

SECTION 5

Coordination

IDOT has provided early, frequent, and meaningful opportunities for residents, business owners, municipalities, resource agencies, and other stakeholders to participate in the study process. NEPA, SAFETEA-LU, and IDOT's CSS policy require the integration of public and agency interaction into the process for developing transportation improvements. As such, the SIP developed for the project was designed to provide a structured program for agency coordination and public involvement that complies with state and federal regulations and addresses the unique coordination and communication needs of the project. Because the project requires consideration of multiple modes of transportation and affects many different communities, the plan was designed to foster communication among the general public, resource agencies, and local governmental officials on project issues and types of improvements needed, and to build consensus for a preferred transportation solution. This section summarizes the agency coordination and public involvement activities that occurred during the EO-WB study, and the involvement of residents, community groups, and other stakeholders.

5.1 Compliance with Federal Coordination Regulation

The SAFETEA-LU legislation, specifically Section 6002, requires additional involvement opportunities for federal, state, and local agencies and the public for projects requiring an EIS. The legislation created a new category of participation in the consultation and input process for studies like the EO-WB with the goal of enhancing agency and public participation. The participating agency category was created to ensure that all interested agencies have an opportunity to be involved in the study and environmental review process. Table 5-1 lists the coordination activities undertaken during the project to comply with Section 6002 requirements. Minutes prepared for those activities are included in the official project record.

5.1.1 Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating agency status is invited by the lead agencies or sponsors of an EIS (see Appendix D for invitation letters). The joint lead agencies for preparing this Tier One EIS are IDOT and FHWA. In accordance with NEPA, a cooperating agency is any federal agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact of a proposed project. When the effects are on lands of interest to a Native American tribe, a state or local agency of similar qualifications may by agreement with FHWA and IDOT be a cooperating agency. Cooperating agencies are permitted, by request of the lead agency, to assume responsibility for developing information and preparing environmental analyses for topics about which they have special expertise. Furthermore, they may adopt a lead agency's NEPA document when, after an independent review of the document, they conclude that their comments and suggestions have been satisfied.

TABLE 5-1
Section 6002

Section 6002 Requirement	Location of Description of Activity
Identify participating and cooperating agencies, and place notification letters on participating and cooperating agency status in project file.	Subsection 5.1 of the Draft EIS, and the Stakeholder involvement plan / coordination plan
Determine and document lead/joint lead agency status.	Subsection 5.1.1 of the Draft EIS, and the Stakeholder involvement plan / coordination plan
Develop coordination plan in consultation with participating agencies and file.	Stakeholder involvement plan / coordination plan
Identify schedule for environmental review process with participating agencies and file.	Time duration agreement in stakeholder involvement plan / coordination plan (updated regularly)
Give opportunity for participating agencies and the public to provide input during development of purpose and need and document involvement.	Subsections 1.2 and 5.1.2 of the Draft EIS
Give opportunity for participating agencies and the public to provide input during development of range of alternatives and document involvement.	Section 3 and subsection 5.1.2 of the Draft EIS
Coordinate with participating agencies to identify appropriate methodology to be used and level of detail required in analysis and document.	Sections 2, 3, and 5 of the Draft EIS

Agencies invited to serve as cooperating agencies for the project are included in Table 3-2 of the SIP (FHWA and IDOT, 2009). The IDNR and TSA accepted the lead agencies' requests to be cooperating agencies. The responsibilities listed below are in addition to those typical of cooperating agencies:

- Identify issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental and socioeconomic impact as early as possible
- Communicate issues of concern formally in the EIS scoping process
- Provide input and comment on the purpose of and need for the project
- Provide input and comment on the procedures used to develop alternatives and to analyze impacts
- Provide input on the range of alternatives to be considered
- Provide input and comment on the sufficiency of environmental impact analyses

5.1.2 Participating Agencies

According to SAFETEA-LU Section 6002, a participating agency is a federal, state, tribal, regional, or local government agency with interest in the project. By definition, all cooperating agencies are participating agencies, but not all participating agencies are cooperating agencies. Invitation letters soliciting participating agency participation are included in Appendix D. Twenty-eight federal, state, and county agencies, communities, and other interested parties are considered participating agencies. The agencies and their

responsibilities are listed in Table 3-3 in the SIP. The responsibilities listed are in addition to providing comments on purpose and need, study methodologies, range of alternatives, environmental impact analyses, and the preferred alternative.

5.1.3 Agencies Declining Invitation to Participate

Pursuant to SAFETEA-LU Section 6002, a federal agency that declines to be a participating agency must specifically state the following in its response:

- It has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project.
- It has no expertise or information relevant to the project.
- It does not intend to submit comments on the project.

A nonfederal agency must formally accept the invitation in order to be considered a participating agency. If an agency declines, its response should state the reason for doing so. If it chooses not to participate, the agency may still comment on the process at public/stakeholder involvement venues (coordination planning group, task forces, public meetings, etc.). A nonfederal agency that does not respond to the invitation will not be considered a participating agency. In this project, 62 agencies were requested to be participating agencies, 23 of which accepted. Eight agencies declined, and 31 that did not respond are considered to have declined. Those agencies are listed in Table 5-2.

TABLE 5-2
Agencies that Declined Participating Agency Status or Did Not Respond to the Invitation

IDOA	Cook County	City of Wood Dale
IEPA	Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District	Village of Bensenville
Illinois NRCS	North Cook County Soil & Water Conservation District	Village of Berkeley
ISTHA	Addison Township	Village of Bloomingdale
Hannahville Indian Community	Elk Grove Township	Village of Franklin Park
Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin	Hanover Township	Village of Melrose Park
Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma	Leyden Township	Village of Norridge
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians	Maine Township	Village of Roselle
Prairie Band of Potawatomi	Norwood Park Township	Village of Rosemont
Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri	Proviso Township	Village of Schiller Park
Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa	Schaumburg Township	Village of Villa Park
Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska	York Township	RTA
City of Park Ridge	CTA	

During the study process, cooperating and participating agencies participated at several venues, such as project working group meetings, the NEPA/Section 404 concurrence

process (for federal/resource agencies), one-on-one meetings, small group gatherings, and stakeholder workshops.

5.2 Federal, State, and Local Agency Coordination

From the beginning of the study, two groups were established to provide a forum for discussing the project and for engaging various federal, state and local agencies. One consisted of regular NEPA/404 Merger agency meetings to discuss the transportation issues in the study area, the purpose and need for the improvements, the methodology for developing and screening alternatives, methods for evaluating environmental impacts, and the rationale for dismissing alternatives. These discussions were accomplished in individual meetings, as well as the formal NEPA/404 concurrence meetings. The other group (meetings of the Project Management Team, consisting of IDOT and FHWA representatives and their consultants) comprised the study leadership and focus on the overall technical and process aspects of the project, ensuring that the planning requirements of IDOT and the Federal Government are satisfied.

5.2.1 NEPA / 404 Merger Process

The project was coordinated under the Statewide Implementation Agreement for Concurrent NEPA/404 Process, which was designed to ensure appropriate consideration of the concerns of the USACE, the USEPA, the USFWS, and others as early as practicable in the highway project development process. It is intended to involve these agencies at key decision points in project development to ensure environmental clearances for the project are secured. Project team members attended regularly scheduled meetings held by regulatory/resource agencies to discuss the project. The NEPA/404 process seeks to obtain concurrence from the signatory agencies at three key decision points: Project Purpose and Need, Alternatives to be Carried Forward, and Preferred Alternative.

5.2.1.1 Scoping Meeting

Early in the process, an Agency Scoping Meeting was held (December 12, 2007) with the regulatory and resources agencies to identify the important environmental issues and concerns to be considered in the EIS (see Appendix I for meeting minutes). The meeting included an overview of the process, a description of the Tiered EIS process, and a review of the analytical tools. The GIS was a specific focus, and details were presented concerning data layers, sources of data, level of detail and gaps in the data. The agencies agreed that the level of detail in the GIS database was appropriate for comparing impacts of alternatives and for making decisions about transportation system solutions.

The principal purpose of the meeting was to solicit the agencies' input on key resource issues and topics to be addressed in the EIS. Topics that were suggested included the need to avoid and minimize impacts to environmental and socioeconomic resources, consideration of sustainable design measures, multimodal transportation solutions, and the need to ensure the project is compatible with concurrent transportation improvement projects. (See the Scoping Document in Appendix I for a detailed description of the issues the agencies discussed.)

5.2.1.2 Supplementary Scoping Meeting

A second scoping meeting was held January 11, 2008, to obtain input from the USACE and IDNR, who were not present at the first scoping meeting (see Appendix I for meeting minutes). The agenda for the meeting mirrored the first meeting and included an overview of the project organization, process, and analytical tools and methods. Both agencies agreed that the process and methods of analysis were acceptable for this type of study and sufficient for making decisions about transportation solutions.

The USACE and IDNR reviewed the list of resource issues generated from the first meeting. The agencies added several topics to the list including the source and extent of the Cook County soils information and consideration of BMPs to manage water quality in the area. (See the Scoping Document in Appendix I for a detailed description of the issues the agencies discussed.)

