open forum
10/5/2005	Discuss detailed build alternative corridors	Presentation and open forum
Part C: Design Development for the Detailed Build Alternatives and DEIS Preparation		
4/4/2006	Discuss detailed build alternative alignments	Presentation and open forum
4/5/2006	Discuss detailed build alternative alignments	Presentation and open forum

7.2.8 Other Activities

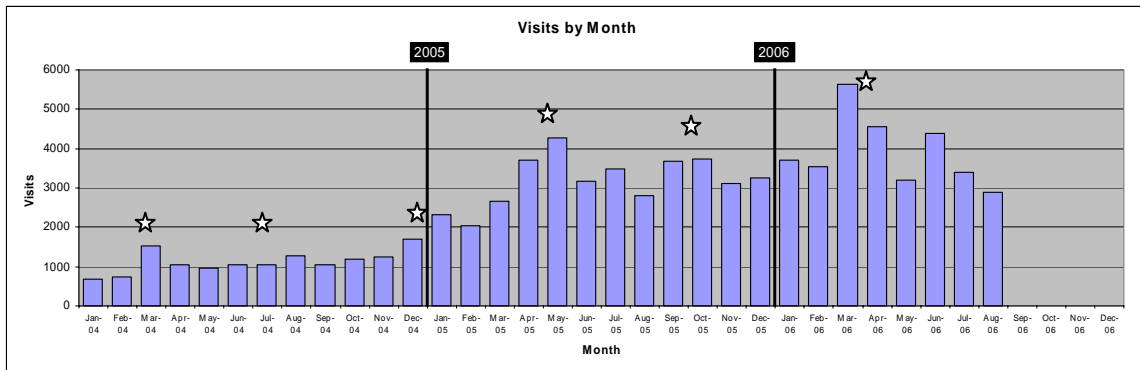
In addition to the meetings described above, the IDOT used several other means for communicating and coordinating with the public, including a web site, newsletters, and a telephone survey.

7.2.8.1 Website

The IDOT established a public website for the project (<http://www.prairie-parkway.com>). People entering the website could obtain information on the status of the project, information on upcoming meetings, and provide comments and feedback.

The website is a comprehensive source of project information as well as a means for the public to communicate with the Study Team. Since January 2004, the site has registered over 83,000 visits. [Chart 7-1](#) shows monthly web site use in relation to when public meetings were held (indicated by the star). The site has been well publicized and is advertised in project newsletters, press releases, and in other correspondence with the public.

Chart 7-1. Project Website Visits by Month (January 2004 to August 2006)



In addition to providing general project information, the project website includes a news and events archive, fact sheets/handouts, newsletters, presentations, press releases, and project reports. A key component of the website is the online comment form. This form provides the public with an opportunity to submit their comments and concerns electronically to the Study Team.

7.2.8.2 Newsletter

IDOT published and mailed six newsletters since initiating the project study. The newsletters were mailed to anyone requesting to be placed on the project mailing list, as well as to elected officials and government agencies. The newsletters were generally mailed twice a year, in the Spring and Fall. The first newsletter was distributed in the Spring of 2003. The most recent newsletter was distributed in the Spring of 2006. The newsletters provide updates on the status of the project, news of upcoming meetings, and contact information for the project.

7.2.8.3 Telephone Survey

In October and November, 2004, a random telephone survey of 1,000 residents within the Prairie Parkway study area was conducted. The area surveyed consisted of all of Kendall County, the southern portion of Kane County, the northern portion of Grundy County, the western portion of Will County, the eastern portion of LaSalle County and the eastern portion of DeKalb County.

