

## Chapter IV

# Comments and Coordination

### A. First Tier Public Involvement Summary

The public involvement program for the First Tier Study was designed with two primary objectives in mind. The first objective was that the program should enhance public awareness and understanding of the study. The second objective was to offer citizens frequent and accessible opportunities to participate in a substantive way. The study team utilized newsletters, public meetings, a web site, a post office box address and a hotline to initiate contact with the public. The study team documented over 22,000 direct contacts with the public during the course of the First Tier Study. Additional detail about the First Tier Study public involvement process is available in the First Tier Study summary contained in **Appendix A**.

### B. Second Tier Public Involvement Plan

The second tier public involvement plan was developed jointly by the SIU 6 Study Team and the Public Involvement Consultant (PIC). Prior to drafting the plan, study team and PIC staff attended a two-day workshop on citizen participation principles and the process used to develop informed consent. These principles of citizen participation and development of informed consent became the foundation for the SIU 6 public involvement plan.

The primary goal of the SIU 6 public involvement plan was, *“To create informed consent for the reconstruction and widening of I-70 in SIU 6, including the selected Kingdom City interchange options, through simple, clear and straightforward communications with potentially affected interests and the interested public.”* The primary objective of the plan was to achieve *“Informed consent for reconstruction and widening of I-70, including the selected Kingdom City interchange option, at the conclusion of the study.”*

Included among the guiding strategies utilized by the study team in the public involvement plan were the following:

- Personalized contacts with potentially affected interests;
- A consistent and clear message that communicated project purpose, goals, null alternative and process;
- Multiple opportunities to convey and receive information;
- Responsive and responsible communication with and input from the public;
- Maximum use of existing organizations and communications channels;
- Use of the media to communicate message; and
- Involvement of all section team members – PIC, SEC, MoDOT – in the process and development of messages and techniques.

The study team and PIC chose to utilize a variety of tools and techniques for implementing the plan and achieving its goal and objective:

- **Written Materials and Mailings** – Newsletters, fact sheets and other materials were distributed by mail to media outlets and the public. Copies of newsletters and fact sheets were also available via the project Web site.
- **Intake of Public Inquiries** – The study team utilized a study e-mail address, post office box address and hotline telephone number to receive public inquiries.
- **Project Web Site** – The web site contained second tier and SIU 6 specific information.
- **Media Outreach and Coverage** – All media outlets were placed on the project mailing list and received the advisories, releases and follow up support on inquiries.
- **Public Information and Community Group Meetings** – The study team held several community events during the course of the process and met with key community groups and officials.

After the Draft Environmental Assessment is approved, the study team will conduct a public hearing at a location within the SIU 6 corridor.

## C. Public Involvement Contact

### 1. Written Materials and Mailings

#### a. Fact Sheets

A six-page fact sheet providing an overview of the Improve I-70 study was released in April 2002. The fact sheet covered a variety of topics including a history of the Improve I-70 study process and a discussion of the First Tier Study. Other topics covered in the fact sheet included:

- An explanation as to why I-70 needs to be improved, as well as what the Improve I-70 Study intends to accomplish.
- The First Tier Study Preferred Strategy and the reasoning behind selecting widening and reconstruction of I-70 as the preferred strategy. An exhibit also displayed a comparison between the preferred typical I-70 cross-section and the current cross-section.
- Frequently asked questions and answers regarding project need, schedule, alternatives and other important issues.
- Discussions regarding each of the seven Sections of Independent Utility along with a map that displayed where each section is located.
- Public contact information and a discussion regarding the need for the public to become involved in the study by attending meetings, visiting the project Web site and providing contact information.

#### b. Newsletters

The first Improve I-70 project newsletter was released in the spring of 2003. This newsletter provided the latest information about activities in each of the seven SIUs under study and provided information about the efforts to advance the project toward design and construction. Several key issues were addressed in this newsletter, including:

- Public activities calendar for each SIU;

- Access management information;
- Field resource documentation;
- Discussion regarding the types of environmental processes/documents that are being produced; and
- Detailed status reports for each SIU.

The second Improve I-70 newsletter, released in the summer of 2003, followed the same format as the first newsletter. Highlights of the second newsletter included:

- Project status report that gave an overview of the public meetings held in the Spring and what the next step in the process would be;
- Calendar of events;
- MoDOT funding issues related to making major I-70 improvements;
- Corridor improvement priorities;
- Maintenance of traffic discussion on how I-70 can be widened and reconstructed without shutting down traffic for years on end;
- A discussion on how the installation of guard cables are enhancing the safety of existing I-70; and
- Detailed status reports for each I-70 SIU that is under study.

The third Improve I-70 newsletter was released in the fall of 2003. This newsletter focused on how the NEPA process works and how it guides the overall study. It also included the ongoing features related to the project calendar of events and status reports for each of the seven project SIUs.

### **c. Land Owner Mailing**

The PIC coordinated a mailing to land owners along the I-70 Corridor, notifying them of the second tier studies and requesting property access for possible environmental research. These landowners received all subsequent mailings and notices about study events.

## **2. Public Inquiries**

Numerous letters, e-mails and phone calls were received during the Second Tier Study. The study team and Public Involvement Consultant established a project post-office box, e-mail address and a toll-free telephone number to receive public inquiries. A contact log was also established in order to track all SIU 6 related correspondence and study team responses.

The Improve I-70 hotline was the primary mechanism for receiving public inquiries, followed by electronic and written correspondence. During the SIU 6 Study, the study team received 38 calls to the hotline, 12 e-mails and seven letters. There were 15 inquiries regarding right of entry forms or issues of access to the property by study team members. Other topics of inquiry included:

- Request for open house presentation information and exhibits;
- Status of the Kingdom City interchange alternatives;
- Status of the Mineola Hill alternatives;
- General information on SIU 6;
- Support from Jefferson City for a directional interchange at Kingdom City.

### 3. Project Web Site

The Improve I-70 Web Site, located at [www.improvei70.org](http://www.improvei70.org), contains up-to-date information regarding the Improve I-70 project. Among the primary features of the Web site include:

- Overviews of the entire project, focusing on the process that led to the Improve I-70 project, what the project would entail, facts about the project and a schedule for project completion;
- Current project status, an events calendar, recent news releases and project publications;
- An issues section that explains common I-70 issues regarding interchanges, construction, trucks, funding, enhancements and noise;
- A local facts page where the viewer can find news, events, maps, graphics, documents and a schedule for each section of the study.

The Improve I-70 Web Site also provided information on how to contact representatives of the study, as well as an opportunity to sign up for the project mailing list. Documents from the First Tier Study along with links to related projects and organizations also appeared on the web site.

### 4. Media Outreach and Coverage

#### a. Media Outreach

The PIC and MoDOT Central Office staff took the lead in contacts with the media. Early in the process, the PIC produced a media kit containing project information, corridor maps, graphics, a contact list and other material. The kits were distributed to media outlets throughout the state. MoDOT Central Office and district staff were available to discuss the study process with interested media. Central Office and district staff were also responsible for preparing releases and advisories during the process as well as direct media inquiries.

