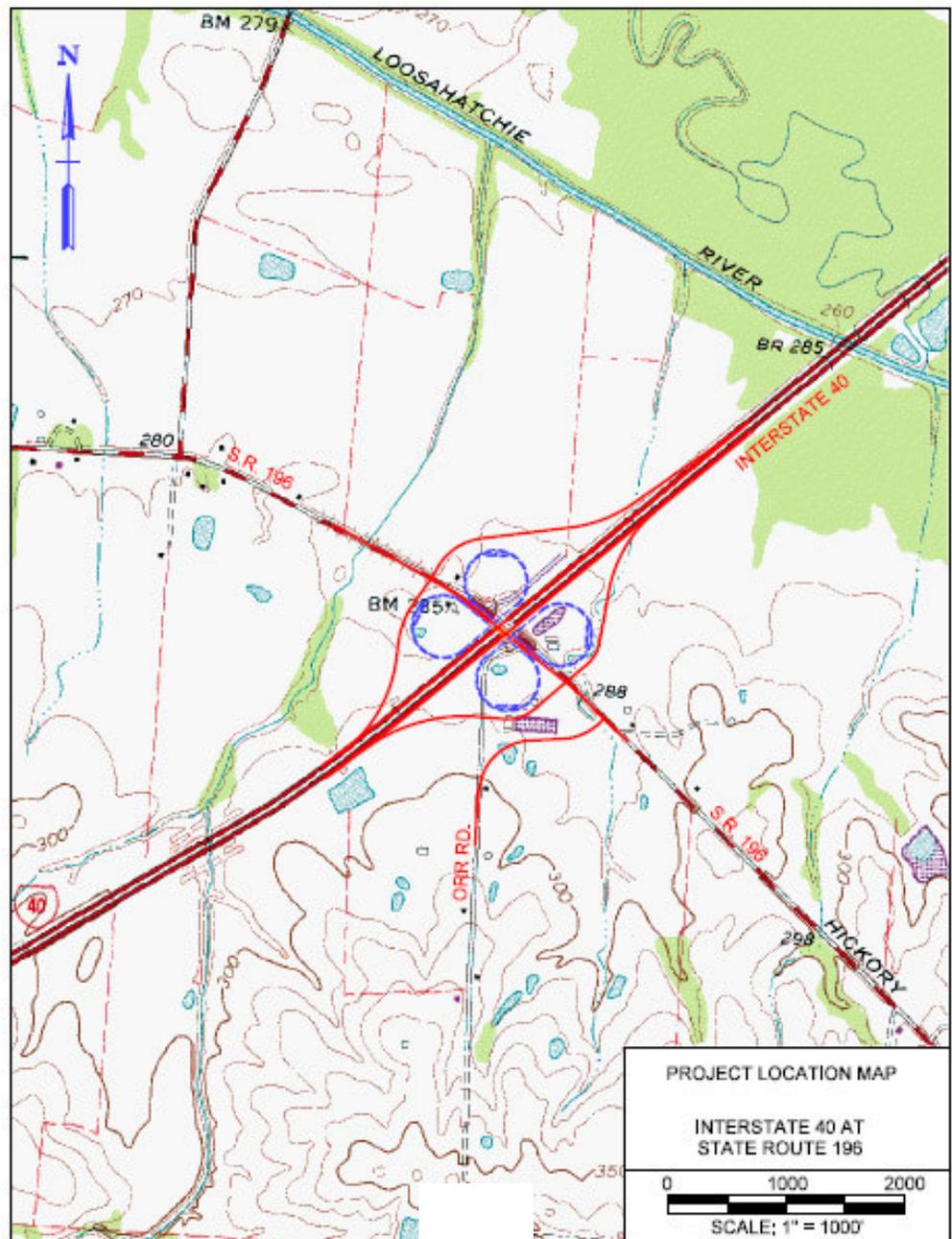


Environmental Assessment for Interstate 40 Interchange at State Route 196 (Hickory Withe Road) Fayette County, Tennessee