5.2.1.3 NEPA / 404 Meeting Number One

A meeting was held June 23, 2008, to seek concurrence on the purpose and need statement. The purpose and need statement was founded on technical analysis and stakeholder information and input. As such, information from the TSPR (FHWA and IDOT, 2009), the report documenting the detailed technical analysis of travel performance for existing and future travel in the study area, and stakeholder involvement activities, which provided an insightful local perspective of the transportation issues in the study area, were presented. Highlighted was the finding that when the results of the technical analysis were compared with the stakeholder issues there was a remarkable similarity. At the conclusion of the meeting, concurrence on the Purpose and Need was obtained.

5.2.1.4 NEPA / 404 Merger Meeting Number Two

The EO-WB project team met with the NEPA/404 Merger group on September 4, 2008, to provide a project update. The status report focused on the tiered process and advances in alternative development and evaluation. Whereas the EO-WB project is the first in Illinois for which tiering is being applied, the meeting represented another opportunity to state the fundamentals of the process. Tier One was explained as a planning step used to identify the location and type of preferred improvements at a conceptual level of detail, and Tier Two would be used to advance project development for priority elements of the plan.

The group responded favorably to the use of tiering. In particular, it recognized that there was no preconceived solution for the area given the complexities of the transportation issues in the study area. The development of an overall master plan for the area was viewed as a benefit, more so as a framework from which projects with independent utility could advance in Tier Two. The agencies expressed satisfaction with the process because their early involvement gave them a context within which resource impacts were assessed on a broader scale.

The second part of the meeting was an update regarding the development and evaluation of alternatives. The analytical methods and evaluation criteria used to screen alternatives was described. The first evaluation step compared the travel performance of the initial 15 roadway alternatives. Five alternatives were dropped because they failed to satisfy purpose and need. The remaining 10 were evaluated against environment and socioeconomic factors, and three more were dropped because of high socioeconomic impacts. The agencies concurred with the analysis, agreeing that the socioeconomic evaluation criteria were the

most discerning. They also agreed with the approach that further detail would be incorporated into the process as it advances.

The meeting updated the merger group and sought their input on progress to date, and on methods that may be applied in future steps. Several members of the NEPA/404 group were not present, and it was suggested that the agencies have a joint agency meeting on October 8, 2008 in Schaumburg, thus giving the team the opportunity to give another status report. The EO-WB team agreed to be present at that meeting. See Table 5-3 for a description of topics discussed at the meeting.

TABLE 5-3
Meetings and Coordination with Resource Agencies and Other Organizations

Date	Participants	Topics Discussed
October 30 and November 30, 2007, and June 11, 2009	IDNR	Ecological Compliance Assessment Tool (EcoCAT) submitted and results received. Consultation initiated.
November 7, 2007	IDNR, IEPA	Meeting to discuss/obtain available information from state databases.
November 29, 2007	IDNR	Refinement of state-listed plant species data (e-mail).
December 21, 2007	DuPage County	Received available DuPage County GIS data.
January 18, 2008	JAWA, MWRDGC	Received utility atlases.
February 5, 2008	USFWS	Letter with information pertaining to potential federal-listed threatened and endangered species within the study area.
February 7 and March 14, 2008	FEMA	Letters with requirements pertaining to floodplain impacts and the Tiered EIS.
April 10, 2008	USFWS	Letter stating that the Indiana bat likely is not present in northeastern Illinois.
August 2008	FPDDC, INHS	Received and refined wildlife information.
August 6, 2008	Bensenville	Received additional information pertaining to potential historic sites. (Original information was obtained through the Context Audit.)
October 8, 2008	USACE, USFWS	Tiered approach for the EIS (the process, how critical decisions are made, level of detail in each tier, expected results and documents for each tier); alternatives development and evaluation process (screening from 15 system alternatives to 10, then to seven, future screening of four transit alternatives); current travel modeling efforts (redistribution of traffic onto other roadways, potential capacity improvements beyond major improvements) that led to proposal to expand the study area (agencies concurred).
October 13, 2008	USEPA	Received list of CERCLIS sites in Cook and DuPage counties.

TABLE 5-3
Meetings and Coordination with Resource Agencies and Other Organizations

Date	Participants	Topics Discussed
October 17, 2008	Baxter & Woodman, Village of Bensenville, Cook County Highway Dept., City of Des Plaines, DuPage County Public Works Department, Elk Grove Village, Village of Hanover Park, Village of Roselle, Village of Schaumburg, Village of Schiller Park, City of Wood Dale	Letter documenting telephone conversation requesting the appropriate drainage information for incorporation into the drainage study. The following material was requested: storm sewer plans, combined sewer atlas, utility plans, contour mapping, proposed and current drainage improvements, identification of flooding experience associated with the highway or adjacent properties, and local ordinance.
November 12, 2008	USACE, USEPA, USFWS	Meeting to discuss wetland data collection and data refinement methodology; quantification of potential wetland impacts; the use of available data to identify wildlife resources in the study area. Field visit to view environmental resources, specifically wetlands.
November 19, 2008	DuPage County Dept. of Economic Development and Planning	Request for a copy of <i>Upper Des Plaines River Tributaries Watershed for Willow-Higgins Creek, Bensenville Ditch, Crystal Creek and Addison Creek Tributaries</i> .
December 2008 and February 2009	FPDCC, FPDDC, INHS	Received and refined wildlife information for original and expanded study area.
December 12, 2008	IDNR	Updated information pertaining to state-listed threatened and endangered species and natural areas, including the expanded study area.
December 22, 2008	FPDDC	Received exhibit showing proposed forest preserve acquisition area located southwest of the Elgin O'Hare Expressway and Medinah Road (adjacent to the west side of Medinah Wetlands Forest Preserve).
December 30, 2008	IDNR	Received maps with biological integrity and diversity stream ratings.
January 20, 2009	Cook County Assessor's Office	Received available Cook County GIS data.
January 21, 2009	USEPA	Received list of RCRA-regulated facilities in Cook and DuPage counties,
January 22, 2009	USACE, USEPA, USFWS	Project status update, expanded study area and supporting improvements, updates to the purpose and need document, the TSPR, and the finalist system alternatives update.
January 29, 2009	USFWS	Letter with revised information pertaining to potential federal-listed threatened and endangered species for the study area, including the expanded study area.
February 18, 2009	IDNR	Written permission to use the information provided by the state in the Tier One EIS.
March 9, 2009	DuPage County Dept. of Economic Development and Planning	Phone conversation regarding DuPage County trail lengths.
April 3 and June 4, 2009	IDNR	Received information pertaining to public lands that were purchased and/or developed using LWCF or OSLAD funds.

TABLE 5-3
Meetings and Coordination with Resource Agencies and Other Organizations

Date	Participants	Topics Discussed
July 22, 2009	SHPO	Finding of No Architectural Resources Affected.
July 27 and July 30, 2009	USEPA, USFWS	Conference call to discuss the treatment of air quality in the Tier One EIS, schedule to complete the Tier One EIS, and accelerated schedule for Tier Two.
September 14, 2009	SHPO	Finding of No Archaeological Resources Affected.
October 5, 2009	USACE, USEPA, USFWS	Project status update, summary of the Draft EIS, remaining Tier One and Tier Two schedule, special studies progress, potential treatment of preferred alternative concurrence point in NEPA/404 Merger process, and next steps.
December 1, 2009	USACE, USEPA, USFWS	Tier One Draft EIS comments (particularly October 26, 2009 USFWS comment letter).
December 2-8, 2009	USACE, USEPA, USFWS	Project status update summarizing IDOT's identification of a preferred alternative (Alternative 203 with Option D). Based upon meeting discussions, USACE requested additional information to support the agency's evaluation of the build alternatives and determination of concurrence.

5.2.1.5 NEPA / 404 Merger Meeting Number Three

On February 3, 2009, the EO-WB team met with the NEPA/404 Merger group to provide a project status update. The topics included a revised study area, updated purpose and need statement, and an update of the alternatives evaluation and screening.

Traffic data and analysis caused the project team to reconsider the project limits in the later half of 2008. Traffic analysis of the roadway alternatives examined the affects of the improvements on traffic for the adjacent roadway network. The Elgin O'Hare Expressway was consistently affected by all alternatives and showed increases in traffic levels that warranted capacity improvements. Therefore, the study area was expanded to the west to include the Elgin O'Hare Expressway. The decision to expand the study area required that the purpose and need statement (concurred upon in June 2008) be reconsidered to determine if the larger area changed the fundamental need statement. The basic transportation performance metrics that supported the purpose and need findings were presented. Each measure was evaluated, comparing the old study area metrics with the new study area. It was concluded that the basic message in the original purpose and need statement did not change with the expanded study area. The NEPA/404 Merger group acknowledged the findings but agreed to wait until the next meeting for formal concurrence.

The environmental and social impacts of the seven roadway alternatives were presented to the group. It was noted that the accuracy of the database had improved since the last impact assessment. The environmental resource impacts are remarkably similar for all alternatives, including wetlands, waters and floodplains. Three alternatives have potential impacts to threatened and endangered species, but the others have none. The greatest differentiators were building displacements and tax revenue losses.

The presentation concluded with a preview of the February 2009 stakeholder meeting and March 2009 public meeting, at which the remaining roadway and transit alternatives would be presented and meeting participants would be asked to comment on them. Following the public meeting, information supporting the selection of the alternatives to be carried forward in the Draft EIS would be compiled, reviewed by FHWA, IDOT, stakeholders, and the NEPA/404 Merger group, and presented at the next NEPA/404 Merger meeting in June 2009 for concurrence.