#### b. Newspapers

The *Fulton Sun* closely followed the process related to Kingdom City improvements throughout the First Tier Study. That coverage continued during the Second Tier Study, including the following articles:

- ***Kingdom City Highway Coalition (KCHC) Commissions Economic Study, December 2, 2001***- The article discussed the KCHC announcement regarding the commission of an economic impact study as part of a continuing effort to preserve the I-70/U.S. 54 interchange at Kingdom City. The Community Policy Analysis Center (CPAC) at the University of Missouri-Columbia agreed to conduct the study and study results would be submitted to the KCHC and MoDOT.
- ***Kingdom City and Jefferson City Square Off on Interstate Debate, March 24, 2002*** - This article details the battle between the KCHC and the Jefferson City Chamber of Commerce over the proposal to close the existing Kingdom City interchange on I-70 and facilitate an interstate spur from I-70 south to Jefferson City. A copy of this article, written by Colin Suchland, was also in the March 24, 2003 edition of the *Jefferson City News Tribune*.
- ***Opportunity May Bypass Kingdom City Along with Interstate, March 27, 2002*** - This article discussed possible economic impacts on Kingdom City if the existing interchange is closed and moved east to provide for a high-speed system interchange. Town representatives believe the closing of the ramps and the

subsequent bypass would greatly affect the economic vitality of the Kingdom City business corridor.

- **Officials Say it's Too Soon to Answer Questions about Interstate Changes, March 29, 2002** – The article discussed questions about the proposed changes to the I-70/U.S. 54 interchange that may not be answered in the near future. At the time a proposal on file with MoDOT would have moved the existing 70/54 interchange approximately two miles east of the current location.
- **MoDOT Gathering Data on Kingdom City's I-70 Needs: Safety and Congestion Key Concerns, March 31, 2002** – This article discussed MoDOT's gathering of information about the needs of the I-70/U.S. 54 interchange at Kingdom City. MoDOT was beginning the Second Tier Study of I-70 across the state. Safety and congestion at the interchange were mentioned as MoDOT's primary concerns; projected growth was also factored into MoDOT's considerations.
- **MoDOT Says Kingdom City not to be Cutoff from I-70 in Upgrade of Intersection, April, 9, 2002** – The article detailed MoDOT's statement that the Department did not plan to close the Kingdom City interchange with I-70. MoDOT affirmed the need to upgrade the interchange and would explore a full range of possibilities for the Kingdom City interchange.
- **Kingdom City Highway Coalition Reviews Options for I-70/U.S. 54 Junction, August 13, 2002** – The article discussed a meeting of state and local officials in Kingdom City to examine possibilities for the I-70/U.S. 54 interchange. The Coalition had been working with MoDOT for several months. Several plans for improvements and alterations for the interchange were presented.
- **Highway Planning Continues in Kingdom City Despite MoDOT Slowdown September 10, 2002** – The article discussed Kingdom City improvements and the uncertain nature of highway funding in Missouri. It mentioned that the next step in the process was to select a concept for the intersection. More refined concepts were displayed by the MoDOT consultants at the meeting.
- **Coalition Reviews Alternatives for the Kingdom City Intersection, November 6, 2002** – The article discussed the meeting of KCHC members with state officials to review possible changes to the I-70/U.S. 54 interchange. Six proposals for the interchange were presented at the meeting, while evaluation of the six over the past few months yielded three concepts that seemed more advantageous based upon state and local criteria.
- **Uncertainties Cause Pause in Firefighter's Plans, November 17, 2002** – The article discussed the uncertain plans for the Kingdom City interchange and how the construction of a state fire fighter's museum had been put on hold. Several options for the interchange were being reviewed and some concepts would incorporate the land owned by the Fire Fighters Association of Missouri on which the museum would be built.
- **Kingdom City Coalition presents MoDOT with Interchange Options, December 10, 2002** – The article discussed how, after months of viewing state-generated plans for the community, the Kingdom City Highway Coalition unveiled two designs that originated from among its ranks. The first design presented, titled Option B, called for an upgrade to the current structure. The second coalition design, called Option A, proposed I-70 be split at Kingdom City. The westbound lanes would be diverted north of Old Highway 40, while the eastbound lanes would continue along the current roadbed through the village.
- **Highway Coalition Narrows Field of Options, February 26, 2003** – The article discussed the KCHC meeting where the study team previewed the four alternatives

that the study team selected from the broader list of preliminary alternatives. The study team also showed a video that demonstrated how Single Point Urban Interchanges (SPUI) operate.

- **Highway Coalition Singles Out Design for I-70 Interchange, March 27, 2003** - This article discussed why, prior to the first Kingdom City open house held April 2, 2003, the Kingdom City Highway Coalition endorsed the SPUI-on-existing alternative. The Coalition stated that the design promised the least amount of change to current businesses and opened the door to new development.
- **MoDOT Meeting Recaps Year of Progress, April 3, 2003** – The article highlighted activities at the first Kingdom City open house held April 2, 2003. The article detailed the reactions of several citizens and business owners to the interchange concepts and initial screening results as presented by the study team.
- **Firefighters Move Ahead with Museum Plans, April 29, 2003** – The article discussed that at their annual meeting, the Fire Fighters Association of Missouri voted to pursue the construction of a museum adjoining its Fire Fighters Memorial. The decision was based in large part on the highway coalition's endorsement of the SPUI-on-existing alternative. The article included reaction to the news by highway coalition members and local officials.
- **I-70 Options Down to Final Four In Kingdom City, October 7, 2003** – The article discussed the study team's presentation to the Highway Coalition regarding the four reasonable alternatives still under study. The article served as a preview to the second Kingdom City open house held later in October.
- **I-70 Open House Features Final Pair of Alternatives, October 23, 2003** – The article summarized the second Kingdom City open house held on October 22 and discussed the two remaining Kingdom City interchange alternatives. The article quoted Steve Wells, MoDOT District Engineer Roger Schwartze and members of the Kingdom City Highway Coalition.
- **Northside Businessmen Air Concerns at Kingdom City Highway Meeting, November 18, 2003** – The article summarized the KCHC meeting where the owners of several businesses located north of the existing interchange expressed their opinion on the remaining interchange alternatives for Kingdom City. Two of the business owners expressed support for Alternative B which would relocate the interchange north of the existing location and reconfigure it as a single point urban interchange. It would also require taking the businesses of said owners.
- **Kingdom City Highway Plans Narrow to Final Pair, January 1, 2004** – The article updated readers on the status of the SIU 6 Study and discussed the features of the remaining two alternatives.
- **Diamond Makes Final Cut of I-70 Interchange Options, February 10, 2004** - The article reviewed the proceedings of the February 9, 2004 meeting of the Kingdom City Highway Coalition. The article discussed the features of the recommended preferred alternative and the reaction of coalition members to the study team's plans. Coalition members were quoted voicing their support for the recommended preferred alternative.