Pin #: 105597; Project #: 24001-1144-44

COORDINATION PLAN



INTERSTATE 40 INTERCHANGE AT STATE ROUTE 196 (HICKORY WITHE ROAD), FAYETTE COUNTY, TENNESSEE

COORDINATION PLAN

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1.0 PURPOSE OF COORDINATION PLAN

This Coordination Plan will define the process by which the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) will communicate information about the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Interstate 40 (I-40) Interchange at State Route (SR) 196 in Fayette County, Tennessee to the lead, cooperating, participating, and other agencies and to the public. The plan also identifies how comments and other information provided by agencies and the public will be solicited and considered.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will serve as the lead agency for the project. This plan complies with TDOT's Statewide Public Involvement Plan (PIP). The PIP and this coordination plan also outline the process by which the required level of public involvement will be accomplished. A Level Three public involvement process will be employed for the EA.

This Coordination Plan will:

- Identify the early coordination efforts;
- Identify cooperating and participating agencies to be involved in agency coordination;
- Establish the timing and form for agency involvement in defining the project's purpose and need and study area, the range of alternatives to be investigated, and methodologies, as well as in reviewing the EA and the selection of the preferred alternative and mitigation strategies;
- Establish the timing and form for public opportunities to be involved in defining the project's purpose and need and study area and the range of alternatives to be investigated, providing input on issues of concern and environmental features, and commenting on the findings presented in the EA;
- Describe the communication methods that will be implemented to inform the community about the project; and
- The Coordination Plan will be updated periodically to reflect any changes to the project schedule and other items that typically require updating over the course of the project.

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

2.1 Project Introduction and Background

TDOT proposes to construct a new interchange where State Route (SR) 196 (Hickory Withe Road) crosses over Interstate 40 (I-40) in Fayette County, Tennessee.

