

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

See INDOT Public Involvement Procedures at: <http://www.in.gov/indot/2354.htm>

I. Overview

This Public Involvement Plan has been developed for the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (“OKI”) Bright 74 Study (the “Study”). OKI views comprehensive, strategic stakeholder outreach and public involvement as essential to the success of the Study. As such, the objectives for the Study’s public involvement and outreach efforts are:

- Provide multiple opportunities for stakeholders and the public to review Study-related information and obtain updates on the progress being made to identify and evaluate the feasible transportation alternatives to improve connectivity between the Bright, Indiana area and the I-74 corridor
- Provide stakeholders and the public with multiple opportunities through which they can provide feedback to the Study Team
- Update community members who may have participated in previous planning efforts, while identifying and reaching out to new, previously untapped community members and stakeholders
- Three formal public meetings are planned during this 12-month Study. Dates and locations will be posted on OKI’s website and shared through numerous other public channels as soon as the information is available. Every public meeting will be followed by a 30-day public comment period with all information available on the website (Bright74.oki.org).

Dearborn County residents play an important role in shaping the transportation decisions that will affect their community. They rely on the transportation system to travel in the community, and in particular, Interstate 74 (I-74), to move through the state and to neighboring parts of the Cincinnati Metropolitan area for work and leisure activities. In addition to their reliance on the facility to meet transportation needs, these users have a stake in transportation decisions because they are taxpayers, stakeholders and users of the proposed transportation alternatives.

A. Study Area

The Study area is located in Harrison and Logan Townships in northeastern Dearborn County. Bright, Indiana has name recognition but is not an incorporated municipality. The topography is undulating with State Line Road running north to south in the center of the corridor following a ridge line that falls off to the east, west and north. The Whitewater River runs along the north

and east sides of the Study area separating I-74 from Bright and unincorporated areas to the south. State Line Road is the north-south roadway and commercial spine of Bright. Connections to the east and west are provided by North Dearborn and Jamison Roads. Remaining roads in the Study area are generally local roads. Nearly all arterial and collector routes are two lanes with varying pavement and shoulder widths that do not meet current American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) geometric design criteria.

Residents of the Study area can directly access I-74 via State Route 1 to the west or at the New Haven Road interchange in Harrison, Ohio to the east. Each interchange is located about 7.5 miles from the center of Bright. It takes approximately 10 to 15 minutes to travel from the intersection of State Line Road and Jamison Road to I-74 either at New Haven Road or at SR 1 near St. Leon. An existing folded diamond interchange at I-74 and US-52 is located in the middle of the Study area that can be indirectly accessed from Whites Hill Road. It takes approximately 8 to 9 minutes to travel from the intersection of State Line Road and North Dearborn Road, via Whites Hill Road, to the existing interchange of I-74 and US-52. There are no roadway projects in the Fiscal Years 2016-2019 OKI Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) currently identified in the Study area.

There are no fixed route transit services or dedicated bicycle facilities within the area. The Indiana and Ohio Railway Brookville Subdivision runs generally parallel Harrison-Brookville Road (Old 52) in the northern portion of the Study area and does not operate to Brookville at this time. INDOT has provided funds to upgrade the line in Dearborn County.

B. Study Scope

The project development began in 2015. The Study is assumed to be classified as an LPA administered INDOT “Major Project” during this phase. Study tasks will generally follow the INDOT Project Development Manual Steps 2 through Step 5 to develop preferred alternatives, but will not include the initiation of environmental field studies, resource agency coordination or NEPA documentation. It is anticipated that completion of the Study will require approximately 12 months and will be completed in late 2016. Future project development steps will incorporate the NEPA process required for specific recommended projects.

As OKI, INDOT and Dearborn County make decisions on transportation improvement projects, the agencies are required to consider:

- Input from the public,
- Input from other local governmental agencies,
- Input from resource agencies (federal and state agencies which have responsibility for environmental resources, such as water resources, historic resources, air quality and endangered species),
- The Study’s assessment of transportation needs, cost, funding availability and engineering constraints.

OKI recognizes a key component in the success of any transportation project depends upon many factors, none of which are more essential than the involvement of its community members. It also understands the importance of involving the public in information exchange when providing transportation facilities and services to best meet Dearborn County and the Bright area's transportation challenges.

