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# MEETING MINUTES

**Project:** Hazard to Harlan Scoping Study, Item No. 11-137.00

**Purpose:** **Project Team Meeting #1**, Project Kick-off

**Place:** KYTC, District-10 Conference Room, Jackson

**Meeting Date:** June 10, 2003, 10:00 a.m.

**Prepared By:** Tom Springer

**In Attendance:**

Bruce Siria	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Steve Ross	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
George Best	KYTC, Central Office Division of Highway Design
Christian Wallover	KYTC, Central Office Division of Materials
Charles T. Allen	KYTC, District-10 Pre-Construction Branch Manager
Jason Blackburn	KYTC, District-10 Permits
William Madden	KYTC, District-10 Planning Branch Manager
Bob Dungan	KYTC, District-10 Traffic Branch
Jeff Allen	KYTC, District-10 Environmental Coordinator
Corbett Caudill	KYTC, District-10 Design
Don Breeding	KYTC, District-10 Chief District Engineer
Greene Keith	KYTC, District-11 Planning Branch Manager
Keith Damron	KYTC, District-12 Planning Branch Manager
Clay McKnight	CVADD Transportation Planner
Scottie K. Cornett	KRADD Transportation Planner
David Smith	Qk4 Vice President
Darryl Renfrow	Qk4 Transportation Engineer
Tom Springer	Qk4 Transportation Planner

Following introductions, Mr. Siria provided a brief project history, noting that a citizens group has advocated this project for several years, and that the Cabinet is implementing several other projects in the area.

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## Study Area

The study area is approximately 550 square miles in southeastern Kentucky. It crosses three KYTC Districts (10, 11, and 12), two Area Development Districts (Cumberland Valley and Kentucky River), and five counties (Harlan, Leslie, Perry, Knott, and Letcher). The boundaries of the study area are generally as follows:

- South – US 119, between Harlan and the Letcher County line
- West – US 421, between Harlan and the Daniel Boone Parkway
- North – the Daniel Boone Parkway, Hazard, and KY 15
- East – a cross-county line between Carr Creek State Park and the Harlan/Letcher county line

Mr. Smith facilitated the meeting via a PowerPoint presentation that generated open discussion of the following items.

## Previous Studies

Past highway corridor or scoping studies that have been completed in the project area were noted to be helpful in both gathering existing conditions and understanding transportation issues. Past studies identified include:

- US 421 Harlan to Hyden, 1995
- KY 15 Jeff to Whitesburg, 1996
- Grapevine to Jeff, 1996
- US 119 (Letcher County) Safety Study, 2001
- Hyden Bypass Intermediate Planning Study , 2001

## Scope of Work

Mr. Smith went through the major element of the Scope of Work, which were included in the handout, for the planning project. Additionally, Mr. Siria distributed an outline of the major elements of the Scope of Work. The major elements in the Scope of Works provided by both Mr. Smith and Mr. Siria were:

1. Identify Project Information/Assess Existing Conditions
2. Public Involvement Plan/Activities
3. Development and Analysis of Alternatives
4. Project Reporting

The only difference between the two handouts was an element entitled “Project Management” in the document that Mr. Smith distributed, but not in the outline Mr. Siria distributed.

Mr. Smith noted the Environmental Overview would consist only of a literature review, and no fieldwork would be conducted.

## Public Involvement and Schedule

Mr. Smith reviewed the Public Involvement Plan for the project and presented the project schedule, both of which are summarized as follows:

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## Public Involvement:

- Project Team Meetings (4)
- Local Officials Meetings (2)
- Public Meetings (2 at 3 Locations)
- Resource Agency Coordination (2)
- Website

## Project Schedule:

- Environmental Overview Summer 2003
- Present Preliminary Alternatives Fall 2003
- Present Feasible Alternatives Winter 2003
- Draft Report February 2004
- Final Report May 2004

## Existing Conditions

Available data on 11 state or US highways in the study area, most of which crossed one or more county lines, were presented in three tables in a 10-page handout. The tables were:

Table 1: Existing Highway Systems – tabulated mileposts, major intersecting routes, state system, national truck network, national highway system, functional classification, and truck weight class

Table 2: Geometric Characteristics of Existing Highways – tabulated length, number of lanes, lane width, shoulder width, percent passing sight distance, speed limit, roadway type, terrain type pavement type, existing (2002) and projected (2030) ADT, existing and projected LOS, and the adequacy rating. Some of the noteworthy conclusions from Table 2 are as follows:

- For both US 119 and US 421, traffic is expected to increase approximately 140 percent between 2002 and 2030. At the most congested areas of these two roads, average daily traffic volumes ranged from 12,800 to 27,400, which are projected to increase to 30,900 to 53,200, respectively.
- Of the 67 miles of US 119 in the study area, approximately 75 percent (50 miles) currently operates at a LOS of C, most of which is expected to decrease to LOS D/E by 2030.
- Of the 62 miles of US 421 in the study area, approximately 74 percent (46 miles) operates at a LOS of C, most of which is expected to operate at a LOS of C/D by 2030.

