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I-10 STUDY - BATON ROUGE
PHASE I
FINAL REPORT
APPENDIX 2
Public Involvement Documentation

I-10 Study - Baton Rouge
(Mississippi River Bridge to I-10/I-12 Split)
East Baton Rouge Parish
Project No. 700-29-0026
F.A.P. No. NHI-10-3(212)155



**I-10 STUDY - BATON ROUGE
FINAL REPORT
APPENDIX 2**

- A. Minutes of First Steering Committee Meeting
 - B. Summary of I-10 Meeting Results
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- * All completed and returned survey forms have been provided to LaDOTD's Planning Division under separate cover.

**S.P. No. 700-29-0026
F.A.P. No. NHI-10-3(212)
I-10 Study (Baton Rouge)
Mississippi River Bridge - I-12
Route I-10
East Baton Rouge Parish**

**Minutes of the Initial Meeting of the
Intermodal/Involved Agency Committee
July 11, 1995**

The first meeting of the Intermodal/Involved Agency Committee on the I-10 study was held on July 11, 1995 at the Louisiana Municipal Association Building at 700 N. Tenth Street. A list of all attendees as well as handouts provided at the meeting are attached.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Coan Bueche, Chief, LaDOTD Planning Division, who provided an introduction and overview of the committee's role and involvement during the study as follows:

- This is the first Major Investment Study (MIS) to be conducted by LaDOTD. Active participation by Committee members is encouraged. Members do not have to be "experts" to speak-up and state their opinions.
- The committee will be called the "MIS Committee."
- The Committee will provide advice and review for the Study. There will be two formal meetings and mail-out information for review and suggestions during the Study.
- The MIS should go beyond simply choosing modes of travel. It should clearly articulate what the problem to be solved is, what is causing it, what are the alternative solutions, and what are the preferred solutions that would be incorporated into a Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- The following committee agencies were not represented at the meeting; Capital Transportation Corporation (CTC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Transit Authority (FTA), Baton Rouge Mayor's office, and the Baton Rouge City Police Department.

Mr. Bueche then introduced Mrs. Julie Hoover of Parsons Brinckerhoff who provided a summary of the MIS process, current status of MIS regulations, and Parsons Brinckerhoff's national role in MIS's.

- Parsons Brinckerhoff is currently under contract to the National Transportation Institute for developing the guidelines for MIS's and providing training for the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Authority for Major Investment Studies throughout the country.
- Coan Bueche's definition of an MIS was on-target. When Drafting ISTEA, Congress felt it was prudent when spending hundreds of millions of dollars on transportation facilities, to take time up-front to address all possible solutions, not just from a mobility perspective but from a broad range of transportation options. This should include both positive and negative impacts on economic development, land-use, air quality and the trade-offs involved before decisions are made. Also, everyone affected by the transportation facilities should be involved in the decision making process. This is why we can't just add additional lanes without a very comprehensive study of the options, and the inclusion of the project in the area's financially constrained long-range plan.
- A special emphasis has to be put on Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) reduction strategies for areas that are in non-attainment.
- There are hundreds of MIS's underway in the country now. In some cases, the MPO's are taking the lead.

- For effective public involvement, public participants must be educated as to what MIS's are and how they will be used.
- FHWA and FTA are still trying to inform their division and regional people about MIS requirements.
- Urges committee to give inter-agency cooperation a sincere try. It is working well in other areas. Also, put agreements in writing.
- One size does not fit all. MIS procedures are not restrictive. If transit is not realistic, it does not have to be an alternate. Alternates should be rigorously screened then narrowed down.
- Public involvement techniques should be innovative. Break out of the traditional public hearing mind-set.
- Alternatives should flow from the "Purpose and Need" Statement. This can avoid protests and litigation.

Coan Bueche then summarized that the LaDOTD cannot just go out and add capacity on I-10. An MIS must be completed and the project placed in the area's financially constrained long range plan, that a MIS is a Federal requirement which documents the planning process. Also we're doing the MIS because it is a good planning process.

Chris Roberie of the LaDEQ inquired as to whether the MIS process is part of the ISTEA regulations and statutes, what constitutes a MIS, and whether this is the first MIS in Louisiana. Julie Hoover advised that yes, the MIS is part of the ISTEA regulations, and resulted from Congress' mandate that the FHWA and FTA merge their planning process. As to what constitutes a "major project", Julie Hoover noted that for transit projects it used to be for projects over \$100 million, but that now the threshold is around \$33 million. There is flexibility in the definition, and that consideration has to be given to the alternatives and potential impacts.

Coan Bueche advised that the first MIS in Louisiana was the Canal St. Streetcar Project in New Orleans.

Huey Dugas of the Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) then provided an overview of the project and its relationship with the region's long range plans. Significant points were noted as follows:

- The first significant transportation planning effort for Baton Rouge was the Wilbur Smith study which dates track to 1965-1967 time frame.
- The Wilbur Smith study included 1965 ADT flow volumes and travel desire lines. Although the interstate (I-10/I-12) is absent it is obvious from the travel desire lines how the interstate location evolved.
- The next significant planning efforts occurred in the late 1980's. The LaDOTD decided to update the 1965-1967 Wilbur Smith transportation plan, and the City of Baton Rouge decided to separately under take a more comprehensive plan which became known as the Horizon Plan.
- Each planning effort was pursued. Early coordination between the two plans resulted in the Horizon Plan including a transportation element that would be closely coordinated with the LaDOTD's transportation plan update.
- It was also decided that Wilbur Smith's Associates, which was the firm under contract for the Horizon Plan, would prepare the future growth scenarios for Baton Rouge.
- This became very important because development of the growth scenarios for the Horizon Plan resulted in the land use data and variables that would then be used in the TRANPLAN computer model.
- The "Land Use Element for Baton Rouge" from the Horizon Plan was reviewed and a number of the scenarios presented:

- The Existing Trends Growth Scenario, which showed growth occurring along major corridors such as Airline Hwy, Greenwell Springs Rd., Florida Blvd., I-10, I-12, and College. Growth to the south is especially evident.
- The In-Fill Development and Redevelopment Growth Scenario, which showed concentrated future growth near the center of town with some growth on Airline, Florida, Airline and I-12, Essen I-10 and I-12, and parts of the CBD to the left near the river.
- The Transportation Corridor Growth Scenario which projected growth outward along the major transportation corridors.
- The Growth Area Scenario, which identified some core areas and projected growth radiating outward.
- The City of Baton Rouge and Parish selected the "In-Fill Development and Redevelopment Growth Scenario." This scenario was then used as a guide to the future growth of Baton Rouge and to develop the land use data and variables for the TRANPLAN model for the transportation plan.
- In the early 1990's, the transportation plan update was contracted to the RBA group. This update, which utilized the "In-Fill Development and Redevelopment Growth Scenario" presented problems in that it was not consistent with past and current trends in Baton Rouge.
- After discussions with the City, it was determined that only changes to the traffic zones within a planning district would be allowed. The overall growth within a district had to be maintained. This resulted in growth forecasts being pushed out to the southern and eastern edges of the districts, which represents the model as it is being used today.
- The RBA Group transportation plan update listed all projects in the Horizon Plan. A total of 44 were tested against the model and all but three projects survived. They were documented by RBA and had City & Parish concurrence.
- The transportation plan update, which is referred to as the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan Update, was completed by RBA in April 1992.
- The plan included a recommendation of 118 projects to be added to the Baton Rouge network over the next 20 years at a cost of approximately \$1 billion. Projects include the I-10 corridor, especially from the bridge to the I-10/I-12 split which is shown in Stage 3. This represents the financially unconstrained plan for the area.
- In December of 1994, a contract for preparing the financially constrained transportation plan was begun. This update of the unconstrained plan (April 1992) was contracted to Neel Schaffer, Inc. which had acquired the Baton Rouge office of the RBA group.
- The constrained plan represents some \$500 million in projects and utilizes a funding commitment of \$25 to \$30 million annually for the first 10 years and an average of \$12 million per year for the second 10 years.
- A map showing the projects which comprise the financially constrained plan was displayed and the difference between it and the one for the unconstrained plan was noted.
- A map showing the air quality during peak hours was also displayed and the problems present on the interstate corridor in the form of both VOC and NOX emissions were noted.
- The presence of the I-10 corridor project was identified in the RBA Groups 1992 update (financially unconstrained plan) and also in the LaDOTD's Intermodal plan. Within the Intermodal Plan, the widening of I-10 to 5 lanes in Baton Rouge is identified under Tier 2 programs.
- In closing, a network map showing the level of service of all corridors ran against an assignment of the existing demand, land use, and population variables represented to date was displayed, which represents the projects in the financially constrained plan. The projected levels of service in 2015

show level F in significant corridors. It was noted that present levels of service will get much worse and that the financially constrained plan doesn't come close to meeting the demands.

Mr. Bueche then introduced Mr. Chris Roberie with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, who provided the following points relative to air quality issues pertaining to transportation projects in the Baton Rouge area:

- Baton Rouge is classified as a serious ozone non-attainment area for air quality. Historically, the program has tried to address the problem by regulating industrial sources, not mobile sources. The Clean Air Act, however, mandates the implementation of programs to deal with automobile emissions as they relate to ozone.
- Highway projects have to be consistent with the State Implementation Plan to reduce emissions and control ozone problems. This has been very difficult here and around the nation. As a consequence, the EPA has gone in and amended the Federal Transportation Conformity Rule. A number of amendments are being proposed and the La DEQ is watching the situation very closely. It is anticipated that the regulations will be eased up a little.
- To address the ozone non-attainment problem, hydrocarbon emissions have to be reduced, and until recently, it was thought that nitrogen oxide emissions had to be reduced as well.
- Based on sophisticated modeling, it has been decided to target reduction of the hydrocarbon emissions and not nitrogen oxide. This will require obtaining a waiver from the EPA which will hopefully be received by the end of the year. This will greatly aid dealing with air quality conformity within the transportation projects.

Mr. Bueche noted that this is good news. In the past increased operating speeds, which reduced the hydrocarbon emissions resulted in an increase in NOX emissions, which made it just about impossible to get a project to conform. Having to deal just with the hydrocarbon or VOC issue will make transportation planning within conformance much easier.

Coan Bueche then introduced Mr. Kent Israel, Head of Road Design for the LaDOTD, who gave an overview of current improvement projects, which will affect the Baton Rouge network, and the I-10 Study Corridor. A copy of the summary of the significant projects, "Future Projects In The Metropolitan Area", as well as a copy of the LaDOTD's 7/5/95 proposed construction program, are provided as attachments. Several of the key projects relative to the I-10 Corridor are noted as follows:

- There are 14 projects underway in East Baton Rouge with a value of approximately \$22.1 million. This includes a project on I-10 known as the "truck ramp" problem. Also, there will be a project to add an additional lane in each direction from Acadian to the I-10/I-12 Interchange and extending to Airline. This project will include complete pavement replacement. Four lanes (2 East bound and 2 West bound) will be maintained throughout the project. Total project construction cost is over \$30 million.
- There are a number of projects that will improve traffic operations in the Baton Rouge area including capacity improvements to arterials that interchange with I-10 and I-12 in the vicinity of the Study Corridor.
- An Incident Management Procedure will be employed during the I-10/I-12 reconstruction. This will include standby wreckers to quickly remove accident vehicles, public information and press notices regarding construction activities.

Mr. Bueche then noted that the next agenda item was a description of present problems along the I-10 corridor that would be presented by Chris Orillion of the LaDOTD. Mr. Orillion provided an overview of previous and present problems in the corridor as follows:

- Between Los Angeles and Jacksonville, Florida, some of the more serious problems along I-10 are in Baton Rouge where it is reduced to one lane on the Mississippi River Bridge. The section of I-10 from College to the I10/I12 split now functions at LOS F with a V/C Ratio of 1.01. By 2020, it will be even worse, and the V/C ratio will be 1.48 by then.
- There are problems with the deficient portion of I-110 and the junction with the I-10 Bridge. There are lane deficiencies compounded by the Washington St. ramp. There are also capacity problems on the I-10 Bridge resulting from lane problems on the East approach.
- There is a lack of frontage roads on I-110 and no way to divert traffic during incidents.
- The bypass study recently done showed a reduction in traffic by 20% on the bridge, but only 8% on the main lanes of I-10 at the I-10/I-12 split.
- Incidents along the corridor are a major contributor of congestion. An Incident Management system would help. Rubbernecking by passersby makes the problem worse.

Mr. Bueche then introduced Mr. Bryan Davis of Parsons Brinckerhoff, who is the Project Manager for the I-10 study. Mr. Davis led an open discussion of questions and answers centering around problems on the I-10 corridor and suggestions for potential solutions. The questions and responses are summarized as follows:

Question: Will additional lanes solve all of the problems? What about College Ave.; and the development taking place there? Comments or opinions?

Response: I use I-10 everyday. Most of the problems are caused by rubbernecking. Maybe screens would help. Also, the interstate coming into one lane is a problem, which is further complicated by the Washington St. exit.

Question: Do the people that use the port talk to you about specific problems along I-10?

Response: Not so much getting to the port, its mainly going back and forth. Accidents and rubbernecking make things worse. Directional signs to the port would help.

Question: Other thoughts?

Response: There are a lot of trucks in Baton Rouge that take up a lot of potential volume. If they could take another route, it would improve capacity on our highways.

Question: What do you think Cathy?

Response: (Cathy Gautreaux) We don't want to be part of the problem. If we had an alternate route, we would take it. The inefficiency hurts us too. There is not another route. We are open to suggestions.

Response: The "high pass" was conceived to add capacity by separating through traffic from local traffic and eliminate truck problems. There was an earlier study started, however, there were environmental and constructibility problems and the study did not go forward.

Question: (Cathy Geautreaux) How much of peak traffic is through traffic?

Response: We did some roadside surveys. External trips are 15-20% maybe higher. The database of the survey results can be queried for some of the data.

Response: This is a key question. It is essential to know the types of trips in order to come up with a plan.

Comments from the Chamber of Commerce (Don Powers):

- One lane exits are a problem, especially at Essen Lane. Traffic backs up into the main lanes into the I-10/I-12 Split. The same is true at Dalrymple and Acadian. As far as short term solutions, eliminating these one lane exits would be an improvement.

- The long range solution in the viewpoint of the chamber, is the Bypass around the southeast quadrant.

Question: How does the I-10 MIS tie in with the Bypass MIS?

Response: (Coan Bueche) The committees will be the same for both projects. Consultants and the projects will have to be coordinated. It would be desirable for one consultant to do both studies, but there is a consultant selection process required by law. Both projects will affect each other. The Bypass would reduce trips on I-10 by 8%. No matter what you do with the Bypass, you will still have a big problem with the I-10 Corridor.

Response: The model shows that one project is not an alternative to the other. They are independent projects. Its more of a timing problem. Which project should be done first.

Question: (FHWA representatives) Was there a previous study? If so, when? Was there anything that can be used to answer some of the questions?

Response: There was a previous study but it was halted and not completed. It will provide some information that can be used relative to exit ramps, exit lanes and numbers of lanes. It primarily showed lane requirements, preliminary sections and conceptual geometrics.

Question: Will the additional lane from I-12 to College and the truck ramp improvements solve the problems and I-10?

Response: No. They will help; however.

Question: Was there any consideration of fly-overs to move traffic from the College interchange area to I-12 without having to merge with I-10 traffic?

Response: Nick Kalivoda has some concepts but they are quite expensive and require a lot of right-of-way. This may be looked into at a later time. Also, there were some plans for modifications to the College Drive exit ramp and interchange. They did not progress beyond the environmental phase.

Question: It seems that many of the problems causing congestion in the corridor are occurring outside of the study area, i.e., on I-12, west of the bridge etc. The problems being caused outside of the study area must also be looked into. Also, the incident management program that is being negotiated with Urban Systems, for implementation when the I-10 Truck Ramp and I-10/I-12 widening construction starts, should help solve some of the problems.

Response: Those problem areas, outside the study area, when they are solved, will only deliver more volume to the corridor and this has to be considered in assessing what the traffic volumes will be within the corridor.

Question: Have there been any thoughts about additional frontage roads or modifications to the existing frontage roads?

Response: The problem is there is no way to connect them. There is a 2 1/2 mile gap. The Reichler Research Park is being developed today, and will bring in a lot of high-tech companies. This will increase activity in the College Drive area. This will be a major problem area, not to mention the current commercial development and hospitals.

Question: Can the College Drive Interchange handle this?

Response: It can't handle the existing traffic. CRPC is developing an RFP for a light rail system to connect some of these uses. The (I-10) Study should address a transit alternative to address some of these concerns.

Question: What would it take to make transit work. If given a blank check, what would have to be done to encourage people to leave their cars at home or at a park and ride lot, and take some form of public transportation to work?

Response: Park and ride lots at Denham Springs, Westover, Baker, the Scottlandville area, Gonzales and the border between Ascension and East Baton Rouge Parish. Also, increased frequency of service would be required.

Question: How frequent would the service have to be?

Response: About every 10 minutes.

Question: How many people that are presently using their cars would switch to busses?

Response: Let's look at it this way. If all of the park and ride lots were built and used to their full capacity, you will only remove 750 trips out of a projected 140,000 ADT. There is nothing that can be done with transit that will change the level of service because the level of service is so high over F and there are not enough trips.

Response: You may be able to reduce the size of the project through transit use.

Question: What is the status of van pool activity in the area?

Response: There is a regional ride - sharing program that the CRPC is going to expand and that will include van pools. Currently, the CRPC is in the process of advertising to hire someone to head up the ride - share program.

Response: Many of the items being discussed such as increased transit service, van pools, etc, are single occupancy vehicle reduction strategies which will be looked at within the congestion management system portion of the study.

Question: Has there been any discussion of compressed work weeks or staggered work hours?

Response: Woodward-Clyde has just completed a study dealing with these items.

Question: Will these measures help? Will they help reduce peak hour traffic?

Response: Some agencies are already doing these things, but the bridge is clogged up between 3:00p.m. and 6:00p.m. Some of this is going on but not enough.

Question: Is there opportunity for further coordination within state government, banks, hospitals, etc?

Response: This need to be examined along with such things as telecommuting.