The survey found that:

- Residents expressed moderate levels of concern about traffic congestion, rating the problem a 5.8 to 6.2 on a scale of 1 to 10. Approximately half considered traffic congestion to be severe. Approximately three-quarters believed that traffic congestion will get much worse over the next ten years.
- Among the proposed solutions to traffic congestion problems, residents indicated the most support for widening existing roads and better transportation planning.
- Few respondents reported using public transportation. Interest in using improved public transit options as an alternative to driving was low. There was moderate support for enhanced rail service.
- When asked specifically about the need for roads, over half (61 percent) of the respondents felt that growth is inevitable and roads should be built or improved before traffic problems increase.
- Those who were in favor of new roads indicated a need for both a north-south and an east-west road. However, residents of the central part of the study area were more apt to express a need for a north-south road.
- Many residents supported working with the existing infrastructure to deal with traffic congestion (e.g. expanding existing roads, widening intersections). Twenty-two percent said existing road improvements should be favored over new road construction.
- In terms of potential solutions to congestion, residents indicate the highest likelihood of using expanded roads or new freeways/expressways.
- Increased traffic safety and reduced regional and local travel times were perceived to be the most attractive benefits from transportation improvements.
- Respondents express the most concern over the impacts on water quality and added costs to taxpayers.

7.3 Stakeholder Involvement Process and Outcomes

This section presents a chronological description of the stakeholder involvement program for each of the three parts of the Prairie Parkway Study:

- A. Determination of project purpose and need;
- B. Selection of detailed build alternatives; and
- C. Design development for the detailed build alternatives and DEIS preparation.

Meeting and other materials associated with the stakeholder involvement program described in this section are presented in Appendices E to L.

7.3.1 Part A: Determination of Project Purpose and Need

7.3.1.1 January 2003 Introductory Stakeholder Meetings

The stakeholder involvement program began in January 2003, with several introductory meetings. The first meeting for elected officials, held January 16 (see [Table 7-4](#) and [Appendix F in Volume 3](#)), was followed one week later by two public information meetings on January 22 and 23 (see [Table 7-6](#), and [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#)).

These meetings were important to determining the public's opinion of the study. The previous planning process for the corridor protection was not well received by the public, so the IDOT wanted to be clear in defining the study's process, intent and direction. The IDOT stressed throughout the introductory meetings that the study was starting with a 'clean slate,' and that if the need for transportation improvements was found, then a variety of possible improvements will be examined.

The presentations to the officials and the public detailed the decisions points, anticipated schedule, the study area and the Part A process, which at that time, was the only funded part of the study. The presentations noted that public involvement was an ongoing process, that public meetings will be held at key decision points, and invited and encouraged comments and participation in the study.

After these meetings, the Study Team received comments, through many channels (e-mail, phone/oral, and written). The comments covered many issues, with some people expressing support for the study and the Protected Corridor, while others expressed concerns about the Protected Corridor and its anticipated impacts.

7.3.1.2 February to November 2003 Stakeholder Meetings

Following these initial meetings, meetings with the various stakeholders were held. These meetings were to introduce the study, collect data, identify local area needs and issues and address questions that the stakeholders had. During this introductory period, the Study Team met with numerous stakeholders, including representatives of municipalities and counties (45 meetings from February 10 to December 18, 2003, [Table 7-4](#)), interest groups in the study area (26 meetings from May 27 to November 20, 2003, [Table 7-5](#)), state and federal environmental resource and regulatory agencies (August 27, 2003, [Table 7-3](#)), and other local agency representatives (10 meetings from May 19, 2003

to November 24, 2003, [Table 7-3](#)). (See Appendices G, H, and K for associated materials, minutes, and correspondence.)

These meetings provided the Study Team with a good understanding of the issues in the study area. The Study Team was able to gain insight into the challenges faced by area communities because of population and employment growth. One finding was concerns about increasing of truck traffic because of the opening of two new intermodal facilities.

Recent updates to area comprehensive plans indicated that study area counties place a high value on agriculture land preservation, a higher value than most municipalities in the study area. Preserving natural resources was identified as a concern by many groups, as well as the potential for development to deplete the region's water aquifers and storm water management.

The population and employment forecasts that will be used for the study were discussed at several stakeholder meetings. Several communities expressed concerned that the Northeastern Illinois Plan Commission methodology historically underestimated future population in the region, and suggested that the study should not take such a conservative approach with forecasting. Lastly, most stakeholders expressed a need for some type of additional or expanded transportation facilities in the region.

