

B. Scoping Meeting Minutes

- I. Agency Meeting Minutes
- II. Public Meeting Minutes

i. Agency Meeting Minutes

Final Meeting Summary

I-84 Hartford Project Agency Scoping

January 20, 2015, 10:00 to 11:30 AM

The Lyceum, Hartford, CT

Attendance:

Agency / Tribes	
Susan Lee	ACOE
David J. Fox	CTDEEP
Trevor Gibson*	FRA
Laura Shick*	FRA
Sean Sullivan	FTA
Beth Held	HUD
Suzanne Piacentini	HUD
Doug Harris	NITHPO
Daniel Forrest	SHPO
Cathy Labadia	SHPO
Timothy Timmermann	USEPA
Project Sponsors	
Mark Alexander	CTDOT
Richard Armstrong	CTDOT
Stephen Delpapa	CTDOT
Thomas Doyle	CTDOT
John Dudzinski	CTDOT
Brian Natwick	CTDOT
Charles Scott Speal	CTDOT-OEP
Amy Jackson-Grove	FHWA
Michelle Herrell	FHWA
David Nardone	FHWA
Eloise Powell	FHWA
Project Team	
Julie Georges	A. DiCesare Associates
Deborah Howes	AECOM
Kelly Sheehan	AECOM
Christine Tiernan	AECOM
Nicole Weymouth	AECOM
Ginger Mold	Arch Street Communications
Allie Zamow	Arch Street Communications

* Participated by Webex and conference call

Ruth Fitzgerald	FHI
Marcy Miller	FHI
Michael Morehouse	FHI
Tony Moretti	Parsons Brinckerhoff
Timothy Ryan	TranSystems
David Stahnke	TranSystems

Project Introduction

Presenter: Rich Armstrong, CTDOT

The purpose of this meeting was to give a brief overview of the I-84 Hartford Project and obtain input from stakeholder agencies.

Rich Armstrong, CTDOT, opened by thanking everyone for taking time to attend this important meeting. He provided an agenda of topics that would be covered during the presentation and key scoping milestones for the project. He identified the study area to be from the Flatbush Avenue ramps to I-91 and established that the project corridor, where it is expected that there will be project improvements and expenditure of capital, to be from Hamilton Street to I-91.

So far, the Project Team has completed identifying the needs and deficiencies, data collection, and analysis and reporting. Currently the project is in the process of alternative development and an environmental review. Once a preferred alternative and funding has been identified, the project will proceed into design and construction phases.

Purpose & Need

Presenter: Michael Morehouse, FHI

Michael Morehouse, FHI, continued the presentation by identifying why the project is needed. The I-84 Hartford Project is intended to solve bridge structure, traffic, safety, and mobility deficiencies within the project corridor.

Additional goals and objectives of the project include:

- Ensure better integration of the interstate with the urban environment
- Maximize public investment in corridor
- Ensure long-term serviceability of corridor

Alternative Analysis Process

Presenter: David Stahnke, TranSystems

The presentation was turned over to David Stahnke, TranSystems, to discuss the alternative analysis process. He walked through the key corridor features and constraints. He emphasized the fact that the existing preliminary alternatives are subject to refinement, will include sub-options, and will consider related studies and projects.

Alternative 1: No Build

- Is not a "Do Nothing" scenario
- Major rehabilitation of bridges
- No changes in width, alignment, geometry, operational improvements, or to local streets
- Baseline alternative, required by NEPA and CEPA
- Estimated cost \$1.9 - 2.3 billion

Alternative 2: Elevated Highway

- Existing railroad alignment and busway
- I-84 elevated from Sigourney to High Street
- Wider shoulders
- Increased vertical clearance
- Fewer interchanges
- Reduced width of mainline
- Estimated cost \$4.3 – 5.4 billion

Alternative 3: Lowered Highway

- Railroad and busway relocated
- I-84 at ground level or below grade from Park to Trumbull Street
- Wider shoulders
- Fewer interchanges
- Reduced width of mainline
- Estimated cost \$3.8 - 4.6 billion

Alternative 4: Tunneled Highway

- Relocated railroad and busway, north
- I-84 in tunnel from Myrtle to Laurel Street
- Bridges over railroad for all local street crossings
- Fewer interchanges
- Reduced width of mainline
- Estimated cost \$8.3 – 10.4 billion

A bypass alternative is not being considered as an alternative as it does not address the issues identified in the Purpose and Need. For instance, it does not provide any significant congestion relief and there are significant environmental impacts.