Question: What is the status of the Bypass?

Response: Nine responses were received and will be evaluated. A shortlist is a month to 6 weeks away. They are probably a year away from a contract. Maybe 6 months.

Question: Could trucks be denied access during certain times of the day? i.e., Peak hours?

Response: Interstate truckers know how congested I-10 in Baton Rouge is and they avoid it at all cost. Most that come through have destinations in the area. They have to meet service demands. Even if you excluded trucks and reduced the problem 2-3%, what have you accomplished but to hurt the trucking industry that pays significant taxes. Also, AAA has looked at lane restrictions and found that they increase accidents. Trucks have to make deliveries and there are no logical alternative routes. Also, we badly need an incident management system. The implementation phase is underway.

Question: Is there a way to discourage deliveries during peak periods and to encourage drivers to route through Baton Rouge during non-peak periods?

Response: The industry already tries to do these things. The problem is customer demands do not always allow them. It also goes back to the problem that there is no alternate route for through trucks. The amount of through truck traffic has to be determined to justify impact of trucks.

Question: Could off-peak deliveries be made at a reduced rate than peak hour deliveries?

Response: That would be difficult. If it is cost effective, the companies may consider it. Whatever is done must be cost effective. A lot of deliveries are made during off peak times and at night.

Response: It appears that the Baton Rouge area has a much higher percentage of trucks than a lot of other areas. This may be due to the types of industries and facilities in the area.

Response: The truck percentage in Baton Rouge is high, somewhere between 19% and 25%.

Question: Again, the issue becomes what percentage of the truck traffic would bypass Baton Rouge if possible, and what is local truck delivery traffic that would have to be in the corridor anyway.

Response: We did some surveys in 1989 or 1990 that may provide some information. There were some 17,000 surveys which can be queried various ways in the database. From the surveys we know where an external to external trip entered the city, where it left, what time of day and what type of vehicle it was. Also, LaDOTD has permanent classification counters to determine percentage of trucks.

Response: (Cathy Gautreaux) There has been some Foundation Research on the trucking industry and we'll be glad to see what research is available especially on the southeast I-10 corridor. Maybe this study should look into this information.

Question: Are you trying to narrow down the congestion problems on I-10?

Response: Yes. One of the tasks within the MIS is to identify where the problems are, and what is causing them so that the solutions can be directly targeted toward them.

Question: Is there anyway to control the problems through zoning? Bluebonnet is growing into a major problem area. So is East Baton Rouge Parish. Is "Infill Growth a reality?"

Response: (Ellen Miller, Baton Rouge Planning Commission) In February 1994, amendments to the rural zoning regulations were initiated. These amendments remove commercial and multi-family usage from all rural areas. Presently the land use plan is being adjusted to reflect actual uses via surveys. This will definitely impact growth trends and force the "InFill" growth scenario, forcing commercial and high density growth within the urban central core.

Comments: Education (school problems) is forcing growth outside of East Baton Rouge Parish. The main capacity problem is on I-10 and it is due to through traffic.

Question: Why do you think it's through traffic?

Response: People living in Ascension Parish, working at Dow, Exxon, and across the river in West Baton Rouge. Also a lot of East-West traffic from Jacksonville to L.A. It's because we have one bridge that crosses the Mississippi River and people have to use it.

Question: What you are saying is that if the through trips went somewhere else, we would not have a problem in the I-10 Corridor?

Response: Yes, HNTB did a study about 4 years ago that showed only 14,000 people crossed a line into the downtown area. We don't have that many people in downtown Baton Rouge. The traffic on I-10 is either generated some place else, because it's not coming to downtown.

Question: What are you calling downtown?

Response: Acadian Throughway to here. North/South would be the Capitol area to I-10.

Question: What about LSU?

Response: LSU is a major problem. When school is in session we have transportation problems everywhere. Also, Livingston Parish is growing rapidly, due to people moving from East Baton Rouge. They are commuting to the plants, and all the way from Hammond and Slidell.

Question: Is growth to the East a problem?

Response: Yes - Job markets and service industry workers are having to cross the bridge.

Question: If this is the cause of the problem, what is the solution?

Response: HNTB's Study shows a 20% reduction on the bridge and 8% reduction on I-10 at the I-10/I-12 split.

Question: Don, why don't you believe those numbers?

Response: They should be just higher. Look at the traffic in the afternoon. It stops on the bridge and the merge of I-110 with I-10. It is not coming from downtown. I-110 backs up at I-10 only because I-10 is full.

Comment: The Bypass Study showed that there is a repository of demand. There is this thing called "Principal of Triple Conversion" that if you increase capacity or increase travel time speeds within a particular corridor, trips will converge on that corridor from three different sources; other routes, other times of the day and other modes. If a Bypass was provided it may only provide short term relief to the I-10 Corridor, but maybe some increase in the network mobility. It isn't necessarily increasing the number of trips of the number of cars out there, but when they travel and how far they travel that causes traffic jams.

Comment: There is a lot of property in West Baton Rouge that has not developed but in the future it is going to. This may pull jobs to that side of the river.

Comment: (Frank Graski, FHWA) In theory, the Bypass is great and it would help to some degree. However, history of bypasses in undeveloped areas shows that they move problems and relocate businesses that come at the expense of vacancies in areas that already have the infrastructure to support them.

Coan Bueche then introduced Nick Kalivoda from the LaDOTD, who provided a summary of the previous planning efforts on the I-10 corridor as follows:

- The first request in the files, looked at providing 2 lane ramps at College Drive for the westbound moment from College Drive to I-10.
- This prompted further studies including the 1984 HDR Safety Study which developed a masterplan and included stripping improvements on the bridge, barrier rail modifications and major geometric changes involving reconstruction.
- This led to the DMJM study for improvements to the I-10/I-110 interchange and I-10 corridor. The study encountered major constructibility problems with the "High Pass" concept. Additionally from an operational aspect trying to fit in the splits to both the "High-Pass" and then the I-10/I-110 interchange resulted in very short merge distances that created problems. The third major problem was how to maintain traffic during reconstruction. Essentially, these problems halted the study.
- Another study was done internally by the LaDOTD which presented a separation of through traffic from local traffic.

Further questions and comments concerning the previous studies followed. Key points of discussion were:

- Concern was expressed during the prior DMJM Study relative to closing the Washington St. exit ramp. Also, there was a public meeting held during the study that was set up by the Downtown Development District. There was discussions as to whether or not the meeting was transcribed. It was noted that efforts to uncover transcripts of the meeting or list of attendees would be made by the consultant, since this meeting included individuals representing interests on both the Washington St. exit and historic Beauregard Town.
- It was asked as to what tradeoffs were made between the DMJM study and the subsequent in-house LaDOTD study. Mr. Kalivoda noted that basically tradeoffs were more environmental impacts due to right-of-way acquisition needs.
- It was also noted that the elevated through traffic alternative would potentially present problems for emergency vehicle access.

Chris Roberie of the LaDEQ noted that he had seen some recent modeling data that suggests that there maybe some carbon monoxide omissions problems in the corridor. Further traffic concentration in the corridor would present further problems with this issue.

Questions were raised regarding the comparative costs between the "High Pass" and the ByPass. Additionally, apparent opposition to any major right - of- way acquisition between Washington St. and to I-10/I-110 interchange was noted due to large number of land owners and citizens that would be impacted.

Bryan Davis provided an overview of the MIS process as it pertains to this phase of the study and in what areas the Intermodal/Involved Agency Committee will be involved. Additionally, discussions centered around how the improvements that will be recommended for further evaluations will become part of the financially constrained long range plan.

Virgil Page (FHWA) noted that the purpose behind the MIS process is to keep from developing detailed engineering and environmental documents for projects and then have these documents become obsolete. If a final EIS is going to be done, there needs to be a fairly high level of confidence that the project will proceed within a relatively short time frame.

Further, it was noted that the project's focus should be on what can be done in the near future utilizing low cost programs such as incident management.

In closing, it was noted that the financial feasibility of any project is a major consideration, especially given the systems' present maintenance needs and the current government theme of program reductions.

MIS COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDEES

7/11/95

Name	Agency
Bryan Davis	Parsons Brinckerhoff (504) 830-0070
Vincent Nandlal	DOTD - Environmental Sec.
Vincent G. Russo, Jr.	DOTD - Environmental
Wanda Walker	DOTD - Public Transportation
Carol Cranshaw	DOTD - Public Transportation
Leslie W. Mix	DOTD - Road Design
Guy W. Leonard III	DOTD - Road Design
W. Kent Israel	DOTD - Road Design
Wayne Aymond	DOTD - Bridge Design
Ray A. Mumphrey	DOTD - Bridge Design
Ellen Miller	Planning Commission - Advance Planning
Jim Joffrion	DOTD - Planning
Chris Orillion	DOTD - Planning
Cathy Gautreaux	La. Motor Transport Assn.
Virgil Page	FHWA - Planning/Environmental
Frank Grabski	FHWA - Division Bridge Engineer
Olin K. Dart, Jr.	Chairman, TAC-CRPOC
Don Powers	Vice Chair TAC-CRPC
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Gary K. Pruitt	Port of Greater Baton Rouge P.O. Box 380, Port Allen, LA 70767
Nick Kalivoda III	DOTD-Traffic & Geometric Design Engineer

Name	Agency
Chris Roberie	LaDEQ - Mobile Sources
Dale McDaniel	Parsons Brinckerhoff (504) 830-0070
Julie Hoover	Parsons Brinckerhoff (212) 465-5000
Huey Dugas	Capital Region Planning Commission
Coan Bueche	DOTD Planning Division

I-10 BATON ROUGE STUDY

PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

University Lakes:

- Problem areas identified
 - *Ramps at East end of Mississippi River Bridge*
 - *Dalrymple Interchange*
 - *College Interchange*
- Recommended Solutions
 - *Bypass*
 - *Improve Dalrymple Interchange*
 - *Improve other surface arterials*
- Concerns
 - *Noise*
 - *Impacts of widening*

Washington Street:

- Problem areas
 - *Washington Interchange Safety*
 - *I-10/I-12 Split*
- Recommended Solutions
 - *Improve Transit Service*
 - *Close Washington Street Ramp and provide access from Government Street*
 - *H.O.V. or reversible flow lanes*
- Concerns
 - *Noise*
 - *Impacts from relocation*
 - *St. Francis Xavier Center (impacts)*

Beauregard Town/Downtown:

- Problem Areas
 - *Ramps at East End of Mississippi River Bridge*
 - *College Interchange*
 - *Through Traffic*
- Recommended Solutions
 - *Improve other surface arterials*
 - *Park and ride lots*
 - *Bypass*
 - *H.O.V. Lanes*
- Concerns
 - *Impacts to Neighborhood*
 - *Noise*
 - *Maintaining adequate service on I-10*

I-10 BATON ROUGE STUDY

PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

Interchange Businesses:

- Problem Areas
 - *Lack of public transportation*
 - *Lack of frontage roads*
 - *College Drive interchange area*
- Recommended Solutions
 - *Improved signalization at ramp intersections*
 - *Longer ramps*
 - *Congestion Management Solutions (i.e. Incident Management, Staggered Work Hours, Ramp Metering)*
- Concerns
 - *Delays in providing solutions*
 - *Lack of driver Education*
 - *How much through traffic vs local traffic*

First Public Meeting:

- Problem Areas
 - *Ramps at East end of Mississippi River Bridge*
 - *Dalrymple Interchange*
 - *College Interchange*
- Recommended Solutions
 - *Bypass*
 - *Improve I-10/I-110 Interchange*
 - *Improve other surface arterials*
- Concerns
 - *Noise*
 - *Impacts of widening I-10*
 - *Impacts of elevated lanes*

I-10 STUDY (BATON ROUGE)

Meeting Minutes University Lakes Neighborhood Meeting October 11, 1995

A neighborhood meeting was held with the University Lakes area residents on Wednesday, October 11, 1995. The meeting was held at the Trinity Episcopal Church on 3552 Morning Glory Ave., and started at 7:00 p.m. The following representatives from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD), the Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC), and the Parsons Brinckerhoff team (PB), conducting the study were present as noted below. A copy of the sign-in sheet is attached to these minutes.

Coan Bueche, Chief Planning Division (LaDOTD)

Huey Dugas, (CRPC)

Bryan Davis, (PB)

Dale McDaniel, (PB)

Jerry Bolton, (PB/Geo-Marine)

Blake Smietanski (PB/Geo-Marine)

- The meeting was opened by Mrs. Catherine Schober, President of the Lakeshore Civic Association, who acknowledged the above noted individuals, and then introduced Bryan Davis.
- Mr. Davis provided an overview of the I-10 Study, explaining the Major Investment Study process (a copy of the board presented and explained is attached). The Federal requirements for a Major Investment Study were briefly explained, and Mr. Davis advised that one of the primary principles of a Major Investment Study is to solicit input from affected parties early in the planning process so that as alternatives are developed they can be sensitive to and incorporate public concerns and input. Mr. Davis requested that those in attendance sign in and pick up a questionnaire and envelope, and to please send in their response. Mr. Davis also advised that there will be an open public meeting on November 7, 1995 between 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m. at the City Park Recreation Building. The meeting was then opened up for audience input.
- Concern over further noise pollution was expressed. It was noted that the area around the I-10 corridor presently exceeds allowable sound levels, and that there are no existing noise barriers or other noise mitigation measures presently in affect. The question was raised as to what noise mitigation measures are presently being considered. Mr. Davis advised that at this stage of the study, noise mitigation measures had not been developed, but as alternatives are developed, if noise is a primary concern, consideration will be given.
- The question was asked as to how many additional lanes are being considered. Mr. Davis replied that at this time, those type of decisions had not been made.
- It was noted that recently, Federal funds had been allocated for the study of a bypass, and the question was raised as to why study both. It was acknowledged that one initial study of the bypass had been performed, and that another study is about to begin. It was further noted that while the bypass and I-10 improvements are related, the studies performed to date for the bypass, indicate that construction of a bypass does not alleviate the current congestion on the I-10 corridor.

- A statement was made that it would be better to build the bypass, and then see if further improvements were needed on the I-10 corridor. Mr. Coan Bueche addressed the audience, and advised that the studies done to date on the bypass show that traffic at the I-10/I-12 split is only reduced by 6 to 8% due to the construction of a bypass. The traffic computer modeling shows that the majority of the traffic congestion on the I-10 corridor is due to trips in the corridor.
- A point was made that truck traffic appears to compose a heavy percentage of the traffic.
- It was noted that some of the problems on I-10 are due to the traffic signals on the surface streets which do not get the traffic off of I-10 quickly enough.
- A question was raised as to how much had been spent on the previous studies. The bypass study recently completed by HNTB Corporation for the CRPC was for \$136,000. Additionally, the Long-Range Plan recently completed for the CRPC, which is a masterplan for the entire Baton Rouge Metropolitan area, was \$250,000.
- Councilman Jim Benham noted that the bypass study recently done by HNTB showed that by the time a bypass was to be built that the growth and traffic projections would result in no improvement to the present situation on I-10.
- A question was raised as to what was the split of traffic between I-10 and I-12 at the I-10/I-12 interchange. Mr. Davis advised that the traffic numbers were not brought to this meeting, but that this information would be displayed at the open public meeting scheduled for November 7.
- A question was raised if Baton Rouge improved other surface routes in the city, could federal funds be utilized. It was noted that this issue was to be looked at.
- A point was made that some studies have shown that if capacity is increased, congestion increases too. This was acknowledged as being a valid point. The studies have shown that if additional capacity is provided, additional traffic will be attracted to the route.
- A question was raised as to the constraints due to air quality on improvements to the I-10 corridor in that would not the development of a bypass be restricted as well. It was noted that both projects are subject to the same constraints, in that before any additional capacity can be considered for funding, a Congestion Management System plan, which addresses the reduction of single occupancy vehicles, has to be implemented and committed to.
- It was questioned if the I-10 Study includes recognition of the upcoming construction of additional lanes from the I-10/I-12 split to Acadian. Mr. Davis advised that it does.
- A question was raised as to what plans are currently being developed for improvements to the I-10 Ramps on the east side of the Mississippi River Bridge. Mr. Davis advised that within this study, there are no plans developed to date.
- Concern was expressed over traffic problems at the Dalrymple entrance on to I-10. Traffic has to come to a stop due to a short merge distance and the extremely heavy traffic, especially truck traffic.

- It was noted that many of the people in this neighborhood work very close to their residences and usually avoid I-10.
- A suggestion was made that consideration should be given to re-routing I-110 by way of a bypass, which would take traffic off coming from the north on I-110, and tie in to I-12 and I-10 around to the east of Baton Rouge.
- A question was raised as to the timeframe for the study. Mr. Davis advised that this study would be completed in the spring of 1996.
- A question was raised as to whether or not we had thought of a tunnel which would start on the west side of Baton Rouge and route through traffic to the east side.
- A point was raised if the Major Investment Study is required in order to get projects into the Long-Range Plan, and if the Long-Range plan is a 25-year window, won't most of the people here be dead by the time anything materializes. If so, then isn't this just a show? Mr. Davis noted that the LaDOTD, CRPC, and the consultant team certainly don't think that these meetings are just for show. They are a meaningful step in the process, and while they are a departure from the way planning for transportation projects was progressed in the past, they are a step in the right direction.
- Further concerns over pollution (noise & air) were expressed. Additionally, further development which increases these pollutants, deteriorates the inner city. Solutions that residents would like to be seen are those which increase the quality of life, aesthetics and property values. It was requested that the interests of this group be represented on the Steering Committee.
- It was noted that there are numerous state and federal roads running through the city and neighborhoods, and that closer working relationships need to be developed between the City of Baton Rouge, the FHWA, and the LaDOTD. Better surface streets and signalization would help the congestion on I-10.
- Concern was again expressed over noise and property values given the close proximity of this neighborhood to the I-10 corridor.
- It was suggested that the study look at the problems with the connection of Dalrymple and Louise.
- It was noted that a noise study had been conducted 8-10 years ago, and that even at that time the noise levels were unacceptable.
- In response the numerous comments regarding noise, Mr. Davis asked to what degree noise barriers or sound walls would be acceptable, and if there were any styles that the audience thought were acceptable.
- A comment was made that the noise berm and fence which was constructed on I-110 appeared to waste a great deal of right-of-way and would not be the type that should be considered.
- It was noted that the sound and noise from the bridge over the lake is terrible.

