THE NORTHWEST LOUISIANA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS AND PROVIDENCE PRESENT:

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN ACTION

I-49 INNER CITY CONNECTOR (ICC)

2013 Louisiana Transportation Conference
WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) defines environmental justice (EJ) as:

The **fair** treatment and **meaningful** involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

- **Fair** - No one group of people bears a disproportionate burden
- **Meaningful** - The potentially affected community has opportunities to participate in decisions and their concerns will be considered in the decision-making process. The involvement of the community is sought out by the decision-makers.
Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

Projects requiring federal actions must consider the environmental effects, including human health, economic, and social effects the project may have on minority and low-income populations when these analyses are required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
Answer the following screening question early in your project planning process...

*Does the potentially affected community contain minority and/or low-income populations?*

See DOT Order 5610.2(a) for the latest definitions of minority and low-income.
If yes, in addition to the documentation requirements discussed in the FHWA Memorandum dated December 16, 2011, there should also be:

- An enhanced outreach effort to assure that EJ populations are engaged in public participation and analysis designed to identify and assess the impacts
- An increase in the project team’s sensitivity to the potential for cumulative impacts

Source: USEPA's Interim Guidance on Considering Environmental Justice During the Development of an Action
Source: FHWA Memorandum: Guidance on Environmental Justice and NEPA
The I-49 ICC study area population demographics according to the 2010 census data:

Study Area Minority Population = 91.8%
Study Area Poverty Population = 39.5%

The answer to the EJ screening question to assess the applicability of EO 12898 for the ICC is Yes.
What is the I-49 ICC?

There is a 3.6 mile gap in the proposed I-49 corridor from New Orleans to Arkansas – and it lies in Shreveport. This portion of the I-49 Corridor was defined as far back as 1976.
I-49 ICC History

- Lack of funding removed this 3.6 mile section from the 1978 Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in Louisiana
- Lack of community support prevented further study and development of the route
Why did we continue to study the I-49 ICC?

I-49 is part of an International Interstate Corridor that is planned to connect the Port of New Orleans to Winnipeg, Canada.
Why did we continue to study the I-49 ICC?

- Construction of I-49 from Lafayette to I-20 just south of downtown Shreveport completed.
- Construction of I-49 North from Arkansas south toward I-220 to the west of downtown Shreveport currently in progress.
- Became apparent that Louisiana would have a non-continuous interstate facility due to this 3.6 mile gap.
I-49 ICC STAGE 0 HISTORY

- NLCOG along with local leaders and elected officials realized the need to develop the ICC
- Pursued funding to initiate Feasibility Study (Stage 0 of DOTD’s Project Delivery Process)
- Stage 0 would determine project’s feasibility from an investment perspective and whether the public would support the project
I-49 ICC Stage 0 History

Initial Project Concept:
- Major Design Features
- Supporting Technical Data
- Technical Analysis
- Potential Alternatives
- Construction Traffic Management Considerations

Preliminary Environmental Review, Value Planning and Engineering Assessment and Constructability Review

Preliminary Scope and Cost Estimate

Identified Expected Funding Sources

Final Public Meeting

Public Feedback Form

2nd Round Public Meetings (3 total)

1st Round Public Meetings (6 total)

Public Input Survey

Stakeholders Meetings

Identified Stakeholders

Preliminary Purpose and Need

Newsletters and Website Updates Throughout the Process
I-49 ICC Stage 0 History

Stage 0 Public Input

What do you see as the benefits to connecting existing I-49 to I-49 North?

- Traffic and Access Improvements: 47%
- Economic Development: 27%
- Other: 6%
- Neighborhood Revitalization: 5%
- Protection of Cross Lake: 3%
- Better Highway Safety: 4%
- Progress: 8%
The Stage 0 Feasibility Study yielded a 1,000-foot corridor study area and potential construction costs that were deemed feasible.
Stage 0 Feasibility Accepted
I-49 ICC Moves Forward

- Stage 0 completed May 2010
- Moved into Stage 1 Planning/Environmental
- Class of Action determined to be an EIS
- Record of Decision is needed at end of Stage 1 to obtain environmental clearance before the project can compete for funding and move toward final design and construction

DOTD Project Development Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 0</td>
<td>Feasibility</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Planning/Environmental</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Funding/Project Prioritization</td>
<td>Indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Final Design</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Bid Letting</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Operation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With the decision to prepare an EIS, the project team developed an EJ Work Plan and Checklist to ensure meaningful involvement of the affected community would be achieved.

Our work plan involves six primary steps:

1. Develop a community profile
2. Develop a community-specific involvement/outreach plan
3. Interact with the community and develop additional engagement techniques to ensure involvement in process related to alternative selection, impact analysis, and mitigation
4. Identify potential impacts for each alternative
5. Assess possible mitigation
6. Re-evaluate impacts on EJ populations and document for the EIS
STEP 1 – COMMUNITY PROFILE

Developing a Community Profile is the first step because what you learn here...

