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5. Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Prior to Draft EIS Availability

This section summarizes public involvement, agency coordination and other stakeholder coordination held prior to the Draft EIS Notice of Availability. Section 6 summarizes public involvement and agency coordination since the Draft EIS Notice of Availability. WisDOT developed a Coordination Plan for Agency and Public Involvement for the I-39/90/94 Corridor Study to effectively involve the public and agencies early in the process and to share study information and invite input on the study, including study purpose and need, alternatives, impacts and measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.

The public involvement process for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was open to all residents and population groups along the study corridor and did not exclude any persons due to income, race, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability.

5.1. Public Involvement

WisDOT's public involvement activities included a range of formal and informal engagement:

- o Public involvement meetings (PIMs)
- o Public scoping
- o Advisory committee meetings
- o Stakeholder meetings
- o Business interchange meetings
- o Environmental Justice and other public outreach
- o Study website

5.1.1. Public Involvement Meetings

As of December 2023, WisDOT held three PIMs to present information at study milestones.

Public Involvement Meeting #1 (September 13 and 14, 2022)

WisDOT held open-house PIMs near the southern and northern ends of the study limits to encourage corridor-wide attendance. Meetings occurred between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. on:

- o Sept. 13, 2022: Yahara Elementary School, DeForest, Wisconsin
- o Sept. 14, 2022: Clarion Hotel and Suites, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

At PIM #1, WisDOT introduced the study and provided information and sought input on preliminary study needs and issues of concern to public stakeholders as the project proceeds into the formal environmental review process. WisDOT mailed postcard invitations to about 14,500 property owners, residents, businesses and other stakeholders within about one-quarter mile of the study corridor in Dane, Columbia, Sauk and Juneau counties. WisDOT also sent an email invitation via the study's website to over 900 contacts within the study database and encouraged invitees to post meeting information on stakeholder websites. About 100 persons attended the

meetings. WisDOT posted meeting handouts, displays and presentation on the study website to encourage additional public comments. Public comments focused on the following themes included in the EIS:

- o Address stormwater and flooding impacts on adjacent agricultural properties
- o Address concerns for existing and potential sediments in Mirror Lake
- o Location of future interchange access in the Hoepker Road/Hanson Road area; general support, but also concerns about property impacts
- o Address safety at problem interchanges
- o Close coordination with utilities, including the American Transmission Company powerline next to the Interstate
- o Interest in right of way impacts
- o Address drivers using local roads during Interstate backups
- o Noise impacts

Public Involvement Meeting #2 (April 12 and 13, 2023)

WisDOT held open-house PIMs between 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on:

- o April 12, 2023: Yahara Elementary School, DeForest, Wisconsin
- o April 13, 2023: Wisconsin Dells Middle School, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

At PIM #2, WisDOT presented refined purpose and need information, and mainline and interchange alternatives with range of impacts. Feedback from the public was also solicited to aid the study team in continued alternatives development. Both mail and email notifications were like those for PIM #1. About 100 persons attended the meetings. A recorded presentation was available on continuous loop throughout the PIM. WisDOT posted meeting handouts, displays and presentations on the study website to encourage additional public comments. Public comments were specific to interchange and mainline alternatives that informed further alternatives refinement and helped eliminate alternatives from further consideration. Comments on potential new interchanges at Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street were split between support and opposition. Supporting comments noted the new interchanges would be consistent with and provide access to development envisioned in local plans. Opposing comments noted impacts of increased traffic on public safety and quality of life.

Public Involvement Meeting #3 (January 30, 31 and February 1, 2024)

WisDOT held open-house PIMs between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on:

- o Jan. 30, 2024: Virtual Meeting
- o Jan. 31, 2024: Wisconsin Dells High School (Art Gallery) – HH Bennett Hall, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin
- o Feb. 1, 2024: Madison College – Truax Building, Conference Room D1630, Madison, Wisconsin

At PIM #3, WisDOT conducted one virtual meeting and two in-person meetings. The information at all three meetings was the same. WisDOT presented updates on the study's remaining improvement alternatives. Feedback from the public was also gathered to aid the study team in alternatives development. Both mail and email notifications were sent out just like in PIM #1 and #2. About 190 persons attended the virtual meeting and 96 persons attended the in-person meetings. A recorded presentation was available on continuous loop throughout

the PIM. WisDOT posted meeting handouts, displays and presentations on the study website to encourage additional public comments.

The comments received during the public comment period were primarily about specific interchanges. The proposed new interchange at Hoepker Road received very strong support with nearly all commenters mentioning easier access to hospital facilities in the area. The Directional alternative at the US 151/High Crossing Boulevard Interchange also received strong support for its potential to improve traffic conditions. Support was mixed for the new proposed interchange at Milwaukee Street. Commenters in favor of this proposed interchange cited the increased opportunity for development in the area. Commenters opposed to the Milwaukee Street interchange cited concerns about potential negative impacts to undeveloped land in the area. Many commenters also weighed in on intersection control options. Again, these responses were specific to each interchange. The comments were split in their support for roundabouts or traffic signals. Several commenters also mentioned bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The support for these accommodations was strong.

5.1.2. Public Scoping

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS on July 18, 2023. The NOI included a 30-day public comment period requesting input on aspects of the study, including the purpose and need, alternatives and other issues of concern to be addressed in the EIS. WisDOT announced the NOI on the study website and provided a link to a narrated presentation explaining the scoping process and opportunities to provide comments during the scoping period. WisDOT also notified study subscribers and cooperating and participating agencies of the NOI via email. The public comment period closed Aug. 17, 2023. WisDOT received 50 comments from the public and 7 comments from government agencies. The comments focused on themes of transportation infrastructure, new interchanges, or pedestrian and bicycle uses. Some commenters provided input on more than one theme. The largest number of comments (31) requested bicycle, pedestrian and multi-use trails within the study corridor. Other comments (15) were specific to the mainline or interchange alternatives; five comments requested additional transportation investments such as transit, multi-use trails and roundabouts; seven comments supported or did not support new interchanges at Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street; three comments requested consideration of threatened and endangered species and natural habitats and one comment requested better connectivity at the Yahara River crossing. More information about the formal scoping period is included the Scoping Summary posted on the study website.¹ WisDOT considered comments as part of the EIS development.