Table 3: Crash Analysis – tabulated the number of fatal, injury, and property damage only crashes; and the rate and critical rate factor for each type of crash. Some of the noteworthy conclusions from Table 3 are as follows:

- Each of the 11 state or federal highways had at least one section with a critical rate factor greater than 1.0 for injury (verses fatal) crashes.
- Some of the areas with the highest critical rates were as follows:
  - US 119, Letcher County, between MP 0 and 13.0, and 14.4 and 17.6
  - KY 15, Letcher County, between MP 1.8 and 2.3, and 7.6 and 9.2
  - All 25 miles of KY 15 in Perry County had a critical rate factor of greater than 1.0. In total, over the five years from 1997 through 2001, there were 12 fatality crashes, 902 injury

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crashes, and 621 property damage only crashes. This road had notably higher numbers and rates for crashes of the other 10 roads studied.

Specific land use and environmental considerations noted during the meeting include:

- The Pine Mountain Linear Park. A point of contact is Mr. Shad Baker.
- Lily Cornett Woods
- Blanton Forest
- Pine Mountain Settlement School
- Frontier Nursing Center
- Kingdom Come State Park
- Carr Fork Reservoir

## **Issues, Problems/Needs**

Mr. Springer led the group in an exercise to identify project and planning issues, problems, and needs via post-it notes that were collected and organized. At the end of the meeting he presented the major categories identified, and noted that these categories and comments would be used to craft the first set of Goals and Objectives for the plan. In summary, the major issues were divided into Opportunities and Major Considerations:

- Issues:
  - Safety Deficiencies of the Area's Road Network
  - Connectivity and Geometric Deficiencies of the Area's Road Network.
  - Current Area Roadway Network Constricts Economic Development Opportunities
- Major Considerations:
  - Construction Costs
  - Environmental Issues
  - Topography/Geology
  - Other Highway Projects
  - Public Opinion

## **Development of Alternatives**

**Existing and Committed Projects:** Projects in the Six-Year Plan should be considered committed (i.e., KY 7, Jeff to Viper; and US 119, Partridge to Oven Fork). In addition, the US 119 Pine Mountain Tunnel shall be considered a committed project.

### **Proposed Spot Improvements:**

- MP 52 to 53 on Daniel Boone Parkway
- Interchange at MP 56 on Daniel Boone Parkway

**Bicycle/Pedestrian:** Mr. Siria noted we should assume the typical section will accommodate bicycle facilities for cost estimation purposes. However, this planning study will not make a final determination of the cross-section of any recommended alternative. Additionally, the Division of Multimodal Programs will be contacted to identify existing bicycle routes in the study area.

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## Proposed Improvements to Existing Highways:

- US 421, north of Harlan. Some design has been completed for this project. District-11 will provide information.
- KY 15, around Hazard (MP 13 to 16). Some design has been completed for this project. District-10 will provide information.
- US 421, Hyden Bypass, Some design has been completed for this project. The Division of Highway Design will provide information.

## Data Collection

KYTC will provide construction, utility, and right-of-way cost information for the most recent projects available. Detailed information on real estate in the project corridor will be provided for a short-list of alternatives.

## Agency Coordination

Mr. Siria noted the Division of Planning coordinates with some 80 agencies when planning a project to receive their input and concerns. In addition to these agencies, the following will also be contacted for the Hazard to Harlan Scoping Study:

- Appalachian Regional Healthcare (ARH)
- Pine Mountain Settlement School
- Hazard Community College

## Next Steps

Following this Project Team Meeting, meetings with local officials will be held in both Hazard (for officials in Perry and Leslie Counties) and Harlan on June 26, 2003. Public meetings are tentatively scheduled for August 12 in Hazard, August 14 in Hyden, and August 26 in Harlan.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:30 pm.