5.2.1.6 NEPA / 404 Merger Meeting Number Four

The EO-WB project team met with the NEPA/404 Merger group on June 24, 2009, to seek concurrence on the project purpose and need, and the alternatives to be carried forward in the Draft EIS. The group originally concurred on the project purpose and need in June 2008; however, since that time the study area boundary was expanded and the purpose and need was revised to conform to the new boundary. In February 2009, the group was briefed as to the expanded boundary and changes to the purpose and need. The revised version of the purpose and need was submitted to the group for review and summarized at the June 24, 2009 meeting. Although the study area was expanded, the original purpose and need statements remained valid, with metrics showing that congestion remained as high for the larger study area, the area with travel times of greater than 10 minutes to a freeway connection remained the same, the longest travel times in the study area continued to be those to the west, and transit ridership remained the same. After answering a few questions for the project team, the NEPA/404 Merger group unanimously concurred with the project purpose and need.

The second concurrence point involved a detailed presentation of the alternatives development and screening process that led to the alternatives retained for further study in the Draft EIS. The project team explained that the roadway alternatives were narrowed from 15 to 10 to seven by means of travel performance, environmental, and social measures. The seven remaining alternatives were subject to a more complex screening approach including a quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, and consideration of stakeholder input. Each aspect of the screening approach evaluated a number of factors including travel performance, design viability, and environmental and socioeconomic factors. This led to the conclusion that transportation system Alternatives 203 and 402 be carried forward as build alternatives. The alternatives development process yielded several options for connecting the south leg of the O'Hare West Bypass with I-294. The process started with seven options that were later reduced to four options. The four remaining alternatives were subjected to detailed comparative evaluations. However, the reasons that two of the four options were dismissed were unworkable railroad conflicts, large loss of tax base, and large displacement of commercial and industrial business. The remaining options (Options A and D) were recommended to the group to be retained for further evaluation in the Draft EIS. Again, after answering a few questions, the NEPA/404 Merger group unanimously concurred that Alternatives 203 and 402 and Options A and D be carried forward into the Draft EIS.

5.2.1.7 Distribution of the NEPA/404 Preferred Alternative Concurrence Package

On November 21, 2009 FHWA distributed the Preferred Alternative Concurrence Package to NEPA/404 Merger group members. It described the recommendation of Alternative 203 with Option D as the Preferred Alternative and IDOT's rationale for its selection. Specifically, FHWA noted that Alternative 203 with Option D addresses the purpose and

need better than Alternative 402, Option A, or the No-Action Alternative. In addition, Alternative 203 with Option D does not result in disproportionate impacts to environmental and socioeconomic resources, and has received substantially greater public support than Alternative 402 and Option A. All agencies, including USEPA, USFWS, USACE, IDNR, IDOA, and IHPA concurred with IDOT's recommendation. See Appendix D for the Preferred Alternative Concurrence Package and agencies' responses to requests for their concurrence.

5.2.1.8 Other Resource Agency Meetings and Coordination

Extensive coordination was undertaken with resource agencies and other agencies outside the formal NEPA/404 process. The coordination focused on the exchange of resource information (such as status and general location of endangered or threatened species, acquisition of the latest resource data to populate the project's GIS database, input to the process, and the level of detail needed in a Tier One evaluation) and on field visits to gain perspective of the resources in the area and their quality. Table 5-3 lists the coordination activities. Letters are included in Appendix D.

5.2.2 Project Working Groups

Three working groups were developed to guide the development of the process to a successful conclusion. The groups have different functions, but all are designed to provide timely input to the process so as to satisfy both federal transportation planning requirements and to provide a solution that meets the needs of the study area. The individual project working groups are described in the following sections.

5.2.2.1 Project Management Team

The Project Management Team comprises FHWA, IDOT (District and Central office), and consultant staff. The group provides guidance on the process and technical requirements. Its role is to establish the overall process, methodologies for alternative development and evaluation, detailed procedures for evaluating travel performance, environmental and socioeconomic impacts, and other technical evaluations, stakeholder involvement, and compliance with federal requirements. The group meets monthly to report on project status and to discuss project activities, actions, and required decisions to advance the project upon an agreed schedule.

5.2.2.2 Corridor Planning Group

The Corridor Planning Group (CPG) consists of community leaders from the affected communities and from DuPage and Cook counties (see Table 4-2 in the SIP for a list of members). The role of the CPG is to reflect the views and interests of the individual municipalities while considering the broader transportation needs of the study area, to review and comment upon the interim products from the process, to provide input to the study process for consideration and analysis, and to champion unity within the study area that would lead to the support of a preferred transportation solution. CPG activities are described in subsection 5.3.2.

5.2.2.3 Environmental, Land Use, and Transportation Task Forces

Three task forces were created to focus on technical aspects of the project development process and to provide external subject-matter information and input with respect to environmental, land use, and transportation issues. Task force members have expertise or a particular interest in these areas (see Table 4-3 in the SIP for a list of members). They represent communities and counties in the study area, interest groups, resource agencies, transportation agencies, and individuals. Task force activities are described in subsection 5.3.2.

- **Environmental Task Force** is charged with identifying, evaluating, and making recommendations with respect to various environmental issues and concerns within the study area. This includes providing advisory input to the development of environmental impact evaluation criteria and the evaluation of environmental impacts.
- **Land Use Task Force** is charged with identifying, evaluating, and making recommendations with respect to land use and economic issues within the study area. This includes advisory input regarding land use patterns, the effects of various alternatives on land use and economic centers, and the compatibility of alternatives with the overall land use and economic development goals within the study area.
- **Transportation Task Force** provides advisory input to help identify, evaluate, and make recommendations with respect to various transportation issues within the study area. This includes advisory input for the transportation system performance evaluation, transportation system performance measures to be used to evaluate alternatives considered, and evaluation of the performance of system alternatives.

5.3 The Public and Interested Groups

The EO-WB implemented an extensive public involvement program that included every stakeholder that has interest in or is affected by the proposed transportation improvements. Many venues were provided, with the goal of establishing opportunities for stakeholders to participate, be heard, and influence the outcome of the process, for example the project's purpose and need and build alternatives to be carried forward. The EO-WB hosted or participated in meetings with the core communities most affected by the proposed improvements; stakeholder workshops comprised of community officials, staff, agency representatives, and others; meetings with transportation providers and other operating infrastructure entities in the study area; speakers bureau events with civic groups, professional societies, business groups, and communities; and information meetings with the general public.

5.3.1 Core Community Meetings

Continuous communication with the core communities – Elk Grove Village, Bensenville, Itasca, Wood Dale, Schaumburg, and Roselle – has been rigorously maintained throughout the project's development. Community officials were apprised early on of the project's intended goals. As the south bypass connection option development process matured, Franklin Park was added to the list of communities who were regularly engaged. Meetings with communities were held every couple months to update officials on current and upcoming activities and to obtain input on the development of alternatives. Officials were

asked to inform the project team of how alternatives could benefit or otherwise affect the community, or if there were aspects to the alternatives that had not yet been considered. Meetings were held with community officials in advance of stakeholder events, including public meetings. The object was to provide community representatives with a preview of what was going to be presented, to answer questions, and obtain their feedback. Table 5-4 summarizes the meetings with core community officials.

TABLE 5-4
Core Agency Meetings

Community	Date	Topic Discussed
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Wood Dale, Franklin Park	August 2007; September 2007	Overview of the study process and goals; public and stakeholder involvement; and elicit input regarding local issues.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Wood Dale	November 2007	Public Information Meeting; project working group coordination plan; preview Joint Task Force Meeting and Stakeholder Workshop Number One.
	February 2008	Alternatives development and evaluation process; preview objectives of upcoming project working group meetings.
	April 2008	Summary of Stakeholder Workshop Number Two; project purpose and need; initial roadway system strategies.
	May 2008	Comments related to project purpose and need; initial roadway and transit system strategies; preliminary transportation performance analysis.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Wood Dale, Franklin Park	June 2008	Travel performance for initial roadway system strategies; preview objectives of upcoming project working group meetings.
Itasca	June 2008, July 2008	Elgin O'Hare Expressway access options in Itasca.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Wood Dale, Franklin Park	July 2008	Dismissal of five roadway strategies that did not satisfy purpose and need; evaluation of environmental and socioeconomic impacts; north and south legs of the O'Hare Bypass or IL 83 Freeway.
Franklin Park	August 2008	Discussions of initial south bypass connection options noting their advantages; sought opinions of the options and compatibility with land use patterns.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Wood Dale	October 2008	Expanded study area; recent alternatives development and evaluation efforts; analyses of projected travel patterns.
Roselle, Schaumburg	October 2008	Expanded study area; introduction and overview of study; recent alternatives development and evaluation efforts; analyses of projected travel patterns.
Wood Dale	November 2008	Land use and economic development consultants (The Lakota Group and TranSystems) scope of transportation improvements; improvements planned for the Thorndale corridor; coordination of projects.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Franklin Park	December 2008	North and South West Bypass Connection Options; analysis findings for the potential Elgin O'Hare Expressway westerly extension past terminus at US 20.