5.1.3. Advisory Committees

WisDOT solicited local and elected officials and major stakeholders, at the beginning of the environmental study, to participate in study advisory committees. Local and elected officials helped identify advisory committee participants. Solicitations consisted of email invitations. Prospective committee participants were given the option to be a part of one of three advisory committees. Those that agreed to participate were then placed onto committees. WisDOT notified committee members of their responsibilities through in-person and virtual meetings. Advisory committees will meet throughout the study process. The three advisory committees include:

¹ Wisconsin Department of Transportation. I-39/90/94 Study – Public involvement. <https://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/by-region/sw/399094/scopingsummary.pdf>.

- o Business Advisory Committee (BAC): includes business stakeholders along the study corridor, see Table 5-1. The BAC provides feedback about the study communications approach, design needs, corridor issues and environmental concerns and needs. WisDOT sought input from local governments for appropriate representation.
- o Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): includes local and regional transportation and planning professionals from communities in the study corridor, see Table 5-2. The TAC provides technical information such as transportation and land use plans, utility locations, traffic volumes, public transportation routes and general engineering and planning principles and policies.
- o Local Officials Advisory Committee (LOAC): includes officials from the state, counties, cities, villages, other municipalities and government agencies within the study corridor, see Table 5-3. The LOAC provides an opportunity for local leadership input on study aspects, including the need for the study, alternatives development and environmental impacts and benefits. Early in the study process, WisDOT held a separate Local Officials Meeting in advance of PIM #1 in September 2022. WisDOT briefed local officials as part of LOAC meetings held prior to PIMs #2 and #3.

Table 5-1: Invited BAC Members

| Business | Title | Business | Title |
|---|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| American Family Insurance Headquarters | Media Relations Advisor | Pepsi-Cola of Madison | Sales Manager |
| Baraboo Chamber of Commerce | President | Portage Area Chamber of Commerce | Board Chair |
| Cascade Mountain | General Manager | Poynette Chamber of Commerce | President |
| Columbia County Visitors Bureau | Executive Director | Sauk County Development Corporation | Executive Director |
| Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce | President | Sauk County Development Corporation / Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc. | Vice President & Sr. Project Manager |
| DeForest Windsor Area Chamber of Commerce | President | Sun Prairie Chamber of Commerce | Executive Director |
| East Towne Mall (CBL Properties) | General Manager | T. Wall Enterprises | President & CEO |
| Gander RV of Madison | Manager | Tommy Bartlett, Inc. (AWTA) | Co-owner & President |
| Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce | Public Policy Manager | UW-Health | Communication Relations Director |
| Ho-Chunk Nation | Executive General Manager | Wilderness Resort | Owner & President |
| Hovde Properties | Chairperson | Wisconsin Agri-Business Association | Executive Director |
| Interstate Partners, LLC | Property Manager | Wisconsin Clean Cities (c/o Legacy Environmental) | Executive Director |

| Business | Title | Business | Title |
|--|--------------------|---|---|
| Juneau County Economic Development Corporation | Executive Director | Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau | President & CEO |
| Kalahari Resort Dells | Owner & President | Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association | President & CEO |
| Lodi & Lake Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce | Vice President | Wisconsin Latino Chamber of Commerce | Assoc. Director of Partnerships & Business Engagement |
| Madison Black Chamber of Commerce | President & CEO | Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce | Commerce Contact |
| McAllen Business Park | Property Manager | Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association | President |
| Mount Olympus Resort | Owner & President | Wisconsin RV World | President |
| Noah's Ark Water Park | General Manager | | |

Table 5-2: Invited TAC Members

| Municipality/Agency/Org. | Title | Municipality/Agency/Org. | Title |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Capital Area Regional Planning Commission | Agency Director | Sauk County | Highway Commissioner |
| City of Madison | Police Chief | Sauk County | Planning & Zoning Manager |
| City of Madison | Fire Chief | Town of Arlington | Fire Chief |
| City of Madison | Transportation Director | Town of Arlington | EMS Director |
| City of Madison | Deputy City Engineer | Town of Blooming Grove | Public Works Supervisor |
| City of Madison | City Engineer | Town of Burke | Town Chair |
| City of Madison | DPCED Planning Director | Town of Dekorra | Supervisor 1 |
| City of Madison | Traffic Engineer | Town of Sun Prairie | Town Chairperson |
| City of Madison | Traffic & Spec. Services Captain | Town of Vienna | Town Chair |
| City of Portage | Public Works Director | Town of Westport | EMS Director |
| City of Portage | Director of Business Development & Planning | Town of Westport | Town of Westport Engineer |
| City of Sun Prairie | Fire Chief | Town of Westport | Town Administrator |
| City of Sun Prairie | EMS Chief (interim) | Village of Cottage Grove | Fire Chief |
| City of Sun Prairie | Director of Public Services/City Engineer | Village of Cottage Grove | EMS Chief |