- A discussion over the initial building of I-10 noted that supposedly when I-10 was built there were other entrance and exit ramps planned for LSU which were not built due to LaDOTD personnel who lived in the area and would have been impacted. As a result the traffic from LSU is extremely heavy in the neighborhood. It was suggested that the impact of traffic from LSU be looked into.
- A comment was made that many cities smaller than Baton Rouge have a bypass, and the emphasis should be on the bypass, not further improvements to I-10.
- The question was raised as to how this group can stop this project. Mr. Davis noted that at present the "project" has not been identified, but actively participating in the meetings, and responding to the questionnaire, noting specific concerns and issues, is the best way for the group to have meaningful impact.
- It was questioned as to how other areas benefit from such items as ramp metering, and if these types of solutions were being considered. Mr. Davis noted that in certain cities, these solutions do help quite a bit, and that these types of solutions are part of the Congestion Management System part of the study.
- A comment was made that improving what exists is needed. Additionally, for a major city, the abundance of left and right hand exits and entrances is very confusing and definitely impacts traffic.
- A question was raised as to the public meeting to be held. Mr. Davis advised that the open public meeting would be held in the City Park Recreation Building on November 7th from 12:00 noon to 7:00pm. It was asked as to whether or not solutions would be presented at this meeting. Mr. Davis advised that no solutions would be presented at this time, but that at the second public meeting to be held in the spring, solutions would be shown.
- A comment was made that there were those here who thought that solutions would be presented tonight, and in reviewing the solutions noted in the questionnaire, the only acceptable solution is the bypass. It was also asked if other solutions could be recommended. Mr. Davis advised that where other is noted, to fill in your recommendation or attach a more detailed suggestion.
- A question was raised as to whether or not anyone has looked at the state's driving test. No one here knows how to merge onto the interstate. Mr. Davis added that this same opinion had been voiced by the Baton Rouge City Police.
- An additional comment was made that the media needs to get involved in educating drivers. Perhaps a series of TV and newspaper articles on driving skills could help.
- A comment was made if the interstate is widened, and further complicated, how will people ever learn to drive. Signage and more advance notification of merges and exits should be considered.
- It was noted that other cities have loops and beltways, and that widening the interstate won't help the problem. The solution is a loop or beltway.
- A comment was made that the increasing population southeast of Baton Rouge would use a bypass.

- It was noted that many people who were leaving think this is just a show, however in this commentator's opinion this type of meeting is good, and is the first time that input has been sought at this stage. It was further noted that the existing traffic and operational problems are a result of LaDOTD engineering and planning and that there has to be a recognition of the lack of communication and coordination between the City of Baton Rouge, the FHWA, and the LaDOTD.
- A comment was made that the continued emphasis in improving the existing I-10 corridor is being pushed by the downtown business interests.
- It was noted that a bridge at St. Francisville with connections to I-49 and I-55, and a southern loop would be beneficial to the movement of through traffic.
- A comment was made that the I-10 corridor needs significantly better signage and advance warning of merges and exits.
- In response to Mr. Davis' earlier solicitation of input relative to sound barriers, a comment was made that the city of Hartford, Connecticut had very aesthetically pleasing sound barriers, and that if sound barriers are required, these should be considered.
- Another comment was made relative to sound barriers, in that traffic accident frequently result in vehicles coming through the fence along I-10, and if sound barriers are considered some type of vegetation should be considered to absorb the impact.
- It was noted that the lakes and lake area are a very important aspect of Baton Rouge, and the affection the people feel for this area runs very deep. The study and any future solutions should bear this in mind.
- With respect to the noise issue, a comment was made that the noise problem would disappear, especially the noise due to the truck traffic, if a bypass was built. The bypass is the best way to serve the through traffic needs.
- A question was raised as to whether or not there is an effort to encourage growth towards the inner city. It was noted that the Horizon Plan, which is Baton Rouge's masterplan, is based on an "in-fill" growth scenario, which encourages growth in the inner city.
- A comment was made that an awareness program for the use of transit (carpool, van pools, and buses) needs to be encouraged and integrated within the education programs.
- A comment was made relative to the use of Plexiglas sound walls. Mr. Davis asked if the use of such a wall was desired; several negative responses were made.
- It was noted that the Mayor and other City of Baton Rouge officials who are involved in the planning process, need to be involved in these meetings.

Mr. Davis closed the meeting at approximately 8:30p.m., and reminded those still present to please sign in, to pick up a questionnaire, and noted that the open public meeting is scheduled for November 7, 1995 at the City Park Recreation Building between 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m..

I-10 STUDY (BATON ROUGE)

Meeting Minutes Washington Ave. Neighborhood Meeting October 12, 1995

A neighborhood meeting was held with the residents in the Washington Ave. vicinity on Thursday, October 12, 1995. The meeting was held at the Leo S. Butler Community Center on 950 East Washington Ave at 6:00 p.m. The following representatives from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD) and the Parsons Brinckerhoff team (PB), conducting the study were present as noted below. A copy of the sign-in sheet is attached to these minutes.

Coan Bueche, Chief Planning Division (LaDOTD)
Bryan Davis (PB)
Dale McDaniel (PB)

- The meeting was opened by Bryan Davis, who acknowledged Councilman Darrell Glasper's assistance in organizing the meeting. Mr. Davis gave an overview of the I-10 Study, explaining what a Major Investment Study is, and how it differs from the planning process of the past. (A copy of the board presented is attached). Mr. Davis advised that the Major Investment Study process is a Federal requirement and that one of the primary principles of such a study is to solicit input from affected parties early in the planning process. The alternative solutions as they are then developed consider and incorporate the input and concerns from those who are potentially affected. Mr. Davis also advised that an open public meeting would be held on November 7, 1995, between 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m. at the City Park Recreation Building.
- Councilman Glasper noted that he and Mr. Davis had reviewed the area in the vicinity of I-10, and that he had noted to Mr. Davis the importance of the St. Francis Xavier Center to the community and the sensitivity associated with any potential impact to this facility. Additionally, Councilman Glasper noted that widening of I-10 to the east would impact numerous properties. It was also noted that the Washington Ave. exit ramp is this neighborhood's only exit off of I-10, and that there would be heavy opposition to closing this ramp. Councilman Glasper confirmed to the audience that nothing would be done without input from this neighborhood. Other comments from the audience were then received.
- Safety was noted as being a primary concern, and is a significant problem with respect to trying to exit at Washington Ave.
- A comment was made relative to alternative solutions to the Washington Ave. exit ramp. It was suggested that the study look at the possibility of closing the Washington Ave. exit ramp, and extend/reopen the exit ramp for Government St. through the park area. This would still provide egress off of I-10 east for the Washington Ave residents, but remove the problem associated with the exiting Washington Ave traffic merging with I-10 East traffic.

- A question was raised as to whether or not there were presently any plans on the boards for improvements to I-10. Mr. Davis and Mr. Bueche advised that at present there are two projects close to going to construction. One project is for improvements to the I-10 West ramp, which involves construction of a taller barrier railing to prevent trucks from falling off of the ramp. The second project includes adding additional lanes on the I-12/I-10 corridor starting at Airline Hwy. on I-12 and continuing to Acadian on I-10.
- A comment was made regarding displacements. It is totally out of the question to widen to the right side of I-10, however to the left side there appears to be some room. Also is stacking of the I-10 being considered as a possibility? Mr. Davis noted at this stage of the study, those types of alternatives have not been looked at, but acknowledged that there had been mention of these alternatives in a previous study.
- It was noted that many other major cities, such as Atlanta, Dallas, etc., use Park and Ride facilities, and is this a possibility? Also consideration should be given to improved/increased transit and bus service to serve major employers in the downtown area. Additionally, incentives, such as special lanes, for use of Park and Ride and transit service should be considered.
- Mr. Davis asked if there were any specific concerns or issues.
- A comment was offered expressing concern over noise and vibration, and increased air pollution due to increased traffic. It was also noted that if the speed of the traffic increases, then the pollution should decrease.
- It was noted that when the interstate was first built, that many people were displaced and did not receive adequate compensation. The public was not contacted during this process, and many still fear this type of treatment. Mr. Bueche noted that since the construction of the original interstate, many things have changed. Legislation was enacted which requires adequate compensation when property is acquired, and provides avenues of recourse if there are questions as to the fairness of compensation. Displacements were noted as being a primary concern, and if displacements do occur the people should be treated fairly and equitably.
- It was noted that the LaDOTD and the engineers in conducting these public outreach meetings are doing something that has not been done before.
- A question was raised as to whether or not any alternatives being considered would affect the St. Francis Xavier Center. Mr. Davis advised that the study has not developed to that point as of yet. Potentially, there could be impact if widening was considered, however, the costs and impacts of such a facility weigh heavy into the evaluation of the alternatives, as does the public concern for such a facility.
- It was noted that copies of the minutes from this meeting would be provided to Councilman Glasper for review by the community.
- With regards to a previous comment regarding stacking of the interstate, a comment was made that this alternative would result in a major increase in the noise problem, and that this should be considered by the community in weighing other options such as widening.
- A comment was made that the idea of separating the local traffic from the through traffic, as noted in the questionnaire, was a good idea, especially in the area of College Dr.

- It was noted that improvement of mass transit should be considered. Presently the Baton Rouge area is under a court ordered vehicle inspection program due to the pollution issue, and the use of mass transit could help in this regard.
- A question was raised as to whether or not someone from the Capitol Transit Corporation (CTC) was involved. Mr. Davis advised that the CPC is represented on the project's Steering Committee.
- With respect to the Steering Committee, the question was asked as to whether or not representatives from the community groups are included. Mr. Davis advised that they were not included in the initial meeting of the committee, but that representatives from each community group will be on the Steering Committee from now on.
- Another comment was offered with respect to the use of Park and Ride lots, and the designation of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. The comment was made that a statement had been made in the past that the City and State workers would revolt if carpool and vanpools were instituted. Some 26% of the metropolitan Baton Rouge population works downtown. This indicates very strongly that the majority of the traffic in the corridor during peak hours is due to local traffic, not through traffic.
- With respect to the issues of Park and Ride and Vanpools, a comment was made that the area has a large percentage of plant workers, who would be natural candidates for such programs.
- A suggestion was made that reversible lanes for HOV lanes should be considered with respect to the previous comment made as to incentives for Park and Ride and transit use.
- A comment was made that traffic in the evening peak, which is backing up onto the bridge, is often due to the bottlenecks at the I-12/I-10 split.
- A question was raised as to what funding was in place for potential improvements. Mr. Davis advised that at present no funds are allocated for any improvements which might come out of this study. One of the purposes of this study is identify and develop alternative solutions, which can then be considered for funding.
- It was questioned as to whether or not this study is considering any options that would entail inner-city displacements. It was noted that at this time alternatives are not developed, and solutions have not been established. Mr. Bueche added that we appear to be dwelling on potential displacements, and at this point in time this is premature. First, we have to agree that there is a problem, and to define the problem. Then solutions can be developed to address the problem, and these may or may not be structural solutions which would involve relocation. In the event that displacements are necessary, there are new laws concerning displacements and relocations which help to insure equitable treatment.
- Mr. Davis noted that once solutions are defined and subjected to further refinement and evaluation, the next phase of the project would involve an Environmental Impact Statement. Within this phase, formal Public Hearings will take place and the LaDOTD's Relocation Department will explain in detail the relocation program.

- Concern was expressed that even though widening alternatives might not require the displacement of a home or business, the increased noise and vibration might significantly reduce the value of the property, and the owners should be compensated accordingly.
- A comment was made that in the future more notification time needs to be given for these meetings.

Mr. Davis closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. He requested that all attendees sign-in, pick up a questionnaire, and return their completed questionnaire. Councilman Glasper noted that he would take additional questionnaire's for further distribution.

I-10 STUDY (BATON ROUGE)

Meeting Minutes Beauregard Town Neighborhood Meeting October 18, 1995

A neighborhood meeting was held with the residents in the Beauregard Town and downtown area on Wednesday, October 18, 1995. The meeting was held at the City Government Building at 222 St. Louis St., in the Metropolitan Council Chamber. The meeting started approximately at 6:00 p.m., following the City Council's Finance Committee Meeting. The following representatives from the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development (LaDOTD), the Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC), and the Parsons Brinckerhoff team (PB), conducting the study were present as noted below. A copy of the sign-in sheet is attached to these minutes.

Coan Bueche, Chief Planning Division (LaDOTD)
R.J. Goebel (CRPC)
Bryan Davis (PB)
Dale McDaniel (PB)
Jerry Bolton (PB/Geo-Marine)
Blake Smietanski (PB/Geo-Marine)

- The meeting was opened by Mr. Davis Rhorer of the Downtown Development Association who introduced Mr. Bryan Davis.
- Mr. Davis gave an overview of the I-10 Study, explaining the Major Investment Study process (a copy of the board presented and explained is attached). The Federal requirements for a Major Investment Study was briefly explained, and Mr. Davis advised that one of the primary principles of a Major Investment Study is to solicit input from affected parties early in the planning process so that as alternatives are developed, they can be sensitive to and incorporate public concerns and input. Mr. Davis requested that those in attendance sign in, pick up a questionnaire, and to please send in their response. Mr. Davis also advised that an open public meeting will be held on November 7, 1995, in the City Park Recreation Building between 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m.. The audience was also advised that solutions or alternatives have not been developed to date, and that these would be presented at the second public meeting which will be held in the spring of next year. The meeting was then opened up for comments and questions.
- The question was raised as to whether or not any money has been appropriated yet, and to what magnitude. Mr. Davis advised that no dollars had been programmed as of yet, and that this study is the first step in the funding process. Mr. Davis then gave a brief explanation of the way projects become funded.
- It was noted that when I-10 was first built the downtown area was significantly impacted, and that there is still a great deal of sensitivity to projects which would further impact the area.
- A comment was made that a great deal of the traffic on Government St. could be reduced if the Florida St. exit off of I-110 allowed traffic to go west.

- It was noted that the State's recent completed Intermodal Study identified a need for a connector between the airport, downtown, and the numerous hotels in the College Dr. vicinity.
- It was questioned when the construction of the I-10 West ramp barrier wall was to be started. Mr. Bueche advised that the job had been awarded to a construction company and that work would probably be noticed by the first of the year.
- The reduction of I-10 East from two to one lanes after crossing the river was identified as a major problem. Additionally, several areas east of the I-10/I-110 interchange, especially the College Dr. area, cause severe traffic congestion in the afternoon peak. Also the College Dr. on ramp to I-10 West creates problems due to conflicting merges.
- There was recognition that I-10 and I-110 provide good exits into the downtown area from the North, South, and West, however, the Florida Ave. entrance and exit needs to be improved.
- It was noted that Beauregard Town and Spanish Town have both seen a marked resurgence in property values recently and that many improvements had been made. Concern was expressed that solutions should complement the current improvements and not have negative affect.
- Bryan Davis noted that there had been previous studies which proposed a major reconstruction of the I-10 /I-110 interchange, and asked for input and concerns on this type of redevelopment.
- A comment was made that a noise study was done several years ago, which showed unacceptable levels under present conditions, and a question asked as to whether or not any thoughts were being given to sound walls. The individual noted that these seem to be used quite widely in other cities. Mr. Davis noted that as alternatives are developed, consideration would be given to noise mitigation.
- A resident on French St. expressed concern over the amount of traffic on the neighborhood streets, and noted that any plans need to address trying to divert some of the traffic out of Beauregard Town.
- A question was raised as to whether or not the previously mentioned work to be started on the I-10 West ramp would involve widening. Mr. Bueche advised that this work would just involve installing a taller barrier, and not a widening of the structure. Mr. Bueche also noted that earlier studies had looked at flattening the I-10 East ramp, but that this impacted the area and was not acceptable at the time. This may be addressed after the on-going traffic and safety studies are completed.
- It was noted that the merge from two lanes to one lane on I-10 East after crossing the bridge is a big problem, and it was suggested that perhaps better directional signage before motorists got on the bridge would help.
- A comment was made that if you are coming from the vicinity of College Dr., you have to get across three lanes of traffic to get to the North St. (left hand) exit, and that this conflicts with traffic coming across the bridge and heading towards I-110 north. Again it was suggested that more advance and better signage could help this situation.

- It was noted that the I-10 East ramp appeared to work better before it was re-stripped to one lane, and that closing the Washington Ave. exit, and extending the Government St. exit through the park to tie in to Washington Ave., would alleviate a great deal of the conflicting merge for traffic heading on I-10 East. A question was raised relative to the barrier wall to be added to the I-10 West ramp, in that whether or not any aesthetic treatments were to be considered. Mr. Bueche advised that he was not aware of what, if anything, had been considered, but would check into this issue.
- Concern was expressed on behalf of those who work in the downtown area relative to the number of trucks trying to go west and conflicting with traffic trying to get on I-10. With respect to any improvements to the I-10/I-110 interchange, it was noted that if the bottleneck is actually further east of the merge (i.e. Acadian or College), then unless solutions are directed towards those areas, any improvements to the I-10/I-110 interchange would be of little consequence.
- A comment was made that many cities use a dedicated radio station for continuous traffic updates, especially in the afternoon peak. Although radio stations presently broadcast updates periodically, if you miss the update you're not informed. Also, if there were some type of easy visual indicators that could be observed from the downtown area, people would wait to get on the interstate or find alternative routes. Mr. Bueche noted that what was being described was Intelligent Vehicle Highway System (IVHS) applications.
- It was noted that I-10 is very important to downtown. During regular hours without accidents, the system works very well, provides easy access and good mobility. The downtown area is very reliant on a healthy I-10.
- Building of a bypass was noted as being the best possible solution, especially with respect to diverting the through traffic out of the downtown area.
- A question was raised as to whether or not there was any special moneys allocated under ISTEA for IVHS applications. Mr. Bueche explained that ISTEA is an acronym for the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, which is the transportation legislation which provides all of the federal funds for transportation. Mr. Bueche also advised that there are special funds for enhancement projects, but these dollars are more for alternative modes (i.e. pedestrian and bicycle, etc.) The money for IVHS applications is contained for the most part under the normal program.
- A point was raised that the Baton Rouge area appears to always be last with respect to transportation improvements. Mr. Bueche noted that funding appears to go in cycles, and since the interstate system in Baton Rouge is one of the oldest sections, the cycle is just coming back to Baton Rouge. This is evident when one looks at the upcoming projects in the State, which show more projects and dollars now being targeted for Baton Rouge.
- A comment was made that although Mayflower is not a direct access to I-10- or I-110, it is heavily used as such, and there is a severe problem with traffic utilizing this street, especially on school days between 3 and 5 p.m..
- A suggestion was made that other cities use reversible lanes quite frequently to handle peak hour traffic, and that this could help the traffic problems in the morning and afternoon.