#### c. TV/Radio Coverage

Local television and radio stations covered events during the SIU 6 Study. Columbia-Jefferson City television stations KOMU, KMIZ and KRCG covered both Kingdom City open houses as well as several Kingdom City Highway Coalition Meetings. Each station did a news segment regarding the main topics associated with the particular open house. At the April 2003 open house the stories focused on the interchange alternatives and the potential effect of a bypass on

the community. Stories related to the October 2003 open house dealt with the four remaining Kingdom City interchange alternatives.

## **5. Public Information and Community Group Meetings**

### **a. Public Notification Activities**

Prior to the public meetings in April and October, 2003, notices were printed in the Improve I-70 newsletter, which was mailed to 712 residents and businesses in SIU 6. The meetings were also announced on the Web site and in news releases sent to all local media. Postcard notices were mailed to all those on the mailing list and flyers were distributed by local stakeholders.

### **b. Public Information Meetings**

#### ***Mineola Drop-in Center – March 24, 2003***

The SIU 6 Study Team held a drop-in center on Monday, March 24, 2003, from 2 to 7 p.m., at the Graham Cave State Park Visitor Center. The study team held the drop-in center in order to discuss future improvements to I-70 in the Mineola Hill area. The drop-in center was open to the public. The study team invited citizens and organizations that had participated in the First Tier and early second tier processes, local officials, members of the Study Management Group Mineola Hill Subcommittee and other interested stakeholders. Approximately 60 people attended the drop-in center.

At the drop-in center attendees were able to review several large exhibits displaying the preliminary alternatives and known environmental and cultural resource constraints. The preliminary alternatives included options for on-existing improvements as well as off-alignment options that would involve realigning I-70 to the north of the state park. Study team members sought to gather new information regarding known cultural and environmental resources. Study team members also discussed and answered questions regarding the preliminary alternatives and gathered input on attendees issues and concerns. The issues and concerns raised by attendees pertained to potential impacts to Graham Cave State Park, the Graham farmstead and Graham Rock. Attendees were also concerned about potential impacts to residential and hunting properties associated with off-alignment alternatives that would relocate I-70 north of the state park.

#### ***Kingdom City Open House – April 2, 2003***

The SIU 6 Study Team held an open house on Wednesday, April 2nd, 2003, from 4 to 7 p.m., at North Callaway High School in Kingdom City. The study team held the open house in order to discuss future improvements to Interstate 70 between Kingdom City and Route 19. Several large exhibits displaying alternatives for mainline I-70, the Kingdom City interchange and the Mineola Hill area, along with boards displaying the issues and processes that went into developing these alternatives were located throughout the school's cafeteria. Approximately 100 members of the public attended the open house as did several representatives from local television and print media. Open house materials emphasized the preliminary alternatives and the initial screening process and included:

- Display boards – Approximately 30 boards grouped into six stations.
- Videos – Two videos were shown, one explaining single point urban interchanges, the other explaining MoDOT's access management plans for the I-70 Corridor.

- Presentation – Project Manager Steve Wells twice made a brief presentation explaining the purpose of the open house, the initial screening process, funding issues and the next steps in the study.

The study team encouraged attendees to discuss issues with available study team members and to leave their written comments on the provided comment forms. The study team received approximately 20 comment forms from open house attendees. Several of the key points or issues raised by attendees included:

- I-70 improvements needed to be made as soon as possible,
- Poor roadway conditions on I-70 and its effect on traveler safety, and
- Support for Kingdom City Interchange Alternative 3, a single point diamond interchange at the location of the existing interchange.

### ***Mineola Open House – October 20, 2003***

The SIU 6 Study Team held an open house on Monday, October 20, 2003. The meeting took place between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m., at the Mineola Community Center in Mineola, MO. Approximately 50 people attended the open house. Prior to the open house, the study team held a preview of the exhibits for interested public officials.

For the open house, the study team displayed over 30 boards grouped into several stations. There were separate stations for Kingdom City and Mineola Hill alternatives as well as for mainline improvements between the two areas. Other stations provided general information on the Improve I-70 Studies and SIU 7 improvements. A MoDOT architectural historian was also on hand for the many attendees that had questions regarding cultural resources in general as well as specific Section 106 questions.

At this open house, attendees were primarily concerned with the future alignment of I-70 through the Mineola Hill area and the potential impacts of each alternative. Study team members and attendees discussed the proposed alignments and the positive and negative aspects of each alignment. Many attendees that owned property north of the existing highway expressed their concern about potential impacts associated with alternatives that relocated the highway to the north of the state park. Several attendees requested copies of the Mineola Hill displays. For each request, the study team mailed a scaled down version of the display that focused on the improvements and the property of the person making the request. Attendees were also encouraged to provide comments. The study team received two written comments from meeting attendees, one that supported a new northern alignment for mainline I-70 through the Loutre Valley, the other in regards to coordination with Montgomery County's plan to build a new bridge on Highway N over the Loutre River.

### ***Kingdom City Open House #2 – October 22, 2003***

The SIU 6 Study Team held an open house meeting in Kingdom City on Wednesday, October 22, 2003. The meeting took place between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m., at the North Callaway High School in Kingdom City, MO. Approximately 75 people attended the open house. Prior to the open house, the study team held a preview of the exhibits for interested public officials.

For the open house, the study team displayed over 30 boards grouped into seven stations. There were separate stations for Kingdom City and Mineola Hill alternatives as well as for mainline improvements between the two areas. Other stations provided general information on the Improve I-70 Studies, SIU 5 improvements and a station where attendees could view video presentations regarding MoDOT's access management standards and the benefits of single point urban interchanges.



Attendees mainly focused on the Kingdom City interchange alternatives. Attendees continued to strongly support the alternatives that placed a single point urban interchange at the site of the existing interchange. Members of the Kingdom City Highway Coalition and other attendees voiced their concerns or support with representatives of the study team.

The study team received six written comment forms from attendees. Five of the six written comments stated support for Alternative A, the single point urban interchange located on the existing alignment. The other written comment favored Alternative B, a single point interchange relocated to the north of the existing interchange. In general, attendees expressed their support for Alternative A. The Kingdom City Highway Coalition expressed their support for Alternative A as well. Some attendees, including some Kingdom City business owners supported either of the alternatives that would relocate the interchange north of the existing location. Several attendees requested copies of the Kingdom City displays. For each request, the study team mailed a scaled down version of the display that focused on the improvements located near the property for which the person making the request was interested.

#### **c. Public Hearing**

(A detailed summary and official public hearing transcript will be prepared after the public hearing scheduled between the draft and final environmental assessment).

#### **d. Kingdom City Highway Coalition**

The Kingdom City Highway Coalition (KCHC) is a group of Kingdom City business owners, local officials and citizens interested in the I-70/U.S. 54 interchange. The goal of the KCHC was to maintain the viability of the Kingdom City business community on an improved I-70. Throughout the Second Tier Study, the KCHC was a useful source of community input and a sounding board for community issues and concerns regarding alternatives for the U.S. 54 interchange.