| Municipality/Agency/Org. | Title | Municipality/Agency/Org. | Title |
|--|---|--|------------------------------------|
| City of Sun Prairie | Police Chief | Village of Cottage Grove | Director of Public Works |
| City of Wisconsin Dells | Planning & Zoning Admin | Village of Cottage Grove | Chief of Police |
| City of Wisconsin Dells | Public Works Director | Village of Cottage Grove | Director of Planning & Development |
| Columbia County | Planning Committee Chair | Village of DeForest | Public Works Director |
| Columbia County | Chief Deputy | Village of DeForest | Fire Chief |
| Columbia County | Sheriff | Village of DeForest | Chief of Police |
| Columbia County | Highway Commissioner | Village of Lake Delton | Director Public Works |
| Dane County | Senior Planner | Village of McFarland | Chief of Police |
| Dane County | Sheriff | Village of McFarland | Fire & Rescue Chief |
| Dane County | Deputy Public Works Director | Village of McFarland | Director of Public Works |
| Dane County | Interim Highway and Transportation Commissioner | Village of McFarland | Village Administrator |
| Dane County Regional Airport | Airport Director | Village of Windsor | Director of Public Works |
| Dane County Regional Airport | Deputy Airport Director | Wisconsin Bike Federation | Executive Director |
| Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization | Transportation Planner | Wisconsin Bike Federation | Programs Manager |
| Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization | Transportation Planning Manager | Wisconsin Dells Visitors & Convention Bureau | Board Chair |
| Juneau County | Highway Superintendent | Wisconsin State Patrol | Lieutenant |
| Juneau County | Highway Commissioner | Wisconsin State Patrol | Captain |
| Sauk County | Associate Planner | | |

Table 5-3: Invited LOAC Members

| Jurisdiction | Title | Jurisdiction | Title |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Capital Area | Planning Commission Appointee | Town of Burke | Town Clerk |
| City of Madison | Aldermanic Districts 3, 16 and 17 | Town of Caledonia | Town Chairperson |
| City of Madison | City Clerk | Town of Caledonia | Town Supervisor 1 and 2 |

| Jurisdiction | Title | Jurisdiction | Title |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| City of Madison | City Council President | Town of Cottage Grove | Town Supervisor 1, 2, 3 and 4 |
| City of Madison | Madison Bikes Board of Directors Member | Town of Dekorra | Town Chairperson |
| City of Madison | Mayor | Town of Dekorra | Town Supervisor 2 |
| City of Madison | Transportation Commission | Town of Delton | Town Chairperson |
| City of Madison | Transportation Policy and Planning Board Director | Town of Fairfield | Town Chairperson |
| City of Portage | Mayor | Town of Fairfield | Town Supervisor 1 and 2 |
| City of Sun Prairie | Aldermanic Districts 3 and 4 | Town of Lyndon | Town Chairperson |
| City of Sun Prairie | City Council President | Town of Lyndon | Town Supervisor 1 and 2 |
| City of Sun Prairie | Mayor | Town of Sun Prairie | Town Supervisor 1 and 2 |
| City of Wisconsin Dells | Mayor | Town of Vienna | Town Clerk |
| Columbia County | County Board of Supervisors Districts 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 24 | Town of Westport | Town Supervisor 2 |
| Dane County | County Board of Supervisors Districts 12, 16, 17, 21, 22, 24, 29, 34, 36 | Village of Cottage Grove | Village President |
| Dane County | Commissioner and Director | Village of DeForest | Village President |
| Juneau County | County Board of Supervisors Districts 20 and 21 | Village of Lake Delton | Village President |
| Sauk County | County Board of Supervisors Districts 1, 2, 12 and 13 | Village of Lake Delton | Project Manager/Village Engineer |
| Town of Arlington | Town Chairperson | Village of McFarland | Community & Economic Development Director |
| Town of Arlington | Town Supervisors 1 and 2 | Village of Windsor | Board of Appeals Members |
| Town of Blooming Grove | Clerk/Treasurer/Administrator | Wisconsin State Assembly | Assembly Districts 37, 41, 42, 46, 47, 48, 50, 76, 78, 79, 81 |
| Town of Blooming Grove | Town Chairperson | Wisconsin State Senate | Senate Districts 13, 14, 16, 17 and 27 |

Table 5-4: Summary of Advisory Committee and Local Officials Meetings

| Date | Meeting Purpose |
|--|--|
| Aug. 9, 2022 (CAC) Aug. 17, 2022 (TAC/LOAC) | Study introduction, roles and responsibilities, input on areas of concern |
| Sept. 13 and 14, 2022 (all committees) | Information on materials presented at PIM #1, including study kick-off and preliminary purpose and need. |
| April 6, 2023 (all committees) | Information on materials presented at PIM #2, including purpose and need, range of alternatives and initial impacts. |
| Jan. 23, 2024 (all committees) | Present alternatives screened for full evaluation in EIS. |

5.1.4. Stakeholder Meetings

WisDOT continues to coordinate with numerous stakeholders throughout the study corridor. The meetings provided opportunities for study updates and receive input from local elected officials, residents and businesses as mainline and interchange alternatives developed. The meetings held to date are listed below:

- o **June 28, 2022** – Meeting with DeForest/Windsor Chamber of Commerce to introduce the study.
- o **July 14, 2022** – Hoepker Road Interchange business stakeholder meeting to share analysis and evaluation process for the potential Hoepker Road Interchange and receive comments on alternatives and evaluation.
- o **Aug. 31, 2022** – Meeting with city of Madison staff, Madison Common Council alders, local residents and business stakeholders to discuss the study and potential new interchange at Milwaukee Street and I-90/94.
- o **Nov. 16, 2022** – Meeting with business stakeholders at the American Center (commercial development at US 151 Interchange) to present the study and considerations for access to east side of Madison via potential new interchanges at Hoepker Road.
- o **Nov. 16, 2022** – Meeting with Dane County Cities and Villages Association to introduce the study and schedule.
- o **Nov. 30, 2022** – Meeting with city of Madison staff to discuss concepts at potential new Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street interchanges and the High Crossing Boulevard Interchange, local plans and future public engagement.
- o **Jan. 17, 2023** – Meeting with city of Madison staff to discuss status of potential new interchanges, study schedule and future coordination.
- o **March 2, 2023** – Meeting with city of Madison staff to review update on existing and potential new interchange alternatives in city.
- o **March 6, 2023** – Hoepker Road Interchange business stakeholder meeting #2; presenting update on traffic analysis, ongoing coordination with city of Madison, alternatives development, requesting input on design alternatives, discussion around transit, bicycles and pedestrian accommodations and mainline alternatives.
- o **March 9, 2023** – Meeting with local residents, businesses and elected officials to discuss alternatives at the I-39 I-90/94 Split Interchange and options for access to Cascade Mountain Road.
- o **March 22, 2023** – City of Madison Executive meeting to provide study overview and alternatives development status and evaluation process.
- o **March 27, 2023** – Meeting with Dane County Highway department to discuss mainline alternatives, alternatives at the I-94/WIS 30 Interchange and impact to existing salt storage shed in the interchange. Also

provided update on alternatives for other existing Dane County interchanges and potential new interchanges at Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street.