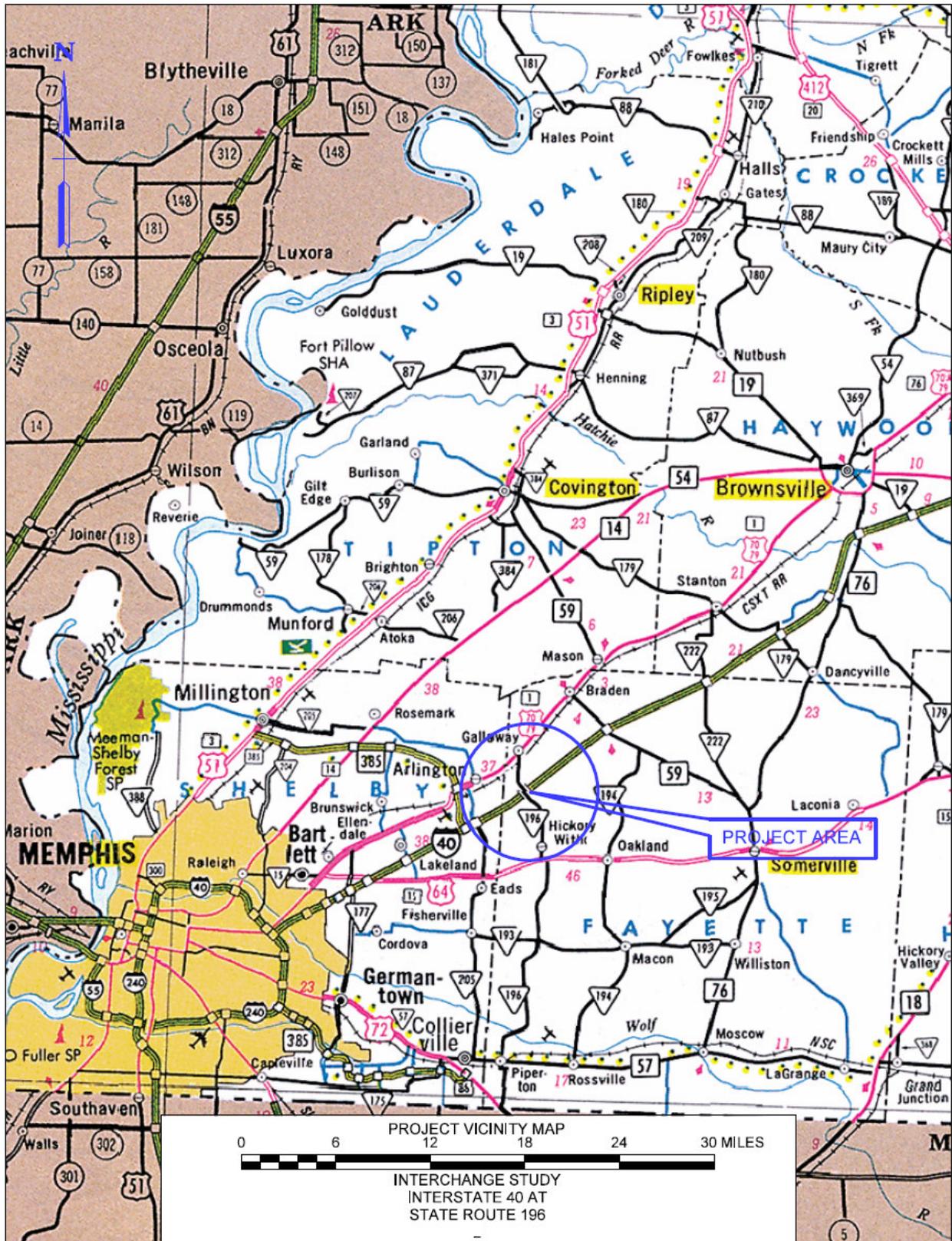
Construction of this project would make this the first Fayette County access point east of the Memphis Area. The adjacent interchange to the east is at SR-59 at a distance of approximately five miles. The adjacent interchange to the west is at New Airline Road in Shelby County at a distance of two miles. The closest urban development, Arlington, is located 4.5 miles northwest of the proposed project. A small community, Gallaway is located 2.0 miles north of the proposed interchange location. The provision of an interchange at this location would allow access to I-40 from areas along both SR-15/US-64 and SR-1/US-70/79. This interchange would provide direct interstate access to Gallaway and an additional route to Arlington and Somerville. Figure 1 shows the project vicinity in relation to Memphis and the surrounding communities.

Within the project area, I-40 currently consists of a rural four lane, controlled access facility with a grass median and approximately 300 feet of right-of-way (ROW).

SR-196 is currently a rural two lane, non-access controlled road with a pavement width of 22 feet and approximately 60 feet of ROW.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) that complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) will be prepared to fully address the project purpose and need, alternatives, and environmental consequences or impacts of the project. The following sections contain preliminary project planning information and anticipated methodology to be used for conducting impact assessments for the various resources that may be affected by the project.

Figure 1. Vicinity Map for Interstate 40 Interchange at State Route 196 in Fayette County, Tennessee.



Land use in the project area is primarily rural with cotton fields and a sod farm immediately adjacent to the proposed interchange site. The area contains scattered residential developments along SR-196 to the north and south of I-40. Construction of this interchange is not expected to require the acquisition of any residences or other improvements. Acquisition of some acreage now being used for the agricultural operations would be necessary. More detailed studies will be conducted as part of the EA to determine potential impacts to the environment including natural, social, cultural, and economic resources. Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts will be assessed.

2.2 Preliminary Project Purpose and Need

The primary purpose of the proposed I-40/ SR-196 Interchange is to provide safe and adequate transportation facilities for traffic projected to be generated by residential and commercial development that is anticipated based on the project area being identified in the Fayette County Growth Plan, as a “Fayette County Planned Growth Area.” The Fayette County Growth Plan was adopted in August 2003.

