US 51 Corridor Study

Stoughton - McFarland
I-39/90 – US 12/18, Dane County

Public Involvement Meeting Handout

August 26, 2015

Welcome!

Thank you for attending this public involvement meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to provide a comprehensive update on what has occurred since the last public meeting in 2012, and explain WisDOT's new approach and schedule for the US 51 Corridor Study moving forward. This meeting will also present the design and environmental aspects of possible improvements to US 51.

A presentation will be given at 6 P.M. The Status Report below provides a brief overview. Page 3 of this handout lists key points about the study. Page 4 lists the maps and other exhibits on display. The exhibits provide details on project purpose and need, describe the alternatives developed to meet the needs, and show the estimated impacts associated with the alternatives. If you need assistance interpreting the meeting materials, please talk to any of the study team members present.

We encourage you to fill out a comment sheet so we have a record of your thoughts, suggestions and/or concerns to help shape the future of the US 51 corridor.

Project Contact and Website

Jeff Berens, P.E., WisDOT Project Manager, telephone (608) 245-2656, email jeff.berens@dot.wi.gov.
The project website will have all the meeting maps, exhibits, handout, and comment sheet posted after the meeting. Find the website at: http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/sw/5139901218/default.aspx

Status Report on the US 51 Corridor Study

The US 51 Corridor Study is an ongoing study to evaluate alternatives that will improve safety and congestion along the corridor and address needs of bicyclists and pedestrians. The most recent public involvement meeting for the study was held in October 2012. At that time, information about the three corridor alternatives was presented and public comments were recorded for inclusion in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The three alternatives included the following:

- **No Build:** Normal roadway maintenance and currently programmed resurfacing projects only.
- **Alternative A** (Low Build): Safety improvements at various intersections and reconstruction of 2-lane US 51 east of Stoughton.
- **Alternative B** (4-Lane Expansion): 4-lane expansion of US 51 between Stoughton and McFarland, 4-lane Stoughton Bypass, safety improvements in Stoughton and McFarland, and reconstruction of 2-lane US 51 east of Stoughton.

Under the fiscal constraint requirement, a project must have construction funding budgeted within six years of the approval of the environmental document.

The DEIS was completed at the end of 2013, but it was not published. Due to the fiscal constraint requirement for all WisDOT environmental studies, a project must be funded within six years of the approval of the environmental document. Based on statewide priorities, it was determined that the US 51 corridor alternatives proposed in the DEIS could not be funded in their entirety within six years. WisDOT understands there are safety, operations, and pavement issues along the corridor that need to be addressed. The department has worked with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to examine possible options to fund a fiscally constrained improvement project that would address the existing safety, operations, and pavement issues on the corridor while still addressing the purpose and need of the study. It was decided to modify the existing DEIS into two environmental documents: an Environmental Assessment (EA) to address near-term corridor needs, and a Tier 1 EIS that addresses the long-term corridor needs.

To accommodate the funding limitations, WisDOT will document the US 51 corridor improvements in two stages:

Stage 1 - Address Near-Term Improvements:
In the first stage, WisDOT will prepare an EA for corridor improvements that are anticipated to be funded within six years of completing the document. The EA will document the development of alternatives specific to near-term corridor needs.

Stage 2 - Address Long-Term Improvements:
The second stage uses a Tiered EIS process for corridor improvements that are not anticipated to be funded for construction within six years of the EA approval. The process begins with a Tier 1 EIS document that will analyze the project on a broad scale and identify a preferred corridor location for potential future improvements. The Tier 1 EIS does not identify a specific project that requires funding within six years of the EIS approval. When funding becomes available, Tier 2

Stage 1 - Address Near-Term Improvements (continued):
In addition to the DEIS alternatives previously identified, the EA will document the development of a new alternative, Alternative H. Alternative H is a "hybrid" that combines aspects of Alternative A (Low Build) and Alternative B (4-Lane Expansion) to address the near-term needs of the corridor. Alternative H will have 2- and 4-lane reconstruction sections and intersection improvements.

Stage 2 - Address Long-Term Improvements (continued):
environmental documents will be prepared with a greater degree of engineering detail for specific improvements. For US 51, WisDOT will prepare a Tier 1 EIS that could evaluate a general corridor location for the potential expansion of US 51 between Stoughton and McFarland and a potential bypass of Stoughton.