**END OF MINUTES**

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File Name: Docs\Minutes\PTM 1, 6-24-03.doc



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## MEETING MINUTES

**Project:** Hazard to Harlan Alternatives Study, Item No. 11-137.00

**Purpose:** **Project Team Meeting #2**, Presentation of Preliminary Alternatives

**Place:** KYTC, District-10 Conference Room, Jackson

**Meeting Date:** November 18, 2003, 1:00 p.m.

**Prepared By:** Tom Springer

**In Attendance:**

Bruce S. Siria	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Steve Ross	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Michael Miller	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Charles T. Allen	KYTC, District-10 Pre-Construction Branch Manager
Mark Wireman	KYTC, District-10 Traffic/Permits
William Madden	KYTC, District-10 Planning Branch Manager
Bob Dungan	KYTC, District-10 Traffic Branch
Jeff Allen	KYTC, District-10 Environmental Coordinator
Ron Eastes	KYTC, District-10 Administrative Section Supervisor
Sandy Rudder	KYTC, District-11 Public Information Officer
Dean Croft	KYTC, District-11 Environmental Coordinator
Quentin Smith	KYTC, District-11 Design
Clay McKnight	CVADD Transportation Planner
Scottie K. Cornett	KRADD Transportation Planner
David Smith	Qk4 Vice President
Tom Springer	Qk4 Transportation Planner

Following introductions, Mr. Siria noted the objective of this meeting was to seek input and guidance for the next round of public meetings, which will be held in December. David Smith then presented the PowerPoint presentation, a hard copy of which was included in the handout. Following are the main topics presented, and where noted, comments received during the meeting.

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November 18, 2003, Project Team Meeting #2

## Project Status

Tasks completed include the collection of existing conditions, and development and analysis of an initial broad-range set of alternatives. Major tasks remaining to be conducted include one more set of public meetings, refining alternatives, making recommendations, and developing the report.

## Local Officials Meetings and Coordination

On June 26, 2003, two local officials meetings were held—one in Hazard in the a.m., and one in Harlan in the p.m. Key issues identified at the first meeting included safety, connectivity, and lack of economic development opportunities. Key issues identified at the afternoon meeting included use of the US 421 corridor, joint planning to help ensure connectivity with the future I-66, linear park along Pine Mountain, Pine Mountain Regional Industrial Park located in Bell County (it was mistakenly identified as being in Harlan County in the presentation), and tourism and safety.

Coordination with local officials generated comments from the Harlan County Board of Education and the Mayor of Hazard. The BOE stated that US 421 is their most significant transportation problem and that improvements to it is their top transportation priority. The Mayor noted support for any improvements to the area's road network.

## Public Workshops

Three public workshops were held in August—one each in Hazard, Hyden, and Harlan. Forty-three written comments were received. The top priorities identified were to improved safety, serve the highest volumes of traffic, minimized relocations, enhance economic and tourism opportunities, and implement reconstruction quickly. Regarding alternatives, almost all responses preferred use of the US 421 corridor—few desired a new cross-country corridor.

Mr. Siria noted that in general, the comments received at Hazard came from the local leaders and were not necessarily corridor specific; rather, they were more supportive of improvements to the larger road network, especially for medical related travel. In Hyden, the comments received, in general, were to implement a north-south alternative that provides access to and from Hyden. In Harlan, the general comments received were to reconstruct US 421 north over Pine Mountain and then continuing to the Hal Rogers Parkway.

## Project Goals and Planning Considerations

The following goals and planning considerations were presented, along with a request for comments and changes. The only comments received were supportive, no changes or modifications were recommended.

### Project Goals (Draft)

- Improve safety by providing a roadway that meets current design standards
- Improve travel time between major population centers
- Accommodate:
  - Existing and future traffic demands
  - Large truck traffic
  - Tourism traffic

### Major Planning Considerations (Draft)

- Identify options that:

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- Are compatible with the area's topography and geology
- Are considerate of costs
- Minimize impacts to the human and natural environment
- Can be constructed in usable and independent sections
- Server rather than bypass existing communities
- Are in concert with public opinion

## Environmental Overview

Following are the key issues of the elements of the Environmental Overview that were presented:

- Air quality is not expected to be an issue of concern, and this planning project has been included in the STIP as a "various planning project."
- Water quality issues include the Middle Fork of the Kentucky River, which parallels the US 421 corridor.
- Important terrestrial resource habitat areas are located along the Cumberland River network, Pine Mountain and Black Mountain.
- Special designated lands include: Daniel Boone National Forest, Kentenia State Forest, Pine Mountain Settlement School, Buckhorn Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Carr Creek WMA, Redbird WMA, Black Mountain Conservation Easement, Blanton Forest State Nature Preserve (SNP), Hi Lewis Pine Barrens NP, James E. Bickford SNP (at Pine Mountain Settlement School), Lilley Cornett Woods NNL, and Kingdom Come State Park.

Mr. Siria noted the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission has acquired more land and expanded the Blanton Forest SNP east, toward and across US 421. However, through further coordination it was noted that the KSNP identified the area east of US 421 as a potential zone in which a future reconstruction of that roadway would have the least impacts to the NP. Further coordinated with the agency will be made to get a better understanding of the KSNP's plans and the impacts of any road construction on their properties.