7.3.1.3 August 2003 to November 2004 Technical Advisory Group Meetings

Part A's studies included developing regional population and employment and travel demand forecasts. To ensure that forecasting assumptions were reasonable, the Study Team organized the TAG described in [Section 7.2.1](#) to review the results of the traffic analysis during Part A, and provided comment and guidance as needed (see [Table 7-1](#) and [Appendix J in Volume 5](#)).

7.3.1.4 Fall 2003 Focus Group Meetings

In late fall 2003, four focus group meetings (see [Section 7.2.5](#)) were conducted to assess public perception of travel conditions in the region. The general findings of the meetings were:

- Participants in all groups felt that traffic congestion in the region is a problem and that there is a need to do something to alleviate it;
- For solutions, the participants felt that both expanding existing roads and building new roads will be most helpful to alleviate traffic congestion;
- Few of the focus group participants presently use public transportation; and
- Many people expressed concern that building new roads will increase development in the region.

7.3.1.5 March 2004 Transportation System Performance Report Meetings

In March 2004, the Study Team released a Transportation System Performance Report (TSPR) at a presentation to local officials (Table 7-4 and Appendix F in Volume 3) and at two public meetings (see Table 7-6, and Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3). The TSPR was presented to environmental resource and regulatory agencies on February 4, 2005 (Table 7-3). The TSPR documented existing travel conditions in the study area and the various factors that are expected to influence future travel demand. The TSPR presented the several measures of transportation performance described in Section 1.3 of Chapter 1. These measures were used to define the purpose and need of the project presented in Chapter 1. Results showed that congestion will increase in the study area in the future.

There were a small number of comments received from the meetings. Most of the comments related to concern over IL-47 and US-34 traffic congestion and suggested that non-highway improvement alternatives (e.g., mass transit) be considered.

7.3.1.6 March 2005 Resource and Regulatory Agency Concurrence on Statement of Purpose and Need

The environmental resource and regulatory agencies, the IDOT, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) concurred with the statement of purpose and need presented in Chapter 1 at a meeting on March 1, 2005, completing Part A. With the completion of Part A, and the identification of a need for transportation improvements, the IDOT decided to proceed with the selection of alternatives.

7.3.2 Part B: Selection of Detailed Build Alternatives

The steps and results of Part B are described in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3. The steps were:

1. Identification of initial alternatives;
2. A “functional evaluation” of alternatives that focused on the potential travel benefits of each alternative; and
3. A “locational evaluation” of alternatives that that focused on identifying alternatives that will have a lower potential for environmental impact.

7.3.2.1 May to December 2004 Stakeholder Meetings

At the beginning of Part B, the Study Team again held meetings with representatives of area municipalities and counties (19 meetings from May 10 to December 6, 2004, Table 7-4), interest groups in the study area (14 meetings from May 18 to October 4, 2004, Table 7-5), and regional transportation agency representatives (three meetings on September 19, 16 and 30, 2004, Table 7-3). (See Appendices G, H, and K for associated materials, minutes, and correspondence.)

The meetings focused on community and regional transportation improvement ideas. A common theme in these meetings was that existing transportation facilities are not able to keep up with the pace of growth in the region. In addition, with job concentrations in

DuPage and Cook counties, commuter traffic is creating additional travel problems in many areas of the region.

There was support for expansion of the local road system, including Eldamain Road, Orchard Road, Dauberman Road, and the WiKaDuKe Trail. In addition, the need for a new expressway or freeway with limited access was repeated by some.

Kane County noted that the deficiencies identified in the TSPR were very similar to the results of the Kane County's 2030 transportation planning studies. The needs listed in that report included local road improvements, additional river crossings, a bypass around Yorkville on IL-47, and an improved railroad crossing between Dauberman and Granart Roads for emergency services response.

Preserving farmland and providing for storm water management were two topics discussed in detail by a number of stakeholders. The idea of locating a new transportation facility east of IL-47 was shared by many stakeholder groups.