- o **April 6, 2023** – Meeting with city of Madison staff for updates, general discussion on mainline and interchange alternatives.
- o **May 3, 2023** – Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board meeting; presented study update and discussed mainline alternatives, alternatives at existing interchanges in planning boundaries: I-94/WIS 30, US 151/High Crossing Boulevard, US 51, WIS 19 and County V.
- o **May 4, 2023** – Meeting with city of Madison staff to debrief from PIM #2 on Madison area interchanges.
- o **June 1, 2023** – Meeting with Columbia County staff/elected officials to review mainline alternatives and interchange alternatives at County CS, the I-39 I-90/94 Split, WIS 33 at I-39, WIS 33 at I-90/94.
- o **June 1, 2023** – Meeting with DeForest/Windsor Area Chamber of Commerce to provide update on the study and alternatives on the mainline and at the WIS 19 and County V interchanges.
- o **June 1, 2023** – Meeting with village of Lake Delton to present study schedule, mainline alternatives and interchange alternatives developed at US 12, WIS 23, WIS 13 and US 12/WIS 16 interchanges. Also discussed status and options under consideration to address flooding along mainline and at interchanges.
- o **June 12, 2023** – City of Wisconsin Dells Department of Public Works and Planning Commission meeting; presented study overview, mainline alternatives and interchange alternatives at US 12, WIS 13, WIS 23 and US 12/WIS 16 and evaluation process.
- o **June 15, 2023** – Village of Windsor Board meeting; presented preliminary concepts for mainline alternatives and alternatives at WIS 19 interchange.
- o **June 15, 2023** – Meeting with UW-Health and city of Madison staff to review concerns, next steps and preferences at US 151/East Washington Boulevard, High Crossing Boulevard and potential new interchange at Hoepker Road.
- o **June 16, 2023** – Meeting with Dane County Executive to review status of mainline and interchange alternatives in Dane County.
- o **June 20, 2023** – Village of DeForest Board meeting; presented study status, mainline alternatives and interchange alternatives at US 51, WIS 19 and County and the alternatives evaluation process.
- o **June 27, 2023** – Meeting with city of Madison and WisDOT Secretary and Southwest Region staff.
- o **July 6, 2023** – Meeting with city of Madison staff to review updates on travel demand, alternatives, multimodal connections and upcoming meetings.
- o **July 10, 2023** – City of Madison Planning Commission meeting to review and answer questions about the US 151/High Crossing Interchange alternatives and potential new interchanges at Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street.
- o **July 11, 2023** – City of Sun Prairie Public Works Committee meeting; presented study update, mainline alternatives and alternatives for US 151/High Crossing Boulevard Interchange and potential new interchange at Hoepker Road.
- o **July 12, 2023** – City of Madison Transportation Commission meeting; presented study update and mainline and interchange alternatives.
- o **July 12, 2023** – Sauk County Highway Committee meeting; WisDOT presented study schedule, mainline alternatives and interchange alternatives at US 12, WIS 23, WIS 13 and US 12/WIS 16 interchanges.

- o **July 24, 2023** – Village of Poynette (Columbia County) village board meeting; provided study update, presented alternatives at County CS Interchange and alternatives evaluation process.
- o **July 25, 2023** – Meeting with Dane County Public Works Committee to present study update and discuss Interstate alternatives and potential new interchanges in Dane County.
- o **Sept. 5, 2023** – Meeting with the Sun Prairie Committee of the Whole to discuss US 151 alternatives and have them provide a recommendation on the preferred alternatives.
- o **Sept. 7, 2023** – Meeting with city of Madison staff to provide and update on alternatives evaluation and bike/pedestrian connections.
- o **Sept. 21, 2023** – Meeting with the village of DeForest to discuss study updated and development plans adjacent to the corridor.
- o **Oct. 4, 2023** – Coordination meeting requested by the city of Wisconsin Dells to discuss interchange design alternatives.
- o **Nov. 30, 2023** – Meeting with the city of Madison to share initial design concepts and receive feedback for potential Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street interchanges.
- o **Nov. 30, 2023** – Meeting with the city of Madison to discuss the City's Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood plan and its relation to a potential new interchange at Hoepker Road
- o **Dec. 5, 2023** – Meeting with the village of DeForest to provide a study update and discuss schedule, village goals and multimodal accommodations.
- o **Dec. 6, 2023** – Meeting with the Ho-Chunk Nation to discuss study updates, environmental study schedule, mainline alternatives, interchange alternatives and salt shed impacts.
- o **Dec. 6, 2023** – Meeting with Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization to discuss study updates, purpose, mainline and interchange alternatives.
- o **Dec. 11, 2023** – Meeting with the city of Wisconsin Dells to provide a study update and discuss schedule, city goals, interchange alternatives and multimodal alternatives.
- o **Dec. 11, 2023** – Meeting with the village of Lake Delton to provide study update and discuss schedule, village goals, and multimodal accommodations.
- o **Jan. 8, 2024** – Meeting with UW Health to provide a study update.
- o **Jan. 4, 2024** – Meeting with the Sun Prairie Public Works Committee to discuss US 151 alternatives and have them provide their recommendations.
- o **Jan. 10, 2024** – Meeting with the Town of Caledonia and stakeholders in the Cascade Mountain area. Discussion included study overview and schedule, project needs, proposed alternatives, flood mitigation and next steps.
- o **Jan. 16, 2024** – Meeting with the village of DeForest to provide an update to the study and discuss mainline alternatives.
- o **Jan. 17, 2024** – Meeting with the city of Madison to discuss schedule, approach and alternatives.
- o **Jan. 18, 2024** – Meeting with UW-Health to introduce new study team staff and provide updates on alternatives for US 151, Hoepker Road, Milwaukee Street, and US 51.
- o **Feb. 9, 2024** – Meeting with Columbia County Traffic Commission to introduce new study staff and provide updates on alternatives, study schedule and flood mitigation.
- o **Feb. 27, 2024** – Meeting with Town of Delton to introduce new study team staff, provide an update on alternatives near Lake Delton and Wisconsin Dells and study schedule.