- Provides data needed for your EJ analysis
- Helps develop a community history and values
- Profile assists in establishing techniques for conducting outreach
- Helps determine mitigation and offsetting benefits down the line, if needed
For instance...

Our community has many elderly residents that are not necessarily familiar with computers and the internet, many use public transit, some do not have high school diplomas. Our involvement plan outlines strategies to reach these residents and provide materials that they can access and understand.
First, the boundary of the impacted community must be determined.

As this was defined during Stage 0, we turned to the US Bureau of the Census and local resources to gather the data necessary to compile the profile.
**STEP 1 – COMMUNITY PROFILE**

1. Define Demographic Profile
   - 2010 Census Summary Files for race/ethnicity, age, gender, household/occupancy status
   - American Community Survey (ACS) data for 2006-2010 for education level, employment status, occupation, special population groups/disabled, vehicle available, language spoken
   - ACS data for 2006-2010 for block groups with median household incomes at or below the current U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHH) poverty guideline for a family of four ($23,050 in 2012)

2. Define Economic Profile
   - Community historical background/context
   - Community values and issues (ex. security and solitude)
   - Economic base (ex. agriculture, manufacturing, etc.)
   - Property values
   - Tourism

The economic profile can be determined using a combination of current and historic census data, city departments (such as planning/zoning/economic development), residents, and community leaders.
STEP 1 – COMMUNITY PROFILE

3. Define Community Resources
   o Describe general nature of community
   o Travel patterns (vehicle, bicycle, public transit)
   o Churches, schools, and community facilities
   o Predominant land use, business environment, recreational resources

All the data gathered from Tasks 1 through 3 was utilized to tailor outreach strategies in our Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Plan to address this community
Strategies implemented as outlined in our involvement plan to reach our residents include:

- Maintain the project website www.i49shreveport.com
- Adjust the stakeholder group utilized during Stage 0 to represent the potentially impacted area
- Create a Citizen’s Advisory Committee
- Foster relationships with community churches
- Provide project materials to churches, libraries, and other community facilities and community leaders
- Hold two rounds (3 meetings each) of Community Input Meetings
- Host a majority of the meetings in the affected EJ community rather than greater Shreveport
# Step 2 - Involvement Plan

Welcome to the official website for the I-49 Inner City Connector Project. We will be updating this website regularly to correspond with progress in the project schedule. Please check back periodically for updated information, maps, and event information.

We have entered the planning and environmental stage (Stage 1) of this project. Please check the Update Section below for current project information and new meeting dates.

**The Project:** The I-49 Inner City Connector Project is part of the I-49 Corridor which runs from Winnipeg, Canada to New Orleans, Louisiana. The I-49 Inner City Connector will be a new interstate facility approximately 3.6 miles in length. It is proposed to intersect Shreveport in order to connect I-49 at the I-20 interchange with I-49 North in the vicinity of the I-220 interchange.

## Current Status of Stage 1

- Traffic Data Collection, Alternative Development, and Alternative Screening.
- **Click here to see an overview of the Stage 1 process.**

## Updates

**OPEN-HOUSE STYLE MEETINGS WERE HELD - Stage 1 (Round 2) Community Input Meetings were held December 11-13, 2012.** The project team presented four build alternatives, two potential interchange (enter/exit) locations, and the no build alternative. Several items from the meetings have been uploaded to the Documents page including all exhibits presented, the Frequently Asked Questions handout.

## Newsletter

- Email Address: 
- Name:  
- I-49 Newsletter

**Submit**
We formed a *Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC)* as a way to further reach the affected community and provide a more neighborhood-specific opinion of the project.

What have/are we achieving through this group?

- Confirmed a local need for the project
- Assisted in establishing the community history
- Identifying and resolving local concerns
- Building community awareness of the project
- Obtaining input on upcoming public meeting material
- Providing an “opportunity for involvement” by the public in developing the purpose and need and in determining the range of alternatives
- Assistance in identifying project impacts
- Assistance identifying potential mitigation options
Who is on the CAC?

- Residents, business owners, church leaders, school officials, and non-profit organizations operating in the community

- Our CAC has:
  - 4 Reverends/Pastors/Fathers
  - 2 Residents
  - 3 Non-profits
  - 2 Business owners
  - 2 School principals
  - 1 City department official (Shreveport Parks and Recreation)
Community Churches

Our impacted area is home to numerous churches, most of which are Baptist, with one Catholic church and one Methodist church.
STEP 3 - INTERACT

Community Churches

- We have engaged the church leaders of approximately 10 churches in conversations about the project and obtained insight into the history of the local community, activities (drive, walk, computer literacy) and concerns of area residents, and how to address impacts.