Other meetings were held with stakeholders who had not been met with previously, to provide them with a summary of the project and work done to date. Comments from these groups were broad and had a long-term focus, citing interest in an alternative that connected to I-90 (north of the study area). Additionally, there were comments that just widening IL-47 will likely provide adequate long-term traffic capacity for the region. Provisions for future mass transit options, by preserving or creating right-of way in the median of a new facility, was something that the Study Team was asked to consider. Finally, the groups noted that the regional impact of the freight industry was increasing.

7.3.2.2 June 2004 Public Workshops

On June 16, 2004, the Study Team held two public workshops to gather potential improvement ideas from the people who live and work in the area (see [Table 7-6](#), and [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#)). Each workshop started with a short presentation that reviewed the study to date, and established a framework for small group discussions that followed. The draft purpose and need for the study was reviewed, and then the small groups worked on a map to identify conceptual improvements. At the close of the meeting, a representative of each small group summarized the suggestions of that each.

The discussion and subsequent written comments resulted in more than 150 suggested improvements (see [Section 3.3.1.2](#) and [Figure 3-2](#) in Chapter 3).

To help manage the analysis of the more than 150 suggestions, the Study Team combined suggestions into broad corridors and eliminated some of the suggestions that did not meet the project's purpose and need (see [Section 3.3.1.3](#) and [Figure 3.3](#) to [Figure 3.6](#) in Chapter 3).

As the study progressed, the Study Team met with key stakeholders to gauge response to some of the potential corridors and to make sure that nothing crucial was omitted.

7.3.2.3 December 2004 Elected Officials Meeting and Public Workshops

In December 2004, the Study Team presented the potential corridors for study to the local officials (December 6, see [Table 7-4](#) and [Appendix F in Volume 3](#)) at a meeting and to the public at two meetings (December 8 and 9, see [Table 7-6](#), and [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#)) at different locations in the study area. The alternatives included both location and improvement type options. The Study Team also discussed the purpose and need (a Part A component finalized in March 2005 as noted in Section [7.3.1.6](#)), the alternatives evaluation process, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process. In general, comments either expressed support for the project or expressed concerns about it and the impacts the improvements might have on the environment. Other comments related to the widening IL-47, the purpose and need of improvements, and the northern termini of the proposed corridors.

7.3.2.4 April 2005 Resource and Regulatory Agency Fox River Crossing Alternatives Field Review

Because of the environmental sensitivity of the Fox River, environmental resource and regulatory agencies were invited to a briefing discussing the potential alternatives and a field review of five of the six potential Fox River crossings on April 12, 2005 (see [Table 7-3](#)). The field review was conducted to help identify potential environmental impact issues and provide agency representatives with a clear understanding of conditions at each potential crossing site.

7.3.2.5 April to June 2005 Meetings on Initial Alternatives

During April to June of 2005, initial alternatives evaluation results were presented in various public forums, including:

- A media briefing on April 29, 2005, that led to the widespread announcement of the availability of the evaluation findings in newspapers and radio broadcasts;
- Several briefings of stakeholder groups, elected officials, regional transportation agencies, and neighborhood groups (26 meetings from April 8 to August 18, 2005, see [Table 7-3](#) and [Table 7-4](#) and [Appendices G, H, and K](#));
- A newsletter (see [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#)) mailing and distribution to public buildings and libraries; and
- A posting of extensive data on the project website.

The project website included a summary of the findings, an interactive constraint map to view the corridors and the GIS database, and an electronic comment form. Public meetings were held on May 10, 2005 at Kaneland John Shields Elementary School in Sugar Grove, and May 11, 2005 at White Oak Elementary School in Morris (see [Table 7-6](#), and [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#)). Receipt of comments was initially requested by June 13, 2005, but was extended to the end of June 2005. The extension was advertised on the project website.