The entire area surrounding the proposed interchange is contained within the Fayette County Planned Growth Area. State Route 196 from Gallaway to Piperton is also located within the planning area of the Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The inclusion of the project area in those plans indicates that continued development is anticipated in the project area as the Memphis metropolitan area continues to grow.

This project is primarily being developed to deal with access issues and anticipated urban growth in the region rather than being due to roadway deficiencies on existing routes. However, it is anticipated that the growth may eventually result in increased traffic volumes being generated that would put additional demand on existing roadways in the area.

Many commuters from this area primarily use I-40 to travel to jobs in urban and suburban Memphis areas. To do this, many of them currently travel through the City of Arlington to gain access to I-40 via Airline Road or SR-385. The interchange proposed for I-40 at SR-196 would provide many of these commuters with access to I-40 without requiring them to travel through Arlington.

The new interchange at SR-196 would provide better access to I-40 for the City of Gallaway and other nearby residential areas. The new interchange would be somewhat of a proactive transportation improvement that could provide relief for other secondary routes, such as SR-1 (US 70/US 79), if the anticipated growth results in increased traffic volumes that could potentially cause the existing roadways to become deficient in terms of traffic capacity and/or safety issues. The new interchange would result in an increase in traffic on SR-196 both north and south of I-40 compared to existing conditions without an interchange.

This project has been undertaken in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) policy for granting new or modified interstate access. An Interchange Justification Study (IJS) was conducted for this project and received operational approval from the FHWA on January 4, 2005. The IJS is a highly-structured report on existing and anticipated traffic flow conditions that demonstrates that ramp merging and diverging associated with the proposed interchange will operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS), that the proposed ramp junctions will not have any adverse effects on ramp operations at nearby interchanges, and that the ramp intersections on the crossroad may be adequately accommodated for the anticipated traffic demands.

The I-40/ SR-196 Interchange is proposed to be a full diamond type interchange and would provide for all traffic movements. The proposed layout of the interchange would allow enough space for construction of loop ramps in all four quadrants of the interchange in the future. The recommended interchange design would meet or exceed all American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

(AASHTO) criteria. The proposed interchange project is consistent with the MPO's 2026 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). In addition, the project was included in the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

2.3 Project Alternatives

A No-Build Alternative and one Build Alternative are proposed to be studied in the EA, unless other reasonable alternatives that would meet the purpose and need of the project are identified during the public involvement and/or agency coordination efforts. The No-Build Alternative will consider what, if any, consequences would occur in the project area if the I-40/SR-196 Interchange were not constructed. The No-Build Alternative will serve as a baseline comparison for the proposed Build Alternative, which would have inherent adverse and beneficial consequences.

At this time it is anticipated that one Build Alternative, originally identified in the IJS, will be considered in the EA. The proposed Build Alternative would include construction of a standard diamond interchange that permits future construction of loop ramps within all four quadrants. The cross section of SR-196 would be three-lanes within the interchange having 12-foot traveling lanes, 12-foot continuous left-turn lane, and 10-foot shoulders. All interchange ramps would have 16-foot lanes and 6-foot shoulders. Orr Road, which currently intersects SR-196 immediately south of the interstate, would need to be relocated 960 feet south of its present location to allow for the construction of the ramp in the southwest quadrant of the proposed interchange. The realignment of Orr Road would be designed to meet minimum standards.