Therefore, OKI supports the policy of the INDOT in their Local Public Agency's Project Development Process (PDP) to promote public involvement opportunities and information exchange activities in planning, developing, designing, construction, operations and maintenance of transportation projects. The public involvement procedures, as outlined in this plan, provide opportunities for early and continuing involvement of the public in developing transportation plans, programs, and projects and provide complete public information, timely public notice and public access to key decisions.

Public involvement is a two-way communication aimed at providing information to the public and incorporating the views, concerns and issues of the public in the transportation decision-making process. The public provides input on transportation needs, community concerns and environmental considerations.

An open line of communication between local officials, the public and the Study Team is a key component in developing a transportation plan that will best address the concerns of the community. The Study Team consists of OKI and AECOM staff. Dearborn County and INDOT Seymour District staff are close working partners to the Study Team as they serve to address past, present and future transportation improvement needs for the entire Study area. OKI will manage the overall Study relative to the scope, keeping to the established schedule and budget, resolving Study issues, implementing agency and public involvement activities and coordinating with the Study Advisory Committee and other members of the Study Team.

The public involvement process begins with the gathering of information from the local officials and community members who will be involved with the Study. The process continues by providing information to these same stakeholders and keeping them informed of the Study's progress and direction. This exchange of information is a dynamic process that continues throughout the life of the Study. Goals of the Public Involvement Plan include the following:

- Identification of potential stakeholders, such as local officials and community members impacted by the Study who have been requested to participate in the Study Advisory Committee
- Develop activities and meeting agendas that assist with gathering information from the committee members
- Foster a positive relationship with the Advisory Committee and keep them informed of the Study progress
- Adequately evaluate potential levels of controversy to address specific concerns and develop context sensitive plans

- Work together to develop a transportation solution that has broad public support
- Provide productive forums for members of the public to provide comments

This Study includes an extensive public involvement plan. It contains communication details such as how, when and where to expect to hear Study status reports and to be involved. It is made up of a variety of activities and forums to allow many opportunities for involvement.

Elements of the plan consist of:

- Project webpage providing Study information and progress updates accessed through OKI website and social media platforms (Bright74.oki.org)
- Study press releases
- Three planned Public Information Meetings
- Formation of a Study specific community Advisory Committee and five planned Advisory Committee meetings

Resource agency coordination will be limited primarily to local agencies during this Study.

Section 106 Consulting Party Coordination will not be conducted during this Study but will be conducted for specific recommended studies following completion of the Study.

C. Timeline

Following the initiation of the Study and at various key points (milestones) throughout the Study, the Study Team will make the current information related to the Study available for review and comment (see below study timeline). The Study Team members will review all comments received and will incorporate comments into the Study as appropriate.



II. Study Website

To provide the public with access to the most current Study information available, the Study Team will provide Study-related information to OKI's website (Bright74.oki.org). Information that will be available on this website includes, but is not limited to:

- Study news and updates
- Specific Study Information such as:
 - Study schedules
 - Listings of Study meetings
 - Various study-related data, documents and maps
 - Study contact information and opportunity for providing public comments and receiving Constant Contact email Study updates
- Links to other websites Including the Dearborn County, INDOT and FHWA

III. Press Releases

The Study Team will provide press releases during the Study process at key Study milestones marked by the three public information meetings. The releases will be distributed to regional media, Advisory Committee members and posted on the OKI website. The press releases will be the primary method for informing and involving a wide public audience for the three public information meetings.

IV. Direct Post Card Mailing

In order to notify members of the public that are directly associated with the Study Area, a direct post card mailing will be conducted to all property owners within the Study Area boundaries. Addresses will be attained from the Dearborn County Planning and Zoning Department. The list will be reviewed to remove duplicate addresses and owners, cemeteries, public land and other related listings to achieve an efficient and effective mailing list. The postcard will provide concise, key information on the first public involvement meeting, Study website address, OKI mailing address and contact phone number. The postcard's design will be colorful and eye-catching to distinguish the information from other mail items, so that the public will be more likely to see and read the information. The postcard will be mailed so that property owners receive it one week before the first public involvement meeting. Due to the Study's budget constraints, the mailing will be conducted this one time, early in the Study process to engage the public from the start.