- ***KCHC Meeting #1, February 11, 2002*** – This was the first KCHC meeting attended by the SIU 6 Study Team. MoDOT officials attended several meetings prior to the start of the Second Tier Study. Topics of discussion included the time frame for the study process, potential interchange alternatives and traffic counts. The agenda also included a discussion about a KCHC sponsored economic impact study conducted by the University of Missouri to determine how interchange scenarios would directly and indirectly affect the Kingdom City business community.
- ***KCHC Meeting #2, March 11, 2002*** – The study team presented a timeline outlining key milestones such as the development of goals, purpose and need, alternatives development, evaluation criteria and screening of alternatives. The study team indicated that it would present two interchange alternatives at the next meeting and initiate discussion on the broader range of alternatives and the establishment of goals.
- ***KCHC Meeting #3, April 8, 2002*** – The study team provided a handout outlining the process of developing and selecting alternatives. A large aerial photograph of Kingdom City was also displayed so that KCHC members could identify where anticipated development is expected to occur. This information would assist in developing interchange alternatives as well as projected future traffic volumes. The study team also identified an access management issue with the existing South Outer Road/ U.S. 54 intersection. The KCHC also inquired about the input they would have in developing concepts. The study team responded that they would develop concepts and then work with the KCHC to address their concerns.
- ***KCHC Meeting #4, May 13, 2002*** – The study team discussed with the KCHC the upcoming steps in developing and selecting an alternative. This included traffic

- counts, the University of Missouri economic study, development of several alternatives, public involvement process and progress meetings. KCHC members again voiced concern about a bypass of Kingdom City.
- **KCHC Meeting #5, August 12, 2002** – University of Missouri professor Morgan Mundell discussed the results of his study regarding the effect of I-70 on economic conditions in Kingdom City. The study team presented the traffic count information collected in July 2002, as well as initial projections for future year traffic in 2030. The assumptions regarding known and anticipated future development in Kingdom City were discussed. Finally there was a discussion regarding the initial set of interchange alternatives. KCHC members voiced their issues and concerns regarding each alternative. Primary concerns included maintaining visibility of existing businesses and potential changes in business access. The study team agreed to consider highway coalition comments when reviewing possible modifications to the initial alternatives presented at the meeting.
  - **KCHC Meeting #6, November 4, 2002** – The study team presented a slide show reviewing study progress to date and a timeline for future steps. Key process steps reviewed in the presentation included study goals, evaluation criteria, the interchange alternatives developed to date, a preliminary evaluation matrix and potential advantages and disadvantages of the various interchange alternatives. The role that construction costs would play in prioritizing projects was also discussed. The highway coalition requested that the study team present how traffic would operate under each alternative.
  - **KCHC Meeting #7, December 9, 2002** – The study team presented traffic simulations for each of the alternatives developed to date. The main topic of conversation was a discussion of the merits of each alternative. Prior to the meeting, highway coalition members reviewed the six alternatives, provided comments and offered new alternatives for the study team to consider. The highway coalition stated that none of the six alternatives were acceptable, primarily because of proposed changes to the internal network of roads that serve local businesses. Preferences for the internal roadway network were discussed at length. The study team reminded the highway coalition that the six alternatives were designed to balance business accessibility and visibility.
  - **KCHC Meeting #8, January 27, 2003** – The study team presented three new interchange alternatives. The alternatives were developed with consideration to the previous critiques offered by the highway coalition in earlier meetings. The new alternatives included refinements to the frontage road system and the team explained how improvements would be phased over time. The issue of access management standards was discussed. MoDOT's access management standards for I-70 improvements would preclude preserving the existing intersection into the Firefighters Memorial and the existing intersection of the South Outer Road and U.S. 54. Representatives of the Fire Fighters Association of Missouri requested a time frame for phasing and construction improvements so they could report back to their members.
  - **KCHC Meeting #9, February 3, 2003** – Project Manager Steve Wells held an interim meeting with the highway coalition to address concerns regarding a bypass of the Kingdom City area and the internal workings of the frontage road system. Mr. Wells informed highway coalition members that there were no plans for a Kingdom City bypass. Highway coalition members stated that they preferred to maintain the Firefighters Memorial in its existing location and relocate the intersection of U.S. 54

and the south outer road. The coalition offered a favorable reaction to a single point interchange concept if it minimized the future need for directional ramps.

- **KCHC Meeting #10, February 24, 2003** – The study team presented the reasons for selecting four of the nine initial alternatives for further study. The coalition viewed a video showing how a single point interchange operates. The study team also provided a preview of the first Kingdom City open house which was held in April, 2003. Coalition members again expressed concern regarding changes in access to their businesses. The possibility of directional ramps was also discussed. The study team reminded the coalition that all of the access changes and proposed frontage roads were still conceptual. The study team acknowledged the concerns and reminded the coalition that issues regarding the actual location of driveway and frontage roads would be addressed once a preferred alternative entered the design process. The study team also commented that if directional ramps were included in a preferred alternative, the ramps would not have to be built immediately. They could be constructed when traffic volumes warranted them.
- **KCHC Meeting #11, August 4, 2003** – The study team presented construction staging scenarios for the two remaining on-existing interchange alternatives. The presentation included a discussion of maintenance of traffic plans for each on-existing alternative.
- **KCHC Meeting #12, October 6, 2003** – Meeting participants discussed the upcoming open house, the potential historic status of the city-owned telephone repeater station and the preliminary screening results for the remaining four interchange alternatives. The study team explained the process that had to be followed when dealing with historic or potentially historic properties and why all “reasonable and prudent” alternatives must be taken into account in an attempt to avoid taking the telephone repeater building. The study team explained the reasoning associated with eliminating alternatives that would relocate the interchange to the north of the existing location. The owner of a business located north of the interchange stated that the access management associated with on-existing properties would slowly kill his business. The study team then reviewed the necessity for access management and the potential effect on businesses.
- **KCHC Meeting #13, November 17, 2003** – The meeting opened with a discussion of the open house. The study team also discussed a recent field visit to the Houf family farm. The study team then presented the preliminary results of the cost estimates and screening process. This was followed by another discussion regarding access management and its potential effect on businesses located north of the interchange.
- **KCHC Meeting #14, February 9, 2004** – Steve Wells reviewed what the study team had been working on since the Coalition’s November 2003 meeting. The focus of the meeting was a discussion of the study team’s recommended preferred alternative and the Coalition’s reaction to the study team’s recommendation. The study team answered a variety of Coalition members’ questions regarding the concept for the recommended preferred alternative. Each Coalition member then had an opportunity to state their opinion about the recommended preferred alternative. Each of the Coalition members that spoke indicated their support for the recommended preferred alternative.

## D. Agency Coordination

Agency coordination has been integrated into the I-70 study, including both the First Tier and second tier environmental decision-making process. The First Tier EIS initiated the environmental scoping process, including the environmental scoping meeting, to identify issues and concerns that would affect the selection of the preferred strategy and final location. In addition, informal coordination has occurred through both the first and second tier with periodic meetings in which resource agency personnel attended and participated. The resource agencies played a key role in the overall decision-making process for this study.