The purpose of this public involvement effort was to present the findings of the travel benefit analysis and the potential environmental impact evaluations, and solicit comments. The conceptual alternatives presented encompassed a wide range of concepts, including widening existing arterial streets, new freeways, and transit improvements. The alternatives were evaluated and presented from the perspectives of how well they addressed the four parts of the statement of purpose and need (see Section 3.3.2 in Chapter 3) and their environmental impacts (see Section 3.3.3 in Chapter 3). In order to obtain public opinions of the trade-offs required to obtain the optimal blend of improved travel benefits with acceptable levels of impacts, no recommendations were offered to the public. The public was encouraged to respond in writing with concerns and opinions of the alternatives based upon the objective technical findings and presentation. Many of the alternatives had originated from the suggestions offered through the context sensitive solutions process, which led to active participation in the review of the findings.

7.3.2.6 *Governmental Body Comments*

The following study area governmental bodies sent comments or resolutions regarding the initial alternatives evaluation. The references to corridor alternatives refer to the alternatives discussed in Section 3.3.2 of Chapter 3. The comments are:

1. Big Rock Township—Letter supports freeway corridor similar to freeway corridor C2 in order to benefit more people and cause less destruction to the beauty of the area.
2. Village of Channahon—Resolution supports freeway corridor B5 and requests an interchange at Brisbin Road and corridor B5.
3. Grundy County—Resolution affirms support for original Protected Corridor alignment.
4. Kane County—Letter recognizes freeway corridors C2 and C5 are hindered by development and municipal plans. In consideration of western Kane County freeway corridors (B5, B2, and A1), the county wants to work closely with the IDOT to ensure the protection and preservation of Big Rock Creek watershed and its unique aquatic habitat. They request environmental enhancements and are supportive of the IDOT corridor planning process. They are concerned about new interchanges altering land uses. The county does not want the corridor to be a catalyst for development in areas designated for agricultural preservation.
5. Kendall County—Resolution supports freeway corridor B5 since it is a transportation component in the *Kendall County Land Resource Management Plan*, and they have designated it as a Scenic Corridor. They ask that the Scenic Corridor design guidelines found in their plan be incorporated. They support corridor B5 and the widening of IL-47 (corridor L3), and the WiKaDuKe Trail (corridor N5).
6. Village of Montgomery—Resolution supports corridor B5 and strongly opposes corridors C2, C5W, C5E, and C3 because of negative impacts on quality of life and

the economy, as well as negative environmental impacts to sensitive natural areas, Blackberry Creek, wetlands, and a park site. They support extending the corridor from I-88 north to I-90.

7. Village of Newark—Letter supports corridors A1 and A5 as long as farm severances are minimized.
8. Village of Oswego—Letter notes that all corridors utilizing or near Orchard or Grove roads will be extremely problematic for Oswego, and they oppose those alternatives based upon existing and future land use and development. The letter also notes that western corridors, including corridor B5, will offer substantially less impact to existing development than corridors along Grove or Orchard roads.
9. City of Plano—Letter supports freeway corridor B5. They indicate the corridor will also provide good potential for future extension to Indiana. They request upgrades to US-34 to accommodate a future Prairie Parkway.
10. City of Sandwich—Resolution favors freeway corridors B2 and B5, and opposes corridors A1 and A5 because of impacts on the city.
11. Village of Sugar Grove—Letter supports freeway corridor B5. It requests that IL-47 improvements and the I-88 interchange with IL-47 be considered by the study as needed local improvements.
12. City of Yorkville—Letter supports freeway corridor B5 because it will connect major highways, but it does not appear to have impacts on developed areas or environmentally sensitive areas like the Fox River. They oppose corridors north of the Fox River that are completely, or partially, east of IL-47 because of the amount of existing development, as well as the disruption to planning that has been done to ensure access, safety, and regional storm water management. The letter notes ecological and environmental concerns for the interchange at the Fox River crossing east of Yorkville. In addition, it notes that corridors to the west of corridor B5 are less able to lessen traffic on IL-47, and that corridor B2 may be good if the corridor is expected to be extended to the south and east of I-80.