V. Public Meetings

Three public information meetings are planned for the Bright 74 Study. Each of the meetings will present specific information associated with key milestones in the Study's development for public review and comment. A standard process will be followed for each public meeting; however these meetings are not considered formal public hearings for NEPA.

In cooperation with INDOT, OKI and Dearborn County are committed to providing Public Information Meetings in a format that allows public participation. Therefore, the meetings are planned to follow an open-house style meeting where members of the public are welcome to arrive at any time during the stated time span (traditionally 4-7pm) and stay as long as they desire. The same information will be made available and the same method of collecting public input will be used during the entire event. This same information and method of collecting public input will be translated into online (electronic) versions and posted to the Study website on the day of each public information meeting and will remain on the website for a 30-day public comment period. In addition, Study Team members will be present throughout each of the public information meetings to explain information and answer questions. Comments received via the website will be responded to within two business days by the OKI Project Manager or her designee.

The public meetings will be held at a place and time generally convenient for persons impacted by or interested in the proposed undertaking. The meeting location will be accessible in order to accommodate people with disabilities.

The Public Information Meetings will be advertised via a media release, website announcement, direct emails and social media a minimum of 15-days prior to the meeting. OKI has established working relationships with the three, primary media outlets serving the Study Area (Eagle 99.3 WSCH-FM, *The Beacon* and *The Dearborn County Register & Journal Press*). From this media outreach, coverage of the Study has already occurred and will continue throughout the Study's duration. Members of these media outlets have committed to publicizing public information meetings through on-air announcements, news articles and online news postings, thereby removing the need for paid advertising. In addition, the Study Team will ask for the Advisory Committee to assist in promoting the public information meetings through their websites, social media outlets and email contact lists. As members of the Advisory Committee, these public involvement activities includes INDOT and Dearborn County's websites and contact databases.

In addition, OKI's website and social media coordination will be used to encourage attendance as well. An announcement will be emailed to OKI's email contact database for the Study. This notice will specify the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting and will contain a brief description of the Study. In addition, the notice provides contact information for requesting assistance for persons with disabilities. The notice will also include the Study's website where all public meeting information and comment form/survey will be made available for 30-days starting with the date of the meeting.

A summary will be made of verbal statements and comments made at each of the public

information meetings. The summary will be accompanied by copies of all written statements from the public, both submitted at the public meetings and during the 30-day public comment period. A summary of public meeting proceedings will be included in the Study documents.

A. Public Information Meeting #1

The first Public Information Meeting will be advertised and held prior to beginning development of alternatives. This first meeting serves as a “kick-off meeting” and, as such, has two primary objectives. The first is to introduce the public to the Study and to provide information related to the Public Involvement Plan. Maps of the Study area as well as graphics of existing conditions will be available for viewing. The second objective is to collect valuable information from residents related to unique features, such as utilities, drainage concerns, historic resources etc. that may be present in the Study area and to receive comments and Study-related concerns. Members of the Study Team will be available to answer questions and to obtain public views regarding the problems that need to be addressed and the conceptual solutions that need to be considered. Receiving this information early in the Study provides the Study Team with a better understanding of the area, issues and constraints prior to beginning development of alternatives. This will lead to the potential development of a transportation improvement Study that will best meet the needs of Bright and its residents.

B. Public Information Meeting #2

The second public information meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to provide comments immediately before Study decision-making to consider conceptual solutions. The second meeting is planned to present possible alternatives to solve transportation improvement issues, discuss alternatives screening process and provide a general status update of the Study.

Representatives of the Study Team will explain the following information:

- The Study’s purpose, need and consistency with the goals and objectives of the local transportation plan
- The Study’s conceptual solutions to be evaluated in more detail
- The anticipated social, economic, environmental and other impacts of the proposed alternatives
- The availability of any appropriate Study materials
- Procedures for receiving public comments for consideration as Study develops

C. Public Information Meeting #3

At the third meeting, the Study Team will provide a review of the scope and location of the Study,

and present the recommended alternatives and a preliminary opinion of probable construction costs. Conceptual plans for the recommended alternatives will be on-hand for public review and comment. This meeting will conclude the public involvement process for this Study. Additional public involvement opportunities will be provided by project sponsors during future steps of the project development process.