### 1. First Tier Agency Coordination

#### a. Environmental Scoping Meeting

An environmental scoping meeting was held on February 23, 2000 at the Federal Highway Administration Division Office in Jefferson City. Special invitations, including a packet of information, were transmitted to the various resource agencies prior to the meeting. The packet of information included information about the project, the tiering process, a draft purpose and need statement and a project map. A notice of intent to perform the study and announcing the scoping process was published in the Federal Register on December 30, 1999 in advance of the meeting. The following resource agencies were invited to attend the scoping meeting:

##### *Federal Agencies*

- Federal Highway Administration
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Emergency Management Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Coast Guard

##### *State Agencies*

- Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

#### b. Study Team Progress Meetings

Periodic study team progress meetings were held during the First Tier process that resource agency personnel were invited to attend and participate. The participating agencies included: MDNR, MDC, USCOE, USFWS, USEPA and FHWA. Including the scoping meeting, there were eight team progress meetings in the First Tier Study. The dates and subject matter of those meetings follow:

- February 23, 2000 – Scoping Meeting (Study Introduction; Draft Purpose and Need; Concurrence Points; Joint Development; and Feasibility Study).
- March 15, 2000 – (Phase 1 Evaluation Matrix; Public Involvement Review; Environmental Data Collection Activities; and Traffic and Economic Studies Information).

- April 18, 2000 – (Chapter 1, Purpose and Need; Affected Environment Overview; and Public Involvement Update).
- June 21, 2000 – (Review findings of Public Involvement Efforts).
- October 25, 2000 – (MoDOT Commission Meeting and Stakeholder Coordination Review; Sections of Independent Utility; and Project Schedule).
- January 16, 2001 – (Preferred Widening Strategy; Upcoming Agency Meetings, Overton Bottoms and Mineola Hill; Methodology for Evaluation of Alternatives; and Stakeholder and Public Meetings for Columbia, Wentzville and Warrenton).
- April 17, 2001 – (Agency and Public Meetings Update; Widening Strategy Review, Evaluation of Widening Strategy; Preliminary Draft EIS).
- July 17, 2001 – (Status of Draft EIS and SIU Plan).

### c. Mineola Hill SMG Subcommittee Meeting

As part of the Agency coordination efforts implemented during the First Tier environmental review, a special subcommittee of the overall study management group was developed to identify and discuss issues related to the sensitive environmental features in the Mineola Hill area. That subcommittee was composed of representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Division of Tourism.

Mineola Hill is located along existing I-70 just north of the village of Mineola between the Williamsburg and Danville interchanges. Mineola Hill includes several environmentally sensitive areas, including the Loutre River valley, the Graham Cave State Park north of I-70, the historic Graham Farmstead south of I-70 and a substantial rock outcropping located in the I-70 median. This rock feature has been referred to historically as Graham Rock as well as Picnic Rock and Slave Rock.

The first meeting of the Mineola Hill subcommittee was held with key resource agencies at the Missouri Department of Natural Resources in Jefferson City on February 28, 2001. Resource agency and meeting participants included the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Missouri Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. Highlights of the meeting follow:

- A detailed discussion of the history in the area. U.S. 40 constructed in 1953, Interstate 70 built in 1965 and the Graham Farmstead are all considered to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the importance of Graham Cave and the Graham Cave State Park should be incorporated into the transportation improvement and enhancement options.
- Because of efforts made by the Graham family, there is currently no outdoor advertising in the Loutre River valley. This area is one of the more aesthetic sections of Interstate 70 across the state. There is a need to protect this viewscape, which could be a multi-agency joint development common goal.
- The Missouri Department of Natural Resources' priority in this area is the cave, the rock and the farmstead. The preference is to stay out of the cave/park and keep the rock in place. Even though the rock may not have legal status, it is viewed by many as a place of historic significance. There was also a concern expressed about a conceptual corridor adjacent to the north boundary of the park. This is where camping is provided within the park and the concern is with possible noise impacts. The preference expressed by the DNR was to widen the existing with careful attention given to not impacting the rock.

- The idea of using local architecture in rest areas was discussed, plus the idea of using a low frequency radio transmitter, either from the park or possibly the highway rest areas, to inform the traveling public of the features of interest within the Mineola Hill area.

**d. First Tier Study Agency Comments Related to Second Tier**

During the First Tier environmental decision-making process, several comments were received from resource agencies concerning issues that needed to be addressed in the Second Tier Studies. This section provides a summary of those comments that specifically relate to SIU 6.

- **Income and Poverty and Minority Populations** – “It would be appropriate to further delineate and describe minority and low income populations at the census block and tract level within those counties affected by this project. This information would assist in assessing adverse affects to this segment of the population and may curtail any future Environmental Justice conflicts.” (USEPA, July 13, 2000)
- **Water Quality** – “Given the potential for a significant increase in runoff and associated pollution from the project alternatives, a more comprehensive description should be given of the watersheds and streams within the affected project boundaries...EPA recommends using additional data available from EPA’s Surf Your Watershed (<http://www.epa.gov/surf3/>) and the 1998 Missouri Unified Watershed Report in this section. It may also be helpful to illustrate on maps some of the water resources potentially affected by this project, such as the Outstanding Water Resource Waters.” (USEPA, July 13, 2000)
- **Wetlands** – “It should be noted that farmed wetlands are not included in NWI data, but may still be jurisdictional wetlands and, therefore, subject to the permitting requirements of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act...further delineation of wetlands will be required as the project progresses into the next tier.” (USEPA, July 13, 2000) “The discussion on wetland impacts downplays the cumulative and secondary impacts of development. The potential for a strategic area management plan and/or mitigation banking needs to be explored.” (MDC, May 24, 2001)
- **Social & Economic Characteristics** – “Examples of additional county specific information that we recommend be provided in the Affected Environment chapter of the EIS include the following: names of primary urbanized areas and rural communities, distinguishing community characteristics, population development patterns, population densities, building densities, acreage of land in farms, total annual economic value of agricultural products and local zoning and development plans and other transportation services and facilities that exist, including both highway and rail.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
- **Parklands** – “In 1961, (Graham Cave) was recognized by the Secretary of the Interior as being of national significance. While the cave is owned and preserved by the department’s Division of State Parks, the Landmark designation will have implications on future mitigation procedures for the I-70 project. There are special requirements for protecting National Landmarks under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The requirements are outlined in the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s regulations under 36 CFR 800.11.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** – “Adherence to Section 6(f) conversion requirements will be necessary for six parklands if the identified parklands are converted to other than outdoor recreational use. Many schools have also received funding through the LWCF program. To ensure that schools have