2.4 Study Methodology for Completion of the Environmental Assessment

In general, the EA, public involvement, and agency coordination for this project will be developed and conducted in accordance with TDOT's established procedures as documented in the latest edition of the Tennessee Environmental Procedures Manual (TEPM), the Statewide Public Involvement Plan (PIP), and the Tennessee Environmental Streamlining Agreement (TESA) for the Environmental and Regulatory Coordination of Major Transportation Projects. The latest TEPM and PIP documents can be viewed online at the following web addresses:

- <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/environment/tepm.htm>; and
- <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/documents/pip.pdf>

More information regarding the TESA is presented in Section 3 of this Coordination Plan and a description is available at the following web address:

- <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/tesa/default.htm>

The TEPM contains technical guidance as well as background information on federal and state environmental regulation, FHWA guidance and policies, interagency agreements, and TDOT policies. The TEPM provides guidance for the preparation of environmental analysis and documentation for federally-funded and state-funded transportation projects. Projects that are funded in whole or in part with federal funds or have major federal actions must follow the requirements of NEPA, as well as related federal and state environmental regulations. The TEPM helps ensure that TDOT adheres to the requirements set forth in those regulations.

The Statewide PIP documents the public involvement procedures and stated public involvement principles of TDOT. The document is intended to outline public involvement considerations and procedures to be used by TDOT on all Federal aid projects. The level of public involvement for this project will follow the guidelines set forth in the Statewide PIP for a Level Three project, which includes procedures for a project that requires preparation of an EA.

The procedures set forth in TESA are aimed at establishing a coordinated planning and project development process for transportation projects in Tennessee in order to ensure significant agency and MPO participation and involvement early and throughout the project development process. This streamlined environmental process is intended to achieve the timely and efficient identification, evaluation, and resolution of environmental and regulatory issues. This Coordination Plan discusses the TESA procedures in more detail in Section 3.3.1 through Section 3.3.6.

3.0 COORDINATION PLAN

3.1 Initial Coordination

3.1.1 Initial Coordination Package

TDOT will prepare an Initial Coordination package and distribute it to federal, state, and local agencies, officials, and organizations. The package will include a transmittal letter and a project data summary. A copy of this Coordination Plan will be sent to all potential Participating Agencies. The project data summary will provide an overview of the background and history of the proposed project including the basic purpose and need for the project, potential alternatives to be considered, traffic information on specified roadways, and examples of environmental concerns that will be considered throughout the course of the EA process. The project data summary will also include a map of each of the proposed build alternative being considered as well as a general project vicinity map.

Five groups of agencies and organizations will receive initial coordination packages:

- Cooperating Agencies;
- Participating Agencies;
- Non-Participating Agencies and Organizations;
- Local Agencies, Public Officials, and Organizations; and
- Section 106 Consulting Parties.

3.1.2 Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating Agencies are those governmental agencies specifically requested by the lead agency to participate during the environmental evaluation process for the project. FHWA's NEPA regulations (23 CFR 771.111(d)) require that those federal agencies with jurisdiction by law (with permitting or land transfer authority) be invited to be Cooperating Agencies for an EA. For this project, it is anticipated that only the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District (USACE) will be asked to become a Cooperating Agency for this project. The USACE will also be invited to become a Participating Agency as defined below.

If new information reveals the need to request another agency to serve as a Cooperating Agency, TDOT will issue that agency an invitation.

3.1.3 Participating Agencies

The recently established SAFETEA-LU (Section 6002) created a new category of agencies to participate in the environmental review process for EAs. These are federal and non-federal governmental agencies that may have an interest in the project because of their jurisdictional authority, special expertise and/or statewide interest. These participating agencies are formally invited to participate in the environmental review of the project. In addition to the USACE, other federal, state, and local agencies/divisions that will be asked to be Participating Agencies for this project are shown on Table 1.

If, during the progress of the project, new information indicates that an agency not previously requested to be a Participating Agency does indeed have authority, jurisdiction, acknowledged expertise or information relevant to the project, then TDOT, in consultation with FHWA, will promptly extend an invitation to that agency to be a Participating Agency. TDOT and FHWA would consider whether this new information affects any previous decisions on the project.

3.1.4 Non-Participating Agencies and Organizations

Initial Coordination Packages will also be sent to Non-Participating agencies, public officials, and organizations. This group includes federal and state agencies and organizations with statewide interests as well as local agencies, public officials, and private organizations. A complete list of the non-participating agencies and organizations that were sent initial coordination packages is included on Table 1.

