

8. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Throughout the study efforts were made to obtain stakeholder and public involvement. An Advisory Committee was established that included representatives from local governments, state governments, and public transportation officials.

Early on, the Advisory Committee was provided with a questionnaire that asked for the identification of the problem areas within their own communities, problem areas outside of their communities and any possible solutions that they might have to fix these problems. The attendees were also asked to supply a list of any projects within their communities that might affect the capacity along Dixie Highway. The following list provides a brief description of the issues identified in the questionnaires:

- Lack of right and left turn lanes within the project limits
- Several offset intersections within the project limits
- Close spacing of signalized intersections
- New traffic signal planned for the Wessel's Development located just north of the intersection of Dixie Highway and Sleepy Hollow Road
- Heavy Traffic areas: Buttermilk Pike, Commonwealth Avenue
- Movement of Emergency Vehicles along the corridor, especially during freeway incidents
- Proposed subdivision at Krumpelman Farm

In addition to the Advisory Committee meetings, one meeting was conducted to inform the public of the project's progress and obtain input on improvements under consideration. Copies of the displays used at the public meeting can be found in the *Dixie Highway Corridor Study: Public Involvement & Modeling Documentation*. The public meeting was held on August 9, 2004.

Approximately 25 people attended the public meeting. A survey was distributed to each person. A copy of the survey and the results are provided in the *Dixie Highway Corridor Study: Public Involvement & Modeling Documentation*. This survey asked respondents to rate the existing functionality of Dixie Highway and various improvements that are being considered. Two of the most important issues derived from this survey are that most of the individuals at the meeting consider the flow of traffic on Dixie Highway to be fair to poor, and that the attendees would strongly support the coordination of the traffic signals along Dixie Highway.

Following each meeting, the Dixie Highway Corridor Study often received press coverage in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, the *Cincinnati Post* and the *Community Recorder*. In addition, the public meeting was announced on several local news broadcasts including *WCPO*, *WKRC*, and *WLWT*. Please see Appendix B for the newspaper articles.

In addition to their participation on the Advisory Committee, representatives from most of the communities along the corridor were interviewed individually in order to discuss the project. The interview was conducted through an individual meeting or a phone call based on the community's wishes. To view the meeting minutes, see the *Dixie Highway Corridor Study: Public Involvement & Modeling Documentation*. During the meetings, the communities were asked to provide a list of problem areas throughout the study area regardless of whether the problem areas were in their jurisdiction. The communities were also asked to provide a list of any ongoing projects in their communities and any possible solutions they had for the Dixie Highway Corridor. The ongoing projects were evaluated to determine their impact on the Dixie Highway Corridor. If the project would impact the project corridor, the improvements were incorporated into the future conditions.

These meetings were very productive in determining each community's problem areas and establishing a list to evaluate during the capacity analysis and recommendations phase. The following list provides a brief discussion of the issues discussed when meeting with community representatives:

- Access Management – the lack of access management along the corridor, especially at Kyles Lane and at Kenton Lands Road, results in too many driveways and accesses along the corridor
- Signalized Intersection Spacing – due to the age of the corridor, adequate signal spacing has not been provided, resulting in signals that are very closely spaced, some as close as 100 feet
- Mall Traffic – at the Crestview Hills Mall, the traffic exiting the freeway must cross three lanes in a short distance to access the Mall.
- Freeway Operations – any incident on Interstate 71/75 affects the traffic on Dixie Highway

In order to keep stakeholders informed about the project, a project Web site was created, www.dixie-highway.com. This Web site was regularly updated to ensure that the information passed on to the public was current and correct. To obtain additional input regarding the Dixie Highway Corridor, an online questionnaire was created for the general public. This allowed information to be gained from the everyday users of the Dixie Highway Corridor. The following list provides a brief description of the issues identified from the online questionnaire:

- Red light running at the intersection of Dixie Highway and the I-71/75 SB Ramp in Covington
- Heavy Traffic during the PM Peak at the intersection of Dixie Highway and Commonwealth Avenue

Issues from the online questionnaire were reviewed during the study process to identify causes of the problems and propose solutions.

In addition to the online questionnaire, the Web site contained project information, such as count data, accident data, travel time study results, and monthly progress statements. The information

was updated quite often to ensure that the most up-to-date information was available to the public. The project team always included the Web site address with any press releases to remind the public of the site and facilitate feedback regarding improvements.

In addition, the pan-tilt-zoom camera was broadcast over the Internet. Traffic count information was also posted on the site. This allowed anyone with Internet access to view the traffic conditions along Dixie Highway. The camera also allowed the monitoring of the implemented improvements and their impact on Dixie Highway traffic.

The Web site also allowed the users to sign up for automatic ARTIMIS updates regarding the condition of the freeways. All requests were sent to ARTIMIS for inclusion in their automatic update database.

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

An important user of the Dixie Highway Corridor is the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK). As part of the study process, TANK officials were contacted to obtain input on identifying problem areas along the Dixie Highway Corridor. A questionnaire was distributed to the TANK drivers and supervisors. Survey comments were then reviewed and compiled to determine a list of problem areas. Several of the problems mentioned by TANK drivers were also discovered during other phases of the field work. The most common complaints are listed below:



- Heavy traffic at Kenton Lands Road
- Heavy traffic at Commonwealth Avenue
- Heavy traffic at Turfway Road
- Narrow lanes
- Traffic signals' service to side streets when no one is present

All of the heavy traffic areas were confirmed during the travel time studies and the existing traffic models. These intersections are key congestion points along the corridor and will be evaluated in depth during the capacity analysis phase.

The frequent false calls to side streets are a major problem along the corridor. During the signal inventory, several locations were determined to have detector failures, which result in false calls to the side streets. This problem is discussed in further detail in the Signal Inventory Section (Section 6).

Narrow lanes are a problem for most of the project area. This problem is amplified for larger vehicles, such as TANK buses. However, for most of the corridor, the roadway characteristics will prohibit widening.



In addition to TANK, the Fire, EMS and Police personnel from Northern Kentucky were contacted to identify problem areas along the Dixie Highway Corridor. A questionnaire was distributed to each agency requesting the following information:

- Total number of emergency responses
- Number of emergency responses to I-71/75
- Number of emergency responses to Dixie Highway
- Hospitals utilized for injured persons (1st and 2nd choices)
- Typical travel times to scene and hospitals
- Types of siren(s) used
- Traffic Improvements on Dixie that would assist emergency personnel

In addition, the questionnaire asked the personnel if a traffic signal preemption device which would turn the traffic signals green on Dixie Highway would be helpful. These questionnaires are provided in the *Dixie Highway Corridor Study: Public Involvement & Modeling Documentation*.

The Fire, EMS and Police personnel unanimously agreed that a traffic signal preemption system on Dixie Highway would be beneficial. The hospitals utilized by the Northern Kentucky emergency personnel are Saint Elizabeth Hospital South, Saint Elizabeth Hospital North, Saint Luke Hospital East and Saint Luke Hospital West. Based on the location of the hospitals in relation to the location of the police and fire stations, it is apparent that the emergency vehicles often utilize Dixie Highway outside of their jurisdiction. These issues were reviewed to make recommendations to improve the movement of emergency vehicles through the Dixie Highway Corridor.