Overview of Environmental Resources

Presenter: Christine Tiernan, AECOM

Christine Tiernan, AECOM, reviewed the built and natural environmental resources that affect the I-84 Hartford Project alternatives. Alternatives must avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse effects on/to:

- Transportation elements (I-84 mainline and local roadways, parking, Amtrak passenger service, New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Program, Freight rail, CTfastrak, and CTTransit)
- Minority and low-income populations (Environmental Justice Executive Order)
- Historic and archaeological resources (listed or eligible historic resources, and areas of archaeological sensitivity)
- Parks and recreational areas (city owned parks under USDOT Act of 1966, Section 4(f) and Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, Section 6(f))
- Water resources/species (Clean Water Act, Floodplain Management Executive Order, Endangered Species Act of 1973, Farmland Protection Policy Act, and CT Endangered Species Act)

- Contamination/hazardous materials (potential areas of concern include auto repair shops, service stations and manufacturing)
 - Noise (will require noise sensitive receptors and noise analysis reports)
 - Air quality (non-attainment for O₃; maintenance for CO, compliance with Clean Air Act Amendments, and conformity with CT State Implementation Plan (SIP))
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Agency Involvement

Presenter: Christine Tiernan, AECOM

Lead, cooperating, and participating agencies were identified to assist the Project Team in the development, environmental review, and design of proposed improvement alternatives to the study area of I-84. To do so, roles and responsibilities were assigned and invitations were sent to agency contacts to accept or decline project involvement.

Cooperating and participating agencies:

- Provide comments on purpose and need, alternatives, Agency Coordination Plan, assessment methodologies and level of detail
- Identify issues that could substantially delay the project
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and mitigation

Cooperating agencies:

- Develop information and prepare environmental analyses within area of expertise
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Agency Input

Timothy Timmermann, USEPA, inquired about the timeline and travel impacts during construction phase of the project.

David Stahnke, TranSystems, responded by stating that the adverse effects will differ drastically depending on which alternative is chosen. At-grade construction can be done fairly quickly while the tunnel option will have a longer timeline with more extensive construction measures. There are options to mitigate disruption such as to reroute traffic for a short period of time during construction instead of keeping lanes open, and doing construction over a long period of time.

Timothy Timmermann, USEPA, inquired about non-structural assets.

David Stahnke, TranSystems, responded stating that by the time the preferred alternative comes to fruition, improvements to alternative modes of transportation (bus, rail, pedestrian, etc.) will be active, increasing transit options.

Amy Jackson-Grove, FHWA, inquired about the possibility of an alternative option that looks at a hybrid with some portion at-grade to connect communities.

David Stahnke, TranSystems, responded that the alternatives developed and presented are subject to change. It is anticipated that there will be many variations, depending on many factors of the proposed alternatives, and some aspects of alternatives will be combined to come up with the best solution.

Timothy Timmermann, USEPA, inquired about how the Project Team will walk through the NEPA process at the public meeting and what will be the best way to present it. He also complimented the Project Team by saying that the I-84 Hartford Project Scoping Initiation Package is one of the best he has ever seen.

David Stahnke, TranSystems responded that Rich Armstrong will discuss the history and past processes but will not get into details about the EA versus EIS. The NEPA and SEQR process will be briefly addressed.

Susan Lee, ACOE, inquired about the alternative's impacts to Park River conduit, which was a flood control project that ACOE partnered on with the Army Corps of Engineers. Ms. Lee expressed concern that if it will be effected, approval of the alternative by the Corps would be difficult. Ms. Lee provided a copy of the approval process for Project Team review.

David Stahnke, TranSystems, responded, stating that it depends on the alternative. Some alternatives will impact Park River conduit, and some will not.

Timothy Timmermann, USPA, stated that his last name has two n's in it, and requested that it be changed in all documents and in his email address.

Suzanne Piacentini, HUD, stated that her phone number is incorrect and requested that it be changed on all documents. The last 4 digits of her phone number are 9702.

As there were no more comments, the meeting adjourned.

Attendees were invited to have a boxed lunch and take a site visit via van.

ii. Public Meeting Minutes

Final Meeting Summary

I-84 Hartford Project Public Scoping

January 21, 2015, 3:00 to 7:30 PM
Hartford Public Library, Hartford, CT

Project Overview

I-84 through Hartford is the busiest section of highway in the state of Connecticut, carrying more than 175,000 vehicles daily (more than three times its original design capacity). The majority of this 50-year-old highway was built on elevated structures, viaducts, which are reaching the end of their useful life and must be replaced.

The I-84 Hartford Project, sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) in collaboration with a team of consultants (Project Team), will assess the needs and condition of the highway between the Flatbush Avenue ramps and the I-91 interchange, develop alternative solutions, and advance a program of improvements throughout the corridor.

The I-84 Hartford Project seeks to examine a variety of options for reconstructing this section of I-84 and/or modifying the design to create a long-term solution which will be embraced by its many stakeholders.

In order to develop a comprehensive transportation solution that best serves the needs of area residents, businesses and travelers, CTDOT has developed a robust public involvement plan to convey information and solicit input. Participation by those who live, work, and travel in and around the I-84 corridor will help ensure that the project addresses these needs while producing a workable and cost-effective solution.