- It was noted that a significant number of people live in the central part of Baton Rouge, and who get on I-10, I-12, and I-110 to get to work. If there was some type of major arterial across the city, which would provide people who live in the central part of the city an alternative route, it would help the traffic on the interstate system.
- A question was raised as to how this study will move Baton Rouge into a mass transit mentality, such as using park and rides, transit, etc. Mr. Davis noted that these types of solutions are addressed in the Congestion Management System (CMS) portion of the study. The study will describe the thresholds which will make these types of solutions viable options. Mr. Bueche added that the LaDOTD and the CRPC are tasked with developing transportation plans for the Baton Rouge area which are in accordance with the Horizon Plan.
- A resident who lives in the University Gardens area supported the theory that many people who live in the central part of the city use the interstate to commute, because there is no major cross arterial. This is evidenced by the heavy traffic on Airline between Florida and I-12. The comment was also made that adding additional lanes only tends to attract more traffic.
- A question was raised as to whether or not any studies have looked at the segregation of local traffic from the through traffic. This appears to be a major problem.
- A question was also raised as to how much of the traffic problem on the interstate system is attributable to the citizens of Baton Rouge not voting for programs which would improve the local grid system. Consideration should be given to looking at service roads along Airline Hwy. and Florida Ave, and making these routes more controlled with respect to access. The solution to the interstate problems needs to be a comprehensive package.
- A comment was made that a great percentage of the traffic in the corridor is local.
- A comment was also made that if a bypass was built it would relieve the traffic in the I-10 corridor.
- A comment was made that a service road between Acadian and College appears possible, and also that there appears to be enough room in the median of I-10 to construct center lanes which could function as a reversible HOV lane.
- Mr. Davis closed the meeting at approximately 7:30 p.m., and asked everyone in attendance to please sign-in, to pick-up and complete the questionnaire, and noted that the open public meeting is scheduled for November 7, 1995 between 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m. in the City Park Recreation Building.

I-10 STUDY (BATON ROUGE)

Meeting Minutes College Drive, Acadian Thruway, & Perkins Rd. Business Interests November 2, 1995

A community meeting was held with owners and representatives of several businesses in the College Dr., Acadian Thruway, and Perkins Rd. vicinity on Thursday, November 2, 1995. The meeting was held at Cippriani's Italian Restaurant, 4550 Concord Ave. The meeting started at approximately 7:30 a.m. The following representatives from the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development (LaDOTD), the Capital Region Planning commission (CRPC), and the Parsons Brinckerhoff team (PB), conducting the study were present as noted below. A copy of the sign-in sheet is attached to these minutes.

Coan Bueche, Chief Planning Division (LaDOTD)
Huey Dugas (CRPC)
Bryan Davis (PB)
Dale McDaniel (PB)
Jerry Bolton (PB/Geo-Marine)
Blake Smietanski (PB/Geo-Marine)

- The meeting was opened by Bryan Davis who gave an overview of the I-10 Study, explaining the Major Investment Study process (a copy of the board presented and explained is attached). The Federal requirements for a Major Investment Study were briefly explained, and Mr. Davis advised that one of the primary principles of a Major Investment Study is to solicit input from affected parties, such as this business group, early in the planning process so that as alternatives are developed, they can be sensitive to and incorporate public concerns and input. Mr. Davis asked those in attendance to lease sign-in, pick up a questionnaire, and to please send in their response. Mr. Davis also advised that an open public meeting will be held on November 7, 1995 in the City Park Recreation Building between 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m.. The meeting was then opened up for comments and questions.
- A question was raised as to when was the I-10 system built ?, when were problems first identified ?, and why has there been no improvements to I-10 in 30 years? Also it was questioned as to why the additional lanes from Airline Hwy. to Acadian have been delayed. It was noted that the problems with the I-10 system were identified some 10 to 15 years ago, and that presently the additional lanes from Airline to Acadian are in the environmental clearance stage, and should go to construction within the year. An additional comment was made that there appears to be little or no momentum in carrying through improvements to the I-10 corridor.
- A representative of the business interest group asked to what extent a focus group like this, can push the project. Mr. Davis noted that keeping informed and up to date on the project, and supporting the improvement projects that are identified in the study through the CRPC and the LaDOTD would be the best way to push the project.

- A question was raised as to whether or not Acadian Thruway would become more congested, at present it seems to function adequately. Huey Dugas advised that modeling presently done does not indicate any further congestion, due to potential improvements to the I-10 corridor.
- A representative from Ruth's Chris Steakhouse noted that their business had gone through a similar experience in Jackson, MS. An 18 month construction phase turned into 4 years and forced them to relocate. The planning that is now happening is 20 to 25 years to late. It was also noted that the national chains look consider access and traffic volumes very heavily when looking to locate a site. The more access that is available, the more development that will take place.
- A comment was made that drivers need to read the signage, that at present the existing signage is being ignored or is inadequate to advise drivers of exits, entrances and merges. Also, it was noted that Baton Rouge has experienced an influx of some 100,000 new people in the last eight years, many of whom are not aware of alternate routes. Additionally, it was noted that staggered work hours need to be implemented by major employers to reduce the peak hour congestion being experienced.
- It was noted that congestion on I-10 is not the problem, but rather disruption of traffic is. The corridor needs increased lengths and capacity of exit and entrance ramps and better signalization. Acadian is an excellent example of what better signalization can do. The traffic flow is much better now.
- It was noted that the downtown Baton Rouge area is a hub of activity, with city, state and federal government facilities, and LSU.
- The shutdown of I-10 east from 2 lanes to 1 lanes was identified as a major problem, as were the lack of frontage roads. ON ramps to I-10 and I-12 (flyover, etc.) from Corporate to I-10 is needed. it was noted that the Essen and Bluebonnet interchanges are having the same problems develop with respect to on/off ramp.
- The question was raised as to what type of time-frame is anticipated for this project. Bryan Davis advised that the lower cost, minor improvements can be developed and implemented early. The higher cost, major structural improvements will take more time due to availability of funding and more involved environmental and engineering efforts that will be necessary.
- It was noted that the early planning efforts didn't reflect the degree of development that is now taking place out on Essen and Bluebonnet, and that the engineers/planners are now having to back-in to the solutions. The expansion of I-10 and I-12 will be very helpful.
- A representative from LaQuinta Inns noted that they look for properties with easy interstate access, when scouting locations. It was asked as to whether or not that had been a survey of through traffic in the corridor. This type of information would appear to be very helpful in determining whether the congestion is caused by through traffic or local traffic, and assessing the benefits of a bypass or loop.
- The question was raised that if early solutions are identified, can they be expedited. Bryan Davis referred to the early comment made on this issue, and added that the solution to the I-10 congestion will likely be a combination of small and large projects.

- It was also asked as to whether or not some type of incident management program is possible. It was noted that Houston, and even the French Quarter in New Orleans, have a much more responsive wrecker program, and that more emphasis by the City and State needs to be placed on removing and clearing accidents. Huey Dugas noted that an incident management program is presently underway and is in the process of being implemented.
- A comment was made relative to accident locations and safety, noting that at Essen traffic is stopping on the interstate and poses a major safety problem, which affects the rest of the corridor. The same problem exists as you come over the bridge, going west. A major consideration needs to be given to improving the safety in the corridor. Bryan Davis noted that displays noting the high accident locations, and other safety related problem areas would be presented at the open public meeting scheduled for November 7.
- It was noted that there needs to be an upgrade of driver education, emphasizing merges and exits, who has the right-of-way, etc., p; people do not seem to know or care anymore. Also it was noted that some type of combined shuttle service to the airport could be implemented for many of the hotels in the College Dr. area. At present each hotel is running their own van. Also since there is essentially no cab service, restaurants would support a combined shuttle as well.
- A comment was made that public transportation in the area is a problem. The businesses have some 300 to 400 employees in the area, but buses won't come up Acadian from Perkins. There needs to be better service to the major employment centers in the area. Also, there is no public transportation service in the fringe areas such as Essen.
- Coan Bueche noted that the fringe area development is relatively low density, and that this type of development does not support public transportation.
- In response, it was noted that the business owners in the fringe areas are using a van to bring employees in since there is no bus service they can use.
- It was noted that safety should our first consideration. The study team was urged to not jump to a quick fix and sacrifice safety.
- A comment was made that any type of increased driver education would probably not happen. It was noted that some type of ramp metering at the Acadian on-ramp to I-10 west might help the merge problems at this location.
- Huey Dugas noted that the CRPC is just beginning to look into a traffic control center for the Baton Rouge area.
- It was noted that traffic signalization would definitely help to get traffic on and off of the I-10 corridor at major interchanges such as College Dr..
- A comment was made that there needs to be some type of up and over on ramp for traffic to get on I-10 from college dr. Additionally, frontage roads to Essen and possibly from Essen to Bluebonnet are needed. Also, the interchanges at College and Acadian need simplification.

- A question was raised as to whether or not a bypass or loop is a feasible solution. It was noted that a further study of the bypass is beginning, but that the price is very high and will have to compete for limited available funds.
- Coan Bueche added that overall investment in transportation is declining, and that the degree of re-investment won't reverse. Building new facilities means not maintaining existing facilities.
- Tony Sussmann (FHWA), added that at present, neither \$100 million for capacity improvements on I-10 or \$700 million to \$1 billion for a bypass is available. However, lower cost options could possibly be funded. Additionally, Mr. Sussmann noted that he was encouraged that incident management is welcomed and that of as a benefit to the area.
- Huey Dugas added that presently motorists assistance patrols are in the process of being coordinated with the City, and are scheduled to be proposed to Secretary Patin at a meeting on November 13.
- Don Powers asked as to how soon something could happen, and what could this group do? Bryan Davis noted that the study would be complete in 7 to 8 months, and recommend a range of solutions for further study and possible implementation. At which time as the final recommendations are made, lobbying by the business interests for the projects would definitely help.
- Bryan Davis closed the meeting at approximately 9:00 a.m., and reminded those present of the public meeting on November 7, and asked the attendees to please complete and return the questionnaire.

**I-10 STUDY BATON ROUGE
MEETING MINUTES
First Public Meeting
November 7, 1995**

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The meeting was conducted using an open forum format in which members of the public met one-on-one with project planners and engineers to discuss project goals and objectives, problem areas, suggested solutions, concerns and possible impacts.

Two large aerial photo mosaics of the I-10 corridor were displayed at the meeting. The first depicted areas of environmental concern which could be affected by construction in the corridor. Viewers were requested to identify any additional areas that may have been omitted.

The second display noted the "Bottle-necks" in the corridor that were producing peak hour congestion and identified the operational problems and geometric deficiencies that were contributing to the "Bottlenecks." It also indicated the results of a safety analysis of the corridor and established the locations of abnormally high accident occurrences. The information provided in this display will provide the focus for solutions to be developed to address the problems in the I-10 corridor.

Both displays generated significant interest and prompted meaningful discussion among meeting attendees and project planners and engineers.

The following personnel from the consulting team were on hand to interact with participating mentors of the public

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Additionally, Coan Bueche (LaDOTD) and Huey Dugas (CRPC) were in attendance and participated with members of the public. It should be noted that a number of LaDOTD environmental and design personnel as well as members of the Intermodal/Involved agency committee were present at the session.

A list of attendees is attached. Summaries of discussions with meeting participants were recorded on comment sheets by the interviewers. The following information represents a summary of the discussions:

- **Mr. Tom Bartkiewicz**
4828 Abella Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

- Close Washington Street exit to help I-10 traffic
- Give priority to the Mississippi River Bridge traffic over the I-110 traffic to relieve congestion
- Modify the Dalrymple Interchange to allow for improved access for the people in the vicinity of Washington Street.
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- Add an east bound on-ramp at the Dalrymple Interchange to relieve LSU traffic that is now using residential streets.
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- There is inadequate signing along all of I-10
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**I-10 IMPROVEMENT STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
COMBINED SURVEY RESULTS**

QUESTION	RESPONSE	PERCENT
1) Where do you think the worst problems on I-10 are?	I-10, I-12 Interchange	38%
	MS River Bridge entrance and exit ramps	35%
	College Interchange	14%
	I-10, I-110 Interchange	9%
	Acadian Interchange	4%
2) What do you think would be the best ideas to help relieve congestion and improve safety along I-10?	Build a Bypass around Baton Rouge	47%
	Add additional lanes	31%
	Re-routing traffic along other arterials and freeways	9%
	HOV lanes	7%
	Provide park-and-ride lots and improved bus service	6%
3) What are your biggest concerns about improvements to I-10?	Congestion	39%
	Construction Time	23%
	Noise	13%
	Destruction/Displacement of homes and businesses	12%
	Environment	12%

**I-10 IMPROVEMENT STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
COMBINED SURVEY RESULTS**

QUESTION	RESPONSE	PERCENT
4) What specific solutions should the planners consider when they determine alternatives for solving I-10 problems?	Build a bypass around Baton Rouge	58%
	Add additional lanes	14%
	Special-use lanes for trucks	13%
	Re-routing traffic along other arterials and freeways	10%
	Improving the transportation infrastructure	6%
5) Are there specific groups of people or individuals you think we should contact to obtain their thoughts about I-10 improvements?	Commuters	28%
	Residents	25%
	Businesses	23%
	Engineers	15%
	Home Owners	9%
6) Please suggest any relatively low cost improvements you think could help I-10 traffic conditions?	Transportation Demand Management	30%
	HOV lanes	23%
	Coordinate police services to rapidly clear-out accidents and breakdowns	23%
	Transportation Systems Management	12%
	Provide park-and-ride lots and improved bus service	12%

**I-10 Improvement Study
Questionnaire Results
Combined Survey Results**

I-10 Problems	Rankings
Rush hour traffic	
Mississippi River Bridge (East end)	1
I-10, I-110 Interchange	2
I-10, I-12 Interchange	3
Too many people moving to the eastern areas of Baton Rouge	4
College Interchange	5
Acadian Interchange	6
Inexperienced drivers	7
Rubbernecking at accidents and breakdowns	8
Trucks	9
	10
I-10 Solutions	
Build a bypass around Baton Rouge	1
Add an additional through lane in each direction between the MS River Bridge and the I-10, I-12 split	2
Separate through traffic from local traffic by the use of elevated through lanes	3
Separate through traffic from local traffic by widening I-10	4
Add more frontage roads	5
Improve ramps and signalization at College and Acadian Interchanges	6
Use changeable message signs to alert drivers to detour when accidents occur on I-10	7
Work with state government, industries, hospitals and other major employers to stagger reporting and dismissal times to help reduce rush hour traffic	8
Coordinate police, wrecker and ambulance services to rapidly clear-out accidents and breakdowns	9
Provide park-and-ride lots, van pool subsidies and improved bus service	10

**I-10 IMPROVEMENT STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
PUBLIC MEETINGS**

QUESTION	RESPONSE	PERCENT
1) Where do you think the worst problems on I-10 are?	MS River Bridge entrance and exit ramps	42%
	I-10, I-12 Interchange	41%
	College Interchange	8%
	Acadian Interchange	5%
	I-10, I-110 Interchange	3%
2) What do you think would be the best ideas to help relieve congestion and improve safety along I-10?	Build a Bypass around Baton Rouge	53%
	Add additional lanes	23%
	Provide park-and-ride lots and improved bus service	11%
	Re-routing traffic along other arterials and freeways	9%
	HOV lanes	4%
3) What are your biggest concerns about improvements to I-10?	Destruction/Displacement of homes and businesses	28%
	Congestion	26%
	Noise	24%
	Environment	18%
	Safety	4%

**I-10 IMPROVEMENT STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
PUBLIC MEETINGS**

QUESTION		RESPONSE	PERCENT
4) What specific solutions should the planners consider when they determine alternatives for solving I-10 problems?		Build a bypass around Baton Rouge	59%
		Soundwalls	19%
		Re-routing traffic along other arterials and freeways	8%
		Transportation Demand Management	8%
		Transportation Systems Management	5%
5) Are there specific groups of people or individuals you think we should contact to obtain their thoughts about I-10 improvements?		Residents	46%
		Businesses	21%
		Home Owners	18%
		Engineers	11%
		Planners	4%
6) Please suggest any relatively low cost improvements you think could help I-10 traffic conditions?		Transportation Demand Management	28%
		Provide park-and-ride lots and improved bus service	24%
		Re-routing traffic along other arterials	20%
		HOV lanes	16%
		Coordinate police services to rapidly clear-out accidents and breakdowns	12%

**I-10 Improvement Study
Questionnaire Results
Public Meetings**

I-10 Problems		Rankings
Mississippi River Bridge (East end)		
Rush hour traffic		1
Trucks		2
Rubbernecking at accidents and breakdowns		3
I-10, I-12 Interchange		4
College Interchange area		5
Acadian Interchange		6
Inexperienced drivers		7
Too many people moving to the eastern areas of Baton Rouge		8
I-10, I-110 Interchange		9
		10
I-10 Solutions		
Build a bypass around Baton Rouge		
Add an additional through lane in each direction between the MS River Bridge and the I-10, I-12 split		1
Provide park-and-ride lots, van pool subsidies and improved bus service		2
Separate through traffic from local traffic by widening I-10		3
Add more frontage roads		4
Improve ramps and signalization at College and Acadian Interchanges		5
Use changeable message signs to alert drivers to detour when accidents occur on I-10		6
Separate through traffic from local traffic by the use of elevated through lanes		7
Coordinate police, wrecker and ambulance services to rapidly clear-out accidents and breakdowns		8
Work with state government, industries, hospitals and other major employers to stagger reporting and dismissal times to help reduce rush hour traffic		9
		10