TABLE 5-4
Core Agency Meetings

Community	Date	Topic Discussed
Bensenville, Franklin Park	January 2009	Discussions of the south bypass connection options, including revised layout and cross-sectional views of elevated sections; review of latest impact data and discussion of evaluation criteria.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Wood Dale	February 2009	Briefing of systemwide travel performance, estimated costs, environmental impacts, and social impacts for roadway alternatives.
Elk Grove Village	March 2009	Discussion of the Village's issues concerning several roadway alternatives that affect the community.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Wood Dale, Roselle, Schaumburg, Franklin Park	April 2009	Post public meeting briefing of the build alternatives to be carried forward in the Draft EIS (i.e., Alternatives 203 and 402, and Options A and D).
Franklin Park, Bensenville	June 2009	Change of administration; introduction of study process, goals and milestones; public and stakeholder involvement.
Franklin Park	June 2009	Discussion with elected officials, staff and representatives from industrial properties potentially affected by south connection improvements; timing of right-of-way acquisition process afforded to property owners potentially displaced by highway projects.
Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Itasca, Roselle, Schaumburg, Wood Dale, Franklin Park	June 2009, July 2009	Overview of multimodal improvement plan; build alternatives population and employment, and travel performance; potential advance projects.
Franklin Park	August 5, 2009	Potential roadway improvements to off-set traffic increases as a result of the proposed improvements; potential mitigation techniques for additional stormwater runoff.
Bensenville, Wood Dale, Franklin Park, Itasca, Elk Grove Village, Schaumburg, Roselle	September 2009	Briefing of the Draft EIS including environmental, social, and economic impacts and benefits. Discussion of next steps leading to identification of a preferred alternative, and Tier Two process.
Des Plaines, Hanover Park	November 2009	Discussion of Draft EIS comments. Preview of December CPG/Task Force meeting.
Bensenville, DuPage County, Elk Grove Village, Franklin Park	November 2009, December 2009	Summary of Draft EIS and Public Hearing comments. Preview of the preferred alternative. Description of next steps and schedule for completing Tier One. Process, objectives, schedule, and project working groups structures and roles for Tier Two. Preview of upcoming activities.

5.3.2 Stakeholder Workshops

The CPG and task forces were brought together regularly in a workshop format and assisted with the definition of transportation issues and problems, identification of road and transit facilities that needed improvement, criteria and methods to be used to evaluate alternatives, development of specific alternatives to be considered, and assessment of the alternative evaluation output. See Table 5-5 for the details of their involvement. The stakeholder

workshops have been a valuable forum that has helped to advance the process and build consensus amongst those affected. The workshops also served to identify local community issues that were best addressed in one-on-one meetings. The meetings focused on specific locational issues, access requirements, accommodation of transit and bike/pedestrian needs, and accommodation of changing land uses. Although not specifically invited, the public was welcome to observe.

TABLE 5-5
Stakeholder Activities

Meeting Date	Meeting Activities
October 3, 2007	<p>CPG Meeting Number One. The meeting was attended by members of the CPG. Attendees were provided with an overview of the project and the stakeholder involvement plan, including the expected role of the CPG. A breakout session was held during which participants were divided into four groups and tasked with providing input on transportation issues and identifying concerns important to the communities. The meeting closed with a preview of upcoming events, the distribution of transportation issues questionnaire, and a request for nominees to the environmental, transportation, and land use task forces.</p>
December 13, 2007	<p>Task Force Kickoff Meeting and Stakeholder Workshop. Task force members were provided with an overview of the project and the roles of the task forces. The transportation system performance analysis process and information regarding early analysis findings was also presented. Then, the attendees broke into six groups for the first workshop activity. A moderator and scribe were assigned to each group. Stakeholders reviewed a list of transportation and social issues that had been developed at previous corridor planning group meetings and public and agency coordination events. The stakeholders were asked to identify additional issues within the following categories: Freeway and Tollway System, Major Arterials and Local Roads, Transit, Freight and Bicycle/Pedestrian System, and Quality of Life/Economic Development.</p> <p>Once the groups had stated their transportation issues, attendees were given \$100 of “transportation bucks” to spend on the issues. Issues receiving the most money, and therefore the highest priority, were the need for expanded public transportation, the need for lasting solution that minimizes community impact and maximizes economic development potential, poor connectivity from I-290 to I-294 (including North Avenue), lack of access to O’Hare Airport, and travel delays along roadways with at-grade railroad crossings (e.g., Irving Park and York roads).</p> <p>The second exercise was conducted to identify potential project goals based on the issue defined in the first exercise. The groups developed 35 specific goals addressing the provision of multimodal solutions, consideration of cost-saving measures, minimizing environmental and socioeconomic impacts, and providing a comprehensive and long-lasting strategy for improving the transportation system.</p>
February 13, 2008	<p>CPG Meeting Number Two. Stakeholders were provided with a project update and a summary of the stakeholder involvement plan, issues identified thus far, transportation system performance analysis and process, and upcoming milestones and events.</p>
February 21, 2008	<p>Task Force Meeting Number Two. A general session was held followed by individual breakout sessions. During the general session, attendees were provided an update on the project status and a summary of stakeholder involvement activities, transportation system information and alternative performance evaluation process, stakeholder problem definition, planning framework and alternatives development and evaluation process, GIS database, and upcoming milestones and events.</p> <p><i>Transportation Task Force Session:</i> Modal strategies (or “Transportation Tool Box”) to be considered in Module One of the alternatives development process were described. Task force members were asked to determine whether and how strategies should be considered, and which transportation topics should be addressed during alternatives evaluation.</p>

TABLE 5-5
Stakeholder Activities

Meeting Date	Meeting Activities
	<p><i>Land Use Task Force Session:</i> Members were provided with a description of the GIS database, land use patterns, the No-Action Alternative, transit and airport network, the results of the redistribution of 2030 population and employment without the Elgin O'Hare Expressway extension and O'Hare West Bypass. Members were asked to provide input on land use constraints and opportunities in the study area, including planned land use changes and opportunities for transportation improvements to enhance such changes and comment on evaluation criteria and performance measures to compare alternatives.</p> <p><i>Environmental Task Force Session:</i> The GIS database was presented, and its mapping and analytical capabilities were described. GIS data presented include land use, water resources, designated lands, wetlands, threatened and endangered species, bike trails, historical and archaeological sites, and regulated features. It was noted that traditional field studies would not be completed for the Tier One EIS; rather, data were obtained from available resources and resource agencies. Field studies would take place in Tier Two. Subsequently, the Task Force split into two groups to identify environmental constraints on aerial base maps. The project team would use the environmental constraints identified by group members during the alternatives development process. Finally, the entire Task Force collaboratively developed environmental topics for consideration as evaluation criteria to compare in Module 3.</p>
<p>March 13, 2008</p>	<p>Stakeholder Workshop Number Two. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a workshop to have stakeholders help decide which strategies should be considered to address transportation issues in the area and where they should be used. After an update on the status of the project was provided, the planning charrette was introduced. The "transportation toolbox" was presented as the basis from which stakeholders could develop strategies and includes physical, operating and demand management elements. Information regarding existing and future transportation system performance and environmental and land use constraints were presented. Workshop participants were encouraged to consider this information as they identified potential improvement locations.</p> <p>Participants were divided into six teams and tasked with developing a map depicting existing system strategies and system expansion strategies to be considered, as well as demand management and operating strategies to be evaluated. The goal was to record as much information and as many ideas as possible, not to reach consensus or to develop a single recommendation.</p> <p>Each group moderator summarized the discussion in his or her group. The workshop closed with a summary of the next steps in the process and upcoming activities. The ideas collected at the meeting were used to develop the initial system strategies and potential travel performance evaluation procedures.</p>
<p>April 16 and 17, 2008</p>	<p>CPG Meeting Number Three and Joint Task Force Meeting Number Three. The project team met with the CPG on April 16 and with the joint task force members on April 17 to apprise the group of public involvement and stakeholder activities that have occurred and of analysis findings presented in the draft TSPR, to summarize the draft purpose and need statement, to review the results of the March 2008 stakeholder workshop, and to present initial roadway system strategies. A question and answer session was held and the meetings were adjourned.</p>
<p>May 22, 2008</p>	<p>Stakeholder Workshop Number Three. The purpose of the meeting was to hold a workshop to have stakeholders review the initial system strategies and provide input on the appropriateness of proposed improvement measures and identify environmental and social issues that may constrain improvements. The project team used stakeholder input to evaluate and screen the initial system strategies.</p>
<p>June 25, 2008</p>	<p>Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Four. The project team assembled stakeholders to update them on the status of technical work and stakeholder involvement activities, and to describe the initial roadway system strategies, the process of evaluating the strategies, and the results of the analysis that has been performed. The project team informed the stakeholders that connections to I-90 and I-294, discussed at the previous stakeholder workshop, were screened and that design would continue on the remaining alternatives. A question and answer session was held, next steps were announced, and the meeting was adjourned.</p>

