



I-24 Multimodal Corridor Study

Chattanooga Public Meeting
April 25, 2013
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Brainerd Community Center

Meeting Summary

Joan Barnfield, Project Manager for the Tennessee Department of Transportation's (TDOT) Long Range Planning Division, called the meeting at 5:00 PM. She greeted the group, gave a brief summary of the project and purpose of the meeting, and invited other TDOT staff and local officials to introduce themselves.

Ms. Barnfield then played a four-minute informational video for the group. The video indicated the nature and purpose of the study, which was to investigate a range of multimodal solutions along the I-24 Corridor through Tennessee with an emphasis on managing congestion, improving safety, maximizing the potential for freight diversion and preserving/enhancing the corridor's economic benefits. Ms. Barnfield then turned the meeting over to Scott Rumble of Atkins.

Mr. Rumble began a presentation which gave an overview of the project study area, project schedule, scope of work and existing conditions analysis completed for the study. The presentation concluded with a discussion of the survey submissions to date, including trends and highlighting the areas of most concern. After this presentation, Mr. Rumble invited Ms. Barnfield to make a few comments. She introduced other representatives of TDOT and local officials and then opened the floor to questions and comments.

Comments and questions are noted in bold, and are paraphrased for ease of reading. The full transcript is available. Consultant and/or TDOT responses are italicized.

Q: Did the freight traffic you showed include rail as well as trucks?

Only truck traffic was shown in this presentation.

C: Additional median openings between the Georgia state line and the Ridge Cut are needed for emergency access.



C: Widen existing median openings between the Georgia state line and the Ridge Cut in order to accommodate fire trucks.

C: Wider lanes on I-24 through the city would increase speeds.

C: Strategically placed fire hydrants along I-24 in Chattanooga would help improve fire truck response.

C: There is a need for a warning light where I-24 and US 27 split in order to encourage slower speeds on the bridge. This bridge becomes very slick after it first starts to rain and causes accidents on a regular basis.

C: Problem areas along I-24 include: I-59 exit ramp, Wildwood ramp (Exit 169, SR 299), and Moccasin Bend.

C: The Chattanooga section of I-24 is by far the most dangerous in the State due to problems with excessive truck traffic, the Ridge Cut section, and the interchange with I-75.

C: Police officers find it difficult to enforce traffic laws along the Ridge Cut section due to unsafe, narrow lanes and minimal shoulders that prevent them from making stops safely.

C: The curve in I-24 around Monteagle should be marked ahead so that those unfamiliar with the area can be prepared to drive with extra caution.

C: TDOT should look at the feasibility of building a double-decker interstate along I-24 in the Moccasin Bend section, which could optimize the use of the limited available space for additional lanes on the interstate.

One advantage of constructing an elevated roadway in a section of roadway such as this which has a median, is that existing traffic may not have to be impacted during construction. However, an elevated road is extremely expensive. Another potential concern is with the public's perception of the look and feel of an elevated road. So, it's a balance between efficiency and aesthetics.

C: Traffic on I-24 increases air pollution and wasted fuel during gridlock.

C: Decrease the speed limit for trucks to 45 mph throughout the city.



C: A big problem throughout Chattanooga is the lack of connectivity between streets, which has had a negative effect on minority populations in the city.

C: Wilcox tunnel may be a viable alternate route for connecting to I-75 and would divert traffic from the current I-24/I-75 interchange.

Q: Is the study team utilizing the results of the I-75 Corridor Study's analysis of the I-24/I-75 interchange? How will that be integrated into TDOT's overall plan?

We will review that study as part of this evaluation and also include the input and findings from the TPO from their long range planning process.

Q: Who evaluates the comment forms that we send in?

The consultant team will compile and summarize all the comments.

Q: Are Northern Georgia counties included as part of the Chattanooga area in this study?

While counties in Northern Georgia and Southern Kentucky near Clarksville were not singled out in this presentation, population and employment data for these counties are included in the transportation model being used to evaluate the I-24 corridor. Also, with respect to the Georgia DOT, they do not have any plans to improve I-24 in Georgia except to perform regular maintenance for the pavement.

C: Use the ITS boards to their fullest in order to help divert traffic and prevent backups after accidents.

C: If the speed limit for trucks is lowered to 45 mph, the trucking lobbyists will go to Washington, D.C. and get funding for roadway improvements on I-24.



Attendance

Organization	Number of Attendees
Total	39
Consultant Team	5
TDOT	5
Other/General Public	29

Other Agencies Represented:

- Chattanooga TPO
- Chattanooga Hamilton-County Regional Planning Agency
- Chattanooga Fire Department
- Red Bank City
- City of Chattanooga
- Chattanooga Police Department
- Tennessee Highway Patrol