

Public Involvement Process

Public involvement in the study began in Phase I and continued throughout Phase II. It was an important part of the process and provided significant guidance for the BAC, the BHJ staff and the Consultant Team. The majority of public input into the process was generated through frequent meetings with the BAC, two public information meetings, and an interactive Web site hosted by BHJ.

Bridge Advisory Committee (BAC)

The Consultant Team continued to meet with the BAC on a regular basis to discuss key issues related to the study. During Phase II of the Study the BAC was responsible for evaluating the work of the Consultant Team and making a final recommendation to the BHJ Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). A total of eight BAC meetings were held during Phase II of the Study. Meetings were held almost monthly and were at various locations throughout the study area. The meetings were generally well attended by BAC members or their alternate delegates. All meetings included representation from BHJ, WVDOT, ODOT, and the Consultant Team. The following table summarizes the key activities at each of the meetings.

BHJ took the lead in documenting the results of each of the BAC meetings and the Public Workshops. Copies of the meeting minutes were made available to BAC members as well as the general public and were posted on the project Web site. A complete set of minutes for the BAC meetings is in a separate document. The BHJ staff also prepared a media plan for newspaper and TV and coordinated area-wide public service announcements.

Summary of Phase II BAC Meetings

Meeting Number	Date	Location	Purpose of Meeting	Action
1	2/6/02	Holiday Inn – Steubenville, OH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meeting after Phase I Update of Phase II Scope of Work Review of role of BAC in study process Consultant team approach to Phase II Review of Evaluation Criteria 	Solicitation of comments on evaluation criteria
2	3/13/02	Brooke County Library – Wellsburg, WV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explanation of baseline Scenario Final review and discussion of evaluation criteria Presentation of draft baseline Scenario traffic counts Discussion of comparative ranking approach 	Revision and adoption of final evaluation criteria
3	4/10/02	Millsop Community Center – Weirton, WV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of comparative analysis methodology Presentation of alternative bridge systems to be analyzed Presentation of traffic operations analysis of bridges and roadways 	Approval of comparative analysis methodology

Summary of Phase II BAC Meetings (Continued)

Meeting Number	Date	Location	Purpose of Meeting	Action
4	7/9/03	Brooke County Library – Wellsburg, WV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on study process • Review of matrix and comparison of bridge Scenarios • Recommendation of preferred northern and southern alternatives 	Review of Scenarios and unanimous vote to confirm consultant recommendations
5	9/3/02	Brooke County Library – Wellsburg, WV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of northern alternatives and matrix review 	Selection of preferred northern alternative (Option 5)
6	10/22/02	Millsop Center – Weirton, WV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of combined bridge Scenarios and review of matrix evaluation 	Approval of public information meeting on November 13, 2002
7	1/15/03	Holiday Inn – Steubenville, OH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of preliminary recommendations and conclusions • Discussion of study review schedule 	Clarification and comments on recommendations
8	3/12/03	Fire Hall – Wellsburg, OH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification and final discussion of recommendations 	Vote to adopt consultant recommendations; move to send letter to ODOT and WVDOT requesting commitment to extend life of Market Street and increase maintenance of Fort Steuben

Newspaper and TV media covered each BAC meeting. Lengthy articles appeared in the newspaper and results were given on evening TV news programs.

Public Workshops

Two public information meetings were held at key stages in the Phase II Study process. The meetings were designed to solicit public input into the study process and to gain feedback from the community about the study methods and final recommendations.

The first public meeting was held on November 13, 2002 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Millsop Community Center in Weirton, WV. The first meeting was to present the study evaluation criteria and the alternatives to be analyzed. Approximately 51 members from the community attended the meeting.

The meeting was designed as an open house session where the public could stop by and speak to project representatives and obtain handouts and comment sheets in an informal setting. The Consultant Team supplied a newsletter-style handout for the meeting that contained information about the purpose of the study as well as the various Scenarios that were being considered in the study. A map of the study area showing all of the proposed Scenarios was also provided.

Attendees were asked to complete comment sheets to address the following issues regarding the initial steps of the Phase II Study:

- The Market Street and Fort Steuben Bridge are obsolete. When replaced, should they be replaced in their existing locations?
- If there was only enough funding available to construct one new bridge where would you most like to see it located?
- When traveling across the river in the region (i.e., Weirton, Steubenville, Follansbee, and Wellsburg) do you have trouble finding direct routes to you destinations? If so, where?

Citizens were also given the opportunity to provide any additional questions or comments on their forms.

Approximately 115 completed comment sheets were received by the Consultant Team. According to these responses the majority of citizens preferred not to see the northern bridges replaced in their existing locations and would most like to see a new southern bridge constructed. A complete summary of the handouts, comment sheets, and copies of the received comments are included in a separate document.

The second public information meeting was held on February 5, 2003 also at the Millsop Center in Weirton. The focus of the second public information workshop was to present the study findings and recommendations to the public for review and comment. The workshop was held open-house style and was lead by representatives from BHJ and the Consultant Team. Maps displaying the preferred alternatives were on display and comment sheets were provided to attendees.

Project Web Site

BHJ and the Consultant Team maintained a project website (www.bhjbridge.org), which acted as a repository for information compiled during the study process. Copies of maps and the study matrix were available for viewing and downloading on the site. The website also displayed meeting minutes and handouts. The site was used as a tool for the BAC and the general public to obtain project updates and gain access to study materials. The interactive web site also had a comment function that allowed people to submit questions or concerns about the project.