- Wetlands are few in the corridor
- Threatened and Endangered Species include the backside dace, gray bat, and Indiana bat.
- Historical resources include three districts listed on the National Register: Cumberland Central Business District, Harlan Commercial District, and Pine Mountain Settlement School District; eight sites listed on the NR, located throughout the study area; and seven previously identified "NR-potential" sites, also located throughout the study area.
- Archaeological resources include two known sites in Letcher County. Areas of high probability for archaeology sites include slopes less than 11 percent, greater than 50 percent, floodplains, cemeteries, and areas along roads.
- Hazardous materials are scattered throughout the study area and include USTs/ASTs, asbestos-containing building materials, waste stockpiling, illegal dumping, orphan landfills, and state superfund sites.



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- The Environmental Justice report identified no concentrations of minorities; low-income individual located through the corridor, but with some concentrations in select Block Groups; and high concentrations of elderly located through the study area and in select Block Groups. With careful planning, disproportionate impacts can be avoided.

## Geotechnical Overview

A geotechnical overview was provided by the KYTC Division of Materials and stated that a future crossing of Pine Mountain should be located at the existing US 421 Pine Mountain crossings. And, north of Pine Mountain, use of the existing strip-mined areas would require less cut and fill material and other corridors.

## Preliminary Alternatives

Thirteen build alternative corridors have been identified and analyzed (1, 1a, 2, 2a, 3, 3a, 3b, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 8a). Maps showing the locations of these alignments, and a matrix comparing each to the Project Goals and Planning Considerations were presented in the handout and were the focus of the majority of the meeting. During the discussion of the preliminary alternatives, the key issues noted are as follows:

- Projected savings in travel time for Alternatives 8 and 8a (17.1 and 18.6 minutes, respectively) are considerably less than the travel time savings of the other alternatives.
- The projected Average Daily Traffic on Alternatives 6 and 7 (1000 vehicles per day, each) is considerably less than for the other alternatives. However, these two alternatives provide the best reduction in travel time between Harlan and Hazard (31.2 and 39.0 minutes, respectively).
- None of the alternatives, except 2 and 2a (which involve a total reconstruction of US 421 for the entire corridor) reduce residual traffic on US 421 by more and 42 percent. This indicates that approximately 60 percent of the traffic on US 421 is local and would not use an alternative that is east or west of US 421.
- Alternatives 2 and 2a have the highest construction costs (\$412.2 and \$409.5 million, respectively). This is contributed to the higher number of structures required, higher maintenance of traffic costs, more access road connections, and that a four-lane section was considered for the northern portion of the corridor. Qk4 was asked to revise these cost estimates to include a two-lane road only, which is what was prepared for each of the other alternatives.
- In the south Alternatives 1 and 1a traverse through a main portion of the Blanton State Nature Preserve. This may be a Section 4(f) issue.
- Each of the alternatives except 2 and 2a would be limited in the number of independent and usable sections into which it could be subdivided. This is especially true for those that traverse cross-country (Alternatives 3a, 4, 5, 6, and 7). This is a major concern with selecting an alternative, especially regarding the available of funding.

During the discussion each participant was asked to select his or her top five alignments options, in order of preference. The results are illustrated below.

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Ranking	Alternative													
	1	1a	2	2a	3	3a	3b	4	5	6	7	8	8a	No-Build
1			5	2	1			1	1					
2			2	4	1	1		1		1				
3	5				3				1	1				
4	1	3			1	2		1			1			1
5		2	1		2		2	1	1					
Total Votes	6	5	8	6	8	3	2	4	3	2	1	0	0	1
Weighted Score 1=1.0 2=.8 3=.6 4=.4 5=.2	3.4 (#4)	1.6	6.8 (#1)	5.2 (#2)	4.4 (#3)	1.6	0.4	2.4 (#5)	1.8	1.4	0.4	0	0	0.4

During the conversation the following changes to the matrix were requested: 1) in addition to the length of the alternative, add the total length between Harlan and Hazard that would result for each alternative (i.e., include the distance of the Hal Rogers Parkway, KY 118, and/or US 119); 2) add the total cubic yards of materials required for each alternative; and 3) for items 3.2 and 3.3 clarify which “corridor” the residual traffic would be on (i.e., US 421 or the eastern north-south corridor).

Attached to these minutes is a revised matrix with the above changes incorporated and highlighted in yellow.

## Next Steps

The second round of public meetings is scheduled for December. The dates presented for the specific locations were incorrect in the PowerPoint presentation and the handout, the correct dates area as follows:

- Harlan – December 11, 2003
- Hazard – December 15, 2003
- Hyden – December 16, 2003

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 pm.