Table 1. List of Agencies, Organizations, and other Stakeholders to be Involved in the Initial Coordination for the Interstate 40 Interchange at State Route 196 in Fayette County, Tennessee.

AGENCY TYPE	NAME
Federal*	United States Department of Defense U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District
Federal	U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
Federal	Department of Housing and Urban Development Environmental Officer
Federal	U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Federal	Federal Railroad Administration Office of Economic Analysis
Federal**	Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Assessment Office
Federal	Environmental Protection Agency Office of Federal Activities
Federal	U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Surface Mining
Federal	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

AGENCY TYPE	NAME
Federal	U.S. Department of Interior U.S. Geological Survey Office of Environmental Affairs
Federal	Federal Aviation Administration Memphis Airport District Office
Federal	Federal Emergency Management Agency Regional Environmental Officer
Federal	U.S. Department of Interior U.S. Geological Survey Water Resources Division
Federal**	U.S. Department of Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Federal	U.S. Department of Interior Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Federal	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
State**	Tennessee Department of Agriculture NEPA Contact
State**	Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development NEPA Contact
State	Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development Local Planning Assistance Office
State**	Tennessee Department of Education Director of Operations
State	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Division of Air Pollution Control

AGENCY TYPE	NAME
State	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Division of Ground Water Protection
State	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Tennessee Division of Natural Heritage
State	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste Management
State	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Division of Water Pollution Control
State**	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Commissioner
State	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Division of Water Supply
State**	Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation Tennessee Historical Commission (SHPO)
State**	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency NEPA Contact
State**	Tennessee Housing and Development Agency
Local**	Memphis and Shelby County Office of Planning and Development , Memphis Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Local**	Memphis Area Rural Planning Organization (RPO)
Local	Dr. W. W. Herenton Mayor of Memphis
Local**	Mr. Rhea "Skip" Taylor Mayor of Fayette County

AGENCY TYPE	NAME
Local	Mr. Chester Cocke Mayor of Braden
Local**	Ms. Patricia Garrett Mayor of Gallaway
Local	Mr. Bill Mullins Mayor of Oakland
Local	Mr. Buck Chambers Mayor of Piperton
Local	Mr. Robert S. "Bob" Morris Mayor of Somerville
Local**	Mr. Russell Wiseman Mayor of Arlington
Local	Mr. John Pitner Fayette County Planning and Development Office
Local	Honorable Dolores R. Gresham State Representative
Local	Honorable John Shelton Wilder State Senator
Local	Ms. Julie Perrine, Executive Director Fayette County Chamber of Commerce
Local	Tennessee Trails Association
Local	Memphis Area Association of Governments
Local	State Review Board
Local	West Tennessee Historical Society
Private	Tennessee State Chapter of the Sierra Club

AGENCY TYPE	NAME
Private	Sierra Club
Private	Tennessee Conservation League
Private	World Wildlife Fund
Private	Tennessee Environmental Council
Private	The Nature Conservancy
Private	NAACP
<p><i>* Agency to be invited to become a Cooperating and Participating Agency</i></p> <p><i>** Agency to be invited to become a Participating Agency</i></p>	

3.2 Section 106 Early Coordination

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act Requires consultation with Indian tribes for actions planned on tribal lands or for actions planned on historic properties not on tribal lands where the Indian tribes attach religious and cultural significance.

As a part of the consultation requirements for Section 106, a separate coordination package will be sent to parties with interests in historical and archaeological issues. Although this list is subject to change, the following ten Native American Tribes will be invited to request status as a Section 106 consulting party:

- Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town;
- The Chickasaw Nation;
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma;
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma;
- Kialegee Tribal Town;
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation;
- Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma;
- Shawnee Tribe;
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town; and
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians.

If new information reveals the need to request another agency or tribe to serve as a consulting party, TDOT will issue that agency or tribe an invitation.