- been identified, it is suggested a separate paragraph be prepared identifying all schools in the study area/corridor.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
- **Century Farms** – “The University of Missouri-Columbia, College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and the University Extension recognize Century Farms...while many of these may not be National Register-eligible sources, they are Missouri resources that should be acknowledged in the DEIS. Inserting summaries of available information into the report and acknowledging the need for future study are essential to give an accurate assessment of the impact of the project on the cultural environment.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
  - **Natural Areas** – “In a 1991 study of threats to state parks, aesthetic degradation, air pollution and noise were identified as moderate to low threats to Graham Cave State Park. With the increased traffic on I-70 and especially the increase in heavy truck traffic, these threats are more evident and have a greater impact on the park today. Highway noise is now ‘an existing threat causing immediate damage’.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
  - **Geology** – “Due to extreme range in geology throughout the study corridor it is critical to consider characteristics of the underlying bedrock...a search will need to be made of structures in the areas the proposed new highway may traverse...structures are important both for consideration of earthquake hazards and because solutions structures (such as sinkholes) can be concentrated along them.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
  - **Water Resources** – “In the future study of this project corridor, we would recommend that all 11-digit watersheds within the corridor be identified and water resources and uses be identified and analyzed...additionally, watersheds outside of the corridor but adjacent to or downstream from the corridor can equally be impacted...we recommend that watersheds, surface and ground waters outside of the corridor but interconnected with watersheds and surface and ground waters within the corridor be identified and analyzed...specifically, these data should include but not be limited to: maps of lakes, rivers, streams, watersheds, use data, flow data, recharge data, soil types, land use characteristics, runoff patterns and similar hydrologic function data.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
  - **Farmland** – “A high percentage of the land in the study corridor is farmland. A fairly high percent of the farmland is considered prime farmland...the farmland that ‘meets the requirements only in areas where the soil is drained or protected from flooding’ should be considered carefully in subsequent analysis of the alternate I-70 improvement strategies...our concern is that the farmland impacted by this project be carefully studied so that it is appropriately categorized in the DEIS.” (MDNR, July 17, 2000)
  - **Hazardous Waste** – The information provided in the First Tier document does not include a complete listing of hazardous waste sites. The Hazardous Waste Program (HWP) maintains a database of all registered hazardous waste sites in the state and should be reviewed prior to the analysis. (Hazardous Waste Program, June 19, 2000)
  - **Enhancements** – “The concept of scenic easements stated here with reference to the billboard issue is a matter that should be further explored in the second tier for matters such as noise quality, water quality, BMPs, wildlife habitat mitigation, etc.” (MDC, May 24, 2001)
  - **Floodplains** – “Tier 2 and future studies should examine the hydrology of all flood plains within the corridor more closely. Not only are all watersheds within the study area dynamic in terms of hydraulic condition, many FHBM’s have been shown to be

inaccurate or out-of-date. Several of the described flood plains are part of flood controlled watersheds. (MDC, May 24, 2001)

- **Construction Mitigation** – “A project of this magnitude will likely generate much construction debris. How will this be managed?...Relegating responsibility for borrow area and waste site selection to contractors does not abrogate agency responsibility for the environmental consequences of these actions.” (MDC, May 24, 2001)

## 2. Second Tier Study Agency Coordination

### a. Agency Communications

Correspondence with both Federal and State resource agencies was provided throughout the course of the second tier environmental process. A letter was sent to all agencies on September 4, 2002. The correspondence received in response to this letter has been included in **Appendix D** and includes:

**Missouri Department of Conservation** – A letter from Tom Westhoff, private land conservationist for MDC was received on September 23, 2002. Mr. Westhoff provided information on two prairie reconstruction projects and one savanna restoration project located within the SIU 6 Study Area. A second letter was received from Tom Westhoff on January 23, 2003. Mr. Westhoff provided information and a map regarding a CRP project on a property near Graham Cave State Park. The information he provided was incorporated into the GIS database and used as part of the overall evaluation process.

**University of Missouri Outreach & Extension** – A letter was received from Gary Hoette on October 1, 2002. The letter provided a detailed soils map for SIU 6 as well as a general description of the soil types and primary cropland types.

**Missouri Department of Conservation** – A letter from Gene Gardner, policy coordinator for MDC was received on October 10, 2002. Mr. Gardner provided the Heritage Database report showing the locations of sensitive species and/or communities known to exist within one mile either side of I-70 through SIU 6. Mr. Gardner also expressed several concerns related to SIU 6 that were addressed in the environmental decision-making process:

- **Vegetative Clearing** – Since SIU 6 is one of the more forested sections adjacent to I-70 in Missouri, MDC feels it is appropriate to minimize the clearing of vegetation to only what is absolutely necessary. MDC also recommends planting of native species of trees in the median to mitigate the fragmentation impacts and minimize reductions in forest cover.
- **State-Owned Properties** – Six state-owned properties exist within a two-mile study area that need to be identified in the study process. Graham Cave State Park, including the Graham Cave Glades Natural Area, and the McCredie Farm Lake are the two located in close proximity to existing I-70.
- **Small Streams and Headwater Drainages** – The crossing of the Loutre River and the Auxvasse Creek, along with their tributaries are of primary concern to MDC. The Blacknose Shiner (*Notropis heterolepis*), listed as S2 species, has been known to occur in both drainages.
- **Construction Provisions** – Several cost-effective measures for avoiding or minimizing impacts to waters of the United States were recommended to be incorporated into MoDOT’s project plans.



**Missouri Department of Natural Resources** – A letter from Jane Beetem, transportation coordinator for MDNR was received on December 26, 2002. The letter was to convey information assembled from several MDNR programs, including hazardous waste program information, water resource program information, as well as geological survey and resource assessment division information.

A letter from Doug Eiken, director of MDNR's Division of State Parks, was received on September 4, 2003. This letter requested that the EA evaluate the Mineola Hill area with sufficient width to accommodate eight lanes in the future. MDNR's concern was that the EA was only evaluating impacts involving a six-lane expansion and that the impact of eight lanes would involve substantially more negative impacts to Graham Cave State Park.

A follow-up letter was received from Jane Beetem on October 31, 2003. Ms. Beetem reiterated the concern about accommodating eight lanes in the future.

**Missouri Natural Areas Committee** – A letter from Deborah Schnack, chair of the Missouri Natural Areas Committee (MONAC), was received on June 19, 2003. Ms. Schnack was thankful for the inclusion of Tucker Prairie in the study. She added that another natural area, Graham Cave Glades Natural Area, was not specifically mentioned. A map was provided that displayed where in Graham Cave State Park this natural area was located. Ms. Schnack asked that this natural area be taken into account during the study process.

**National Park Service** – A letter from Gary Vequist, acting regional director of the National Park Service, was received on November 14, 2003. The letter expresses concern about potential effects of highway improvement on cultural resources associated with Graham Cave National Historic Landmark. The Landmark property includes not only Graham Cave, but also considerable land around the cave. The letter asks that the study limit potential adverse effects around the cave.

**State Historic Preservation Office** – A letter from Mark Miles, director and deputy state historic preservation officer, was received on February 3, 2004. The letter provides concurrence on the recommendations made relating to National Register eligibility determinations for the potentially impacted properties, bridges, Graham Rock and the Loutre River Valley.

**National Resource Conservation Service** – A letter was received from Gary Noel, area resource soil scientist on April 6, 2004 providing a formal Farmland Conversion Impact Rating (AD-106) Form for Montgomery County. A second letter was received from Keith Davis, area resource soil scientist on April 15, 2004 providing the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form for Callaway County.

#### **b. Study Management Group Progress Meetings**

The Study Management Group (SMG) assembled during the First Tier Environmental Process was continued through the second tier process. Periodic SMG progress meetings were held during the second tier process that resource agency personnel, including representatives from MDNR, MDC, USCOE, USFWS, USEPA and FHWA, were invited to attend and participate. In total, five SMG meetings were held during the second tier environmental decision-making process.