**END OF MINUTES**

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# MEETING MINUTES

**Project:** Harlan to Hazard Scoping Study, Item No. 11-137.00

**Purpose:** **Elected Officials Meeting #1**, Project Kick-off

**Place:** Kentucky River Area Development District Offices, **Hazard**

**Meeting Date:** June 26, 2003, 10:30 a.m.

**Prepared By:** Tom Springer

**In Attendance:**

Representative Brandon D. Smith	Perry and Harlan Counties
Judge/Executive Denny R. Noble	Perry County
Rhonda Brashear	Leslie County
Scott Smith	Leslie County
W. Ray Wilson	Leslie County
Scottie K. Cornett	KRADD Transportation Planner
Bruce Siria	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Steve Ross	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Robert Brown	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
William Madden	KYTC, District-10 Planning Branch Manager
Don Breeding	KYTC, District-10 Chief District Engineer
Greene Keith	KYTC, District-11 Planning Branch Manager
Mary WestfallHolbrook	KYTC, District-12 Project Manager
David Smith	Qk4, Vice President
Tom Springer	Qk4, Transportation Planner

Following introductions, Mr. Siria provided a brief project history, noting that the Cabinet is implementing several other projects in the area. He then introduced Mr. David Smith, who facilitated the meeting via a PowerPoint presentation that generated open discussion of the items that follow.

## Study Area

The study area is approximately 550 square miles in southeastern Kentucky. It crosses two Area Development Districts (Cumberland Valley and Kentucky River), and five counties (Harlan, Leslie, Perry, Knott, and Letcher). The boundaries of the study area are generally as follows:

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June 26, 2003, Elected Officials Meeting #1  
10:30 am, Hazard

- South – US 119, between Harlan and the Letcher County line
- West – US 421, between Harlan and the Hal Rogers Parkway
- North – the Hal Rogers Parkway, Hazard, and KY 15
- East – a cross-county line between Carr Creek State Park and the Harlan/Letcher County line

## **Previous Studies**

Past highway corridor or scoping studies that have been completed in the project area were noted to be helpful in both gathering existing conditions and understanding transportation issues. Past studies identified include:

- US 421 Harlan to Hyden, 1995
- KY 15 Jeff to Whitesburg, 1996
- KY 15 Jeff to Grapevine, 1996
- Hyden Bypass Scoping Study, 2001
- Design Projects – US 421, Hyden Bypass, KY 15

## **Scope of Work**

Mr. Smith went through the major elements of the Scope of Work, which were included in the handout, for the planning project. The major elements in the Scope of Work were:

1. Analyze Existing Highway Conditions
2. Prepare Environmental Overview/Footprint
3. Develop Project Goals
4. Identify Alternatives
5. Evaluate Alternatives
6. Make Recommendations
7. Prepare Report

Mr. Smith noted the Public Involvement Plan would be implement through the duration of the planning process, and the Environmental Overview will consist only of a literature review, no fieldwork will be conducted.

## **Public Involvement and Schedule**

Mr. Smith reviewed the Public Involvement Plan for the project and presented the project schedule, both of which are summarized as follows:

Public Involvement:

- Project Team Meetings (4)
- Local Officials Meetings (2 at 2 locations, including today's set of meetings)
- Public Meetings (2 at 3 Locations)
- Resource Agency Coordination (2)
- Website

# MEETING MINUTES

June 26, 2003, Elected Officials Meeting #1  
10:30 am, Hazard

## Project Schedule:

- Environmental Overview Summer 2003
- Present Preliminary Alternatives Fall 2003
- Present Feasible Alternatives Winter 2003
- Draft Report February 2004
- Final Report May 2004

## Existing Conditions

Available data on 11 state or US highways in the study area, most of which crossed one or more county lines, were presented in three tables in an eight-page handout. The tables were:

Table 1: Existing Highway Systems – tabulated Mileposts, State System, National Truck Network, National Highway System, Functional Classification, and Truck Weight Class. It was noted that the only roads in the study area that are currently on the National Truck Network are the Hal Rogers Parkway, US 119 within and west of the city of Harlan, KY 119 (Hyden Spur), and KY 15 in both Perry County.

Table 2: Geometric and Traffic Characteristics of Existing Highways – tabulated length, number of lanes, lane width, shoulder width, percent passing sight distance, speed limit, roadway type, terrain type, pavement type, existing (2002) and projected (2030) Average Daily Traffic (ADT), existing and projected Level Of Service (LOS), and the adequacy rating. Roadway segments that notably did not meet standards were shaded. Some of the noteworthy conclusions from Table 2 are as follows:

- For both US 119 and US 421, traffic is expected to increase approximately two-fold between 2002 and 2030. At the most congested areas of these two roads within the study area, average daily traffic volumes were approximately 10,200, which is projected to increase to approximately 19,900.
- Of the 43.5 miles of US 119 in the study area, approximately 90 percent (40 miles) currently operate at a LOS of C, most of which is expected to decrease to LOS D by 2030.
- Of the 45 miles of US 421 in the study area, approximately 70 percent (32 miles) operate at a LOS of C/D, most of which is expected to operate at a LOS of C/D/E by 2030.