TABLE 5-5
Stakeholder Activities

Meeting Date	Meeting Activities
July 31, 2008	Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Five. The purpose of the meeting was to provide stakeholders with an update on project activities and the results of the purpose and need and environmental impact screenings of roadway system strategies. The system alternatives development process was described and next steps were announced. The project team broke the stakeholders into four groups to review and discuss the accuracy of the locations of the north and south leg connections, alternative evaluation criteria, and preliminary impact evaluation results for the north and south leg connections. The teams were encouraged to consider and provide input on the evaluation factors for the finalist alternatives.
November 13, 2008	Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Six. A meeting was held to update members on the refinement of alternatives, revision of the project study area, and the results of the first stage of transit alternatives screening. The public meeting held September 3 was also summarized. The group was apprised of upcoming events and then divided into four groups charged with identifying environmental and transportation issues in the expanded study area as well as potential supporting roadway improvements.
December 16, 2008	Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Seven. A meeting was held to provide members with an update on public involvement and technical activities that have occurred, to apprise the group that the study area has been further expanded based on stakeholder input and logical termini evaluation and that the Purpose and Need and TSPR would be amended to reflect the expanded study area, and present the finalist roadway alternatives evaluation, including tie-ins to I-90 and I-294.
February 19, 2009	Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Eight. A meeting was held to provide members an update on technical activities, including reevaluation of purpose and need to assess whether it changed based on the expanded study area. The finalist roadway alternatives were described. Members were given a preview of upcoming technical work and the public information meeting to be held in March.
April 23, 2009	Stakeholder Workshop Number Four. The project team assembled stakeholders to update them on the status of technical work and stakeholder involvement activities. This included a summary of the March 2009 Public Information Meeting. The project team described the two remaining roadway alternatives (Alternatives 203 and 402), transit elements, and Options A and D that have been carried forward for consideration in the Draft EIS. A question and answer session was held, next steps were announced, and a brief group exercise was held to discuss innovative financing options and to identify "advance projects." Pieces of the overall build alternative that have independent utility and could potentially be accelerated.
July 8, 2009	Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Nine. A meeting was held to update members on refinements to multimodal improvements, including community, bicycle/pedestrian, transit, and roadway improvements. The build alternatives evaluation of population and employment forecasts and travel performance, and potential advance projects under consideration were presented.
September 10, 2009	Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Ten. A meeting was held to provide an update to members on activities that have occurred since the last Joint CPG/Task Force meeting. Attendees were informed that the Draft EIS was signed and the public comment period was about to commence. The sections of the Draft EIS were described. Future technical work was described and the October 8, 2009 Public Hearing was previewed.
December 9, 2009	Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting Number Eleven. The project team met with the CPG/Task Force to present a project status update. A summary of the October 8, 2009 Public Hearing was provided along with a description of the Draft EIS comments received from agencies, municipalities, and members of the public. The project team presented Alternative 203 with Option D as the Preferred Alternative and described the transit and bicycle/pedestrian features accompanying the proposed roadway improvements. The meeting concluded with a description of the next steps, specifically the conclusion of Tier One and the commencement of Tier Two.

5.3.3 Meetings with Other Agencies

Thirty meetings were held with other agencies important to the development of alternatives and the analysis used to evaluate them (see Table 5-6). The RTA and its family of transit providers met regularly with the project team to assist in developing and screening transit improvements for the study area. The MWRDGC considered the effects of alternative transportation strategies upon facilities that it owns and operates, and provided guidance to the team to address those matters. The proximity of the project improvements to O'Hare Airport requires the consideration of airspace constraints. The team consulted the FAA regarding airspace issues, and prepared documentation that evaluated every potential airspace envelope for existing and proposed aircraft operating areas that might be affected by a proposal from the EO-WB. The project team has coordinated regularly with the OMP and freight rail operators in the study area to ensure that project alternatives are compatible with existing and planned facilities.

TABLE 5-6
Meetings with Other Agencies

Date	Participants	Topics Discussed
July 19, 2007	CMAP	Introduction of project team; traffic model development and travel demand forecasts; data needed from CMAP; next steps.
August 23, 2007	CMAP	Travel modeling methodology; model development process; requests for CMAP, IDOT, and ISTHA traffic data.
October 18, 2007	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP	Introduction of the project and study process; transit-related issues; obtain information regarding facilities/services and transit-related planning documents; identification of planned development activities to be considered in the No-Action Alternative; identification of improvements to include in the build alternatives.
October 24, 2007	ISTHA	Introduction of project and study process; acquisition of information regarding existing facilities and planned improvements for consideration as No-Action Alternative; coordination with ISTHA's congestion pricing study; stakeholder and public involvement activities; and ISTHA's involvement in the project.
December 7, 2007	Chicago DOA	Summary of Public Information Meeting Number One; agency invitation letters (CPG membership, Task Force membership nominations, upcoming Joint Task Force Meeting Number One, participating agency invitations); interim projects.
December 19, 2007	FAA	Overview of EO-WB travel demand modeling; stakeholder concerns as project team conducts travel forecasts for the study area; CMAP's airport trip generation process document, including 2018 forecast assumptions and 2030 forecast assumptions; EO-WB baseline travel forecasts and assumptions, including study area socioeconomic data redistribution and airport socioeconomic assumptions.
December 20, 2007	DuPage County, CMAP	Socioeconomic data input from DuPage County and CMAP used to develop a population and employment scenario for the 2030 No-Action Alternative.
January 15, 2008	CMAP	Details of the 2030 preliminary baseline CMAP model run; development of the final 2030 baseline (No-Action Alternative) traffic forecasts.
January 28, 2008	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP	Transit alternatives to be included in the No-Action Alternative; overall alternatives development and evaluation process; request for Pace capacity data; upcoming meetings.

TABLE 5-6
Meetings with Other Agencies

Date	Participants	Topics Discussed
February 1, 2008	OMP	Status of ongoing work (TSPR, purpose and need, scoping); preview of alternatives development and evaluation process (modules, preferred alternative selection process); objectives of upcoming project working group meetings; updates to stakeholder involvement plan; questions and answers.
February 5, 2008	ISTHA	Project status; alternatives development and evaluation process; objective of upcoming project working group meetings; status and objective of the congestion pricing study.
April 16, 2008	OMP	Status of ongoing work; preview and schedule of draft purpose and need statement; summary of Stakeholder Workshop Number Two (presentation of 13 roadway strategies developed in response to roadway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian and TDM strategies suggested by stakeholders; identification of measures to be used to evaluate alternatives); traffic associated with O'Hare Airport; adequacy of initial system strategies and process for screening alternatives; potential locations of the STAR Line.
May 6, 2008	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP	Obtain feedback regarding initial transit system strategies before upcoming stakeholder meeting.
May 20, 2008	OMP	Status of ongoing work; comments on purpose and need and next steps; initial roadway and transit system strategies to be presented at upcoming CPG and task force meetings; results from transportation performance analysis of initial roadway strategies; status of OMP work; projected air traffic numbers; next steps and upcoming meetings.
May 21, 2008	ISTHA	Comments on purpose and need statement and next development steps; initial system strategies, including a preview of the initial transit system strategies and the initial roadway system strategy transportation performance, evaluation and screening procedures, and a preview of corridor typical sections; topics and objectives of upcoming Project Working Group meetings, including Stakeholder Workshop Number Three, Joint CPG/Task Force Meeting, and Public Information Meeting Number Two.
June 16, 2008	OMP	Status of ongoing work; screening of initial roadway system strategies based on travel performance findings and ability to satisfy purpose and need; next steps in alternatives development and evaluation; objectives of upcoming Joint CPG/Task Force and Stakeholder Meetings.
July 29, 2008	OMP	Status of ongoing work; preview of recent alternatives development and evaluation activities and findings (dismissal of five roadway strategies because they did not satisfy purpose and need; evaluation of environmental and socioeconomic impacts to identify alternatives with disproportionate adverse effects); review of south and north connection options and effect on OMP property and air space; update on status of OMP property acquisition; objectives of upcoming stakeholder meetings (recommendation to dismiss three roadway alternatives with disproportionately higher socioeconomic impacts).

TABLE 5-6
Meetings with Other Agencies

Date	Participants	Topics Discussed
August 5, 2008	Canadian Pacific Railroad	Introduction of the project, study area, proposed multimodal transportation solution, and regional significance of the project; impacts of south alignment improvements on the use of Bensenville Yard and potential mitigation measures; suggested alignment locations for south alignment option to limit impact to existing and future uses of the property; agreements between OMP and CPRR; utilities on the property.
August 13, 2008	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP, DuPage County	Alternatives screening process and resulting finalist roadway alternatives; proposed transit alternatives analysis process; current transit alternatives.
September 22, 2008	FAA, TSA	Alternatives development and screening process; key features of the roadway alternatives; proposed improvements' relationship to the Airport Outer Area, the new 9L-27R runway, aviation fuel line easements, and other airspace issues; requirements for the FAA 7460 submittal and review process.
October 17, 2008	Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago	Potential conflict of improvements with storage reservoirs; potential detention storage regulations.
October 21, 2008	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP	Screen transit alternatives analysis measures and results; expanded study area and proposed transit improvements in the new study area; next steps in screening process; upcoming meetings.
December 4, 2008	OMP	Drainage improvements related to OMP; Bensenville flood control project; adequacy of drainage facilities for proposed improvements; future evaluation of drainage options to minimize base floodplain influence spreading into the proposed interchange at York Road/O'Hare West Bypass/Elgin O'Hare Expressway.
December 10, 2008	Canadian Pacific Railroad	Impacts of the south alignment options on freight rail operations and regional freight movement; options for constructing the improvements in the yard.
January 21, 2009	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP	Presented transit screen two analysis and results. Transit corridors having regional significance were retained in plan. Participants dismissed light-rail from Thorndale corridor in favor of diesel motor limits. Ultimately, BRT was chosen to be the initial improvement in the corridor.
February 12, 2009	OMP	Letter to request copies of the <i>Proposed Conditions Willow Creek Relocation Plan</i> .
February 17, 2009	OMP	Brief of roadway and transit alternatives to be presented at the public meeting in March 2009.
March 23, 2009	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP	Brief of the finalist transit corridors. Additional detail provided for station, park 'n' ride, and transit center locations. Transit providers suggested a few adjustments to proposal. Discussion also included cost factors to be considered in development of transit cost estimate.
April 20, 2009	ISTHA	Briefing of the build alternatives to be carried forward in the Draft EIS (i.e., Alternatives 203 and 402 and Options A and D).