Project Schedule

The anticipated project schedule is shown below:

Environmental Assessment (EA)

August 26, 2015	Public involvement meeting to address goals and alternatives of EA and Tier 1 EIS
Spring 2016	Draft EA available for public review / Public hearing on the Draft EA
Fall 2016	Final EA; FHWA reviews for Finding of No Significant Impact applicability

Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

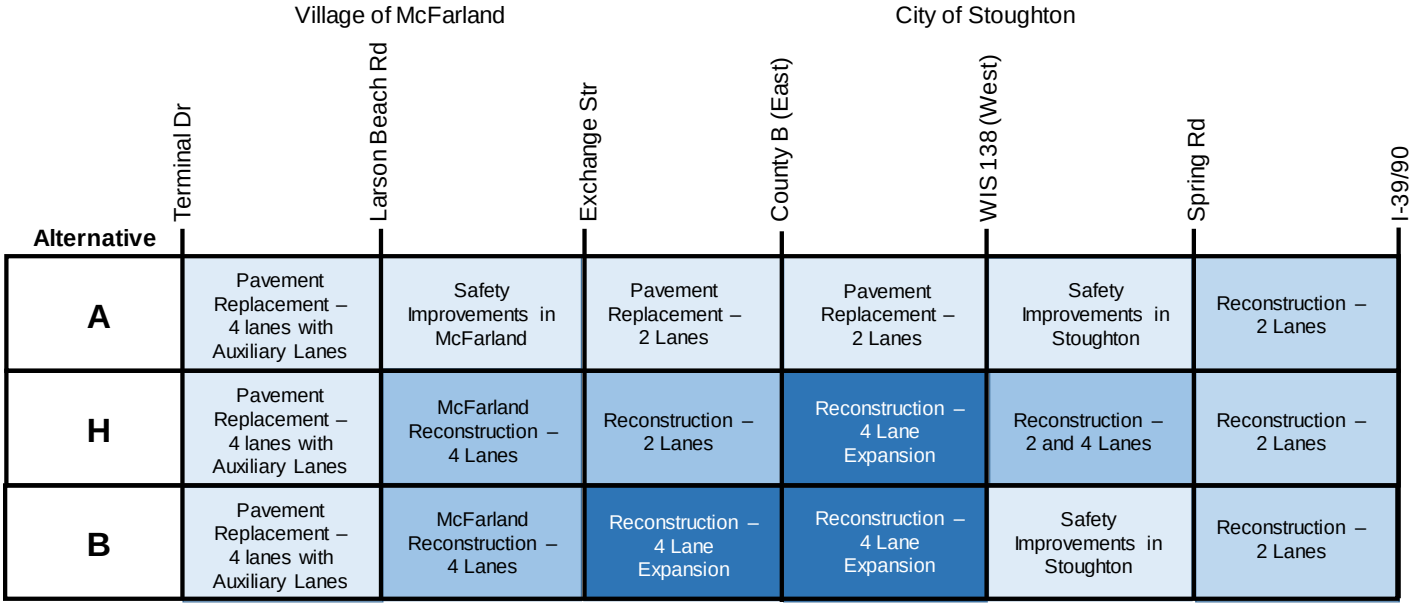
Fall 2016	Public involvement meeting for Tier 1 EIS
2017	Draft Tier 1 EIS available for public review /Public hearing on the Tier 1 EIS
2018	Final Tier 1 EIS and Record of Decision (ROD)

EA Alternatives Description

Alternatives Overview	
A	Low build – Safety improvements and pavement upgrades in some sections; no road expansion
H	Hybrid – Includes aspects of both Alternatives A and B
B	4-lane – Safety improvements, pavement upgrades and 4-lane expansion, could include Stoughton Bypass

All three alternatives reconstruct US 51 east of Stoughton, replace pavement north of McFarland, and add a multiuse path from County B to Skyline Drive.

Alternative Comparison Along US 51



* **Alternative B could include a bypass of Stoughton.**

Impact Comparison Chart for EA Alternatives

IMPACTS	Alternative			
	No build	A	B	H
Total Cost (Millions, in 2014 $)	**$25**	**$95**	**$265 to $280**	**$135**
Relocations	**0**	**3**	**22 to 33**	**6**
Land Converted to R/W (acres)	**0**	**97**	**293 to 320**	**110**
Wetland Area	0	7	10 to 12	7
Agricultural land	0	63	216 to 256	66
Fiscal Constraint Requirement Met?	**Yes**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**