Representatives of the Study Team will explain the following information:

- The Study's recommended alternatives and major design features
- The anticipated transportation, economic environmental and other impacts of the recommended alternatives
- The availability of Study materials and procedures for receiving public comments for consideration
- A summary of next steps and likely timeline for future project development and implementation of the recommended alternatives

VI. Advisory Committee Meetings

Throughout the Study, the Study Advisory Committee will meet with the Study Team to share information and review materials to be presented at the public information meetings. A total of five meetings are planned for the Study. Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public, however they are not publicly advertised. This is due to the meetings' purpose as a small working group to focus on Advisory Committee member concerns and feedback to guide the Study Team. The Study Team will prepare the agenda and necessary handouts and presentations for all meetings. Study Team members will also have numerous contacts with stakeholders throughout the Study and will answer numerous questions and address comments throughout the Study via email and by telephone.

The Advisory Committee consists of Dearborn County OKI Board Members and other key stakeholders who represent 21 diverse and well-established governmental agencies, local businesses, emergency service providers and civic-based organizations in the area. Members represent large groups of people with whom they work and correspond regularly and from whom they receive feedback. The Advisory Committee members' broad reach and representation throughout the Study area and region provides information and guidance as a working group to the Study Team.

Advisory Committee responsibilities include:

- Provide Study updates and disseminate information to community/organizational/agency members to encourage an exchange of information
- Share community/organization/agency members' questions, concerns and general feedback

- Assist with public involvement and outreach efforts, as appropriate
- Five Advisory Committee meetings are planned during this approximate 12-month Study. Members attend meetings and serve the Study in an advisory capacity without compensation.

The agencies and organizations comprising the Advisory Committee, along with their appointed members and alternate members are included as Appendix A.

VII. Media Relations

The Bright I-74 Study is providing OKI with a new opportunity to partner with the media and achieve much wider, more in-depth and consistent news coverage than any previously managed study or plan. Due to the fact that one of the alternate Advisory Committee members owns and operates *The Beacon*, a mailed and online-newspaper, OKI staff have reached out to the two other key media outlets serving the Study Area and Dearborn County. These two media sources are Eagle Country 99.3 WSCH-FM and *The Dearborn County Register & Journal Press*. *The Beacon* owner/operator was invited to serve on the Advisory Committee as an alternate due to her membership and key leadership role with the Bright Area Business Association. Due to her participation in Advisory Committee meetings, OKI will extend an invitation to representatives from both Eagle Country radio and *The Dearborn County Register & Journal Press* to attend the Advisory Committee meetings as guests. As has already been noted, Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public, however meetings are not publically advertised due to their intended purpose of focusing on concerns related to the Advisory Committee members as representatives of the larger general public.

Press releases for public information meetings will be sent to all OKI media contacts. A list of these regional media contacts has been included as Appendix B.

VIII. Resource Agency Coordination

Field Environmental Investigations are not included in the Study scope. Likewise, NEPA documentation, permitting and Federal, State or local agency coordination are not included. These tasks may be initiated on a project specific basis in future phases of project development. Future public involvement activities for specific projects implemented as a result of this Study will be scoped by project sponsors depending on the level of environmental classifications under NEPA required on project specific basis.

The Study team will develop a Red Flag Summary report for the Study area with a focus on potential corridors for roadway improvements. The Red Flag Summary will be conducted within the Study area to identify potential areas of concern. The investigation includes a review of appropriate layers within the INDOT Geographical Information System (GIS) Library, OKI data sets and will include the listing of layers identified in the INDOT Study Development Process, Appendix E. In addition, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) State Historic Architectural

and Archaeological Research Database (SHAARD) and Dearborn County information will be used to identify potential features within the Study area. The Red Flag Summary will include the following topics as well as exhibits showing the proposed conceptual solutions overlain with appropriate/available GIS layers:

- Aquatic & Terrestrial Resources
- Cemeteries
- Cultural and Historic Resources (schools, religious institutions, community centers, etc.)
- Environmental Justice communities/concentrations
- Federal Lands
- Floodplains
- Groundwater Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Land Use (existing/future)
- Sensitive Noise Receptors
- Section 4(f) Resources
- Recreational Parks
- Section 6(f) Resources
- Socioeconomic Concerns
- Streams/Surface Water
- Threatened & Endangered Species
- Underground Storage Tanks
- Water Quality
- Wetlands