**I-10 IMPROVEMENT STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
COMMUTER SURVEYS**

QUESTION	RESPONSE	PERCENT
1) Where do you think the worst problems on I-10 are?	I-10, I-12 Interchange	36%
	MS River Bridge entrance and exit ramps	30%
	I-10, I-110 Interchange	17%
	College Interchange	12%
	Acadian Interchange	5%
2) What do you think would be the best ideas to help relieve congestion and improve safety along I-10?	Build a Bypass around Baton Rouge	40%
	Add additional lanes	34%
	Widening existing lanes	12%
	HOV lanes	9%
	Re-routing traffic along other arterials and freeways	4%
3) What are your biggest concerns about improvements to I-10?	Congestion	44%
	Construction Time	37%
	Safety	8%
	Environment	7%
	Noise	4%

**I-10 IMPROVEMENT STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
COMMUTER SURVEY**

QUESTION	RESPONSE	PERCENT
4) What specific solutions should the planners consider when they determine alternatives for solving I-10 problems?	Build a bypass around Baton Rouge	48%
	Add additional lanes	24%
	Special-use lanes for trucks	10%
	Re-routing traffic along other arterials and freeways	10%
	Improving the transportation infrastructure	10%
5) Are there specific groups of people or individuals you think we should contact to obtain their thoughts about I-10 improvements?	Commuters	44%
	Businesses	18%
	Engineers	15%
	Officials	12%
	Truck Drivers	12%
6) Please suggest any relatively low cost improvements you think could help I-10 traffic conditions?	Transportation Demand Management	32%
	Add additional lanes	29%
	Transportation Systems Management	29%
	HOV lanes	25%
	Coordinate police services to rapidly clear-out accidents and breakdowns	18%

**I-10 Improvement Study
Questionnaire Results
Commuter Surveys**

I-10 Problems		Rankings
Rush hour traffic		
Mississippi River Bridge (East End)		1
I-10, I-110 Interchange		2
I-10, I-12 Interchange		3
Too many people moving to the eastern areas of Baton Rouge		4
Rubbernecking at accidents and breakdowns		5
Acadian Interchange		6
College Interchange		7
Inexperienced drivers		8
Trucks		9
		10
I-10 Solutions		
Build a bypass around Baton Rouge		
Separate through traffic from local traffic by widening I-10		1
Separate through traffic from local traffic by the use of elevated through lanes		2
Add an additional through lane in each direction between the MS River Bridge and the I-10, I-12 split		3
Add more frontage roads		4
Use changeable message signs to alert drivers to detour when accidents occur on I-10		5
Coordinate police, wrecker and ambulance services to rapidly clear-out accidents and breakdowns		6
Work with state government, industries, hospitals and other major employers to stagger reporting and dismissal times to help reduce rush hour traffic		7
Improve ramps and signalization at College Acadian Interchanges		8
Provide park-and-ride lots, van pool subsidies and improved bus service		9
		10

INPUT TO BE SOLICITED FROM ATTENDEES

- Where do you think the worst problems on I-10 are?
- What do you think would be the best ideas to help relieve congestion and improve safety along I-10?
- What are your biggest concerns about improvements to I-10?
- What specific solutions should the planners consider when they determine alternatives for solving I-10 problems?
- Are there specific groups of people or individuals you think we should contact to obtain their thoughts about I-10 improvements?
- Please suggest any relatively low cost improvement that you think could help I-10 traffic conditions?

Please rank the following as to their share of contribution to I-10 problems: (1 is the most serious and 11 being the least significant):

- _____ Rush hour traffic
- _____ College Interchange area
- _____ Mississippi River Bridge (East end)
- _____ Acadian Interchange
- _____ I-10, I-110 Interchange
- _____ Trucks
- _____ Inexperienced drivers
- _____ I-10, I-12 Interchange
- _____ Too many people moving to the eastern areas of Baton Rouge
- _____ Rubbernecking at accidents and breakdowns
- _____ Other (Please note)

- Please rank the following in the order you think would be the best solutions for I-10 traffic: (1 being the best solution; 11 being the least appropriate solution)

- _____ Add more frontage roads
 - _____ Improve ramps and signalization at College and Acadian interchanges
 - _____ Add an additional through lane in each direction between the Mississippi River Bridge and the I-10, I-12 split
 - _____ Build a bypass around Baton Rouge
 - _____ Use changeable message signs to alert drivers to detour when accidents occur on I-10
 - _____ Work with state government, industries, hospitals and other major employers to stagger reporting and dismissal times to help reduce rush hour traffic
 - _____ Separate through traffic from local traffic by the use of elevated through lanes
 - _____ Separate through traffic from local traffic by widening I-10
 - _____ Coordinate police, wrecker and ambulance services to rapidly clear-out accidents and breakdowns.
 - _____ Provide park-and-ride lots, van pool subsidies and improved bus service
 - _____ Other suggestion (Please identify) _____
-
-

Any other comments or suggestions that should be considered: _____

If you would like to receive follow-up information, questionnaire results, project progress reports and other information about the I-10 project please provide the following:

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____



**S.P. No. 700-29-0026
F.A.P. No. NHI-10-3(212)
I-10 Study (Baton Rouge)
Mississippi River Bridge - I-12
Route I-10
East Baton Rouge Parish**

**Minutes of the Second Meeting of the
Intermodal/Involved Agency Committee
May 29, 1996**

The second meeting of the Intermodal/Involved Agency Committee on the I-10 study was held on May 29, 1996 at the Centroplex in downtown Baton Rouge. A list of attendees is attached.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Coan Bueche, Chief, LaDOTD Planning Division, who provided an introduction. The meeting participants then introduced themselves.

Bryan Davis, project manager for PB, began the presentation by describing accomplishments to date:

1. Purpose and Need (P&N) Statement. The P&N defines the problems to be addressed and establishes goals for the project. The P&N for the I-10 study is to achieve LOS D in the corridor and to identify incremental improvements that build toward achieving this goal. Findings to date include:
 - I-10 is a critical portion of the Baton Rouge transportation system.
 - Travelers are forced to use I-10 because of deficiencies in the supporting arterial system.
 - There is a high volume of through traffic using the corridor and a high volume of truck traffic.
 - Of the truck traffic, 2/3 has both origin and destination outside of the Baton Rouge metro area.
 - I-10 is an old facility. Planning occurred during the 1950's and design and construction occurred during the 1960's.
 - Facility does not meet current design standards and this causes many of the operational problems (e.g., weaving, acceleration/deceleration).
 - Preliminary assessment of accident areas and causes of these accidents was made.
 - Project goal for system performance is LOS D. LOS D is similar to peak hour performance in eastbound direction when LSU is not in session. LOS E and F (peak hour when LSU is in session) were described. Westbound problems are not as severe as eastbound problems.

2. Public Involvement.

- Local groups participating in the public involvement program include Beauregard Town, various neighborhoods, residents in the vicinity of the Washington St. ramp, the Lakeshore Civic Association, and various business owners.
- At public meeting held at City Park attendance was not overwhelming but comments were very well thought out.
- Surveys were conducted with neighborhoods, commuters, truckers, and transit users. Response rate was 14 percent which is considered good.

3. Congestion Management Study.

- Study required because of region's air quality problems.
- Results will be presented later in meeting.

4. Future Activities.

- Initial alternatives will be narrowed down to those considered to be most reasonable.
- Objective of this meeting is to introduce committee to alternatives, screening methodology, and congestion management analysis.
- Following meeting, it is proposed that alternatives will modeled for their impact on transportation performance, environmental screening will occur, and cost estimates will be made.
- That information will be presented at the next I/IAC meeting (approximately two months from now).
- Following next I/IAC meeting and public meeting final report will be prepared which will summarize all activities. Report will summarize those alternatives which appear to have the best chance of improving the corridor. That will end this phase of the MIS.
- At that time, policy makers will need to determine best way to proceed. Possible decision includes agreement with findings and recommendations to date and initiation of conceptual engineering, more detailed cost studies, and environmental studies. Also required would be inclusion of alternative in a financially constrained long range plan.

Bryan Davis next described the alternatives and the screening methodology criteria.

- 5. Description of 16 Alternatives.** The alternatives serve as a way to depict the different concepts. Refer to Initial Investment Strategies document and to red covered plan set displaying aerial photographs with alternative alignments marked in color and conceptual cross sections.

Alternative 1: No-Build

- Serves as a baseline to compare future improvements.
- Includes projects already programmed in financially constrained long range plan.
- Freeway projects include addition of lanes between Acadian (I-10) and Airline Highway (I-12), ramp between southbound I-110 and westbound I-10, addition of

lanes on I-10 between the 10/12 split and Siegen Lane, and addition of lanes between O'Neal and Range (Denham Springs).

Alternative 2: Congestion Management System

- To be covered later in meeting.

All remaining alternatives will include the no-build and congestion management alternatives.

Alternative 3: Reasonable Cost/Transportation System Management

- Alleviates major bottleneck locations identified in P&N. Two key bottlenecks are (a) the I-10/I-110 interchange, particularly the reduction to one auxiliary lane in the eastbound direction (the only location on I-10 between California and Florida where this design exists) and the weave to the Washington St. ramp, and (b) the weaving problems in the eastbound direction between College and the 10/12 split.

Comment: Lakeshore residents indicate that travelers exiting I-10 at Dalrymple don't know how to return to the freeway and wander through the residential neighborhoods.

Alternative 4: Alternate Route Improvements.

- Improve other roadways adjacent to the I-10 corridor to divert travelers away from I-10. Roadways include Airline, Burbank, Old Hammond, and Siegen. These proposed improvements are not currently included in the financially constrained long range plan because of lack of funding (not technical needs).
- Analysis of this alternative will predict I-10 performance with traffic diverted to these improved corridors.

Question: Explain how this would work on Old Hammond Highway.

Response: By adding capacity to Old Hammond, interstate traffic might be more inclined to use this facility. Some westbound commuters use Florida/Old Hammond to avoid congestion at the Range Avenue interchange.

- The study team will look at the overall system and make a judgment regarding those routes that could provide alternative service and attract trips from the I-10 corridor.

Alternative 5: Combination of Reasonable Cost/TSM and Alternate Route Improvements.

Alternative 6: Lane Balancing Alternative.

Alternative 7: Lane Balancing plus Additional Improvements Alternative.

Comment: Lakeshore residents don't like Alternative 6 because the addition of lanes and shoulders will encroach upon residential property.

- Response: It is recognized that all build alternatives will be intrusive. The extent of the impacts will be assessed during the screening process.
- Comment: No screening has occurred yet. During screening the cost of real estate acquisition will have to be estimated.
- Comment: The alternatives being presented at this meeting are the result of a brainstorming process. All alternatives have been presented regardless of constraints.
- Question: Who will screen the alternatives?
- Response: The consulting team, LaDOTD, CRPC. Results will then be presented to this panel and their comments incorporated.
- Comment: Alternative 4 only addresses State highways. Were local highways considered in the development of this alternative?
- Response: The Horizon Plan contains projects that survived the 'needs based' screening. However, not all of these projects survived the financially constrained screening. Since that screening (1994), the trend has been to remove projects from the Horizon Plan because they did not survive financially constrained screening. However, these roads and improvement concepts should be considered in this alternative.
- Response: It would help to identify those Horizon Plan projects that are critical but not in the financially constrained plan.
- Comment: Projects in the financially constrained plan will be part of the future year model. The 'needs based' plan was developed in 1992. It was pared down to the financially constrained plan in 1994. The 2015 v/c ratio for the region resulting from the financially constrained plan is 1.2 (LOS F by a wide margin). Because of the area's projected growth and financial limits of the 1994 plan there is quite a problem! The long range plan is currently being updated again.
- Comment: The Horizon Plan projects will be reviewed again for inclusion in Alternatives 4 and 7.
- Comment: Noise barriers in plan set need to be indicated as possible noise barriers.

Alternative 8: Express Lanes and I-10/I-110 Interchange Reconstruction

Alternative 9: Express Lanes and Reasonable Cost/TSM

Alternative 10: Express Lanes plus Lane Balancing

Alternative 11: Combinations to Provide LOS D in 2020

Alternative 12: Bypass

Alternative 13: Bypass plus Reasonable Cost/TSM

Alternative 14: Bypass plus Alternate Route Improvements

Alternative 15: Bypass plus Combination of Reasonable Cost/TSM and Alternate Routes

Alternative 16: Bypass plus Lane Balancing

Comment: All Bypass alternatives include construction of a new bridge. The bypass is described in the HNTB study. The bypass requires a new bridge to attract travelers. This study looked at the Burbank/Nicholson corridor and did not mention using the existing bridge. The State Route 190 bridge is underutilized. Using this bridge as an alternative to the I-10 bridge would force travelers to use the heavily congested Airline corridor.

6. Screening Methods. Refer to Screening Methodologies Report.

a) Does Alternative Meet Project Goal of LOS D?

- The study team will use the CRPC forecasting model to calculate performance.
- A 'high' ranking means that the alternative is beneficial under the subject criteria. 'Medium' means there is some improvement. 'Low' means the alternative does not provide much benefit.

b) Does Alternative Improve Travel Times?

- Typical Baton Rouge area trips (e.g., Port Allen to Hospital) will be modeled to determine travel times.
- Truck trip ends will be located so that trucks have choice of using bypass.

Question: Can alternatives provide performance better than LOS D?

Response: In most urban areas, LOS D is standard level. The disbenefits of providing LOS C or better typically outweigh the performance benefits. For our screening, we will focus on the project objective which has been established as LOS D.

Comment: One objective of the project will be to ensure that resulting VMT does not trigger federal transportation control measure requirements. It should be noted that just because traffic volumes increase in one corridor such as I-10, they do not increase at the same level on other corridors.

Comment: There are discrepancies between the land use projections used by the CRPC forecasting model and actual land development. The downturn in the economy during the 1980's has been factored into the current model. Therefore, development in the 1990's has superseded the projected development patterns.

Comment: Projects in the financially constrained plan cannot exceed financial limitations. If a new project is included in the plan, additional funding has to be identified or existing projects have to be removed from the plan. A big issue for the I-10 corridor will be financial constraints.

Incorporating a project that provided LOS C would eliminate all other projects under existing funding levels.

Comment: We should propose alternative financing options. Only 1/3 of the money required to implement the 'needs based' projects is available under current levels.

c) Safety Criteria

d) Capital Costs

e) Constructibility

- The study team will bring in a construction expert to assess constructibility of the alternatives.

f) Financial Feasibility

g) Public Priority

- The first choice is the Bypass based on results of the survey.

Question: How will project cost be spread over time? Can the project be implemented in a series of useable segments?

Question: Will the alternatives be evaluated in an 'all or nothing' context? Portions of each alternative may override other portions of the same alternative.

Response: Because this level of analysis is so conceptual it is difficult to quantify the screening process at any finer detail. There is still a lot of flexibility in the alternatives and most of the capital intensive alternatives include the less intensive alternatives. At the next I/IAC meeting cost estimates will be provided.

Question: What about cost estimate by source?

Response: Cost estimates have not been considered at this level of detail yet. Funding alternatives could include bonds, tolls.

Comment: Alternative funding sources will need to be considered. The local 1994 election to approve funding for \$1 billion in roadway improvements failed miserably and has scared off any suggestions of creative infrastructure financing. As part of this study, alternative funding methods should be considered.

h) Environmental Impacts/Noise

- Anticipated noise mitigation measures are displayed in the plan set.
- Areas along the study corridor similar to the areas in the 10/12 study requiring noise walls will be assumed to need noise walls.

Comment: LaDOTD is in the process of developing new noise wall criteria.

Comment: Does the assumption that a noise wall is required during the evaluation result in a screening impact. You cannot commit to noise walls at this stage of the analysis and then later on rescind on the commitment.

- Comment: Suggest that the number of sites impacted by noise problems be measured and do not assume any type of noise alleviation measure at this stage.
- Comment: If noise is not going to be alleviated in an alternative, that alternative will succumb to public pressure. There are existing areas that have noise and air problems that exceed standards.
- Resolution: FHWA will reserve any decision on noise walls until later. Until then, it will be assumed that areas with problems will be quantified. Later on, methods to alleviate the problem will be assessed. This way, prejudging or prejudicing can be avoided.
- Comment: Noise was a concern in the public involvement feedback.

- i) Environmental Impacts/Relocations
- j) Environmental Impacts/Sensitive Sites
- k) Environmental Impacts/Wetlands

- Question: Is there going to be a weighting process incorporated into the screening analysis? For example, should public opinion be weighted equally to other criteria? Not to belittle their input, but we do need to address certain limitations.
- Response: There is a sample matrix included in the Screening Methodologies Report. The screening assessments will be summarized and the alternatives with the highest number of positive impacts will be noted. The final report will recommend retention of alternatives that are consistent with the objectives of this panel and with the public involvement comments. The screening methodology does not support a true ranking process. It has been designed as a tool to conduct a qualitative assessment of the strategies.
- Comment: More detailed screening will occur during subsequent stages.
- Comment: Be careful of detailed cost assessments at this stage of screening. As a result of future refinement and development of alternatives, cost estimates may change thereby compromising results of cost assessment criteria.
- Comment: An alternative may fall out of this round of screening but later on become desirable for further screening.
- Question: What about utility relocation.
- Response: At this stage, utilities have not been considered.

7. Congestion Management Alternative

- The strategies included in the Congestion Management Alternative will be included in all other alternatives except no-build.
- It has been determined that the implementation of reasonable congestion management alternatives will not result in LOS D performance in the corridor.

- Congestion management strategies do not have to be implemented right away. They can be implemented at a future date.
- The following strategies are not considered reasonable for the corridor: HOV lanes, parking management, congestion pricing, land use, and trucking operations.
- Strategies considered reasonable for implementation include Arterial and operational improvements, incident management, ramp metering, highway advisory radio, variable message signs, employer trip reduction, work schedule changes, telecommuting, areawide ridesharing, transit improvements, park and ride lots, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Examples of congestion management strategy implementation and results were summarized.