7.3.2.7 *Interest Group Comments*

The following interest group stakeholders have sent comments regarding the initial alternatives evaluation. The comments are:

1. Citizens Against the Sprawlway—Letter states that telephone survey results indicate that residents prefer widening existing roads over building new expressways. It also states that the evaluation comes down to whom the IDOT is trying to serve with the project: current residents best served by local travel improvements or development interests seeking to expand access to rural areas for personal gain. They believe that improving existing roads makes more sense than denying local access at the north end. The letter asks if construction of the central corridor will cause people to have to drive west to go east, thereby creating more demand. It also states that common

sense indicates that a central corridor will be of no benefit to areas east of the freeway, but will add demand and sprawl to the west and north.

The letter also states that the environmental impacts of new highway construction will be substantial throughout the area. It notes that the IDOT assessment focuses on the Fox River crossing, but should address the overall impact of the entire route. The group believes that the quality of the environmental feature should be considered, and that the role of highways exacerbating the effects of sprawl should not be ignored. They also believe that a better measure of farm impacts is the amount of land taken out of cultivation by the project, as well as by the secondary effects of development at the interchanges. The letter states that the IDOT needs to focus studies on corridors to the east of Yorkville because people will not travel west to go east.

The group believes that IDOT should focus on improving or expanding existing routes, including limited reconfiguration and connection of existing routes, along with travel demand management techniques. The letter states that if a freeway is to be considered, it is recommended that an eastern corridor be given the highest priority, since it will serve and impact the areas with the greatest population without igniting further growth into the rural areas.

2. Chicagoland Transportation and Air Quality Commission—Press release critiques Transportation System Performance report findings with respect to the No-Action Alternative traffic analysis (see Section 1.3 in Chapter 1).
3. Conservation Foundation—Letter offers no comment on the corridor selections for further studies. It indicates concern for the future design of the alignment and how that alignment will affect environmental resources. The letter requests a discussion of design techniques to minimize impacts when the time is appropriate.

The letter emphasizes that although river crossings are important, the overall environmental impact of the full corridor is most important. Also, it states that the study should afford ample time for the public to review technical literature, exhibits, and findings before a public information meeting.

4. DeKalb County Farm Bureau—Letter opposes freeway corridor A1. It states that corridor B5 makes the most sense for improving regional mobility, and fairs equally well as freeway corridor A1 in minimizing environmental impacts.
5. Grundy County Farm Bureau—Letter contains a resolution from the Farm Bureau Board that supports an alternative that is as far to the east as possible.
6. Illinois Farm Bureau—Letter opposes corridors along the western edge of the study area that will directly and inadvertently lead to the development of large acreages of farmland and encourage development to sprawl farther to the west. The letter states that the western corridors work against local planning. It also notes that locating the corridor in western Kane County will be inconsistent with the county's effort to

preserve farmland through their 2030 *Land Resource Management Plan*, and also be inconsistent with DeKalb County's plan for controlled growth.

7. Kane County Farm Bureau—Letter notes that the EIS must take into account the loss of farmland and the transitional loss awaiting in-fill development. The letter also states opposition to the Corridor Planning Council because it infringes on individual property rights.
8. The letter states that the corridors that best serve the regional transportation needs of the existing population, while minimizing impacts on the natural environment, maximizing farmland protection, and respecting Kane County land use plans, are the eastern corridors (i.e., corridors C5W, C4, C3, and C2). The letter urges the IDOT to expedite studies to reserve necessary lands before they are developed.
9. LaSalle County Farm Bureau—Letter opposes freeway corridor A1 because of concerns regarding development and farmland protection. The letter indicates support for eastern alternatives.

7.3.2.8 Individual Public Comments

Individual written comments were received from 105 persons. Of the comments received, 70 percent expressed support for some type of transportation improvement; 16 percent were requests for information or complex comments; and 14 percent opposed specific corridors. A petition was also submitted from those with concerns about the corridor alternatives that end near Morris. This petition, with 79 signatures, opposed those locations and favors improvements to the "east".

Of the individual written comments supporting an improvement, 34 percent supported proceeding with the "B" corridors; 20 percent supported proceeding with one or more arterial roadway corridors; 12 percent supported proceeding with an "A" corridor; 12 percent supported proceeding with a corridor east of IL-47; eight percent supported proceeding with a corridor west of IL-47; eight percent supported proceeding with a "C" corridor; and six percent supported unstated improvements.

