

Chapter 5

Summary

The North-South Expressway between I-220 and the Arkansas state line is projected as an interstate type highway as part of the National Highway System. Planning of this highway has been authorized under the Intermodal Strategic Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

The goal of the Corridor Study was to establish purpose and need for the I-20 to I-220 segment of the North-South Expressway.

The Corridor Study included four (4) major tasks:

1. Collection and documentation of currently available data related to existing environmental conditions within the study area and the identification of sources for future in-depth environmental evaluation.
2. A comprehensive traffic study and analysis identifying projected traffic demand for the year 2020 within the study area between I-220 and the Arkansas state line and to evaluate the traffic impacts associated with the proposed North-South Expressway in the area transportation system.
3. Identification of alternate corridor alignments for the North-South Expressway within the study area along with plan-profiles of each alternative corridor alignment were prepared for comparative cost estimate purposes.
4. A public involvement program which included meeting with City and Parish officials, establishment of and meeting with a TAC, assist in the conduct of Workshops and Public Information Meetings and to receive and document citizen comments on the study content and preference of alternative corridor alignments.

The Traffic Study and Analysis determined the projected North-South traffic demand within the study area required major roadway improvements by the year 2020. Several area highways including La 1, US 71, La 3, La 173, La 538 and La 2, are projected to experience congestion and unacceptable levels-of-service (LOS) D,E, or F by year 2020 without the proposed North-South Expressway. The proposed North-South Expressway will eliminate or alleviate many of the projected future capacity deficiencies and provide improved traffic service on area highways. The proposed North-South Expressway should result in significant benefits at the local, regional and national levels. See Appendix Item 1, Traffic Analysis, Chapter 4, Summary of Finding, for detailed outline of findings and benefits.

Based upon the Traffic Analysis report, the projected traffic demand shows a purpose and need for the North-South Expressway between I-20 to I-220 and between I-220 to the Arkansas State line.

Environmental Impact Study shall include preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws. A Line and Grade Study, in conjunction with the EIS, should provide an in-depth engineering study to identify a more exact roadway location.

Environmental related data collected as a part of the Corridor Studies will be studied in greater depth with specific evaluation of environmental impacts related to the roadway locations identified under the line and grade study.

Citizen comments favor the project concept for a major interstate type highway between I-220 and the Arkansas state line. Although citizen comments did express a preference for one of the three alternative corridors, this study is not structured to make a recommendation for a specific alignment.