TABLE 5-6
Meetings with Other Agencies

Date	Participants	Topics Discussed
April 22, 2009	OMP	Briefing of the build alternatives to be carried forward in the Draft EIS (i.e., Alternatives 203 and 402 and Options A and D).
July 14, 2009	OMP	Interchange form at Taft Road and Irving Park Road; widening of Franklin Avenue/Green Street UPRR bridge for purposes of EO-WB (OMP design provisions to expand the bridge without need for shoofly); Cargo Access Road and Irving Park Road intersection; possible locations for compensatory storage in the vicinity of southwest corner of O'Hare Airport.
July 20, 2009	OMP	Irving Park Road/Taft Road and access to nearby properties; discussions of eliminating Cargo Access Road intersection with Irving Park Road.
August 4, 2009	Pace, RTA, CTA, Metra, CMAP	Summarized elements of the build alternatives, including transit. Additional analysis resulted in refinements of the transit plan was shared with the group to secure their consensus. Input suggested that details in the location of the western terminal be deferred until the vision for the west terminal has been advanced. Next steps in the process were outlined stating the dates for the release of the Draft EIS and Public Hearing.
September 9, 2009	OMP	Briefing of the Draft EIS including environmental, social, and economic impacts and benefits. Discussion of next steps leading to identification of a preferred alternative, and Tier Two process.
October 2, 2009	OMP, FAA	Coordination meeting with the FAA concerning flight procedures for aerial flight photos in O'Hare air space.
October 12, 2009	OMP	Coordination with the OMP concerning the reconstruction of the UP Green Street bridge by the OMP. IDOT seeks to alter the bridge length to accommodate EO-WB traffic effects, and would reimburse the OMP for added costs.

Direct connection of proposed improvements to tollway facilities owned and operated by ISTHA required regular contact with staff to determine solutions that would be compatible with its existing facility operations and future improvement plans.

DuPage County's interest in the study area precedes the EO-WB study with a vision study of transportation and economic development proposals for the area. DuPage County has assisted in the process by participating in the development of the No-Action Alternative, assisting in configuring specific transit proposals and providing technical assistance in the development of the population and employment forecasts related to the No-Action Alternative.

5.3.4 Speakers Bureau

The speakers bureau was developed as a venue for putting the project message and information before the public. Fifteen speaking events occurred, many of which were an extension of the project working groups, with group members requesting that the project team speak to other community organizations, such as community councils, business organizations, civic organizations, and others. Requests for speakers also came directly through the project Web page. This venue has been important to the project team in gaining a

broader perspective on local issues, and it has given participants an opportunity to delve into the proposed project improvements and how they affect them. Similar information was presented at each event and included project history and regulatory framework, status of the alternatives development and evaluation process, and past and upcoming public and agency involvement activities. See Table 5-7 for a list of the speaker bureau events.

TABLE 5-7
Speakers Bureau Meetings

Date	Event
October 23, 2007	DuPage Mayors and Managers Council Meeting
May 22, 2008	Northwest Municipal Conference
July 24, 2008	American Public Works Association
October 10, 2008	O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission
October 23, 2008	Franklin Park Economic Development Committee Meeting
November 10, 2008	Schaumburg Economic and Business Development Group Meeting
November 18, 2008	Illinois Association of Highway Engineers Monthly Dinner
November 19, 2008	DuPage Mayors and Managers Council Meeting
January 5, 2009	Village of Roselle Board Meeting
March 19, 2009	Institute of Transportation Engineers, Illinois Division Meeting
March 26, 2009	American Society of Civil Engineers Meeting
April 9, 2009	Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce Air Cargo Logistics
June 22, 2009	Village of Roselle Board Meeting
August 24, 2009	West O'Hare Corridor Implementation Team (WOCIT) Meeting
September 2, 2009	Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association (IRTBA) Meeting

5.3.5 Public Information Meetings

Three public information meetings and one public hearing have been held to present project activities to interested citizens and solicit public input. The meetings were open-house format, beginning with a brief PowerPoint presentation summarizing project activities to date. Personnel from IDOT and its consultants were present to discuss comments from the public. Participants were given two options for submitting comments: (1) forms were available to write and submit comments, and (2) a court reporter was available to record oral comments for the project record. The meetings were publicized through advertisements in newspapers, on various municipality Web sites, and in a newsletter mailed to public officials, communities, organizations, and citizens. Accommodations at the meeting locations were provided to the media covering the events. Meeting summaries were prepared for each meeting and included a description of the meeting, publicity materials, handouts, exhibits, photographs of the meeting, sign-in sheets, and comment and response forms.

5.3.5.1 Public Information Meeting Number One

Public Information Meeting Number One was held November 14, 2007. The meeting was well attended, with almost 400 individuals present. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an introduction and overview of the study objectives, process, and schedule. The public was invited to review aerial exhibits of the study area and to identify transportation issues, sensitive community features, and sensitive environmental features on the exhibits.

Comments were accepted through December 5, 2007. Thirty-one written comments were received, and the court reporter transcribed several oral comments. Transportation issues, sensitive community features, sensitive environmental features and other notations recorded on the aerial exhibits were compiled and documented. Some recommended locations for transportation improvements; others expressed interest in improving non-roadway transportation facilities, or voiced concern regarding schedule and compatibility with the OMP. Many emphasized the importance of minimizing impacts to environmental and socioeconomic resources.

5.3.5.2 Public Information Meeting Number Two

Public Information Meeting Number Two was held September 3, 2008, and roughly 250 people attended. The meeting offered information, such as initial roadway and transit alternatives, the project purpose and need, mapped environmental and socioeconomic data, potential location options for connecting alternatives with an IL 83 improvement to I-90, and options for connecting the north bypass to I-90 and the south bypass to I-294. Other information pertaining to study objectives, process, and schedule was also displayed. Public comments were accepted through September 19, 2008. Forty-five written comments were received. Comments included suggestions or choices for transportation improvements, requests for transit improvements, support for environmentally friendly measures such as reducing traffic and paved area and including landscaping in the design, support for a comprehensive improvement program rather than a compromised alternative that does not address the purpose, concern regarding displacement of area businesses and residents, interest in cost and funding sources, concern regarding losses in community tax base, suggestions for sign changes, support for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, request that the bypass be on airport property, concern regarding noise and community cohesion impacts, and concern regarding whether those entering O'Hare Airport on the west side will have access to the entire airport.

5.3.5.3 Public Information Meeting Number Three

Public Information Meeting Number Three was held March 11, 2009, and was attended by well over 650 people. The meeting presented the roadway and transit alternatives that remain under consideration, including the proposed extension of the Elgin O'Hare Expressway; the potential O'Hare West Bypass north connection to I-90 (by IL 83 Freeway or a new freeway east of Elmhurst Road/York Road); and the four potential O'Hare West Bypass south connection options to I-294. Nearly 37,000 comments were received. Over 36,500 comment cards were received as a result of Elk Grove Village's community outreach effort supporting Alternative 203 and opposing expansion of IL 83. Nearly 200 comment letters supporting Option D were received through Bensenville's community outreach effort. Fifteen comments (two typewritten, 13 oral) were submitted through the court reporter, and more than 80 written comments were submitted supporting particular alternatives, and expressing concern

about traffic operations, and other impacts to communities, including residential and commercial displacements and the resulting tax base losses.

5.3.5.4 Public Hearing

A Public Hearing was held on October 8, 2009, and was attended by roughly 175 people. The build alternatives under consideration in the Draft EIS were presented including the extension of the Elgin O'Hare Expressway, two alignment alternatives for the O'Hare West Bypass north connection to I-90, and two alignment alternatives for the O'Hare West Bypass south connection to I-294. Copies of the Draft EIS were available for attendees to review. A comment box was provided for people to submit handwritten comments. A court reporter was also present to take oral comments. Comments received at the public hearing and throughout the Draft EIS public comment period are described in Section 5.4.

5.3.6 Newsletters

Seven newsletters have been distributed to area residents and interested parties throughout the study (see Table 5-8). They have reported study progress, major decisions, and milestones, and provided answers to frequently asked questions. An eighth newsletter will be distributed after this Final EIS is signed. It will announce the identification of the Preferred Alternative, publicize the completion of this Final EIS, notify readers that the Tier One NEPA process will conclude with the completion of a ROD, and introduce Tier Two.