3.3 Agency Coordination

The participating agencies for this project have roles and responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- Participating in the NEPA process starting at the earliest possible time, especially with regard to the development of the purpose and need statement, range of alternatives, and methodologies;

- Identifying, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental or socioeconomic impacts. Participating agencies are also allowed to participate in the issue resolution process;
- Providing meaningful and timely input on unresolved issues; and
- Reviewing and providing comment on the preliminary draft of the EA and the preferred alternative.

The participating agencies will have defined opportunities for meaningful participation in the decision-making process for the project. Specific opportunities are provided via the agency concurrence points that have been defined for this project.

3.3.1 Tennessee Environmental Streamlining Agreement Concurrence Points

TDOT has developed and is finalizing the Tennessee Environmental Streamlining Agreement (TESA) for the Environmental and Regulatory Coordination of Major Transportation Projects. TESA establishes a single decision-making process to identify and address agency issues at four key points (referred to as concurrence points), during the planning and NEPA process. In addition to TDOT and FHWA, signatories to TESA include federal agencies and authorities, state agencies, and the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the state. Signatory agencies are not required to participate in every project; they would participate only in those specific projects that affect their area of jurisdiction, expertise, or interest.

Several of the agencies involved in TESA will be participating in the concurrence points at the following four major milestones in the environmental review process for the I-40 Interchange at SR-196 EA:

- 1) Purpose and Need and Study Area;
- 2) Project Alternatives to be Evaluated in the EA and Methodologies for Conducting Evaluation;
- 3) Adequacy of the preliminary draft EA; and
- 4) Designation of Preferred Alternative and Preliminary Mitigation.

The process for coordination associated with each of the major milestones (concurrency points) for this project is discussed below.

3.3.2 Concurrency Point 1 - Purpose and Need and Study Area

Based upon comments received during the scoping period from agencies and the public, a draft purpose and need for the project will be prepared. TDOT will prepare and forward to the participating agencies a purpose and need and study area package. The Concurrency Point 1 package will include other available information such as information regarding the project history and other background information to help in the decision making process.

The output from Concurrency Point 1 should include concurrence from the participating agencies on the purpose and need and the study area of the project. Additionally, the agencies will provide input on environmental features and resources of concern.

3.3.3 Concurrency Point 2 – Project Alternatives to be Evaluated in the EA

Concurrency Point 2 will provide information related to the project alternatives to be evaluated in the EA. Concurrency Point 2 may include the following information:

- A. Methodologies to be used and level of detail required in the analysis of each alternative;
- B. A summary of all project alternatives to be evaluated and their effectiveness in addressing the purpose and need of the project, as well as a map showing the location of the project alternatives;
- C. Qualitative results of the preliminary alternatives analysis and environmental screening (based on existing data sources and GIS inventories);
- D. Discussion of the No-Build Alternative;
- E. Narrative describing the rationale why each of the proposed alternatives is being carried into the EA, including what alternatives were considered for

inclusion but later eliminated along with the rationale why they were abandoned; and

- F. Where substantial impacts are anticipated, refined scopes and methodologies of studies, including the spatial and temporal limits of indirect and cumulative impact analyses.

3.3.4 Concurrence Point 3 – Preliminary EA Document

Based on the outputs from Concurrence Points 1 and 2, and the subsequent detailed investigation of alternatives and analysis of impacts, TDOT will prepare and forward a Preliminary EA document to the participating agencies for their review and comment.

The output of Concurrence Point 3 should include concurrence from the participating agencies on the adequacy of the Preliminary EA. The agencies will be asked to specify whether additional information is needed to fulfill other applicable environmental reviews or consultation requirements. In addition, the participating agencies will specify any additional information needed to comment adequately on the EA analysis of site-specific effects associated with the granting or approving by the agency of necessary permits, licenses, or entitlements.

Based on the output from this concurrence point, TDOT will finalize the EA for submittal to FHWA. Based on FHWA's approval of the EA for circulation, one public hearing will be conducted in accordance with NEPA requirements and requirements in the project's Public Involvement Plan.