**Meeting #1 – August 22, 2002** – The first SMG meeting of the Second Tier Study was designed to provide a status on both the corridor-wide issues and the individual SIU issues. The first part of the meeting was used to discuss corridor-wide issues, including the overall I-70 program status, the proposed schedule after the failure of Proposition B, a public involvement

update, the rest area study, the median area study, the bike/pedestrian master plan, as well as reports concerning the three SMG subcommittees (Overton Bottoms, Mineola Hill and Corridor Enhancement, Mitigation and Joint Development).

The project manager for each SIU made a short presentation and answered questions from the SMG during the second part of the meeting. The SIU 6 discussion began with a brief presentation that gave an overview of the environmental issues being evaluated. The presentation discussed the specific purpose and need related to SIU 6, the known environmental constraints starting with a discussion of the two critical areas in Kingdom City and Mineola Hill, other known environmental constraints outside those two primary impact areas, as well as a brief discussion of the universe of alternatives that were being developed and evaluated.

After the presentation, Mr. Wells answered questions from the SMG. The key concerns included environmental justice implications associated with Graham Rock, traffic safety concerns through Mineola Hill, public involvement approaches to be used in the Mineola Hill area, noise pollution in the Graham Cave State Park and the future plans for the State Park.

**Meeting #2 – February 4, 2003** – The SIU 6 portion of the SMG meeting dealt with updates on the Kingdom City and Mineola Hill alternatives. SIU 6 Project Manager Steve Wells led the discussion of the highway coalition's issues and the status of the Kingdom City interchange alternatives. The coalition was concerned about changes in access for existing business and the preservation of the Missouri Firefighters Memorial. Mr. Wells noted that the study team had made it clear to the coalition that any interchange would either relocate the south outer road intersection with U.S. 54, a change in existing access, or require taking the memorial. Mr. Wells noted that Kingdom City business owners were worried that a change in access would cause Lake of the Ozark bound traffic that currently stops in Kingdom City to take their business to Jefferson City. The owners were also concerned that Jefferson City business interests would prove successful in making the I-70/U.S. 54 interchange fully directional.

Steve Wells began the discussion of Mineola Hill alternatives by explaining the rationale for eliminating the near north corridor from further consideration. The primary issue discussed was the potential need for design exceptions for on-alignment alternatives. On-alignment alternatives could require design exceptions for things such as grade, maintenance of traffic and incident management.

**Meeting #3 – May 20, 2003** – The SIU 6 Study Team provided an update on the status of Mineola Hill alternatives located in the on-existing corridor. The study team presented updates on the following activities:

- Public Involvement – The study team discussed activities associated with the first round of public events held in late March and early April. An open house was held in Kingdom City and a drop-in center was held at Graham Cave State Park.
- Mineola Hill Subcommittee – The study team discussed recent activities associated with the subcommittee, including a field visit to the park and farm that took place June 12, 2003.
- Mineola Hill Alternatives – The study team presented the results of the initial screening process and discussed the merits of the four retained Mineola alternatives.

**Meeting #4 – September 11, 2003** – During the SIU 6 portion of the meeting, the study team presented a status of the Mineola Hill alternatives. The main topics discussed included preliminary screening results of the Mineola alternatives and a discussion of cultural resource work in the Loutre Valley. The cultural resource discussion focused on the archaeological

fieldwork and historic architectural research. MoDOT cultural resource staff updated the SMG on the preliminary findings.

**Meeting #5 – April 20, 2004** - The SIU 6 portion of the meeting provided a short status update on the recommended preferred alternative in Kingdom City and Mineola Hill, as well as the guidance provided by the SHPO on the cultural resources work already completed.

### c. Mineola Hill SMG Subcommittee Meetings

The Mineola Hill Subcommittee of the SMG, initiated during the First Tier, was also incorporated into the second tier environmental decision-making process for SIU 6. Periodic meetings were held with the subcommittee during the course of the study to discuss the unique environmental issues that exist in the Mineola Hill area.

**Meeting #1 – July 30, 2002** – The first meeting of the Mineola Hill Subcommittee was held at the Graham Cave State Park on July 30, 2002 to discuss the preliminary alternative improvement strategies being developed through the Mineola Hill area. The SEC Team began the meeting by discussing the key environmental issues previously identified in the area, including the Graham farmstead, the Graham Cave State Park, the Graham Cave, Graham Rock, the Loutre River, the Baker Plantation, the Danville Female Academy, as well as the visual aesthetics and existing noise problems.

The key concerns of the Subcommittee were documented in the meeting minutes and include:

- **Graham Cave State Park** – Existing drainage through the park is a current problem that needs to be accounted for in any of the alternatives developed along the existing facility.
- **Graham Rock** – The impact of adding additional fill in and around Graham Rock should be avoided if at all possible.
- **Noise** – Exacerbating the existing noise problem in the park should be avoided.
- **Joint Use** – Potential coordination between MoDOT and the resource agencies should be pursued to provide joint use facilities, such as an interpretive center.
- **Scenic Easements** – Easements should be pursued to ensure the existing visual aesthetics are not impacted in the future.
- **Rest Area** – The location of the existing rest area should be investigated. The concern is that the rest area is used as a staging area for looters.

**Meeting #2 – December 17, 2002** – The second Mineola Hill Subcommittee meeting was held in Jefferson City on December 17, 2002. The SEC presented the preliminary screening results for the Mineola Hill area. Several alternatives were being evaluated in this area, including several alternatives along existing I-70, a Near North alternative that skirts the Graham Cave State Park to the north, a Far North alternative located to the north of the Near North alternative and a Combination alternative that used the Far North location for the westbound lanes and existing I-70 for the eastbound lanes. Based on the results of the screening criteria previously established, the recommendation was made to eliminate the Near North Alternative, the Combination Alternative and one of the alternatives along existing. The SMG Subcommittee concurred with the recommendation.

Minutes of the meeting were prepared that outlined the issues discussed at the meeting. Those issues included:

- **Environmental Justice** – Whether Graham Rock, also known as “Slave Rock”, should be considered an environmental justice issue was discussed. Some argued that impacts to the rock could be viewed as an environmental justice issue if I-70

improvements had an adverse impact on a minority group's cultural resource. Others argued that the regulations limited environmental justice concerns to actual "communities." The study team agreed to treat the rock as a "cultural resource," coordinate with appropriate organizations to assess the rock's importance and to discuss the potential impacts in the environmental document.

- **Noise Impacts** – The existing and potential noise impacts to the Graham Cave State Park were also discussed. The SEC presented 3D terrain modeling for the three alignment corridors to illustrate where each corridor lies in comparison to the park. The general conclusion was that the Near North alternative would create additional noise impacts to the campground area within the park because that alternative lies on the same general plane as the park. Similar noise problems would not be as likely with the Far North alternative because that alternative runs through the valley, which is substantially lower than the Near North Alternative.
- **Native American Issues** – FHWA identified the need to provide Native American consultation prior to other public involvement activities scheduled to occur. The GEC agreed to begin coordination early in 2003.
- **Aesthetic Easements** – The Loutre River valley currently does not have any billboard advertisements because the Graham family, which owns the majority of the land, has chosen not to erect them. The inclusion of an aesthetic easement to prevent billboards from being erected in the future was discussed.