TABLE 5-8
Newsletters

Issue	Date	Topics
1	Fall 2007	Project introduction; message from IDOT; introduction to project Web site; description of the tiering process for environmental studies; public participation opportunities; next steps; public meeting announcement.
2	Winter 2008	Request for public input; description of the stakeholder involvement plan; introduction to CPG; next steps; frequently asked questions; description of project's purpose and need; request for public input; project description.
3	Summer 2008	What's not working?; request for public input; next steps; presentation of roadway improvement alternatives; public meeting announcement; presentation of transit improvement strategies; frequently asked questions.
4	Fall 2008	Summary of comments on initial alternatives; background and description of expanded study area; update on roadway alternatives evaluation; finalist alternative evaluation criteria; frequently asked questions; transit alternatives update; next steps.
5	May 2009	Roadway alternatives recap; public meeting summary and comments heard; announcement and description of the alternatives to be carried forward for consideration; transit alternatives screening results; next steps.
6	June 2009	Surveys to begin on Elgin O'Hare – West Bypass Corridors.
7	September 2009	Draft EIS available for public comment; environmental and social benefits and impacts of the build alternatives; travel performance benefits; build alternatives considered in detail; next steps.

5.3.7 Web Site

The project Web site (www.elginohare-westbypass.org) provides information that can be accessed at the convenience of the user. The site began service on September 7, 2007, and is updated regularly. General project information and topic-specific details are provided. Materials are available for viewing or downloading, including project documents and reports such as the project purpose and need, meeting materials and minutes, and public involvement materials, such as newsletters and press releases. The alternatives under the various stages of development and screening are posted for public review and comment, including the alternatives carried forward. A page is also provided for those who wish to submit comments. Responses to comments are provided and become part of the project record. The page has received over 700 hits since it began service.

5.3.8 Mailing List

A project mailing list was developed using available information including names and addresses of officials from other recent projects in the area, and Internet searches. The list is updated regularly with attendance lists from public meeting, speaker bureau events, and so on. The list is comprehensive including government and business leaders, area residents, and special interest groups. It is used as a distribution list for newsletters, meeting and workshop invitations, and project documents. The mailing list has about 2,000 entries.

5.4 Draft EIS Comments

The Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS was published in the Federal Register on September 11, 2009. The comment period closed on October 26, 2009. During that time, 74 comments were received from regulatory/resource agencies, municipalities, and other stakeholders. Overall, agency representatives indicated that the build alternatives' environmental and social impacts are comparable and identified actions to be taken in Tier Two. No comments required reconsideration of the range of alternatives or the technical analyses contained in the document. Nine letters or resolutions were submitted by local governmental entities in the study area, four of which were resolutions passed in favor of Alternative 203 and/or Option D; one expressed a preference for Alternative 402. Others focused on issues important to the communities in the next phase of the project such as noise abatement, stormwater management, and preserving transit as a part of the solution. Fifty-seven comments were received from the public at-large, and most (41) supported Alternative 203 and/or Option D. Other comments included requests for specific information or clarification of the proposed concept.

The following section is a summary of substantive comments from agencies and municipalities. Copies of all comments and complete responses to substantive comments are contained in Appendix D.

5.4.1 Resource/Regulatory Agency Comments

5.4.1.1 USEPA

The USEPA noted that the project team provided an abundance of opportunities for stakeholders to be engaged in the process and was able to identify a manageable number of

reasonable alternatives in such a sizeable project area. The agency assigned a rating of “Lack of Objections” to the Draft EIS and the two build alternatives indicating that no changes to the document and alternatives are required. The USEPA identified environmental resources that will require detailed impact analysis in Tier Two along with evaluation and identification of impact mitigation measures including wetlands, air, and stormwater management. Finally, the agency requested that additional information be provided on conceptual mitigation measures for wetland impacts in the Tier One Final EIS. USEPA’s comment (C-1) can be found starting on page D_5-1.

IDOT, in the agency’s response, acknowledged that the resources identified in the USEPA’s letter would receive detailed evaluation in Tier Two and detailed mitigation measures would be identified. The agency noted that conceptual wetland mitigation measures were described in Section 4.13.5, *Wetland Mitigation*, of the Draft EIS, but that additional information will be added, as appropriate, and a reference to this subsection would be added to the wetland impacts discussion in the Final EIS. IDOT’s response (R-1) can be found starting on page D_5-5.

5.4.1.2 USFWS

The USFWS acknowledged that detailed engineering studies and environmental impact analysis would occur during Tier Two, but requested information related to potential noise impacts to birds, lists of birds found in forest preserves, and cumulative effects of edge takes on parks and forest preserves be included in the Tier One Final EIS. USFWS’s comment (C-2) can be found starting on page D_5-6.

IDOT’s response stated that general information relating to potential traffic noise impacts on birds would be included in the Tier One Final EIS. In subsequent discussions regarding this issue, USFWS requested additional information to determine the need for further studies in Tier Two. Data was assembled and showed that current traffic levels far exceeded the threshold of disturbance to birds at locations of concern. The USFWS determined that no further study of the issue was warranted in Tier Two. In the agency’s response, IDOT also confirmed it would include the list of birds found in forest preserves in the Tier One Final EIS. Finally, IDOT noted that it will include a general discussion on the cumulative effects of edge takes on parks and forest preserves in the Tier One Final EIS, but that detailed engineering design developed in Tier Two of the process would be required to provide a more detailed analysis of the cumulative effects of edge takes on such special lands. IDOT’s response (R-2) can be found starting on page D_5-9.

5.4.1.3 USACE

The USACE remarked that all of the agency’s comments on this project had been successfully addressed and that the agency did not have any additional comments on the Tier One Draft EIS. The USACE also identified activities the agency may require during Tier Two. As a follow-up to the USACE’s letter, IDOT held further discussions with USACE to discuss the preferred alternative and the rationale for its identification. During these discussions, USACE requested additional information to assist the agency in its determination of concurrence. USACE’s comment (C-3) can be found starting on page D_5-12.

IDOT, in response, provided additional information to support the agency's determination of concurrence. Information included clarification of the tiering process and the purpose and intent of Tier One and Tier Two. Other information included clarification of the wetland data used for Tier One, meeting minutes addressing the agency's agreement to utilize existing and available data for Tier One analysis, and meeting minutes summarizing the outcome of the agency field visit. Information was also included that showed the relative differences of wetland impacts between Alternative 203 and 402 and roadway operational performance. IDOT's response (R-3) can be found starting on page D_5-14.

5.4.1.4 IDNR and IEPA

IDNR and IEPA noted no objection to the project and described the alternatives' impacts as comparable. Both agencies identified measures to be taken in Tier Two, including evaluating stormwater permit needs and applying the "avoidance and minimization" concept of reducing impacts to environmental resources. IDNR and IEPA's comments (C-4 and C-5) can be found starting on pages D_5-45 and D_5-47.

In the agency's responses, IDOT acknowledged the actions required by the resource agencies for Tier Two. IDOT's responses (R-4 and R-5) can be found starting on page D_5-46 and D_5-48.

5.4.2 Local/Other Agency Comments

5.4.2.1 City of Des Plaines

The City of Des Plaines requested a list of businesses and residences that would be displaced by Alternatives 203 and 402. The City also requested clarification as to whether the Des Plaines Oasis would be removed as a result of Alternative 203 and why congestion is expected to worsen on arterials within Des Plaines under both build alternatives. Des Plaines also identified corrections on two exhibits in the Draft EIS. Finally, Des Plaines indicated a preference for Alternative 402 because it satisfies the purpose and need with fewer impacts to Des Plaines than Alternative 203. The City of Des Plaines's comment (C-6) can be found starting on page D_5-49.

IDOT, in response, noted that a list of businesses and a map showing displacements resulting from Alternatives 203 and 402 were provided at the November 16, 2009 meeting with the city and confirmed that the Des Plaines Oasis would be removed to accommodate the Alternative 203 improvements. Regarding increased congestion on arterials proximate to the Elmhurst Road/I-90 interchange, IDOT noted that travel demand increases on secondary roadways that provide interstate access; as a result, travel performance decreases on arterials near freeway interchanges. In Des Plaines, Alternative 203 would cause slightly greater congestion on local arterials than Alternative 402.

IDOT indicated that as the process moves to Tier Two, more refined traffic studies will be conducted, and further coordination with the City will be necessary to review the new information and supporting improvement needs. IDOT confirmed that the exhibit changes would be made for the Final EIS. Regarding Des Plaines's preference for Alternative 402, IDOT communicated that the agency considered the City's input, but after also considering travel performance, environmental and social impacts and benefits, and other public comments, Alternative 203 was identified as the Preferred Alternative.

IDOT's response and the exhibits showing and listing displaced businesses (R-6) can be found starting on page D_5-53.

5.4.2.2 Elk Grove Village

Elk Grove Village submitted a resolution passed on September 22, 2009 in support of Alternative 203 and nonsupport for Alternative 402. The resolution also expressed support for full financing strategies rather than staged completion of the project and preferably with as little monetary requirements from municipalities. Finally, the resolution expressed support for rapid completion of the project, specifically by December 31, 2015. Elk Grove Village's comment (C-7) can be found starting on page D_5-57.

IDOT noted that a financial and implementation plan will be developed in Tier Two and would explore a variety of funding options. IDOT's response (R-7) can be found on page D_5-62.

5.4.2.3 City of Elmhurst

The City of Elmhurst submitted a resolution passed on October 5, 2009 in favor of Alternative 203 with Option D. Elmhurst's comment (C-8) can be found starting on page D_5-63.

IDOT responded by saying that the agency, together with FHWA, considered the ability of each alternative to address the project's purpose and need, the environmental and social effects and benefits, and public input. Furthermore, Alternative 203 with Option D was identified as the Preferred Alternative. IDOT's response (R-8) can be found on page D_5-67.