Table 3: Crash Analysis – tabulated the number of fatal, injury, and property damage only crashes; and the rate and critical rate factor for each type of crash. Some of the noteworthy conclusions from Table 3 are as follows:

- Ten of the 11 state or federal highways (all except KY 4632) had at least one section with a critical rate factor greater than 1.0 for either injury or fatal crashes.
- Some of the areas with the highest crash rates are as follows:
  - US 119, Letcher County, between MP 0 and 13.0, and 14.4 and 17.6
  - KY 80, Perry County, between MP 0 and 8.
  - KY 15 had notably higher numbers and rates for crashes than the other state or federal roads in the study area. For example, 23 of the 25 miles of KY 15 in Letcher and Perry Counties had a critical rate factor of greater than 1.0. Over the five years from 1997 through 2001, there were 17 fatality crashes, 910 injury crashes, and 629 property damage only crashes.

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June 26, 2003, Elected Officials Meeting #1  
10:30 am, Hazard

## Issues, Problems/Needs

Mr. Springer led the group in an exercise to identify project and planning issues, problems, and needs via post-it notes that were collected and organized. He began by identifying the Issues and Major Considerations that were previously identified at the first (June 10, 2003) Project Team Meeting (PTM), which consisted of KYTC and ADD staffs. The items identified at the PTM were as follows:

- Issues:
  - Safety of Area's Highways
  - Connectivity of Road Network
  - Lack of Economic Development Opportunities
  
- Major Considerations:
  - Construction Costs
  - Environmental Issues
  - Topography/Geology
  - Other Highway Projects
  - Public Opinion

Mr. Springer then collected notes from the attendees, and noted that these and the above categories and comments would be used to craft the first set of Goals and Objectives for the plan. The major issues identified are as follows:

- Issues:
  - Safety of Area's Highways
  - Opportunities to improve economic development (including tourism)
  - Connectivity of Road Network
  
- Major Considerations:
  - Impacts Caused by Bypassing Existing Communities
  - Improving Access to Hal Rogers Parkway and future I-66
  - Construction Costs

## Development of Alternatives

Existing and Committed Projects: Projects in the Six-Year Highway Plan should be considered committed (i.e., KY 7, Jeff to Viper; and US 119, Partridge to Oven Fork). In addition, the US 119 Pine Mountain Tunnel shall be considered a committed project. It was noted that the tunnel project was not yet totally funded.

### Proposed Spot Improvements:

- MP 52 to 53 on Hal Rogers Parkway
- Interchange at MP 56 on Hal Rogers Parkway

Bicycle/Pedestrian: Mr. Siria noted we should assume the typical section will accommodate bicycle facilities for cost estimation purposes. However, this planning study will not make a final determination of the cross-section of any recommended alternative. Additionally, the Division of Multimodal Programs will be contacted to identify existing bicycle routes in the study area.

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June 26, 2003, Elected Officials Meeting #1  
10:30 am, Hazard

## Proposed Improvements to Existing Highways (all of which have been designed to some level):

- US 421, north of Harlan
- KY 15, around Hazard (MP 13 to 16)
- US 421, Hyden Bypass

## General Discussion

Following the presentation the group entered into a general discussion of the following items, as follows:

Groundwater Information – Representative Smith noted that the University of Kentucky Geological Society (UKGS) has produced a CD mapping the location of underground water sources in eastern Kentucky, including the study area. It was also noted that the area where Perry and Leslie Counties meet is a high quality and quantity source for groundwater.

Agency Coordination – Mr. Siria noted the Division of Planning coordinates with some 80 agencies when planning a project to receive their input and concerns, including UKGS.

I-66 – Questions regarding whether or not I-66 would use the Hal Rogers Parkway were raised, but a decision on the location of the highway in the study area has not yet been studied or determined.

## Next Steps

Following this set of Local Officials Meetings (including the one held in Harlan the same afternoon), open-house style public meetings will be held August 12 in Hazard, August 14 in Hyden, and August 26 in Harlan.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 pm.