Question: Can ramp metering work without frontage roads?

Response: Intelligent transportation system strategies that support ramp metering can help alleviate problems caused by lack of frontage roads.

Comment: LSU students have the option of using CTC transit as part of their activities fee.

Question: Why was land use eliminated?

Response: Land use strategies are not consistent with other congestion management strategies because their impacts are diluted by existing land use patterns, the impacts are more long term than near term and they are difficult to apply to a specific corridor.

Question: Was the use of shopping mall parking spaces considered when assessing park and ride lots.

Response: Not at this level of our study.

Question: Where do we go with these strategies? How do they relate to our project?

Response: Many of the strategies are already being implemented. The recommended TDM strategies (employer trip reduction, work schedule changes, telecommuting, areawide ridesharing) are being implemented through the Baton Rouge Area Commuter Services (BRACS) program.

Comment: If you don't implement congestion management all you are doing is expanding capacity which is business as usual.

Comment: Biking in the area is too dangerous under current designs.

Question: How does the Woodward Clyde study relate to this analysis?

Response: That study is not corridor specific. Also, it focuses on air quality benefits and not transportation system performance benefits.

Question: What are some of the services provided by BRACS? Does it provide vans?

Response: It provides information to commuters and employers, it provides rideshare matching. It can provide information on vanpool. An independent organization, VPSI, provides the vans.

Question: The law says we may have to implement TCMs. Does FHWA require this?

Response: TCMs are not required yet because the nonattainment level in the area is only 'serious'. If air quality degenerates to the 'severe' level TCMs would be required.

- Question: Can Dow or other private companies implement these strategies and have the metro area take credit for their use?
- Response: Yes. That is occurring now.
- Comment: I am worried about recommending a strategy that will not work.
- Comment: I am worried about eliminating strategies even though they may not work well. We should just say that their impact, with regards to transportation performance, are limited by the ability of the metropolitan area to support the strategies. The challenge is to determine how well these strategies can work in this setting.
- Question: Can a reversible median barrier be incorporated into the corridor to serve peak direction travel?
- Response: No. The directional split is not high enough. Taking away a lane in the off-peak direction would harm performance in that direction more than it would help travel in the opposite direction.
- Question: How would transit work?
- Response: For the corridor, express buses coupled with park and ride lots east of the corridor.
- Comment: In Baton Rouge, the bus/park and ride strategy wouldn't even attract one percent of the demand in the corridor.
- Comment: With regard to these strategies, we are just beginning to get a feel for how well they work in Baton Rouge.
- Comment: We need to make a presentation to the policy committee on this subject and get their feedback.
- Comment: We need to focus on the strategies that have a direct impact on the I-10 corridor.
- Question: How do you know when you are implementing telecommuting?
- Response: CRPC has a contract with Woodward Clyde to pursue this strategy.
- Question: If we recommend these strategies and they do not work does it mean that we cannot go ahead with SOV improvements?
- Response: Don't think so.
- Question: Who makes the call regarding the strategies?
- Response: FHWA would have to coordinate with EPA. I don't think FHWA would pass judgment on the success or lack of success of these strategies. We should emphasize the fact that the strategies are being implemented.
- Comment: Las Vegas, as well as other areas, is struggling with these same issues.
- Question: How much of the emission problem is vehicle related and how much is due to industry?
- Response: Vehicles account for approximately 25 percent of the problem. However, congress mandates that we still implement vehicle related strategies.
- Question: Does additional capacity reduce emissions?
- Response: Some, yes, but other emissions increase with additional capacity. You can reduce hydrocarbons but increase NOX. When you add capacity you increase trip lengths which in turn increase VMT and NOX. Fleet turnover is helping to decrease emissions.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

MIS COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDEES**5/29/96**

Name	Agency
Bryan Davis	Parsons Brinckerhoff (504) 830-0070
Dale McDaniel	Parsons Brinckerhoff
L.F. Baehr, Jr.	Army Corp of Engineers, New Orleans
Wayne Aymond	DOTD-Bridge Design
Ray Mumphrey	DOTD-Bridge Design
Guy W. Leonard, III	DOTD-Road Design
Catherine Schober	Lakeshore Civic Association, President
Coan Bueche	DOTD-Chief, Planning Division
R.J. Goebel	CRPC
Don Neisler	CRPC
Huey Dugas	CRPC
Tony Sussmann	FHWA
Steve Glascock	GEC, Inc.
Malcolm Sayes	GEC, Inc
Virgil Page	FHWA
Art Aquirre	FHWA
Nick Kalivoda, III	DOTD-Traffic and Geometric Design
Vince Pizzolato	DOTD
Davis Rhorer	DDD
Chris Roberie	DEQ
Ellen Miller	Baton Rouge Planning Commission
Carol Cranshaw	DOTD Public Transit
Jim Brewer	Mayor's Office, Baton Rouge
Olin K. Dart, Jr.	Chairman, TAC, CRPC
Karen St. Cyr	Port of Greater Baton Rouge



Meeting Minutes

**S.P. No. 700-29-0026
F.A.P. No. NHI-10-3(212)
I-10 Study (Baton Rouge)
Mississippi River Bridge - I-12
Route I-10
East Baton Rouge Parish**

**Minutes of the Third Meeting of the
Intermodal/Involved Agency Committee
August 8, 1996**

The third meeting of the Intermodal/Involved Agency Committee on the I-10 study was held on August 8, 1996 at the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Building in Baton Rouge. A list of attendees is attached.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Coan Bueche, Chief, LaDOTD Planning Division, who provided an introduction. The meeting participants then introduced themselves.

Bryan Davis, project manager for PB, began the presentation by describing the contents of Attachment 1. He also stated that a public meeting would be held at the LaDOTD Auditorium on August 15, 1996 at 7 pm.

Comments, Questions, and Responses Related to the Presentation

Question: How will the public meeting be advertised?

Response: News releases will be made to the media. An advertisement will be printed in the Metro States section of the Advocate. The steering panel members were encouraged to advertise by word of mouth.

Comment: Catherine Schober, President of the Lakeshore Civic Association, is the only neighborhood representative on the panel. How can we get information out to other groups?

Response: Much of this information has been discussed with other groups such as residents in the vicinity of Washington Street and Beauregard Town.

Question: Describe fiscal constraints as they relate to this study.

Response: FHWA requires State and local agencies to prepare fiscally reasonable plans. Reasonableness is a function of past history and future projections regarding project funding.

- Comment: Make sure no alternatives are thrown out solely because of fiscal burden.
- Comment: Local perception is that the bypass will alleviate the problems on the I-10 study corridor.
- Response: A separate study will be underway shortly to look at bypass characteristics.
- Comment: Although 20 percent of traffic may divert from I-10 to the bypass, much of that demand will be replaced by other travelers that had not be using the I-10 corridor. Whenever a facility becomes more attractive to the traveler as a result of improvements to or adjacent to the corridor, it typically attracts these new travelers.
- Comment: Any improvements to the corridor should be coordinated with rehabilitation to existing pavement and structures. The objective is to submit the travelers to as few construction detours and restrictions as possible.
- Comment: As the alternatives are further refined, constructibility issues will be addressed in greater detail.
- Comment: The next step in the process is to conduct preliminary engineering on the recommended alternatives.
- Question: Can we use reversible lanes?
- Response: I-10 traffic is not distributed in a way to make reversible lanes appropriate. Although the highest congestion levels occur in the afternoon and eastbound direction, there are still enough vehicles travelling in the westbound direction to fill up the westbound lanes. The congestion problem would just be transferred--not solved--by implementing reversible lanes.
- Comment: The no-build alternative rates high in several categories.
- Response: If the objective is to not impact the surrounding corridor or environment at all then this would be an appropriate alternative.
- Comment: Alternative 11 assumes that the system provides LOS D at all times and at all locations. This would be very expensive, as would providing LOS C or B at all times.
- Comment: Many traffic problems are caused by incidents. The performance assumptions assume that there are no incidents restricting the flow of traffic. The congestion management system recommendation of an

incident management system would have the objective of reducing the impact of incidents on travel.

- Comment: The congestion management alternative does not solve all the problems. However, it's intent is to improve conditions sooner than the more complex and expensive alternatives.
- Comment: No assumptions were made regarding creative financing to fund the alternatives. The MIS results are intended to aid in the decision making process related to the I-10 corridor. Now that costs and alternatives have been identified the issues of financing can be more readily addressed.
- Comment: The results of this study will be presented to the MPO. The MPO will have to give approval to proceed with preliminary engineering and environmental studies.
- Comment: Before committing to subsequent engineering and environmental studies we need to look at cost and opportunities for innovative financing.
- Comment: Prior to the MIS there were many abstract ideas regarding improvements to I-10. Now we have quantified these ideas and determined how much they cost and what benefits they provide.
- Comment: The I-10 corridor in Baton Rouge is the top priority for the state. Although the improvements are expensive they can be done.
- Question: Is it possible to ask Congress for the money?
- Response: FHWA does not advocate demonstration projects. Demonstration projects are not usually funded in full.
- Comment: This project is a national issue. It may be considered a State and Federal problem and not necessarily a local problem. There might not be a lot of local support to shift funding away from 'local' problems to improve I-10.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

MIS COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDEES
8/8/96

Name	Agency
Bryan Davis	Parsons Brinckerhoff (504) 830-0070
Dale McDaniel	Parsons Brinckerhoff
L.F. Baehr, Jr.	Army Corp of Engineers, New Orleans
Wayne Aymond	DOTD-Bridge Design
Catherine Schober	Lakeshore Civic Association, President
Coan Bueche	DOTD-Chief, Planning Division
R.J. Goebel	CRPC
Tony Sussmann	FHWA
Virgil Page	FHWA
Art Aquirre	FHWA
Davis Rhorer	DDD
Chris Roberie	DEQ
Ellen Miller	Baton Rouge Planning Commission

In The Matter Of:

*I-10 Corridor Study
Project Number 17405*

August 15, 1996

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[5] I-10 CORRIDOR STUDY
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[7] PUBLIC MEETING
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[9] AUGUST 15, 1996
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[1] that those I didn't recognize by sight
[2] won't know that - Well, anyhow, I've
[3] given that scheme away.
[4] Councilman Jim Benham is
[5] here. I know that Christina Castille from
[6] Congressman Jim Baker's office is here, or
[7] was here just a minute ago. There she is
[8] back there. I did see Representative Kip
[9] Holden here earlier, but I don't see him
[10] now. And he'll be back, I heard someone
[11] say.
[12] Now, not being from the Baton
[13] Rouge area, I don't recognize everyone who
[14] is in elected office by face, so if I miss
[15] someone who is elected, would you please
[16] let me know and -
[17] Sir?
[18] REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL:
[19] (inaudible)
[20] MR. BUECHE:
[21] William Daniels.
[22] REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL:
[23] (inaudible)
[24] MR. BUECHE:
[25] Oh, excuse me, sir.

[1] PROCEEDINGS
[2] MR. BUECHE:
[3] We're ready to start. How
[4] about taking a seat so we can get on with
[5] the formal presentation?
[6] Thank you.
[7] I shouldn't say "formal
[8] presentation." I should say the
[9] more-organized presentation. I don't
[10] think we've had this many people in this
[11] auditorium since the boss commanded the
[12] staff to come down here a few weeks ago.
[13] My name is Coan Bueche. I'm
[14] Chief of the Planning Division for DOTD.
[15] I'd like to welcome you folks to our
[16] public meeting number two on the Major
[17] Investment Study for the I-10 Corridor in
[18] Baton Rouge from the Mississippi River
[19] Bridge to the I-10/I-12 split.
[20] I know I shouldn't do this,
[21] but I'm going to attempt to introduce
[22] elected officials. And maybe what I
[23] should do - We're going to have a break
[24] later on. Maybe what I should do is
[25] introduce some before and some after so

[1] Representative from Baton
[2] Rouge William Daniel.
[3] You know, I'm not too familiar
[4] with who's in office now.
[5] Is there anyone else?
[6] UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
[7] (inaudible)
[8] MR. BUECHE:
[9] I see.
[10] (laughter from audience)
[11] MR. BUECHE:
[12] Thanks. I was a little too at
[13] ease until you said that, but -
[14] (laughter from audience)
[15] MR. BUECHE:
[16] - I'm going to get on my toes
[17] a little more.
[18] Have I missed anyone else?
[19] UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
[20] (inaudible)
[21] MR. BUECHE:
[22] Sorry I missed you, sir. My
[23] excuse is that I'm ignorant of the area.
[24] Now, from FHWA, I'm not so
[25] much concerned about missing these guys.

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(1) It's sort of like the guys on the team.
 (2) I know that Tony Sussman, the
 (3) Louisiana Division Administrator, is
 (4) here. I saw him earlier. There's Tony.
 (5) I know that Arture Gieda (spelled
 (6) phonetically), who works in his Planning
 (7) and Research area, is here. I didn't see
 (8) anyone else from FHWA here earlier, so if
 (9) I missed anyone from FHWA, raise your
 (10) hand.

(11) Tony and Art, then, will bear
 (12) the brunt of whatever ire you have here at
 (13) the end of this meeting.

(14) The DOTD staff, Vincent Russo
 (15) is here from the Environmental Section,
 (16) and he has several of his people. I hope
 (17) I have all their names: Kenny Jackson,
 (18) Wayne Wynn, and Robert Tessier.

(19) Our esteemed District
 (20) Administrator, Mr. Willie Taylor, is
 (21) here. Willie is here to help Tony and Art
 (22) bear the brunt of your wrath.

(23) From the Capitol Region
 (24) Planning Commission staff we have the
 (25) Executive Director, Don Niesler, here. I

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(1) see Don back there. I saw R.J. Goeble
 (2) (spelled phonetically), and there's R.J.
 (3) Goeble. And I believe that's all from the
 (4) Capitol Region Planning Commission staff
 (5) here.

(6) I did see Jerry Clear, the
 (7) City Parish Department of Public Works,
 (8) either Chief Engineer or Deputy Director
 (9) or whatever his title is now, one of the
 (10) head men. He changes it from week to
 (11) week. It's not a bad idea.

(12) Well, now, if I've missed
 (13) anyone, again, I apologize.

(14) To do this study we've had to
 (15) resort to using consultant assistance
 (16) because of department workload and because
 (17) we needed a certain expertise that is not
 (18) found readily.

(19) So from Parsons, Brinckerhoff,
 (20) Quade & Douglas, we have Dale McDaniel up
 (21) here on the stage, who is the area manager
 (22) for Parsons, Brinckerhoff. We have Bryan
 (23) Davis, who is the project manager for
 (24) Parsons, Brinckerhoff. And out in the
 (25) hall as you were coming in was Brian

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(1) Hoeft, who is a project engineer with
 (2) Parsons, Brinckerhoff.
 (3) Now, to give a little
 (4) background so that our minds are moving in
 (5) the same direction on this thing, I want
 (6) to point out that this study began in
 (7) May. On May 21st of '95 we started this
 (8) Major Investment Study. One of the first
 (9) things we did was to appoint a Steering
 (10) Committee that comprised stakeholders in
 (11) the transportation system, users of the
 (12) transportation system, providers of
 (13) transportation like the Louisiana Motor
 (14) Transport, and people along the corridor
 (15) that we're studying that might be affected
 (16) by whatever improvements we would do.

(17) So our first Steering
 (18) Committee meeting was held at the
 (19) Louisiana Municipal Association Building
 (20) in June of 1995, and then we conducted our
 (21) first neighborhood meeting in the
 (22) University Lakes area in October of 1995.
 (23) We conducted a second neighborhood meeting
 (24) at the Leo Butler Community Center in
 (25) October of '95.

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(1) We did a third neighborhood
 (2) meeting at the Metro Council Chambers with
 (3) the Beauregard Town Interests also in
 (4) October, and we had the fourth
 (5) neighborhood meeting at Cipriano's
 (6) Restaurant on the morning of November the
 (7) 2nd, which was immediately preceded by a
 (8) deluge, so the turnout was a little bit
 (9) light then.

(10) But we had a public meeting -
 (11) The first public meeting was sort of an
 (12) open-house meeting like we had here for
 (13) the last hour and a half in November out
 (14) at City Park. Then we had a second
 (15) Steering Committee meeting in Baton Rouge
 (16) at the Centroplex in May of this year.

(17) So this public meeting is our
 (18) ninth meeting involving the public in one
 (19) form or another during the project study,
 (20) which is sort of a different approach to
 (21) transportation planning in Louisiana, more
 (22) public involvement, more early
 (23) considerations for environmental matters,
 (24) more early consideration for sensitivities
 (25) adjacent to the project.

[1] So here's how the meeting will
[2] work - I hope it will work this way.
[3] This is how we're going to do it. I hope
[4] it works.

[5] The meeting is being
[6] recorded. I know when there's a tape
[7] recorder around I get a little intimidated
[8] by the fact that there's a tape recorder,
[9] but I hope that that doesn't intimidate
[10] you to the extent that you won't voice
[11] your concerns just as you were voicing
[12] them when you were looking at the
[13] displays. We need them for the record.

[14] In just a few minutes
[15] Mr. Bryan Davis from Parsons, Brinckerhoff
[16] will present the findings of the study
[17] thus far, and we will talk about the next
[18] steps. After he's made his presentation
[19] we'll take about a 15-minute break, and if
[20] you have not filled out one of those cards
[21] and you now wish that you had, at that
[22] break you can fill out a card.

[23] And what we'll do, then, after
[24] the break when you come back in we will
[25] ask for those who've filled out cards to

[1] make their statements first. Then we'll
[2] give an opportunity to anyone who's not
[3] signed a card but has decided at some
[4] point in the course of these proceedings
[5] that they'd like to make a statement.
[6] Those statements or questions or whatever
[7] at that time will be part of the record
[8] and for the record.

[9] After all of that's over,
[10] Mr. Davis and I - I don't know how wise
[11] this is, but Mr. Davis and I will try to
[12] field questions you may have and give
[13] answers here ad lib.

[14] So without further ado, let me
[15] ask Bryan Davis, the project manager for
[16] Parsons, Brinckerhoff, to go through what
[17] he has done so far and show you where we
[18] are.

[19] Bryan?