The City of Elmhurst submitted another comment expressing concern regarding traffic back-ups on the eastbound I-290 ramp to southbound I-294. A letter from resident Robert Jenkins was enclosed, which described his understanding of the causes of the back-ups and offered two potential solutions for capacity improvements. Elmhurst's second comment (C-9) can be found starting on page D_5-68.

IDOT responded that the traffic volume is the primary cause of the back-ups rather than the ramp configuration. As such, the entire interchange complex needs to be evaluated rather than the one ramp. IDOT does not have sole authority or funding to do this. However, I-290 from I-90/94 to Thorndale Avenue will be resurfaced beginning in the Spring of 2010. IDOT's response (R-9) can be found starting on page D_5-75.

5.4.2.4 Village of Franklin Park

The Village of Franklin Park submitted the resolution passed on September 8, 2009. The Village supported Option D with provisions for local road and stormwater management improvements. The Village of Franklin Park's comment (C-10) can be found starting on page D_5-77.

IDOT, in the agency's response, noted that it would work with the Village to identify opportunities to address stormwater issues within the project's area of influence, and that the extent of local road improvements will be determined in Tier Two. IDOT's response (R-10) can be found on page D_5-82.

5.4.2.5 Village of Hanover Park

Hanover Park, in its comment, requested extension of the BRT component of the transit improvements to the Hanover Park Metra Station. The Village of Hanover Park's comment (C-11) can be found starting on page D_5-83.

IDOT, in response, noted that based on existing constraints, as well as configuration of the Finalist Alternatives transit service can most reasonably be extended from the Elgin O'Hare corridor through a shuttle service between the Schaumburg Metra Station and the Hanover Park Metra Station in Tier One. This service could be operated with Arterial Rapid Transit features such as a pre-emptive signal control that would be timed to departures of the BRT at Schaumburg to minimize wait times.

IDOT stated that relatively short distance (2.8 miles) between stations and the use of the existing roadway system avoids further impacts and added costs that would be associated with a full extension of a dedicated transit facility. Another factor to consider is that a specific mode for the Elgin O'Hare transit corridor has not been determined. Therefore, a shuttle service is included as a planned improvement in Tier One until the final solution can be determined in Tier Two.

IDOT will coordinate with Hanover Park to further refine this option and others that would improve the Village's connectivity to the regional transit network in Tier Two of the process.

IDOT's response (R-11) can be found on page D_5-89.

5.4.2.6 Village of Roselle

The Village of Roselle submitted a resolution passed on October 12, 2009. The resolution identified two sources of concern: noise impacts and stormwater drainage. The Village voiced concern over the existing and future noise impacts from roadway facilities and expressed an interest in structural and nonstructural noise abatement measures with future improvements. The Village also expressed concern about existing stormwater drainage issues as well as stormwater drainage plans associated with the proposed improvements. The Village of Roselle's comment (C-12) can be found starting on page D_5-91.

IDOT, in response, noted that resolution of the issues in the Village's letter would occur in Tier Two. IDOT's response (R-12) can be found on page D_5-95.

5.4.2.7 DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference

The DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference submitted a letter and resolution (passed on October 21, 2009) urging the funding and completion of the project as well as the consideration of transit accommodations in and proximate to the study area. The DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference's comment (C-13) can be found starting on page D_5-96.

IDOT noted that a financial and implementation plan will be developed in Tier Two when the project details and funding requirements are further refined and project phasing is known. IDOT emphasized that transit accommodations have been explored as part of the project and will be continued. If the transit type was not identified at the conclusion of Tier Two, space will be reserved for commuter rail or BRT, as not to preclude the inclusion of these in the future. Suggested transit improvements on airport property will be coordinated by the City of Chicago. In addition, coordination will occur with IDOT and transit providers

in order to plan the most efficient linkages between on-airport and off-airport facilities. IDOT also referenced the linkage between the Schaumburg station and the Hanover Park station and will further consider alternatives in Tier Two. IDOT's response (R-13) can be found on page D_5-100.

5.4.2.8 DuPage County Board Commissioner, Public Transit Committee

A DuPage County Board Commissioner submitted a response in reference to the Village of Hanover Park comments that the DuPage County Commissioner communicated support for the inclusion of the extension of transit accommodations to the Hanover Park Metra Station in the proposed improvements. The DuPage County Board, Public Transit Committee's comment (C-14) can be found starting on page D_5-102.

IDOT sent a response both to the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference and the DuPage County Board Commissioner since it addressed the Board's comments. IDOT's response to the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference comment (R-13) can be found on page D_5-100.

5.4.2.9 Metra

Metra requested that the design of the western terminal provide the most direct connection of the proposed STAR line to the terminal and proposed CTA Blue Line extension. Metra also expressed support for the median reservation for transit in the Elgin O'Hare Expressway corridor. Metra's comment (C-15) can be found starting on page D_5-109.

In response, IDOT noted that design of the transit station at the O'Hare West Terminal is the responsibility of OMP and that continued coordination between IDOT, OMP, and Metra will ensure further opportunities for Metra to advocate the agency's transit needs. Regarding median reservation for transit along the proposed Elgin O'Hare Expressway corridor, IDOT will continue to work with transit agencies to accommodate a preferred transit type and if design is complete before a preferred transit component is identified, adequate space will be provided for either commuter rail or BRT accommodations. IDOT's response (R-15) can be found on page D_5-110.

5.4.2.10 MWRDGC

MWRDGC requested plans, when developed, of the flyover ramps included in Alternative 203 that span MWRDGC's O'Hare Reservoir as well as any potential mitigation measures; the Alternative 402 alignment along York Road/Elmhurst Road adjacent to the TARP Reservoir and the southwest corner of Elmhurst Road and I-90 as well as IDOT's proposed mitigation measures; and the detailed alignment along the Majewski Athletic Complex. MWRDGC's comment (C-16) can be found starting on page D_5-112.

IDOT communicated that throughout Tier Two, the agency would coordinate the design aspects of the transportation improvements with MWRDGC. IDOT's response (R-16) can be found on page D_5-114.

5.4.3 Other Stakeholder Comments

Other stakeholders submitted a total of 58 comments orally to a court reporter, via email or on comment sheets. Many individuals (43) expressed a preference for an alternative or south

bypass connection option. Forty-one individuals communicated a preference for Alternative 203 and/or Option D. Others requested clarification on materials presented in the document or at the public hearing. Some individuals requested that considerations be made regarding such resources as bicycle/pedestrian accommodations, further roadway improvements, and classifying roadways near the south bypass connection options so as to allow usage by heavy trucks. Other stakeholders' comments (C-17 through C-74) can be found starting on page D_5-116.

IDOT provided information to those that requested materials and IDOT's response to individuals that stated a preference for an alternative and/or south bypass connection option is that Alternative 203 with Option D was identified as the Preferred Alternative. It was selected after comparing each alternative's ability to address the project's purpose and need, limit environmental and social effects, produce economic benefits to the local and regional economy, and benefit affected communities. Further, while both alternatives were comparable for travel performance and environmental impacts, the economic benefits of Alternative 203 are notably higher than Alternative 402.

In response to individuals who provided substantive comments, IDOT explained the agency's role in each of the topics and the ability of IDOT to explore the requests as design continues. IDOT's responses (R-22 through R-31) can be found starting on page D_5-120.

5.5 Results of Coordination Activities

The project team developed an outreach program that includes every stakeholder who has interest in or is affected by the proposed transportation improvements. Many venues have been provided, with the goal of establishing a genuine opportunity for stakeholders to participate, be heard, and influence the outcome of the process. Stakeholder involvement has helped to develop the foundation upon which this study rests – the purpose of and need for the transportation project within the study area. Stakeholders have helped to identify the type and location of improvements, information that serves as a starting point for developing the initial roadway and transit alternatives. Later they helped to devise the criteria that would be used to evaluate and compare alternatives. Stakeholders have voiced opinions about what is compatible with their community and what is not. This communication has shaped the alternatives. The participation of Elk Grove Village in public involvement activities resulted in the elimination of alternatives that involved IL 83. The participation of Wood Dale officials resulted in a design that improves access to important properties along Thorndale Avenue between Prospect and Wood Dale roads. Input from Itasca facilitated a conceptual design for the I-290/Thorndale Avenue interchange that optimizes access to adjacent properties and movement through the interchange. Coordination with Bensenville resulted in locating improvements to minimize damage to community resources.

Transportation service providers (ISTHA, Pace, RTA, Metra, CTA, DuPage County, OMP, CPRR, UPRR, and others) have provided valuable input regarding the development and evaluation of roadway and transit proposals, including refinements that would avoid conflicts with their respective plans and operations. Planning and resource agencies also have been integral to the process. CMAP and DuPage County helped in several technical aspects of the study. Both agencies assisted in the identification of transportation projects to be included in the No-Action Alternative. Also, these agencies provided assistance in the

methodology used to develop 2030 population and employment forecasts specific to the No-Action Alternative. The resources agencies – USACE, USFWS, IDNR, USEPA, and others – have partnered with the project sponsors from the beginning to guide the study through the three NEPA/404 concurrence points, and the analytical process used to measure natural and socioeconomic impacts. The overall result has been a successful, stakeholder-driven process and the identification of a preferred alternative that has received almost complete support across the many communities and stakeholders in the study area.