

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) held eight public meetings in May and November 2001 to seek public involvement in the development of Segment of Independent Utility number 9 of Interstate 69 (I-69) extending from Hernando, Miss., to Millington, Tenn. This section is a part of the larger I-69 endeavor that extends from Port Huron in Michigan to the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas.

Meetings were held in Millington, Memphis and Collierville, Tenn., and Hernando, Miss., in May 2001, and in Whitehaven, Frayser, and Arlington, Tenn., and Byhalia, Miss., in November 2001. Over 1,300 people attended the meetings and almost 800 comments were received.

Two main corridors within Segment 9 were presented to area residents, Corridor A, which would utilize much of existing Interstates 240 and 55 through Memphis and Corridor B, which would utilize State Route 385 to the east of Memphis.

The results of the May 2001 meetings are available on the TDOT web site located at [www.tdot.state.tn.us](http://www.tdot.state.tn.us) under Hot Projects. At the November 2001 public meetings, the proposed alignments for study were presented on aerial photographs showing 1000-foot wide study corridors. About 600 citizens attended the meetings and gave 200 comments. We would like to thank those residents who participated in the public meetings. The issues identified by area residents are important and will be considered during the project development process.

During the meetings, citizens listed increased economic development, most direct route, cost, fewer people affected, and increased tourism as primary reasons for supporting Corridor A. Others were in support of Corridor B listing increased economic development, eased congestion, and the need for an east-west connector in Mississippi as endorsements. Concerns associated with both routes include increased air and noise pollution, the lowering of property values, negative impacts to neighborhoods, schools, wetlands, historical and archaeological resources, safety of children, and potential for creating a drug traffic corridor. All of these issues will be considered in the preparation of the environmental and location studies for Segment 9.

Alternatives A-5 and A-8 are being eliminated from further study due to lack of support at the public meetings. Eliminating these alternatives does not preclude the use of Corridor B as a viable alternative or limit any alternatives east of Millington being studied for Segment 8 of I-69, which extends from Dyersburg to Millington.

The remaining proposed alternative corridors, as well as combinations of proposed alternative corridors will be studied in the environmental impact statement. The social, economic and environmental impacts of each alternative will be evaluated, and a comparison of the alternatives will be made to determine which alternative(s) best meets the purpose and need of the project and is in the best overall public interest. This information will be documented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which will be made available to the public for comment. The target completion date for the Draft EIS is late summer 2002.

For more information on Segment 9, please visit the Tennessee Department of Transportation web site at [www.tdot.state.tn.us](http://www.tdot.state.tn.us)