- o **March 19, 2024** – Meeting with Sun Prairie Committee of the Whole to provide update on US 151 interchange and mainline alternatives.
- o **April 18, 2024** – Meeting with Sauk County EMS and Fire chiefs to receive feedback on remaining interchange and Interstate alternatives in Sauk County and provide information on upcoming public hearing.
- o **April 24, 2024** – Meeting with Columbia County EMS and Fire chiefs to receive feedback on remaining interchange and Interstate alternatives in Columbia County and provide information on upcoming public hearing.
- o **May 8, 2024** – Meeting with Dane County EMS and Fire chiefs to receive feedback on remaining interchange and Interstate alternatives in Dane County and provide information on upcoming public hearing.

5.1.5. Business Interchange Meetings

WisDOT also hosted formal business interchange group meetings to present and receive input on alternatives developed at individual interchanges. Table 5-5 summarizes these meetings.

Table 5-5: Summary of Business Interchange Group Meetings

| Meeting | Date | Discussion Topics |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| Madison area interchanges public meeting | May 24 and June 1, 2023 | Joint public meeting with city of Madison to review status of alternatives at the US 151/High Crossing Boulevard interchanges, as well as at potential new interchanges at Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street. Study staff send post cards to a mailing list of stakeholders, specific to these interchange areas, notifying them of these meetings. The mailing list was prepared by the city of Madison and included residents, businesses, local officials, chambers and other major stakeholders in the area. |
| Wisconsin Dells interchanges meeting | June 8, 2023 | Review status of US 12, WIS 23, WIS 13 and US 12/WIS16 interchange alternatives in the Wisconsin Dells area with local officials and businesses. Businesses such as Noah’s Ark, Wilderness, and surrounding hotels, as well as chambers, and tribal contacts were invited to attend this meeting. |
| US 51 interchange meeting | June 14, 2023 | Review status of interchange alternatives with local officials and businesses. Businesses, chambers of commerce and other local officials in this area were invited to attend this meeting. |
| DeForest area interchange meeting | June 15, 2023 | Review status of WIS 19 and County V interchange alternatives in the DeForest area with local officials and businesses. DeForest area businesses, local officials, and other important stakeholders such as American Family, Pepsi and Kwik Trip were invited to attend this meeting. |

5.1.6. Environmental Justice and Other Public Outreach

WisDOT and FHWA developed an Environmental Justice (EJ) and Preliminary Analysis Plan that included a list of community and neighborhood organizations for initial contact about the I-39/90/94 Corridor Study, see Table 5-6. Beginning in winter 2023, the WisDOT study team contacted community and neighborhood organizations through

emails, phone calls and follow up on-site visits to introduce the study and request further coordination. The WisDOT study team followed up with municipal and county social service agencies, including those listed in Table 5-6 for additional contacts with environmental justice organizations and events. Following the initial contacts, the study team distributed surveys designed to help WisDOT identify populations of concern and to inform the study process. The survey asked how often respondents travel on the Interstate and where they travel, what type of vehicle used, estimated household annual income, race or ethnicity, age and if anyone in the household lives with a disability. Survey flyers were also created with QR codes for individuals to scan and take the survey digitally.

As part of on-site visits, the study team dropped off the demographic surveys, and study information flyers and spoke with individuals at locations and events known to service EJ groups. To date, over 100 digital and physical surveys have been completed and submitted. Minorities and low-income individuals were not well represented in survey submissions. For this reason, the study team continues in person outreach at different community centers and venues. At these in-person meetings, information about the next round of Public Involvement Meetings was distributed. A similar effort was made at meetings held prior to the public hearing on the Draft EIS in the two months leading up to the public hearing. The outreach staff informed stakeholders at these events about the study and encouraged their participation in the upcoming public hearing (see also Section 6 for more discussion). Throughout the study, stakeholders from various environmental justice groups were added to the stakeholder database. Subsequently, these stakeholders were notified of the public hearing through the mailed invitation and e-blast. Section 6 describes efforts to advertise the public hearing. The outreach team asked the meeting participants to share this information with their contacts. PIM and public hearing announcement materials were shared with meeting participants for them to distribute to their contacts. Also, the study team reached out directly to organizations and individuals on the Madison College campus known to service EJ groups. They were asked to help share the invitation to the upcoming Public Involvement Meetings and the public hearing. Table 5-6 summarizes in-person meetings and event outreach by the PI team to foster EJ and stakeholder study participation:

Table 5-6: Summary of Outreach Efforts to Environmental Justice Populations

| Meeting/Event/Outreach | Date | Discussion Topics |
|--|----------------|---|
| Madison Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative | April 18, 2023 | Staff contacted city of Madison staff via email and phone. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Dane County Housing Authority – Madison, Wis. | April 20, 2023 | Staff visited this facility and provided EJ demographic survey flyers. No additional comments received, or actions requested from agency. |
| Madison Black Chamber of Commerce – Madison, Wis. | April 20, 2023 | Staff visited the chamber and spoke with the Director. The study team invited the chamber to participate in the CAC and business interchange meetings. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Wisconsin Latino Chamber of Commerce – Madison, Wis. | April 20, 2023 | Staff visited the chamber and spoke with the Director. The study team invited the chamber to participate in the CAC and business interchange meetings. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |

| Meeting/Event/Outreach | Date | Discussion Topics |
|---|--|---|
| Asian Cuisine (Next to Madison Black Chamber) – Madison, Wis. | April 21, 2023 | Staff visited Asian cuisine restaurants and spoke with staff and dropped off study flyers. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Dane County Veterans Services – Madison, Wis. | May 1, 2023 | Dropped off study literature/survey and spoke with the liaison about further coordination. No additional comments received, or actions requested from agency. |
| East Madison Community Center (EMCC) – Madison, Wis. | April 20, 2023 May 19, 2023 Sept. 12, 2023 | Staff attended the weekly food drive at the EMCC and provided study information and requested feedback. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Goodman Center – Madison, Wis. | April 20, 2023 Sept. 12, 2023 | Dropped off study literature/survey and spoke with the staff and clients about the study and further coordination. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Juneteenth Festival – Penn Park Madison, Wis. | June 17, 2023 | Staff attended the festival and spoke with attendees regarding the study. No additional comments received from the event. |
| Big Top Circus Parade – Baraboo, Wis. | June 23, 2023 | Staff attended the parade and spoke with attendees regarding the study. No additional comments received from the event. |
| Northside Farmers Market, Madison, Wis. | June 25, 2023 | Venue identified as a location in minority and low-income neighborhood, where also minority and low-income vendors participate. Staff attended the market and spoke with attendees regarding the study. No additional comments received from the event. |
| Wisconsin Farm Tech Days – Baraboo, Wis. | July 18-20, 2023 | Staff attended the event and spoke with attendees regarding the study. No additional comments received from the event. |
| Saturday on the Square Farmers Market – Madison, Wis. | July 22, 2023 | Venue identified as a location where minority and low-income vendors participate. Staff attended the market and spoke with attendees regarding the study. No additional comments received from the event. |
| Best Dam Bike Tour – Baraboo, Wis. | Aug. 8, 2023 | Staff attended the sign in for cyclists and distributed EJ surveys. No additional comments received from the event. |
| Aging and Disability Resource Center – Wisconsin Dells, Wis. | Sept. 19, 2023 | Staff contacted and visited this facility and provided EJ demographic survey flyers. No additional comments received, or actions requested from agency. |

| Meeting/Event/Outreach | Date | Discussion Topics |
|---|----------------|---|
| Wisconsin Dells Food Pantry – Wisconsin Dells, Wis. | Sept. 19, 2023 | Staff contacted and visited this facility and provided EJ demographic survey flyers. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Greater Sandburg Neighborhood Association - Madison | Jan. 4, 2024 | Staff held a virtual meeting with the leadership of the neighborhood association. Staff then followed up via email with additional information, a digital survey and an invitation to upcoming public meetings. Association leader provided general feedback on the project and offered to share upcoming PIM details. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Baraboo Acts Coalition – Baraboo | Jan. 5, 2024 | Staff held a virtual meeting with the leadership of the local non-profit. Staff then followed up via email with additional information, a digital survey and an invitation to upcoming public meetings. Coalition leader offered feedback, including about flooding in her area. See Section 3.13 for more information on floodplains. She invited the project team to attend future community events that her group is involved with. |
| Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County – Madison | Jan. 16, 2024 | Staff held a virtual meeting with a leadership member of the organization. Project team provided a study overview. Leadership member expressed interest in US 151 Interchange as it could positively impact commute for clients and staff. She invited team to consider participation in their Back-to-School event in the future. Staff then followed up via email with additional information, a digital survey and an invitation to upcoming public meetings. |
| Urban League of Greater Madison – Madison | Jan. 19, 2024 | Staff held an in-person meeting with the President/CEO of the organization. The project team provided a study overview. President was happy to hear bypass alternatives were not in consideration. He expressed concern about roadway noise and proving need based on traffic numbers. See Section 3.17 for more information on noise analyses. President invited project team to participate in upcoming Unity Picnic. Staff then followed up via email with additional information, a digital survey and an invitation to upcoming public meetings. |

| Meeting/Event/Outreach | Date | Discussion Topics |
|---|----------------|--|
| North Star Neighborhood Association – Madison | Jan. 23, 2024 | Project staff attended a board meeting for the neighborhood association. Project team delivered a study overview presentation and answered questions. The association was very displeased with current Milwaukee Street bridges over I-39/90 and wanted more information on potential improvements. See Section 3.2.2 for more information on proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Association asked for content to share on social media to spread the word about the project and upcoming PIMS. This content was delivered. Association also invited project team to participate in upcoming community events. Staff followed up with an email with additional information, a digital survey and an invitation to upcoming public meetings. |
| Property owners in regulatory floodplain | Jan. 29, 2024 | WisDOT met with property owners in the regulatory 100-year floodplain potentially impacted by potential increased 100-year flood elevations resulting from flood minimization options. WisDOT discussed potential mitigation measures and future coordination should WisDOT and FHWA select a build alternative as the preferred alternative. See Section 3.13.2 for more information on the flood minimization study. |
| North Star Neighborhood Association - Madison | April 17, 2024 | Project staff were invited back by the group to give a presentation about the project at the annual residents meeting of the North Star Neighborhood. The project team delivered a study overview presentation and answered questions. They also brought along several display boards for residents to see potential impacts to the area near their neighborhood. No additional comments received, or actions requested from organization. |
| Eastmorland Outdoor Market – Madison | May 18, 2024 | Project staff attended the local community outdoor market to meet with community members and discuss the study. An exhibit board was displayed showing the study area. A handout was also available. No additional comments received from the event. |
| WORTStock - Madison | May 19, 2024 | Project staff attended the local community concert to meet with community members and discuss the study. An exhibit board was displayed showing the study area. A handout was also available. No additional comments received from the event. |

5.1.7. Study website

The study website is [I-39/90/94 Study \(wisconsindot.gov\)](https://wisconsindot.gov). The website has information on the study history and status, environmental considerations, public involvement activities and contact information. WisDOT provides study announcements, including PIM announcements via the website and posts PIM materials and presentations. The website provides a link to sign up to receive study updates, as well as a link to provide comments online. WisDOT will continue updating the website with new information throughout the study.