**END OF MINUTES**

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# MEETING MINUTES

**Project:** Harlan to Hazard Scoping Study, Item No. 11-137.00

**Purpose:** **Elected Officials Meeting #1**, Project Kick-off

**Place:** Harlan County Fiscal Court Conference Room, **Harlan**

**Meeting Date:** June 26, 2003, 3:00 p.m.

**Prepared By:** Tom Springer

**In Attendance:**

Representative Tim Couch	Clay, Harlan, and Leslie Counties
Judge/Executive Joseph A Grieshop	Harlan County
Kelle Wilson	Harlan County
Clay McKnight	CVADD Transportation Planner
Bruce Siria	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Steve Ross	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
Robert Brown	KYTC, Central Office Division of Planning
William Madden	KYTC, District-10 Planning Branch Manager
Don Breeding	KYTC, District-10 Chief District Engineer
David Smith	Qk4, Vice President
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## Study Area

The study area is approximately 550 square miles in southeastern Kentucky. It crosses two Area Development Districts (Cumberland Valley and Kentucky River), and five counties (Harlan, Leslie, Perry, Knott, and Letcher). The boundaries of the study area are generally as follows:



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- South – US 119, between Harlan and the Letcher County line
- West – US 421, between Harlan and the Hal Rogers Parkway
- North – the Hal Rogers Parkway, Hazard, and KY 15
- East – a cross-county line between Carr Creek State Park and the Harlan/Letcher county line

## **Previous Studies**

Past highway corridor or scoping studies that have been completed in the project area were noted to be helpful in both gathering existing conditions and understanding transportation issues. Past studies identified include:

- US 421 Harlan to Hyden, 1995
- KY 15 Jeff to Whitesburg, 1996
- KY 15 Jeff to Grapevine, 1996
- Hyden Bypass Scoping Study, 2001
- Design Projects – US 421, Hyden Bypass, KY 15

## **Scope of Work**

Mr. Smith went through the major elements of the Scope of Work, which were included in the handout, for the planning project. The major elements in the Scope of Works were:

1. Analyze Existing Highway Conditions
2. Prepare Environmental Overview/Footprint
3. Develop Project Goals
4. Identify Alternatives
5. Evaluate Alternatives
6. Make Recommendations
7. Prepare Report

Mr. Smith noted the Public Involvement Plan would be implement through the duration of the planning process, and the Environmental Overview will consist only of a literature review, no fieldwork will be conducted.

## **Public Involvement and Schedule**

Mr. Smith reviewed the Public Involvement Plan for the project and presented the project schedule, both of which are summarized as follows:

Public Involvement:

- Project Team Meetings (4)
- Local Officials Meetings (2 at 2 locations, including today's set of meetings)
- Public Meetings (2 at 3 Locations)
- Resource Agency Coordination (2)
- Website

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## Project Schedule:

- Environmental Overview Summer 2003
- Present Preliminary Alternatives Fall 2003
- Present Feasible Alternatives Winter 2003
- Draft Report February 2004
- Final Report May 2004

## Existing Conditions

Available data on 11 state or US highways in the study area, most of which crossed one or more county lines, were presented in three tables in an eight-page handout. The tables were:

Table 1: Existing Highway Systems – tabulated Mileposts, State System, National Truck Network, National Highway System, Functional Classification, and Truck Weight Class. It was noted that the only roads in the study area that are currently on the National Truck Network are the Hal Rogers Parkway, US 119 within and west of the city of Harlan, KY 119 (Hyden Spur), and KY 15 in both Perry County.

Table 2: Geometric and Traffic Characteristics of Existing Highways – tabulated length, number of lanes, lane width, shoulder width, percent passing sight distance, speed limit, roadway type, terrain type, pavement type, existing (2002) and projected (2030) Average Daily Traffic (ADT), existing and projected Level Of Service (LOS), and the adequacy rating. Roadway segments that notably did not meet standards were shaded. Some of the noteworthy conclusions from Table 2 are as follows:

- For both US 119 and US 421, traffic is expected to increase approximately two-fold between 2002 and 2030. At the most congested areas of these two roads within the study area, average daily traffic volumes were approximately 10,200, which is projected to increase to approximately 19,900.
- Of the 43.5 miles of US 119 in the study area, approximately 90 percent (40 miles) currently operate at a LOS of C, most of which is expected to decrease to LOS D by 2030.
- Of the 45 miles of US 421 in the study area, approximately 70 percent (32 miles) operate at a LOS of C/D, most of which is expected to operate at a LOS of C/D/E by 2030.

Table 3: Crash Analysis – tabulated the number of fatal, injury, and property damage only crashes; and the rate and critical rate factor for each type of crash. Some of the noteworthy conclusions from Table 3 are as follows:

- Ten of the 11 state or federal highways (all except KY 4632) had at least one section with a critical rate factor greater than 1.0 for either injury or fatal crashes.
- Some of the areas with the highest crash rates are as follows:
  - US 119, Letcher County, between MP 0 and 13.0, and 14.4 and 17.6
  - KY 80, Perry County, between MP 0 and 8.
  - KY 15 had notably higher numbers and rates for crashes than the other state or federal roads in the study area. For example, 23 of the 25 miles of KY 15 in Letcher and Perry counties had a critical rate factor of greater than 1.0. Over the five years from 1997 through 2001, there were 17 fatality crashes, 910 injury crashes, and 629 property damage only crashes.