**Meeting #3 – April 29, 2003** – The third Mineola Hill Subcommittee meeting was held to discuss the potential impacts associated with on-existing alternatives. Before the study team's presentation, the subcommittee discussed recent public involvement events, received an update on several corridor-wide studies/plans under draft by the GEC and reviewed program and schedule updates for the entire Second Tier Study.

The SIU 6 project manager then made a presentation about the four on-existing alternatives for the Mineola Hill area. The study team's presentation reviewed four on-existing alternatives—three percent grade with frontage roads, three percent grade without frontage roads, five percent grade with frontage roads and five percent grade without frontage roads. In the presentation the study team made the case that the three percent grade with frontage roads on both sides offered the worst-case scenario in terms of impact. Exhibits displayed areas of cut and fill for the slopes and where each alternative could impact Graham Cave State Park, Graham Rock and the Graham Farmstead.

After the presentation, Steve Wells answered questions from the subcommittee. Minutes of the meeting were prepared that outlined the issues discussed at the meeting. Those issues included:

- **Placement of frontage roads** – Issues included having parallel frontage on both sides of the highway, on one side or neither side. If only one frontage road was constructed subcommittee members wanted to know if it should be on the park side (north) of the highway or the farmstead side (south) and what the impacts might be. Not having a frontage road would also make maintenance of traffic more difficult during construction. The sub-committee also discussed the possibility of using old Highway 40 as part of the frontage road system.
- **Compromise roadway grade** – Subcommittee members acknowledged that a three percent grade would be ideal, but because of its associated impacts, would be difficult to construct. The study team committed to taking another look at the three and five percent grades at the critical section to see what grade would offer a best case scenario and if there was an acceptable compromise between a three percent

and five percent grade. Study team members suggested holding a field review at the state park in order to better understand where impacts would be.

**Meeting #4 – June 17, 2003** – The subcommittee met at Graham Cave State Park in order to see several areas that were flagged to show the construction limits of the possible alternatives. The study team flagged three alternatives: the three percent max grade profile with guardrail in the fill sections, three percent max grade profile without frontage road (no guardrail) and a composite profile without frontage road on the north side (with guardrail).

The subcommittee reviewed each location to determine if any of the limits associated with the alternatives were unreasonable. Two subcommittee members felt that the three percent grade profile without frontage road and no guardrail would encroach into the park too much because of the 6:1 slope. Another was concerned that the alternatives would get into the natural area that falls within the park to the east of the parking lot and pavilion. Other concerns that were mentioned included:

- Potential construction impacts such as noise and vibration if blasting is required,
- The importance of the cultural/historical sites at this location
- The visual impacts associated with moving the interstate closer to park facilities
- Potential Section 4(f) and 6(f) issues with the state park,
- The potential for exacerbating existing drainage problems,
- Considering the value of aesthetics, and
- Plans for re-vegetation and what that vegetation would be.

**Meeting #5 – July 29, 2003** – The fifth Mineola Hill Subcommittee meeting was held to discuss the study process and alternatives for SIU 6. There was also a discussion regarding issues guiding the selection of a preferred alternative for the Mineola Hill area, including vertical grade, maintenance of traffic and area of impact. Comments of note during the discussion included:

- The Subcommittee indicated that the impacts to the state park associated with 6:1 slopes were unacceptable, preferring instead to use a 2:1 slopes with guard rail.
- FHWA representatives asked the study team to evaluate using a combination grade between three and five percent for on-existing alternatives.
- The subcommittee recommended including only one parallel frontage located south of any on-existing alternative and also possibly improving and using old U.S. 40.
- A discussion of potential impacts associated with on-existing alternatives centered on noise, aesthetics and Section 4(f)/6(f) issues.

The subcommittee also discussed possible impacts associated with the Far-North alternatives. The study team acknowledged that there would likely be archaeological sites uncovered and would have to be compared with impacts to Graham Cave.

**Meeting #6 – December 19, 2003** – The sixth Mineola Hill Subcommittee meeting was held to discuss the status of the Mineola Hill alternatives. The study team presented two “final” alternatives designed to avoid taking Section 4(f) property. One was a variation of a previously presented on-existing alternative, the other followed the Far North corridor. The improved existing alternative would not include frontage roads adjacent to the facility. This alternative would also include the construction of substantial retaining walls that allow for avoidance of the Section 4(f) properties. Some design exceptions could potentially be required for the grades. The Far North alternative would include a frontage road adjacent to the westbound lanes and the southern frontage would utilize the existing I-70 roadbed. The standard typical section would be applied to the Far North alternative. Issues raised during the meeting included:

- FHWA expressed reservation over the need for design exceptions for the on-existing alternative. Likewise, Corps of Engineers representatives were concerned with floodplain impacts associated with using the typical section. The study team suggested holding a separate meeting with Corps and FHWA officials to discuss their concerns.
- The subcommittee discussed potential impacts to the Section 4(f) properties caused by vibrations associated with blasting during construction. The GEC had addressed this by asking the firm Vibratex to conduct a preliminary analysis. Vibratex concluded that construction could take place with proper mitigation and blasting techniques. The study team requested that subcommittee members have their respective staff review the conclusions.
- Graham Rock and its cultural/historic relevance was discussed in detail. MoDOT cultural resource staff noted that Graham Rock failed to meet the criteria for a Traditional Cultural Place. It was decided that the draft cultural resources report would be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), in order to receive a determination on the status of Graham Rock.

**Meeting #7 – April 20, 2004** – The Mineola Hill Subcommittee met for the seventh time in Jefferson City to present the findings related to the final engineering evaluation, the direct and constructive use Section 4(f) impacts and to discuss the recommended preferred alternative through Mineola Hill.

- **Engineering Issues** – Several outstanding issues were left unresolved at the previous subcommittee meeting related to grade, side slopes and right of way requirements. The SIU 6 Study Team presented the final recommended improvement strategy which included the construction of three lanes in the westbound direction and four lanes in the eastbound direction (with the extra lane serving as a truck climbing lane). The recommended grade was a maximum of four percent between the Loutre River and Graham Rock, with a maximum three percent grade between the rock and the Danville Interchange. The side slopes would be a maximum 2:1 with the construction of guard rail as appropriate.
- **Section 4(f) Impacts** – It was determined that, with the construction of a series of retaining walls, that the recommended preferred alternative could be constructed without directly impacting property in either the Graham Farmstead or the Graham Cave State Park. The issue of Constructive Use Section 4(f) was also discussed from the perspective of noise and vibration impacts and determined to also not be an impact of the recommended preferred solution.
- **Recommended Preferred Alternative** – An evaluation matrix identifying all the various impacts of the finalist alternatives was distributed and discussed in detail. The recommended preferred alternative was presented and discussed. The general consensus among the participants was that the group would prefer an alternative away from the farmstead and park, but they understand the constraints that were in place and were in general agreement with the final recommendation.