[20] MR. DAVIS:

[21] Thank you, Coan.
[22] It might be helpful to start
[23] off and explain what a Major Investment
[24] Study is and why we're doing one.
[25] A Major Investment Study is a

[1] relatively new requirement that has to be
[2] accomplished before a state such as
[3] Louisiana can receive federal aid for a
[4] major urban freeway improvement.

[5] What it does, in addition to
[6] being a requirement for federal aid, it's
[7] simply good planning. It calls for a
[8] clear definition of the problem that we're
[9] seeking to solve. It calls for the
[10] identification of all reasonable
[11] alternatives to solve that problem. It
[12] seeks to involve the public in the
[13] decision-making process for the project.
[14] And, finally, it makes a recommendation -
[15] Finally, it makes recommendations that are
[16] well-thought-out and considered on the
[17] basis of benefits produced as well as
[18] costs incurred.

[19] What it results in is a design
[20] concept that will go into the Baton Rouge
[21] Area Long-Range Transportation Plan and
[22] function as a game plan for future
[23] improvements in the corridor. So
[24] basically that's what a Major Investment
[25] Study is.

[1] Let's briefly just describe -
[2] I'd like to briefly describe what we've
[3] accomplished so far.

[4] First, in researching previous
[5] studies and dealing with our Steering
[6] Committee, we've determined that I-10 is a
[7] critical element in mobility in Baton
[8] Rouge. It accounts for a tremendous
[9] percentage of the commuter trips, the
[10] shopping trips, delivery trips, as well as
[11] emergency trips in the city, and it also
[12] accommodates coast-to-coast traffic or
[13] people that are traveling through the
[14] area. And contained especially in that
[15] traffic are a large number of large
[16] trucks.

[17] And I don't think this is
[18] anything that you-all don't already know.

[19] Additionally, we conducted an
[20] in-depth safety and operational analysis
[21] of I-10. And you'll see the results on
[22] that graphic that's on the wall over
[23] there.

[24] But what that determined is
[25] that I-10 is a relatively old urban

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[1] freeway. It was planned in the late '50s
[2] and built in the early '60s. And,
[3] consequently, it does not have many of the
[4] features that are standards that current
[5] urban freeways enjoy.

[6] And the result of that is that
[7] the lanes, the six lanes that currently
[8] exist on I-10 do not function as
[9] efficiently as they could, and there are
[10] sizable numbers of accidents that occur.
[11] Some of the problems that were identified
[12] on I-10 were inadequate acceleration and
[13] deceleration lanes at interchanges, short
[14] weaving distances, which contribute to
[15] traffic tie-ups and increased numbers of
[16] accidents, and a large number of those
[17] types of problems.

[18] Well, the importance of
[19] identifying these problems is so that as
[20] we identify solutions, those solutions can
[21] focus in on those types of problems. So I
[22] guess the bottom line to that discussion
[23] is that, in addition to not just having
[24] enough capacity, I-10 also has problems
[25] that inhibit the capacity that presently

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[1] Management Plan that looks at measures
[2] that don't involve construction or don't
[3] involve the addition of more lanes. These
[4] would be such things as improved transit,
[5] park-and-ride lots, encouraging people to
[6] use van pools and carpools, incident
[7] management programs to deal with accidents
[8] and breakdowns in a more rapid and
[9] organized fashion.

[10] But in urban areas that have
[11] air quality problems, before freeway
[12] expansion can approved, an analysis has to
[13] be made to determine if congestion
[14] management alone would solve the problem.
[15] And if it won't, then those congestion
[16] management measures similar to what I've
[17] enumerated that make sense, the ones that
[18] can actually provide some improvement,
[19] have to be implemented along with any
[20] other capacity expansions that would occur
[21] on an urban freeway such as I-10.

[22] So what have we determined at
[23] this point? When we did our analysis of
[24] the alternatives that were identified, we
[25] found that three had significantly more

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[1] exists.

[2] Using the information that we
[3] gained from research and previous studies
[4] and our work with the Steering Committee
[5] and our public involvement sessions, we
[6] identified 16 possible alternative
[7] solutions to address the problems that
[8] were identified on I-10.

[9] Additionally, we identified
[10] screening criteria that represent the
[11] typical factors that go into
[12] transportation decision-making, including
[13] benefits in terms of improved traffic
[14] service and cost and feasibility and
[15] public opinion, environmental impacts,
[16] relocations of homes and businesses, and
[17] so forth. But these are the types of
[18] criteria that we use to narrow that long
[19] list of 16 alternatives down to a few that
[20] can be recommended for pursuing to solve
[21] I-10 problems.

[22] Additionally, as part of the
[23] Major Investment Study, because of Baton
[24] Rouge's air quality problems, we had to
[25] develop what is called a Congestion

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[1] benefits and less costs in terms of money,
[2] disruption, and environmental impacts, and
[3] I'd like to describe those three
[4] alternatives.

[5] The first is what we have
[6] termed Reasonable Cost, or it may have
[7] been better termed "the bottleneck
[8] solver," because the initial alternative
[9] or that was recommended mainly deals with
[10] the two key bottlenecks on I-10. And it's
[11] important to note that the most serious
[12] problems on I-10 occur during the
[13] afternoon rush hour and for traffic
[14] proceeding in the eastbound direction.
[15] And both of these bottlenecks occur in
[16] that direction.

[17] The first is the problem at
[18] the I-10/I-110 interchange where I-10
[19] narrows down to one lane to merge with
[20] traffic coming south on I-110. The second
[21] exists at the College Street interchange
[22] where traffic is entering I-10 in the
[23] eastbound direction and is trying to
[24] proceed east on I-12 and is having to
[25] cross over all the lanes of traffic to

[1] proceed east on I-12.

[2] The solutions, first of all,
[3] in the Reasonable Cost Alternative would
[4] recommend enough construction to provide
[5] two through lanes through the I-10/I-110
[6] interchange. There would be two
[7] free-flowing lanes of I-10 through this
[8] interchange and would continue to a point
[9] just to the west of Dalrymple.

[10] This recommendation would also
[11] address the problem at the College
[12] off-ramp - not the College, the
[13] Washington Street off-ramp, by relocating
[14] that off-ramp to a safer and less
[15] disruptive location, and in doing so, we
[16] would work closely with the people that
[17] live in that area that would be affected
[18] by that - that change to identify an
[19] acceptable location.

[20] At the College interchange I
[21] mentioned the problem that exists with the
[22] present on-ramp in the eastbound
[23] direction. That on-ramp would be closed.
[24] The traffic that is entering I-10 at the
[25] College interchange that's seeking to go

[1] vicinity of the split.

[2] Additionally, the College
[3] interchange - The present College
[4] interchange would be reconfigured to a
[5] more conventional type diamond interchange
[6] that would greatly improve operations that
[7] are currently pretty difficult in the
[8] College interchange area. The net result
[9] of that would be that traffic on I-10 -
[10] not only would traffic on I-10 be -
[11] congestion would be improved, but also on
[12] College, it would improve the congestion
[13] on College.

[14] The next alternative that is
[15] recommended is what is termed Lane
[16] Balancing. Lane Balancing would include
[17] the recommendations of the Congestion
[18] Management Plan. It would also include
[19] the two bottleneck solutions that I just
[20] mentioned to you in what was termed the
[21] Reasonable Cost Alternative.

[22] But beyond that, it would
[23] provide an additional lane in each
[24] direction along I-10. Presently the
[25] Louisiana Department of Transportation and

[1] east would be routed along the present
[2] Constitution - That's the road that runs
[3] between the Hampton Inn and the Marriott,
[4] the Chris' Steakhouse, right adjacent to
[5] I-10. That road would be converted into a
[6] frontage road, a one-way frontage road in
[7] the eastbound direction, and the traffic
[8] would be routed along that route.

[9] Constitution would be extended
[10] to the east to a point just before the
[11] I-10/I-12 split. At that point ramps
[12] would be provided to allow traffic - that
[13] would allow traffic to go over the split
[14] and tie into I-10 and to I-12 east of the
[15] split.

[16] Now, it's recognized that
[17] there is traffic currently using
[18] Constitution that seeks to go in the
[19] westbound direction. That traffic would
[20] be accommodated by an additional frontage
[21] road in the westbound direction north of
[22] I-10 in the vicinity of the area where
[23] several new restaurants have recently been
[24] constructed. The two frontage roads would
[25] be connected by an elevated loop in the

[1] Development has programed an additional
[2] lane on I-10 between the split -
[3] Actually, on I-12 it goes from Airline
[4] Highway proceeding west to Acadian. The
[5] Lane Balancing Alternative would continue
[6] those additional lanes all the way to I-10
[7] I-110.

[8] The bottom line or the net
[9] result of that recommendation would be an
[10] eight-lane freeway - I-10 would become an
[11] eight-lane freeway with improved shoulders
[12] and connections and the two main
[13] bottlenecks in the eastbound direction
[14] addressed.

[15] The third recommended
[16] alternative is what's termed Lane
[17] Balancing Plus Additional Improvements.
[18] This alternative would include all of the
[19] previous recommendations, the addressing
[20] of the bottlenecks and the additional
[21] lanes and shoulders and so forth and the
[22] reconfiguration of the College
[23] interchange.

[24] It would also address problems
[25] that were identified - And you've seen

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[1] some of those if you've seen the graphic
[2] over there - at Acadian and also
[3] Dalrymple and would consider the
[4] possibility of eliminating the Perkins
[5] interchange. The Perkins interchange is
[6] spaced such that there is inadequate
[7] weaving distances among the other
[8] interchanges that lie to each side of it,
[9] and the elimination of that would improve
[10] traffic flow in that area.

[11] Another aspect of Lane
[12] Balancing Plus Additional Improvements
[13] would consider an eastbound on-ramp at
[14] Dalrymple. Furthermore, the additional
[15] improvements would include more frontage
[16] roads that would accommodate local traffic
[17] that may be currently using I-10.

[18] So the net result would be
[19] additional capacity provided by the
[20] additional lanes. A lot of the problems
[21] that are currently congesting the existing
[22] lanes would be addressed through the
[23] interchange improvements, and the
[24] bottlenecks would be eliminated.

[25] Why do we think that these

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[1] three alternatives should be recommended?

[2] First of all, they provide
[3] significantly improved traffic service
[4] through the forecast project year, which
[5] is 2020. As we have determined them,
[6] these improvements would result in what
[7] traffic engineers term as Level Service D,
[8] which means that traffic would generally
[9] flow about the posted speed limit, there
[10] would be difficulties in changing lanes,
[11] driving would not be too comfortable
[12] but considerably better than what
[13] presently exists during rush hour under
[14] the present circumstances, and certainly
[15] better than what would exist in the year
[16] 2020. Level Service D is a typical level
[17] of service that's currently being targeted
[18] by urban freeway projects.

[19] The second reason for this
[20] recommendation is the cost. For the most
[21] comprehensive alternative, which is Lane
[22] Balancing Plus Additional Improvements,
[23] the total cost is in the neighborhood of a
[24] hundred million dollars. Those that are
[25] less comprehensive would cost

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[1] substantially less.

[2] So one of the reasons is that
[3] the cost is within some reason of being
[4] accomplished. They can be implemented in
[5] usable segments as money is available.
[6] Portions of these could be built with
[7] lesser costs, and then increments could be
[8] constructed as additional funds become
[9] available.

[10] They are consistent with
[11] public opinion. The recommendations for
[12] additional lanes, I believe, rank number
[13] two in the recommendations preferred by
[14] the public.

[15] They would not cause
[16] significant - Well, let's see. They
[17] would not cause significant disruption
[18] during construction. We performed a
[19] constructability analysis to determine
[20] traffic impacts that may occur while these
[21] projects were being built, and that
[22] analysis determined that even under
[23] construction, three lanes could remain
[24] open in each direction during the
[25] construction period.

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[1] Additionally, expensive
[2] detours would not have to be constructed,
[3] which would be the case with some of the
[4] other alternatives that were examined.

[5] Would we recommend any one of
[6] those alternatives over the other two?

[7] And the answer to that is:

[8] Not at this time. At this point they
[9] really are all basically the same
[10] strategy, with varying degrees of how much
[11] would be accomplished under each
[12] alternative, and so the ultimate solution
[13] would be identified after further
[14] conceptual engineering and environmental
[15] analysis.

[16] Now, let's talk a little bit
[17] about what would happen if we did
[18] nothing. We call this the Do Nothing -
[19] the No-Build Alternative. And this is one
[20] that's required to be analyzed as a
[21] baseline to compare other alternatives
[22] to.

[23] Well, obviously, if we did
[24] nothing, there would be no additional
[25] costs in terms of money or disruption or

[1] environmental impacts.

[2] However, problems would
[3] continue to get worse on the I-10. Rush
[4] hours would get longer. Right now in the
[5] afternoon the rush hour's in the
[6] neighborhood of an hour and 15 minutes to
[7] an hour and a half. I think by the year
[8] 2020 we could see considerably longer rush
[9] hours approaching two to three hours.

[10] Accidents would increase.

[11] Those accidents that cause I-10 to back up
[12] for a half an hour, an hour at a time
[13] where nobody moves would expand in
[14] frequency. Traffic would divert to other
[15] arterials that are already congested and
[16] that were not built to accommodate
[17] substantial increases in capacity.

[18] Unanticipated land uses could
[19] occur as a result of increased
[20] congestion.

[21] And, finally, emergency
[22] services would suffer.

[23] The question was asked: Could
[24] we improve other routes such as Florida
[25] and Airline and Perkins and Burbank, and

[1] would that address the problems on the
[2] I-10? And those were analyzed, and they
[3] did not. They would not reduce congestion
[4] on I-10 to a satisfactory level, and they
[5] would cost more than those alternatives
[6] that would provide some significant
[7] relief.

[8] What about the congestion
[9] management ideas? Would they address the
[10] problems? And the answer to that is they
[11] just wouldn't even come close. But,
[12] again, it's important to recognize that
[13] those that - that have some reasonable
[14] impact on congestion on I-10 wouldn't be
[15] necessarily implemented as a part of any
[16] other improvements that would provide
[17] additional capacity to I-10.

[18] What about the express lanes
[19] or what you may have heard termed "the
[20] high pass"? These are lanes that would be
[21] built to handle traffic that is passing
[22] through the corridor with neither origins
[23] nor destinations within the corridor.
[24] They may be elevated or constructed
[25] adjacent to the present facility.

[1] When we analyzed these express
[2] lanes, we found that they did not provide
[3] significantly more improvement than the
[4] recommended alternatives. They would
[5] involve complex and perhaps
[6] bottleneck-producing connections.

[7] And I think you can see
[8] this - If you've ever driven in Texas on
[9] I-35 through Austin and San Antonio,
[10] you'll see examples of express lanes being
[11] used. But if you travel them in rush
[12] hour, you'll also see traffic bunching up
[13] in the vicinity of the entrances and
[14] exits.

[15] And this could be - Our
[16] analysis indicated that this would occur
[17] with express lanes in Baton Rouge. So
[18] consequently they were not recommended
[19] over, above other alternatives.

[20] And then they would be
[21] significantly disruptive during
[22] construction as well as after
[23] construction. If the elevated lanes were
[24] recommended, there would be additional
[25] noise and visual intrusion. If they were

[1] built adjacent to the present facility,
[2] significant amounts of right-of-way and
[3] relocation would be involved.

[4] What about the bypass? I
[5] think it's important to point out and I
[6] want to emphasize that the I-10 study
[7] looked at the bypass only from its ability
[8] to address congestion and safety problems
[9] of I-10. There may be some benefits, and
[10] the bypass may serve purposes that were
[11] not addressed in this study, and I think
[12] that's important to recognize.

[13] What this study found was that
[14] the traffic diverted by the bypass would
[15] simply not be enough to correct the safety
[16] and congestion problems along I-10 during
[17] the peak hours. It would not produce as
[18] much relief as other, less-costly
[19] alternatives.

[20] So what do we do with this
[21] information?

[22] Well, obviously, I-10 in Baton
[23] Rouge is a significant problem, not only
[24] for the people that live here but the
[25] people that travel through here, and it

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[1] requires being addressed. This study has
[2] identified strategies that would address
[3] these problems at lesser costs in terms of
[4] money, disruption, and environmental
[5] impacts.

[6] If the Louisiana Department of
[7] Transportation and Development, in
[8] consultation with the Capitol Regional
[9] Planning Commission's Policy Committee,
[10] concur with the findings of this study,
[11] then the appropriate course of action
[12] would be to authorize more conceptual
[13] engineering that would change these
[14] concepts into more definable projects from
[15] which right-of-way limits could be
[16] determined and more finite costs be
[17] identified and from which an environmental
[18] impact statement could be prepared leading
[19] to approval and, ultimately,
[20] implementation of the improvements.

[21] So what are the next steps?
[22] Well, obviously, we're having
[23] a meeting here tonight to present these
[24] findings to you-all. We want to
[25] incorporate - want to receive your

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[1] comments and incorporate them into the
[2] final recommendations and the final report
[3] of this study. We will be presenting this
[4] information to the Capitol Regional
[5] Planning Commission's committees for their
[6] recommendations and concurrence.

[7] Assuming that those actions
[8] take place and the State and the Baton
[9] Rouge Area prefer to proceed with these
[10] recommendations, then it would be
[11] appropriate to include funding to proceed
[12] with the next phases of the project into
[13] the Baton Rouge Area Long-Range
[14] Transportation Plan and Transportation
[15] Improvement Program.

[16] At this point I'd like to show
[17] you a brief graphic that evaluates the
[18] alternatives based on the identified
[19] criteria. I hope you can read that.

[20] On the left-hand side are the
[21] 16 alternatives. These involve the
[22] addition of lanes. They look at the
[23] possibility of elevated lanes or express
[24] lanes. They also address the bypass and
[25] various combinations of these, and also

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[1] the Congestion Management Plan.
[2] Now, this is somewhat of a
[3] Consumer Report approach to evaluating
[4] alternatives. The dark circles indicate
[5] the level - or high level of acceptable
[6] or favorable characteristics. The target
[7] or lighter-colored circle indicates a
[8] medium level, and, of course, the plain
[9] circle indicates low in the evaluation
[10] context. I think you can read those
[11] fairly well.