Appendix A: Bright I-74 Advisory Committee Members and Alternates

Agency	Member (Alternate)	Title
Dearborn County Board of Commissioners	Kevin Lynch**	Commissioner
Dearborn County	Todd Listerman, PE*	County Engineer
Dearborn County Council	Liz Morris* (Allen Goodman)	Councilmember
Dearborn County Plan Commission	Mark McCormack* (Nicole Daily)	Director of Planning & Zoning
Dearborn County Chamber of Commerce	Eric Kranz* (Andrea Ewan)	Executive Director
Dearborn County Sheriff^	Michael Kreinhop	Sheriff
Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District	Jennifer Hughes (Mary Booker)	Stormwater Coordinator
INDOT-Seymour District	Jim Ude* (Terry Summers)	Special Projects Engineer, Technical Services
Federal Highway Administration	Michelle Allen	Planning and Environmental Specialist
Bright Area Business Association (BABA)	Greg Gronwall (Celeste Calvitto)	President
Bright Volunteer Fire Department	Kevin Glick	Fire Chief
City of Harrison	William R. Hursong	Fire Chief
City of West Harrison^	Jo Wesley (Christina Swafford)	
Farm Bureau, Inc.	Harley Uhlmansiek (Jan Uhlmansiek)	
Genesee & Wyoming Railroad	Marilyn Hyland (Charles Hunter)	
Resident-at-Large	Dale Lutz	
Resident-at-Large	Jeff Stenger	
Resident-at-Large	Randy Maxwell (John Maxwell)	
Resident-at-Large	John Stenger (John Browner)	
Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board	Cari Vuko (Kurt Kegerreis)	WorkOne Southeast
Sunman-Dearborn School District	Dr. Andrew Jackson	Superintendent
*OKI Board Member **OKI Board President/Advisory Committee Chair ^Membership confirmation pending		

Appendix B: OKI Regional Media Contact List

Below is a list of local media outlets and contacts to whom media relations efforts will be directed. Additional contact information for each person listed will be provided in a Media Relations tab that will be included in the Bright 74 Stakeholder Database. This list will be updated as needed throughout the course of the Study.

Name	Title	Phone Number	Email Address
PRINT MEDIA			
Cincinnati Business Courier			
Chris Wetterich	Staff Reporter	(513) 337-9437	cwetterich@bizjournals.com
The Beacon			www.thebrightbeaconindiana.com
Celeste Calvito	Publisher/Editor	(812) 637-0660	Brightbeacon1@comcast.net
The Cincinnati Enquirer			www.cincinnati.com
Jason Williams	Transportation and Economic Development Reporter	(513) 768-8405	Dwilliam7@cincinnati.gannett.com
The Dearborn County Register & Journal Press			
Denise Freitag Burdette	Assistant Editor/Web Site Administrator	(812) 537-0063	newsroom@registerpublications.com
BROADCAST MEDIA –TV			
WCPO/WCPO.com			
Lucy May	Digital reporter, WCPO.com	(513) 490-6084	lucy.may@wcpo.com
News Desk	WCPO – Channel 9	(513) 852-4071	newsdesk@wcpo.com
WKRC			
Dan Hurley	Reporter and Host of Newsmakers	(513) 382-9263	dhurley@cincinnatiachamber.com
News Desk	WKRC – Channel 12	(513) 579-1212	Local12@local12.com

Name	Title	Phone Number	Email Address
BROADCAST MEDIA –TV (continued)			
WLWT			
John London	Reporter	(513) 240-7055	
News Desk	WLWT – Channel 5	(513) 412-5055	newsdesk@wlwt.com
WXIX			
News Desk	WXIX – Channel 19	(513) 421-0119	desk@fox19now.com
BROADCAST MEDIA-RADIO			
Eagle 99.3 WSCH-FM			
Mike Perleberg	News/Sports Director, Operations Manager	(812) 537-0944 (513) 256-1843 cell	news@eaglecountryonline.com mike@eaglecountryonline.com
WLW – 700 AM			
Paul Mason	Producer, Scott Sloane show	(513) 828-7854	paulmason@clearchannel.com
General		(513) 421 - 6397	news@700wlw.com
WNKU – 89.7 FM			
General		(859) 572-7897	
WVXU – 91.7 FM			
Maryanne Zeleznik	News Director	(513) 352-9172	mzeleznik@cinradio.org
General		(513) 352-9170	