3.3.5 Concurrence Point 4 – Preferred Alternative and Preliminary Mitigation

Based on the output of Concurrence Point 3, along with TDOT and FHWA's consideration of any issues, concerns, and/or opportunities identified during the public hearings and comment period for the EA, TDOT will prepare a Preferred Alternative and Preliminary Mitigation Package.

The output of Concurrence Point 4 should include concurrence from the participating agencies on the selection of the preferred alternative and preliminary mitigation. Based on the output from this concurrence point, TDOT will finalize their selection of a preferred alternative and prepare a final document for submittal to FHWA. Based on FHWA's approval of the final document, it will be made available for public and agency review for a minimum of 30 days. This period is the last period during which comments on the environmental evaluation process will be received from the public and agencies.

3.3.6 Agency Review Period for Concurrence Points

The participating agencies will be given 45 days from receipt of each concurrence point package to review and provide a response; a reminder will be sent to the agencies 14 days before the end of the review period. At the end of the 45-day period, TDOT will receive a concurrence, a non-concurrence, a request for a 15-day time extension, or request for cessation of formal concurrence from each agency. TDOT will assume concurrence from those agencies from whom it has not heard at the end of the 45-day period.

3.3.7 Other Opportunities for Agency Involvement

Those agencies that are not "Participating Agencies" as defined in SAFETEA-LU will also have opportunities to provide input and comments on the project as it moves forward. The database of agencies developed as part of the Initial Coordination efforts will be maintained and updated throughout the EA process. Those agencies that responded to the initial coordination/scoping and those that participated in public meetings and/or provided input/comment during the preparation of the EA will receive notification of the availability of the EA. Comments may be received at any point during the development of the EA analysis.

3.4 Strategies for Encouraging Public Involvement

3.4.1 Database of Names and Stakeholder List

TDOT's Environmental Division maintains an initial coordination list that includes the names of federal, state, and local agencies and organizations (such as regional planning agencies) that TDOT will coordinate with for this project. The list also includes private entities that have requested to be included in initial coordination. The entities on the list will be sent copies of the initial coordination package, notices of public meetings, and notice of the availability of the approved EA for review and comment. As appropriate, persons, organizations, and agencies on this list will also receive other correspondence related to the project such as newsletters and/or other coordination packages developed as part of TESA. The Environmental Division's current database will be supplemented with any new stakeholders identified that have an interest in this project. A Public Involvement Plan developed for this project contains more details on how the general public will be informed and encouraged to participate in the development of this project.

4.0 SCHEDULE

A general schedule for the completion of the primary coordination and public involvement milestones is shown below. This schedule will be revised/updated as the project moves forward and new information is revealed that may result in schedule adjustments.

- Prepare Coordination Plan and Public Involvement Plan – December 2007;
- Hold a Public Meeting for Project – December 2007;
- Prepare and Send Initial Coordination Letters and Cooperating and Participating Agency Invitation Letters – March 2008;
- Submit Concurrence Point 1 (Purpose and Need) Package – March 2008;
- Submit Responses to Agency Comments from Concurrence Point 1 - May 2008;
- Submit Concurrence Point 2 (Alternatives) Package – May 2008;

- Submit Responses to Agency Comments from Concurrence Point 2 – July 2008;
- Submit Concurrence Point 3 (Preliminary EA) Package – October 2008;
- Submit Responses to Agency Comments from Concurrence Point 3 – November 2008;
- Hold a Public Hearing for Approved EA – October 2008;
- Submit Summary and Disposition of Public Comments on EA – January 2009;
- Submit Concurrence Point 4 (Preferred Alternative and Preliminary Mitigation) - March 2009;
- Submit Responses to Agency Comments from Concurrence Point 4 – April 2009;
- Submit Draft of Final Document for Review – June 2009; and
- Release Final Document for Public Review July 2009.