Although it was a small sample, it appeared that the decision to advance for further study combination corridor alternatives consisting of "B" freeway corridors and IL-47/WiKaDuKe arterial corridors will meet the desires of the majority of those who sent in comments expressing support for an improvement. The majority of the comments for specific corridors to advance were made in relation to concerns about loss of open space, farmland preservation, water quality preservation, and secondary and indirect impacts.

7.3.2.9 September 2005 Resource and Regulatory Agency Concurrence on Detailed build alternatives

Alternatives study findings and comments on the alternatives study findings presented in Section 7.3.2.5 led to the selection of the two study alternatives for preliminary engineering and detailed environmental evaluation. The IDOT's recommendations for detailed build alternatives were presented to the environmental resource and regulatory

agencies on September 9, 2005 (see [Table 7-3](#) and [Appendix I in Volume 4](#)). Concurrence on Alternative B2 with IL-47 Widening and Alternative B5 with IL-47 Widening were as detailed build alternatives was obtained.

7.3.2.10 October 2005 Meetings on the Detailed build alternatives

Following concurrence on the detailed study, an elected official meeting was held on October 3, 2005 (see [Table 7-4](#) and [Appendix F in Volume 3](#)) and two public meetings were held in October 4 and 5, 2005 (see [Table 7-6](#), and [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#)). These meetings presented the decision to complete additional studies and designs for the two detailed build alternatives.

There were a substantial number of public comments after the October public meeting. These comments generally expressed approval or opposition to the study or a preference for one of the detailed build alternatives.

7.3.3 Part C: Design Development for the Detailed Build Alternatives and DEIS Preparation

After the selection of the detailed build alternatives, a preliminary design was developed for each alternative for assessment in the DEIS. Stakeholder meetings were held to discuss the preliminary design as it developed.

7.3.3.1 June 2005 to March 2006 Stakeholder Meetings

Thirty-one elected officials, local agency, and regional agency meetings were held from October 20, 2005 to April 6, 2006 (see [Table 7-3](#) and [Table 7-4](#)) and 14 interest group meetings were held from June 23, 2005 to January 26, 2006 (see [Table 7-5](#)). These meetings focused on more specific issues related to the refinement of preliminary alignments. Stressed in many of the discussions was the need to protect the area's water quality, with specific attention on Big Rock Creek, a high quality stream, and working with the various watershed groups in the region, to avoid or mitigate the potential impacts (see [Appendices G, H, and K](#) for associated materials, minutes, and correspondence).

As a part of discussions on how best to address water issues continued, two workshops were held at the end of January 2006 as a part of the 31 meetings. These workshops helped the participants and the Study Team identify issues and come to some resolution on storm water management, potential road closures and design issues. These workshops partially resulted from discussion held by the recently formed Corridor Planning Group.

7.3.3.2 November 2005 to October 2006 Corridor Planning Group Meetings

Twenty-one meetings were held from November 16, 2005 to October 18, 2006 with the Corridor Planning Group and supporting task forces. This group and their responsibilities are described in Section [7.2.2](#). The CPG and supporting task forces examined a variety of issues related to the preliminary design of the detailed build alternatives. These issues included alignment location, interchanges and intersections, road closures and grade separations, storm water management, planning for a multi-use

non-motorized trail in the area, and indirect and cumulative impacts of any potential improvement.

7.3.3.3 April 2006 Potential Preliminary Design Meetings

An initial draft of the preliminary design for the detailed build alternatives was presented to local elected officials meeting on April 3, 2006 (see [Table 7-4](#) and [Appendix F in Volume 3](#)), and at two public meetings on April 4 and 5 (see [Table 7-6](#) and [Appendix E in Volumes 2 and 3](#)). In addition to the potential alignments, drawings of typical road cross sections and the study timeline were presented.

Public written comments were received during and after the meetings. Most of the comments were general approval or opposition to a specific alignment or concerned property owners near or within the footprint of one of the alignments. The alignments were further refined based on comments made at these meetings.