5.2. Agency Coordination

WisDOT coordinates with agencies interested in the I-39/90/94 Corridor Study using FHWA's environmental coordination procedures, as codified in 23 U.S.C. 139. FHWA's coordination procedures provide opportunity for agencies, local officials and others to participate in the environmental review process by providing input on the need for proposed improvements, alternatives being considered, potential impacts, mitigation and other environmental aspects. Lead agencies (FHWA and WisDOT) invite other agencies, local officials and tribal leaders to become Cooperating and Participating Agencies in the environmental review process. Cooperating Agencies have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to the project's environmental impacts. Participating Agencies have an interest in the project. In December 2022, FHWA and WisDOT contacted federal and state regulatory agencies, local officials, and tribes inviting them to be Cooperating and Participating Agencies in the I-39/90/94 Corridor Study. Agencies accepting Cooperating and Participating Agency status are included in Table 5-7. WisDOT continues to forward study information to all federal agencies and tribes as Participating Agencies.

WisDOT prepared a Coordination Plan for Agency and Public Involvement (Coordination Plan), which communicates how and when the lead agencies will obtain public and agency participation in the environmental review process. The Coordination Plan identifies two concurrence points in which Cooperating and Participating Agencies were invited to participate:

- o Project purpose and need and range of alternatives being considered
- o Identification of the preferred alternative

Concurrence on the purpose and need and range of alternatives was completed on Feb. 29, 2024, see Appendix B. The concurrence point informing the agencies of the preferred alternative for the study was completed May 7, 2024, see Appendix B. Each time the Coordination Plan is updated, it is provided to the Cooperating and Participating Agencies and posted on the project website [I-39/90/94 Study \(wisconsindot.gov\)](https://wisconsindot.gov). The most recent revision of the Coordination Plan is April 2024.

Table 5-7: Cooperating and Participating Agencies

| Agency Role | Agency |
|----------------------|--|
| Federal Lead Agency | Federal Highway Administration |
| State Lead Agency | Wisconsin Department of Transportation |
| Cooperating Agency | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| Cooperating Agency | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 |
| Participating Agency | Department of Natural Resources |
| Participating Agency | Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection |
| Participating Agency | Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization |
| Participating Agency | City of Madison |

5.2.1. Early Agency Coordination

WisDOT and FHWA hosted an introductory meeting on Sept. 13, 2022, with potential Cooperating and Participating agencies. The agency meeting provided information presented at PIM #1 as well as an overview of the formal agency review and concurrence process anticipated during development of the EIS. No substantive agency comments were received on the preliminary purpose and need or anticipated alternatives, but agencies inquired about potential right of way impacts, which will be determined during the alternative development process.

FHWA and WisDOT held a second agency coordination meeting with invited Cooperating and Participating Agencies on Jan. 30, 2023, to present the range of alternatives and preliminary impacts associated with mainline and interchange alternatives. WisDOT forwarded summaries of the purpose and need statement and range of alternatives, as well as a draft Coordination Plan and draft Impact Analysis Methodology for a 30-day comment period between April 26, 2023 and May 26, 2023. The USEPA responded they did not have comments on the materials submitted. No other comments were received.

5.2.2. Agency Comments During Public Scoping

As described above, WisDOT received agency comments in response to the NOI published on July 18, 2023. At the federal level, the National Park Service (NPS) informed WisDOT the Ice Age National Scenic Trail crosses the proposed study corridor on local roads at four locations in Sauk, Columbia and Dane counties, and requested the study evaluate impacts, including maintaining safe access for hikers, during all phases of the study. Where safe access cannot be maintained, WisDOT will determine a reasonable temporary trail re-route working with Ice Age National Scenic Trail personnel to establish.

USEPA provided comments on a wide range of considerations for the Draft EIS including alternatives, environmental justice, children's health, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, bridge demolition and construction noise, historic, architectural, archaeological and cultural resources, terrestrial resources, federally listed species, aquatic resources, cumulative impacts analysis and agency consultation.

At the state level, WDNR outlined its expectations that WisDOT follow the WisDOT/WDNR Cooperative Agreement procedures to address any resource issues or concerns identified while developing the study. WDNR requested

water quality (stormwater) considerations be included within the EIS and that the Transportation Construction General Permit (TCGP) be added to the list of anticipated permits and authorizations. WDNR noted NR 151 water quality standards, as required under the TCGP, should be considered when evaluating project alternatives, particularly at new and reconfigured interchanges. No other agency comments were received.

At the local level, four municipalities expressed their preferences on interchange alternatives:

Village of DeForest

The village offered its overall support for the I-39/90/94 Corridor Study as a means to improve this major transportation corridor in Wisconsin. Regarding interchanges, the village noted its preferred alternatives as follows: US 51 Interchange - Diverging Diamond, WIS 19 Interchange - U-Ramp and County V Interchange - Diverging Diamond. The village also requested a multi-use trail along the north side of WIS 19, new interstate bridge overpasses from Daentl Road to Pepsi Way and from Daley Road to River Road and the removal of the existing River Road overpass.

WisDOT held follow up meetings with the village to present its recommended preferred alternative at interchanges, which the village supports, see Appendix B. As noted in Section 2.3.8, if anticipated development occurs at County V, the developer would privately fund interchange reconstruction to accommodate future traffic. Additional discussion regarding local roads and bicycle and pedestrian facilities are discussed in Section 3.2.2.