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## Development of Alternatives

Existing and Committed Projects: Projects in the Six-Year Plan should be considered committed (i.e., KY 7, Jeff to Viper; and US 119, Partridge to Oven Fork). In addition, the US 119 Pine Mountain Tunnel shall be considered a committed project. It was noted that the tunnel project was not yet totally funded.

## Proposed Spot Improvements:

- MP 52 to 53 on Hal Rogers Parkway
- Interchange at MP 56 on Hal Rogers Parkway

Bicycle/Pedestrian: Mr. Siria noted we should assume the typical section will accommodate bicycle facilities for cost estimation purposes. However, this planning study will not make a final determination of the cross-section of any recommended alternative. Additionally, the Division of Multimodal Programs will be contacted to identify existing bicycle routes in the study area.

## Proposed Improvements to Existing Highways (all of which have been designed to some level):

- US 421, north of Harlan
- KY 15, around Hazard (MP 13 to 16)
- US 421, Hyden Bypass

## Issues and Major Considerations

Mr. Springer stated that during the previous (June 10, 2003) Project Team Meeting (PTM), which consisted of KYTC and ADD staffs, major issues and considerations were identified through a brainstorming activity. The results of that meeting were presented to the Elected Official Meeting held earlier in the day (June 26, 2003) in Hazard. The results of both previous meetings were presented, as follows:

### June 10, 2003 Project Team Meeting:

- Issues:
  - Safety on Area's Highways
  - Connectivity of Road Network
  - Lack of Economic Development Opportunities
- Major Considerations:
  - Construction Costs
  - Environmental Issues
  - Topography/Geology
  - Other Highway Projects
  - Public Opinion

### June 26, 2003, 10:00 a.m., Elected Officials Meeting in Hazard

- Issues:
  - Safety of Area's Highways
  - Opportunities to improve economic development (including tourism)
  - Connectivity of Road Network
- Major Considerations:
  - Impacts Caused by Bypassing Existing Communities
  - Improving Access to Hal Rogers Parkway and future I-66

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- Construction Costs

Mr. Springer noted that these and the above categories and comments would be used to craft the first set of Goals and Objectives for the plan.

Rather than participating in the same exercise during the afternoon meeting, those in attendance entered into a general open discussion of the following issues:

- US 421 Corridor – The Judge/Executive Grieshop and Ms. Wilson both noted that reconstruction to US 421 to Hyden was the community's top transportation priority. A point noted in this conversation was the potential connection between the recently constructed US Route 58A in Virginia to the south and the proposed I-66 to the north. (Note: US 58 traverses Virginia from the Atlantic coast west to the general area where Kentucky/Tennessee/Virginia meet. US 58A runs generally north of and parallel to US 58 in Lee County. VDOT has been in the process of reconstructing both US 58 and 58A to four-lane facilities beginning in the east and moving west across the state, and has several projects programmed that are south of Harlan County. One such project is the construction of the Dryden Bypass along the north side of Dryden and includes a new intersection with US 421. As a result of the completed projects, US 58 and U58A have become a major east-west route across the southern portion of the state.)
- I-66 – Questions regarding whether or not I-66 would use the Hal Rogers Parkway were raised, but a decision on the location of the highway in the study area has not yet been studied or determined.
- Linear Park – According to the Judge Grieshop the proposed linear park is in a very preliminary stage.
- Agency Coordination – Mr. Siria noted the Division of Planning coordinates with some 80 agencies when planning a project to receive their input and concerns, including the agencies involved with the proposed linear park.
- Industrial Park – Harlan County is constructing a 500-acre industrial park that should be considered during the development of the planning study. An additional 250-acre air park is also being considered.
- Tourism and Safety – Regarding other issues, Judge Grieshop noted that roadway improvements were needed in Harlan County to both increase tourism potential and safety for school buses. It was also noted that during major events at the Bristol, Tennessee Motor Speedway the motel usage and traffic congestion in Harlan and Harlan County increases substantially. Specifically, it was stated that the traffic volumes can increase from approximately 26,000 vehicles per day (vpd) to over 100,000 vpd. Bristol is located very near the Tennessee-Virginia state line, approximately 95 miles from the city of Harlan.

## Next Steps

Following this set of Local Officials Meetings (including the one held in Hazard that morning), open-house style public meetings will be held August 12 in Hazard, August 14 in Hyden, and August 26 in Harlan.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 pm.

## END OF MINUTES

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