- These leaders have also graciously hosted meetings, offered public meeting space, and disseminated materials to their respective congregations.
Community Input Meetings (Round 1)

- Consisted of three meetings in December 2011
- Designed to re-introduce the project to the public
- Attendees asked to provide general comments on the need for the project and any concerns about the project
- Mapping exercise, where attendees laid out potential alternative locations in the planning corridor and defined possible context sensitive solutions
- Advised that written comment forms were available at the meeting for turning in or mailing in and that comments could be submitted from the website’s Contact Us page
STEP 3 - INTERACT

Community Input Meetings (Round 1)
Community Input Meetings (Round 2)

- Consisted of three open house style meetings, two of which were held at church facilities in the project study corridor.
- Meetings were held at different times/days of the week (Tuesday at 6pm / Wednesday at 11am / Thursday at 12pm).
- Meetings advertised via two local newspapers, the local news, the radio, the project website, the mayor’s webpage, in libraries, in churches, through e-blasts, through non-profit distribution, on yard signs, at some area businesses, fliers, and on street banners.
Advertising

**DECEMBER PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**DOTD Stage 1 Environmental Impact Statement**

This is the second round of public meetings for this study. At these open-house style meetings, the team will be presenting interstate alignment alternatives developed by the engineers since the first round of public meetings held last December. We are presenting three build alternatives and one no-build alternative.

**Tuesday, December 11 at 6:00 PM**
**Wednesday, December 12 at 11:00 AM**
**Thursday, December 13 at 12:00 Noon**

Info line: 1 (877) 893-8295  www.i49shreveport.com
Community Input Meetings (Round 2)

- Attendees were provided a meeting brochure, frequently asked question page, and comment cards upon sign-in.

- Exhibits were spread around the room demonstrating the NEPA process, DOTD’s Project Delivery Process, the project area, the five alternatives, focus maps of the four build alternatives, conceptual layouts, and a summary of impacts of each of the build alternatives.
Community Input Meetings (Round 2)
### Community Input Meetings (Round 2)

The image shows a comparison matrix with criteria such as Purpose and Need, Engineering, Community Impacts, etc., comparing different build alternatives. The table is labeled as "BUILD ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON MATRIX" and includes various columns and rows assessing different criteria for each alternative.
Community Input Meetings (Round 2)

- Project team personnel were located throughout the room to guide the public to exhibits and answer questions.
- A station was provided for residents to obtain information directly from DOTD right-of-way personnel.
Community Input Meetings (Round 2)
Community Input Meetings (Round 2)

- An Electronic Mapping Station was provided for attendees to view a Google earth file of the build alternatives so they could better see where their house, church, business, etc. may be in relation to a proposed build alternative.

- A court reporter was also available for those wishing to provide verbal comments.
STEPS 3/4 – INTERACT/IMPACTS
STEPS 3/4 – INTERACT/IMPACTS
## Community Input Meetings (Round 2)
### Meeting Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Event</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Elected Official</th>
<th>Project Team</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church December 11, 2012 at 6:00 pm</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Canaan Baptist Church December 12, 2012 at 11:00 am</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce December 13, 2012 at 12:00 pm</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Input Meetings (Round 2) Opposition

Part of FHWA documentation requirements listed in the December 16, 2011 Memorandum on EJ/NEPA is to describe what steps are taken to resolve any controversy that exists.
**STEP 4 - IMPACTS**

- Discussion of the Build Alternatives and potential impacts with federal and state agencies
- Determination of severity of impacts to specific urban resources (houses, churches, recreational areas non-profit facilities)
- Screen the four build alternatives down to one Preferred Build Alternative
- When evaluating impacts of Preferred Build Alternative determine if there is a disproportionately high and adverse effect on EJ populations, if so need to consider mitigation options
STEP 5 - MITIGATION

With the development of a preferred alternative, the project team will return to our CAC, elected officials, and church leaders to further discuss impacts and possible mitigation options to keep the community whole.
I-49 ICC Lessons Learned

- Be **proactive**
- Get to know your neighborhood (past and present)
- Know your community leaders
- Know your residents
- Trust earned can be lost
Environmental Justice in Action
the
I-49 Inner City connector
RESOURCES

- Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (Executive Order 12898)

- US Department of Transportation (US DOT) Order 5610.2(a) (effective May 2, 2012)
  [Link](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/ej_at_dot/order_56102a/)

- US DOT Revised EJ Strategy (Published March 2, 2012)
  [Link](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/ej_at_dot/dot_ej_strategy/)

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Environmental Justice Guidance
  [Link](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/overview/)
RESOURCES

- An Overview of Transportation and Environmental Justice (FHWA-EP-00-013)

- FHWA Memorandum: Guidance on EJ and NEPA (December 16, 2011)

- FHWA Order 6640.23A (2012)

- US EPA Environmental Justice Webpage
  http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/
RESOURCES TO ASSIST IN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS OF PROJECT AREA

- American Fact Finder - 2000 and 2010 Census Results
  http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t

- American Fact Finder Tutorial Video – Basics
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Jt3-1dATdk

- American Fact Finder Tutorial Video - Advance Mapping
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V77TkN0YNGQ&NR=1&feature=endscreen
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