City of Wisconsin Dells

The city of Wisconsin Dells recommended alternative #1 (Diamond with realigned County H) to WIS 13 and alternative #1 (Split Diamond) to US 12/16 (*Note: Alternative #1 at US 12/WIS 16 is not a Split Diamond. It is a Diamond interchange. See Appendix B and exhibit for Alternative 1 at US 12/WIS 16*). WisDOT held follow up meetings with the city to present its recommended preferred alternative at interchanges, which recommends a trumpet interchange at WIS 13 and a diamond interchange at US 12/WIS 16, both of which accommodate existing and future traffic and address safety issues.

Village of Lake Delton

The village of Lake Delton supports Diverging Diamond interchanges at the US 12 and WIS 23 interchanges. WisDOT held follow up meetings with the village to present its recommended preferred alternative at each interchange. WisDOT recommends a diamond interchange at WIS 23 because existing and future traffic does not warrant a diverging diamond. WisDOT's recommended preferred alternative at US 12 is a Diverging Diamond.

City of Madison

The city of Madison provided comments on interchange and Interstate alternatives. At the US 151 interchange, city staff favored Alternative 5 (6-lane High Crossing Boulevard) because it achieves the greatest number of city objectives. The city also noted Alternative 5A (East Washington Avenue-Freeway Connection – *recently revised as Alternative 6*) does not achieve as many objectives, but if selected asked to preserve Alternative 5 features by providing an urban connection to East Washington Avenue to slow traffic and provide pedestrian and bicycle connections from East Washington Avenue to High Crossing Boulevard. The city noted that Alternative 3 (East Washington Avenue-South) is a reasonable alternative.

The city of Madison’s analysis of a new interchange at Hoepker Road noted the benefits of access to employment and regional medical facilities and a retail center. The city’s analysis of a new interchange at Milwaukee Street noted the interchange has been planned for two decades and is necessary for commercial and employment uses envisioned in local plans.

The city does not favor capacity expansion on the Interstate mainline, but if capacity is incorporated into the preferred alternative, city staff recommends limited measures such as managed lanes rather than traditional lane addition. The city requested WisDOT to revise its noise policy because the current policy results in noise mitigation not being provided.

The city of Madison also commented the Interstate forms a barrier between central Madison and its growth areas to the east. The city commented that generally, all Interstate crossings for motor vehicles should provide all ages and abilities bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The city also provided a map of requested dedicated pedestrian/bicycle crossings at locations across the study corridor.

WisDOT held follow up meetings with the city to present its recommended preferred alternatives for the Interstate and interchanges. The city subsequently indicated support for the Directional alternative at the US 151/High Crossing Boulevard Interchange, see Appendix B. Coordination is ongoing with the city to further refine the preferred alternatives along the Interstate. WisDOT’s noise policy is established, and noise analyses will determine where barriers mitigating impacts are feasible and reasonable. Additional discussion regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities are discussed in Section 3.2.2

5.2.3. Coordination with Native American Tribes

WisDOT sent emails and letters to tribes on June 20, 2022, informing them of the study, requested early comment on the study and invited tribes to become a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Forest County Potawatomi Community identified concerns about disturbance of lands previously not impacted by the present right of way and wishes to remain as a consulting party, see Appendix I.

WisDOT also notified tribes of public involvement meetings and invited tribes to agency coordination meetings described above. FHWA invited tribes to be Participating Agencies on Dec. 9, 2022. No responses were received. WisDOT also invited the Ho-Chunk nation to participate in the BAC described above.

WisDOT continues to coordinate with the Ho-Chunk Nation and last met with the tribe on Dec. 6, 2023. At the meeting, WisDOT discussed study alternatives, historic and culturally sensitive sites, and coordinating potential real-estate transactions in relation to tribal properties in Sauk and Juneau counties. The build alternatives would not impact properties in Juneau County and WisDOT is continuing coordination for potential property acquisition in Sauk County. The Sauk County property is not held in trust. In addition, WisDOT provided an overview of tentative project timelines, should the project move into the design phase. WisDOT invited all tribes, including the Ho-Chunk Nation to the PIMs and the public hearing on the Draft EIS. No additional comments were received. WisDOT will continue coordination with the Ho-Chunk Nation during final design regarding the potential property acquisition in Sauk County.

5.2.4. Section 106 Consultation

WisDOT and FHWA have consulted with SHPO as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The SHPO concurred on Feb. 13, 2024 and Aug. 29, 2024 that the study alternatives would not have an adverse effect on historic properties, see Section 3.20 and Section 3.21 and Appendix I.

5.3. Permits and Other Authorizations

Permits and authorizations anticipated for the project include those listed in Table 5-8. FHWA and WisDOT will also work with Cooperating and Participating Agencies if additional permits or authorizations are required under these or other authorities.

Table 5-8: Permits and Other Authorizations

| Permit/Authorization | Approving Agencies or Agencies Consulted | For More Information See |
|---|---|---|
| Section 402, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Transportation Corridor General Permit | Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources | Section 3.23.4 - Construction Water Quality/Erosion Control |
| Section 404 Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | Section 3.12 - Wetlands |
| 44 CFR Part 60 Conditional Letter of Map Revision and Letter of Map Revision | Federal Emergency Management Agency | Section 3.13 - Floodplains |
| Section 4(f) of US DOT Act of 1966 (23 U.S.C. 138 and 49 U.S.C. 303) | Officials with Jurisdiction (varies) and FHWA | Section 4 - Section 4(f) Evaluation |
| Section 6(f) Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (54 U.S.C. 200302) | Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources/National Park Service | Section 4 - Section 4(f) Evaluation |
| Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. 300101-307108) | Wisconsin State Historical Society | Section 3.20 and 3.21 - Historic and Archaeological Resources |
| Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Section 3.15 - Threatened and Endangered Species |
| Compatibility Determination for Baraboo River Waterfowl Production Area per the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Section 4 – Section 4(f) |