



6. Public Involvement and Coordination

6.1 Agency Involvement

An agency scoping letter was mailed April 6, 2005 to the agencies listed below. Agency response letters are included in **Appendix B**. (Agencies marked with an asterisk provided a response):

- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- NC Division of Archives and History (State Historic Preservation Office)*
- NC Department of Administration (State Clearinghouse)*
- NC Department of Public Instruction
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission*
- NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources*
- NC Division of Water Quality
- Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments (Rural Planning Organization)*
- City of Winston-Salem*

6.2 Public Involvement

Improvements to the US 52 Corridor may impact citizens along the corridor and throughout the region. The purpose of US 52 Corridor Study public involvement is to promote and provide a variety of meaningful forums for study stakeholders to communicate with the study team. The outcome of the public involvement process for this project will be that travelers, citizens, and other stakeholders will have had meaningful opportunities to provide feedback regarding acceptable and effective ways to allocate the \$18.2 million NCDOT has set aside for “interim” roadway improvements to the corridor.

A public involvement plan was developed in 2001 at the beginning of the project. It was updated several times including the addition of a targeted plan to reach the Hispanic community.

Citizen Informational Workshops

Citizen Informational Workshops were held throughout the study process to explain the project to the public and to obtain public input on the project. The workshops were advertised on local media and also were publicized in newsletters mailed to interested



citizens. All meetings were conducted by representatives of the NCDOT and Kimley-Horn and Associates. A total of approximately 130 citizens attended the three series of workshops.

The first series of Citizen Informational Workshops was held on October 23, 2001. The workshops were held from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at the Comfort Inn on Akron Drive and from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the LEAP Academy at Kennedy Middle School Auditorium on North Highland Avenue. These workshops presented information related to the need for the proposed project, the limits of the study, and opportunities for public involvement.

The second series of Citizens Informational Workshops was held on October 20 and 21, 2003 in Winston-Salem. The meetings were held at three locations in the study area for the convenience of the public, and also included information on Project U-2826A, replacement of bridges over Liberty Street and the Norfolk-Southern Railway, and Project U-2925, the Salem Creek Connector. The meetings were hosted at the Comfort Inn on Akron Drive from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on October 20th, at the Forsyth County Public Health Center on North Highland Avenue from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on October 21st, and at the Anderson Conference Center on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on October 21st. The purpose of this second round of workshops was to present to the general public— specifically area residents, property owners, businesses owners and other stakeholders—the improvements under consideration for implementation on US 52, and to inform the public about project milestones and to encourage their participation in NCDOT’s and the study team’s decision-making process. Information presented to the public included alternatives under consideration; general information, cost, and pros and cons of each alternative; how public input from the first round of workshops shaped and refined the alternatives; and information about the next steps in the process.

The third Citizen Informational Workshop was held October 18, 2005 from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Kennedy Learning Center in Winston-Salem. This workshop presented specific improvements to US 52 under consideration, including proposed mitigation and enhancements to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. It provided citizens with the opportunity to provide input regarding the improvements. Two specific changes recommended by citizens attending this Citizens Informational Workshop were to retain access to Leo Street (which was proposed to be converted to a cul-de-sac as part of Scenarios 11a and 11b) and to retain the ramps at Liberty Street (which were proposed to be removed as part of Scenario 7). Based on these comments, Scenario 7 was revised to leave the ramps at Liberty Street in place. Scenarios 11a and 11b were revised to extend Leo Street to Sheraton Street.

Newsletters

Three newsletters have been sent to the public (see **Appendix C**). The first newsletter, dated October 2001, included general information on the purpose of the project, the study area, the need for the project, and the study process and schedule. The newsletter also



announced the upcoming Citizen Informational Workshop. A second newsletter, dated October 2003, provided background information on the study, described the build alternatives, and announced the second set of Citizen Informational Workshops. The third newsletter, dated October 2005, briefly described some of the alternatives under consideration, and announced the third Citizens Informational Workshop. Copies of the newsletters were distributed at each public workshop as well.

Public Officials Briefing Sessions

Representatives of NCDOT and Kimley-Horn held two public officials briefing sessions, once in 2001 and again in 2005. Representatives of NCDOT attended the City of Winston-Salem Public Works Committee meeting and a Town Hall meeting hosted by members of the City Council in 2007.

Community Leader Interviews

A representative of Kimley-Horn arranged and conducted one-on-one interviews with fifteen community leaders at the beginning of the study in 2001 and again in 2005 to review alternatives and public feedback. Draft summaries of each interview were prepared soon afterward by Kimley-Horn and reviewed first by the interviewee for accuracy before they were shared with the Study Advisory Committee. Results of the 2005 interviews are presented in the *Community Impact Assessment* (November 2005).

Study Advisory Committee Meetings

A Study Advisory Committee was comprised of representatives from the City of Winston-Salem (City Manager's office, City Transportation and City Planning Departments), the City-County Planning Board, FHWA, the Board of Transportation member, and several branches of NCDOT. Meetings with the Study Advisory Committee were held throughout the project.

Small Group Meetings

NCDOT has participated in meetings and presentations at the request of various groups in Winston-Salem, including the Ministers Conference (twice), Access Hispanica, Northside Shopping Center representatives, and County Emergency Management Services representatives. Specific mitigations were presented at the second Ministers Conference, where attendees were invited to provide comments on the proposed improvements.

Telephone and E-mail Contact

A toll-free hotline was established to provide information to citizens and to enable them to leave contact information. The hotline message was recorded in English and Spanish, with an opportunity for listeners to select their language. In addition, a project e-mail



address was established for citizens to contact project planners and engineers. Each phone message or e-mail was responded to within 48 hours of receipt. A total of 39 citizens have called the hotline since its inception in 2001.

Direct Mail

A postcard invitation was mailed to all addresses on the mailing list, which was updated throughout the project. The mailing list included all residences and businesses within the study area, as well as interested parties who registered or signed in at a workshop or small group meeting, corresponded with project staff via electronic or postal mail, or provided contact information by telephone. Invitations were mailed prior to each public workshop.

Corridor Walks

Prior to both the October 2003 and October 2005 community information workshops, the project team members walked affected corridors and hand-delivered invitations to the workshop. The project team members engaged residents and business people in expanded discussions about potential impacts to them in an effort to encourage attendance at the upcoming workshop. Willing businesses were given placards to post near cash register lines advertising upcoming workshops to customers.

Hispanic Outreach

The Consultant and NCDOT made a presentation to Access Hispanica, a group of community leaders in the Hispanic Community in Winston-Salem. (As of December 15, 2007, Access Hispanica was not currently in operation.) Spanish versions of the newsletter, questionnaire, and workshop invitations were distributed in multiple quantities so leaders could distribute them to their respective organizations.

Media

Outreach to local media was affected through the city's office of public relations. Articles were printed on the front page of several newspapers prior to each public workshop.