Key Points About This Study

1. The most direct way WisDOT has to address pressing safety concerns and pavement condition needs and obtain approval for construction funding is to use an EA to document near-term improvements that fit within fiscal constraint requirements. The Tier 1 EIS following the EA will lay out a plan for dealing with long-term improvements that are needed but do not fit within current fiscal constraint requirements.
2. Recently updated traffic forecasts prepared by WisDOT for future year 2045 are generally lower than previous 2035 forecasted volumes shown at the last public meeting. This reflects the slower population growth projections by the Wisconsin Department of Administration for the study area.
3. Even though forecasted volumes are lower than previous forecast indicated, population growth is still expected. If no improvements were made, future operations along the section of US 51 between Stoughton and McFarland would not meet the operational goals.
4. In Stoughton, traffic operations along US 51 are expected to remain at an acceptable level, with or without US 51 improvements. Planned roundabout or signal control at the intersections of WIS 138, Jackson Street, Roby Road, and County B (East) will improve operations at these locations. There are two side streets where, even with US 51 improvements, the traffic approaching US 51 is anticipated to experience poor level of service and delays in the future. One location is the 4th Street intersection, which already has a traffic signal. The other location is at Hoel Avenue /Silverado Drive where traffic signals are not currently warranted but may be in the future. WisDOT will regularly review traffic volumes and signal warrants at this location.
5. Between County B (east) and Dyreson Road, rural design standards for Alternatives A and H require a raised median between the northbound lane and southbound lane. This is because there are 10 closely-spaced intersections within a distance of 3.3 miles. Each intersection will have a designated left-turn lane. The median that protects the left-turning vehicles from oncoming traffic doesn't have room to taper down to zero before it approaches another intersection and has to taper back up again. The median opening at intersections between County B (east) and Mahoney Road provides room to store one vehicle, which is anticipated to improve side road operations for both Alternatives A and H.
6. Pavement replacement, as proposed in some sections of each alternative, simply replaces the pavement and aggregate layers. Where reconstruction is proposed, the entire pavement structure (pavement, aggregate and subbase layers) and roadbed is rebuilt. Pavement structure can measure over 2.5 feet thick. Reconstruction also includes flattening of hills and grades, improvement of curves, widening of the roadbed where needed, and elimination or shielding of roadside obstacles.
7. WisDOT is proposing to eliminate Alternative B from further consideration in the EA because it does not meet fiscal constraint requirements.
8. A selected EA alternative will be chosen by WisDOT after consideration of public input from this meeting and written comments, comments from local officials, Native American Indian Tribes, and state and federal resource agencies.
9. Construction of the selected EA alternative could begin in the early 2020s, based upon current transportation funding and statewide priorities.
10. *Help shape the future of the US 51 corridor and fill out the comment form provided with your thoughts and/or concerns.* Please drop off your comments in the box provided at this meeting, or mail them by September 25.

Exhibits and Maps on Display **(proceeding in a counter-clockwise direction from the gym entrance)**

EXHIBIT BOARDS

- What's Happened Since the 2012 Public Meeting?
- Two-stage Approach to Document Improvements
- Project Schedule
- Project Purpose and Need
- Traffic Volumes – Existing and 2045 - Mainline
- Traffic Volumes – Existing and 2045 - Other Area Roads
- Description of Motor Vehicle Levels of Service
- Key Traffic Operations Notes
- Traffic Operations Summary - 2045 AM Peak Hour
- Traffic Operations Summary - 2045 PM Peak Hour
- Traffic Operations
- US 51 Two-Lane Peak Period Roadway Operations
- Comparison of Intersection Operations in Future Year 2045 (1 of 2)
- Comparison of Intersection Operations in Future Year 2045 (2 of 2)
- Needs - Safety - Segment Total Crash Rates for 2009-2013
- Needs - Safety - Segment Fatal Crash Rates for 2009-2013
- Needs - Safety - Segment Injury Crash Rates for 2009-2013
- Needs - Safety – Intersection Crash Rates for 2009-2013
- Needs - Pavement Condition
- Needs – Roadway Deficiencies
- Existing Land Use
- Composite Future Land Use
- Alternatives Considered in EA
- Alternative A
- Alternative H
- Alternative B
- Summary of Anticipated Impacts
- Possible Tier 1 EIS (Long-Term) Improvements

AERIAL MAPS

East of Stoughton:

- Reconstruction (Alternative A, B, & H)

City of Stoughton:

- Reconstruction - Railroad to Spring Road (Alternative H - Option 1, 2, & 3)
- Typical Sections - Railroad to Spring Road (Alternative H)
- Reconstruction - WIS 138 (west) to Railroad (Alternative H)
- Spot Improvements - WIS 138 (west) to Amundson Parkway (Alternative A & B)
- WIS 138 (west) to County B (east) Pavement Replacement (Alternative A)
- WIS 138 (west) to County B (east) Reconstruction (Alternative H & B)

North of Stoughton (County B (east)):

- Multiuse Path (Alternative A, H, & B)
- Stoughton Bypass (Alternative B)

Stoughton to McFarland:

- 2 Lane Reconstruction/Pavement Replacement (Alternative A & H)
- T-intersection example (Alternatives A & H)
- 4-legged intersection example (Alternatives A & H)
- 4 Lane Expansion (Alternative B)

Village of McFarland:

- Reconstruction - Exchange Street to Larson Beach Road (Alternative H & B)
- Pavement Replacement with Auxiliary Lanes - Larson Beach Road to Voges Road (Alternative A, H, & B)