Public Scoping Meeting Summary

A public scoping meeting was held on January 21, 2015, from 3:00 to 7:30 PM, at the Hartford Public Library, located at 500 Main Street, Hartford, CT. Attendance included 109 members of the public, 1 elected official representative, 3 press representatives, and 36 members of the Project Team.

The meeting was advertised in the following publications:

- *Hartford Courant* newspaper
 - Legal ad on December 18, 2014, January 6, 2015, and January 20, 2015
 - Display ad on January 18, 2015
- *La Voz* newspaper on December 18, 2014, January 8, 2015, and January 15, 2015
- State of Connecticut's Council on Environmental Quality Environmental Monitor on December 16, 2014, January 6, 2015, and January 20, 2015.

In addition, a press release was issued by CTDOT on January 16, 2015.

The public meeting venue met ADA compliance regulations and was conveniently located in the city, easily assessable by bus, rail, automobile and pedestrian routes. An American Sign Language interpreter and Spanish translator were available during the duration of the meeting. Two stenographers staffed the meeting, one recorded private public comments and the other recorded the presentation and public comments.

At registration, attendees were asked to sign in and were given an agenda, environmental fact sheet, I-84 Hartford Project newsletter (Issue 5, Fall 2014) and a business card. Project Team members verbally explained the agenda, as well as the various ways to comment.

The meeting began as an Open House, where 20 informational boards were displayed around the room, each staffed by a Project Team member. The public was encouraged to view the boards and ask the Project Team any questions that they may have. Informational boards included:

- Large Display Map of the Area
- Welcome
- What is the Purpose of Today's Meeting?
- About the I-84 Hartford Project
- Why is the Project Needed?
- Bridge Structural Deficiencies
- Traffic and Safety Deficiencies
- Key Corridor Features
- Alternative 1: No Build
- Alternative 2: Elevated Highway
- Alternative 3: Lowered Highway
- Alternative 4: Tunneled Highway
- Preliminary Alternative Profiles
- Where Do We Go From Here?
- What is the Environmental Process?
- What are Environmental Resources?
- Environmental Constraints
- Scoping – NEPA's First Step
- Many Ways to Comment
- Corridor Map

A 3-D video rendering of a flyover of the existing project corridor was projected on a large screen during the Open House portion of the meeting. In addition, during the Open House, several copies of the Needs and Deficiencies Report were available for review and handouts of the Purpose and Need Statement and alternatives boards were distributed.

At 5:30 PM, attendees were asked to be seated for a presentation led by the Project Team. The presentation gave a detailed overview of the project, purpose and need, alternative analysis process, environmental process and public participation opportunities.

Project Introduction

Presenter: Rich Armstrong, CTDOT

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Rich Armstrong, CTDOT, opened by thanking everyone for taking time to attend this important meeting and providing an agenda of topics that would be covered during the presentation. He introduced the topic of “scoping” and presented key scoping milestones for the project. He gave a brief history of the I-84 corridor and described previous studies of the study area. He identified the study area to be from the Flatbush Avenue ramps to I-91. The project corridor extends from Hamilton Street to I-91.

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A bypass alternative was eliminated during evaluation due to significant environmental impact and minimal congestion relief.

Overview of Environmental Resources

Presenter: Christine Tiernan, AECOM

Christine Tiernan, AECOM, discussed the alternatives screening process, as well as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) processes. She reviewed the built and natural environmental resources that may affect the I-84 Hartford Project alternatives. A map of key constraints identified the many resources within the study area that must be investigated further as part of the environmental review process, such as historic buildings, environmental justice communities, and water resources.

Your Role

Presenter: Christine Tiernan, AECOM

Ms. Tiernan described the many ways available for the public to comment, both at the meeting and afterwards, throughout the scoping period. Ground rules for providing oral comments immediately following the presentation were provided.

Following the presentation, members of the public were invited to provide oral comments on the project and the proposed alternatives for improvement. A total of six (6) members of the public spoke before the audience and provided comments and nine (9) provided private comments to the stenographer. A copy of the transcript of the presentation along with the comments of members of the public, and another transcript of the nine (9) members of the public who provided comments privately to the stenographer, are included as Appendices to this meeting summary.

In addition, attendees were directed to comment cards which they could fill out and return at the meeting, or send via USPS. Attendees were also informed that comments can be submitted via the Contact Us page on the project website (www.I84Hartford.com), as cited in outreach materials.

After the conclusion of the presentation and public comment, Project Team members remained available to answer additional questions until the meeting closed at 7:30 PM.

For comments to be considered as part of the scoping process, they must be submitted and/or postmarked on or before February 20, 2015. All comments will be weighed equally no matter what format they were provided. Once all comments have been received and evaluated, a synthesis of the comments received will be included in the Scoping Summary Report, which will help provide direction for further study and analysis.