[12] I'd like to leave that up for
[13] a while and, at this point, go ahead and
[14] take a break, and then during the break
[15] I'd be happy to explain details on any of
[16] the recommendations or any of the
[17] information that you see on the evaluation
[18] chart.

[19] Thank you.

[20] MR. BUECHE:

[21] If you want to make a
[22] statement, please fill out a card, and
[23] we'll call on those who've filled out the
[24] cards first. So let's reconvene at ten
[25] minutes to 8:00.

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[1] (Whereupon a brief recess was taken
[2] at this time.)

[3] MR. BUECHE:

[4] Let's start it, because I have
[5] a bunch of cards here, and we want
[6] everyone to have an opportunity to make
[7] their comments.

[8] Hey, sit down.
[9] (laughter from audience)

[10] MR. BUECHE:

[11] All right. Listen up. If you
[12] don't listen up, you're going to miss the
[13] rest of it, because we're going to start
[14] now.

[15] I said earlier that if I'd
[16] missed any elected officials or if someone
[17] came in, I want to acknowledge that
[18] Senator John Guidry is here, and he will
[19] make a statement later on. I mentioned
[20] that representative Kip Holden was here,
[21] and I understand also we have Councilwoman
[22] Mary Frye Eaton here, or at least she
[23] was - Oh, there she is.

[24] MS. FRYE EATON:

[25] Yeah. I'm here.

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MR. BUECHE:

[1]

[2] Good.

[3] Now, here's how we'll work

[4] this from here out, I hope. I have the

[5] cards that you folks filled out indicating

[6] that you wanted to make a statement.

[7] Now, someone was just asking

[8] me does that include the right to ask a

[9] question. Well, what I'd like to do is

[10] for the record to receive the statements

[11] that you would like to make, and then

[12] after that we will try to field some

[13] questions.

[14] And I'm going to caution Bryan

[15] right now that we should answer only

[16] questions we know the answer to and not

[17] speculate about anything. So if we tell

[18] you we don't know at this time, it's

[19] because Jerry Clear advised me over there

[20] that every time he tries to answer a

[21] question he doesn't know the answer to, he

[22] gets in trouble.

[23] So, Senator Guidry, if you're

[24] ready, I guess you're going to have to

[25] come up here and make your comments. We

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[1] don't have any other place.

[2]

SENATOR GUIDRY:

[3] Let me say that I am

[4] unalterably opposed to what I see here

[5] tonight. This is about an expressway, but

[6] it's about running an expressway over

[7] people. This is about displacement of

[8] people. This is about additional noise.

[9] This is about doing things in the

[10] community that ought not be happening.

[11] A few days ago I talked to the

[12] Secretary of DOTD, a very heated

[13] conversation with your Secretary. And

[14] that heated conversation had to do with

[15] the fact that right now the on-ramp that

[16] comes at Washington Street along McCalop

[17] in order to get on I-10 west, north and

[18] going to I-10 west has been closed, and

[19] they're projecting to have that closed

[20] until November.

[21] And what that means is that

[22] the people who live in that community

[23] cannot get on the Interstate at that

[24] point. They have to go and create

[25] additional traffic and additional noise

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[1] around the lake area in order to get on

[2] the Interstate at Dalrymple. And when you

[3] go around Lakeshore, it's already been

[4] shown that the noise contours are already

[5] exceeding the required levels. So what

[6] you're doing now is you're creating

[7] additional traffic and additional noise

[8] around the lake, and you're totally

[9] displacing an entire community.

[10] The Washington Street on-ramp,

[11] the people who live in that area around

[12] East Washington Street and in that South

[13] Baton Rouge community, that's where they

[14] get on the Interstate. And you-all have

[15] closed that down. You're talking about

[16] closing down until November, and I expect

[17] the reason why you closed it, because you

[18] want to ultimately come and close it

[19] permanently and displace that entire

[20] community.

[21] And then you turn right back

[22] around in this plan - now, that was -

[23] That was going north. Then you turn

[24] around in this plan and say: We're going

[25] to close it south, too. Not only can you

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[1] not get on the Interstate in your

[2] community - And keep in mind, the people

[3] who live in that particular community were

[4] the people who were most displaced when

[5] the Interstate was built in the first

[6] place. The persons who live in that

[7] community were the most displaced when you

[8] built the Interstate.

[9] And now you're cutting off

[10] their ability to get on the Interstate and

[11] go north and then, in this one of your

[12] alternatives here, you're going to cut off

[13] the lane that they come into their

[14] community on the Interstate going south,

[15] talking about doing away with the

[16] Washington Street down-ramp.

[17] Totally unacceptable. I said

[18] that to the Secretary. I'm going to say

[19] it to the Governor next week. And I'm

[20] saying to all of you-all at DOTD, I'm

[21] totally opposed to that. I'm totally

[22] opposed to putting additional traffic

[23] around the lake area because the noise

[24] contours are already too high. And

[25] there's been no commitment to build a

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[1] sound wall.

[2] Now, you said, well, you know
[3] that that's maybe something we ought to
[4] look at, et cetera. But to have an
[5] additional on-ramp at Dalrymple going east
[6] where the noise contours already exceed
[7] acceptable levels without a commitment to
[8] a sound wall is totally irresponsible.

[9] And then you're going to do
[10] away with the Perkins Road on-ramp and
[11] down-ramp all together. And we talk about
[12] economic development. What about the
[13] Wal-Mart? What about the people who get
[14] off at Perkins Road to go to the Wal-Mart
[15] or when they go to the - go to the
[16] neighborhoods? That's going to do a lot
[17] for economic development in that area.

[18] College Drive is one of the
[19] biggest booming areas in our community
[20] right now, all those new restaurants,
[21] hotels, refurbishing, doing all that.
[22] Traffic coming from - People who work and
[23] go to school at LSU, people who live in
[24] Concord and Stratford, Polidor Estates
[25] (spelled phonetically), and all those

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[1] neighborhoods around Perkins Road and down
[2] Interstate to the split, what are you
[3] doing to them?

[4] What you're doing is you're
[5] displacing them. You're taking away an
[6] opportunity to get on the ramp. And
[7] you're going to hurt economic
[8] development. You're going to hurt the
[9] businesses in that area. But most of all -
[10] you're going to hurt the people.

[11] I'll give you one example.
[12] You-all say that we're going to take the
[13] Constitution Street and make that a -
[14] You're going to make that a through road
[15] going to a loop around I-10/I-12.

[16] Well, I know - because I live
[17] in that area - that you're going to
[18] totally destroy the Concord subdivision.
[19] And the effect of that's going to be to
[20] destroy the Stratford subdivision. And
[21] you're going to destroy some other
[22] subdivisions along that way. Because when
[23] you get on Constitution, that runs into a
[24] lady's driveway. And then behind her
[25] there are houses that go all the way

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[1] down - that go all the way down to the
[2] canal. And so you're going to have to
[3] knock those houses out in order to make
[4] that a road going all the way to the
[5] I-10/I-12 split.

[6] And then you're going to say
[7] to a person who's getting on - You're
[8] going to say: Well, you can't get on
[9] Interstate at College. If you want to
[10] go - If you want to go north, you've got
[11] to go all the way to the I-10/I-12 split,
[12] get on a loop, turn all the way around,
[13] and come back and pass College again in
[14] order to go north. That's ridiculous.

[15] So it's very clear to me that
[16] the only thing that we have spent
[17] \$500,000 - And, you know, we've spent
[18] millions of dollars on these studies. You
[19] know, you can analyze and debate so much
[20] until you get caught up in the paralysis
[21] of analysis.

[22] And I wonder how
[23] Representative Daniel - And
[24] Representative Daniel and I were talking
[25] about that a second ago, and, you know,

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[1] maybe we have too many engineers and we
[2] have too many consultants and and we're
[3] just paying too much of our state dollars
[4] to you-all to come up with these wonderful
[5] alternatives which displace people,
[6] destroy neighborhoods, hurt business, hurt
[7] economic development.

[8] And I don't see who's for
[9] that. Now, you may have a couple of
[10] people who are for that, but I doubt very
[11] seriously it's the people who live in
[12] those neighborhoods, the people who have
[13] invested in those homes, who have to
[14] listen to that noise, who have to take
[15] these alternative routes.

[16] You know, maybe that's why
[17] they moved there, because they had an
[18] opportunity to do something, and the
[19] businesses may have come there because
[20] they had an opportunity to make some
[21] business.

[22] But what you're totally doing
[23] is you're destroying businesses. You're
[24] destroying communities. You're displacing
[25] people. You're raising the noise level.

[1] You're increasing the danger, because
 [2] every time you expand these frontage
 [3] roads, you're getting closer and closer to
 [4] neighborhoods. The houses that you do
 [5] not - The houses that you do not remove
 [6] in order to expand these frontage roads,
 [7] those which are left have an increased
 [8] risk of danger, particularly with all
 [9] these 18-wheelers always spilling these
 [10] chemicals on the Expressway. You're
 [11] putting these people closer and closer
 [12] into neighborhoods. And you are giving -
 [13] You're putting them more at risk. You're
 [14] putting more noise on them. And you're
 [15] totally destroying communities.

[16] I do not understand, for the
 [17] life of me, how this department, how this
 [18] administration, and how these consultants
 [19] can come with a plan like this now. Those
 [20] people who say that this is a good plan
 [21] evidently don't live, don't work, don't do
 [22] any approximate business in those
 [23] communities.

[24] I happen to have lived in one
 [25] of the communities with extreme adverse

[1] effects and lived in another one, and
 [2] those in between I represent, sir. I
 [3] represent those communities, and I know
 [4] what you're doing to those people.

[5] I'm not for that. I've told
 [6] your Secretary that, and I'm telling you
 [7] tonight. I'll tell the Governor next
 [8] week. And I will fight tooth and nail in
 [9] the Legislature against these alternatives
 [10] because you are not being fair with the
 [11] people that I represent.

[12] (applause from audience)

[13] MR. BUECHE:

[14] Those comments will be part of
 [15] the record.

[16] The next card I have is
 [17] representative Kip Holden.

[18] REPRESENTATIVE HOLDEN:

[19] Let me say good evening to
 [20] you.

[21] Let me first commend my
 [22] colleague, because I think he put it right
 [23] on the line about this project and the
 [24] fact that we have some serious problems
 [25] with the plan.

[1] But I guess, after you
 [2] evaluate and weigh his comments, then
 [3] there may be others saying: Well, if we
 [4] don't do that, what should we do? And I
 [5] think that in any plan to alleviate
 [6] traffic in Baton Rouge, you must not only
 [7] look at what you do east-west, but at some
 [8] point comprehensively we have to evaluate
 [9] north-south.

[10] I think at the same time you
 [11] need to consider different alternatives
 [12] that you can use short-term to take care
 [13] of the problems created by this project if
 [14] it's on the board:

[15] Coordination of the signals on
 [16] the major arterials or roadways, with the
 [17] provision of a large window of green
 [18] during the peak periods in the direction
 [19] of major traffic flow.

[20] Change the phasing splits and
 [21] cycle length on the roadways and
 [22] intersections to alleviate the long
 [23] waiting periods.

[24] Increase the capacities of
 [25] major interactions by providing exclusive

[1] right-turn lanes and right turn on red.

[2] Increase the times on the
 [3] through movement of problematic
 [4] interactions, thereby increasing the
 [5] number of vehicles per cycle in the
 [6] interaction and the capacity.

[7] Increase the number of
 [8] left-turning and through-movement lanes at
 [9] the major problem interactions.

[10] Look at alternative traffic
 [11] routing added to this proposal.

[12] We must not abandon the use of
 [13] mass transit in traffic management. Let
 [14] me reemphasize that. We must not abandon
 [15] the use of mass transit in traffic
 [16] management.

[17] If you build additional lanes,
 [18] then at least one of those lanes should be
 [19] given serious consideration for an express
 [20] route for mass transit. This would make
 [21] riding the bus more appealing to those not
 [22] using the system at the present time, and
 [23] it will also mean less vehicles on the
 [24] Interstate and less pollution.

[25] This should also be combined

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[1] with the use of a rail system in Baton
[2] Rouge. The track infrastructure's in
[3] place at this time. Chicago, Dallas,
[4] Atlanta are just some of the cities where
[5] rail has helped. Railroad lines are
[6] running east and west and north and south,
[7] and we should look at using a combination
[8] of park-and-ride facilities at points
[9] along the rail.

[10] Finally, we must not continue
[11] to spend millions of dollars, as my
[12] colleague said, doing studies to get it
[13] right. Atlanta is a prime example of what
[14] can be done. We must do things promoted
[15] by an intelligent transportation society.
[16] We must come up with advanced traffic
[17] management systems:

[18] Computer-controlled, adaptive
[19] signal controls for the control of traffic
[20] signals at intersections based on
[21] real-time traffic densities.

[22] Automated traffic-monitoring
[23] systems using video detection devices to
[24] provide data on traffic density.

[25] Beacon-based dynamic route

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[1] guidance systems providing real-time
[2] information to motorists on the best route
[3] to use and how to get there, based on
[4] current traffic situations.

[5] Metering traffic onto the
[6] Interstate based on the density and the
[7] speed of traffic.

[8] Setting up a system whereby a
[9] driver, once their car is equipped with
[10] the detection devices, can key into the
[11] system to find out the best routes to
[12] take.

[13] These, my friends, are not
[14] programs that have not been used in other
[15] areas. Again, look at Atlanta. And
[16] whereas we are constantly told it would
[17] take ten to twenty years, it took them
[18] three years to do things to the Interstate
[19] system, and you never heard of residents
[20] being displaced.

[21] Why do we have to always go
[22] and reinvent government when we have
[23] enough examples already out there to make
[24] it happen? Short-term and long-term
[25] solutions must incorporate the technology

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[1] of the future, including making it
[2] possible for people to turn to a World
[3] Wide Web page to find a map of Baton Rouge
[4] with traffic congestion updates. This
[5] could allow people to log onto a computer
[6] before leaving home or work and find out
[7] what highways to take to avoid the log
[8] jam.

[9] Citizens are tired of us
[10] waiting to get it right. Resources are
[11] available, and the technology is there.
[12] Ease the traffic congestion by
[13] incorporating fresh ideas instead of
[14] rehashing old ones and unsettling people
[15] with new ones. Encourage the use of mass
[16] transit, and reward our citizens, and
[17] don't punish them by leaving them in long
[18] traffic lines both to and from work. They
[19] deserve better, and we deserve better.

[20] Thank you.

[21] (applause from audience)

[22] MR. BUECHE:

[23] The next card I have is
[24] Councilman Jim Benham.

[25] COUNCILMAN BENHAM:

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[1] I have three points to make,
[2] Bryan, and you've heard one of them, and
[3] that's at the top of my list.

[4] And this has to do with the
[5] on-ramp from Dalrymple onto I-10 heading
[6] eastbound. Don Powers was just telling me
[7] about a situation leaving out of LSU at
[8] 4:15 in the afternoon trying to get to
[9] Camp D. It took him 45 minutes to get
[10] there. That's an example of the gridlock
[11] that we have caused by the lack of an
[12] on-ramp onto I-10.

[13] We have roughly
[14] 20-some-odd-thousand, 20, 25,000 students
[15] of LSU. A great number of those commute.
[16] They all try to get out of LSU. They
[17] either come out Dalrymple or they come out
[18] Stanford Avenue. They cannot get onto the
[19] Interstate coming out Dalrymple, so they
[20] cut through South Downs, getting over to
[21] either Perkins Road or to Stanford
[22] Avenue. It causes a huge problem, huge
[23] problem. We need to solve that.

[24] I know that's on the third
[25] phase of what you have proposed. I'd like

[1] to see it at the first phase. I think it
[2] needs to be addressed very quickly, at
[3] least along with the first two
[4] bottlenecks.

[5] I would also like to point out
[6] that along that corridor is one of the
[7] fastest-growing areas in Baton Rouge, both
[8] from a business standpoint and then from
[9] people moving in, building. I don't
[10] believe that the Interstate has caused
[11] problems from people wanting to move into
[12] the area, that prices of homes are still
[13] extremely high. In fact, we had a new
[14] home just built at the corner of East Lake
[15] shore and the Interstate, within a hundred
[16] yards of the Interstate.

[17] I don't believe that we have a
[18] problem caused by that as far as the
[19] neighborhoods except for the noise, and we
[20] do need to deal with the noise. So I hope
[21] that we address that.

[22] So those are my comments, and,
[23] hopefully, we can get those resolved.

[24] Thank you.

[25] (applause from audience)

[1] **MR. BUECHE:**

[2] I did give elected officials
[3] preference on these cards.

[4] Now, as I call the names out,
[5] this is simply the order in which the card
[6] was handed to me, so if you were the first
[7] to fill your card out, it's possible you
[8] might get to be the last to get to speak.

[9] The next card is William
[10] Daniel.

[11] Mr. Daniel?

[12] Done it again. I did not
[13] recognize you again. I promise you that
[14] that -

[15] **REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL:**

[16] I think we're seeing an
[17] example of our tax dollars at work here.

[18] (laughter from audience)

[19] **REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL:**

[20] I live in the - I used to
[21] live in the Lakeshore area. I recently
[22] moved away. I drive in the Baton Rouge
[23] traffic. There is no question, ladies and
[24] gentlemen. We need to do something. We
[25] absolutely, positively have to get a grip

[1] on the traffic problems in Baton Rouge.

[2] But do we have to destroy
[3] homes, businesses to accommodate trucks
[4] coming through Baton Rouge on I-10? Is
[5] that how we propose to solve our traffic
[6] problems?

[7] I don't think that we've even
[8] begun to explore the alternatives of
[9] moving traffic around in the city. We
[10] have Florida. We have Burbank. We have
[11] Airline Highway. We have Perkins Road.
[12] We need to look at moving some of the
[13] traffic off the Interstate and onto these
[14] local roads.

[15] And this is not just a State
[16] problem but it's also a City problem, and
[17] there's a lot of things I think the City
[18] has been delinquent in doing in terms of
[19] solving the traffic problem. We can't put
[20] all the blame on the State in this area,
[21] but we have to look at the City, too,
[22] because we have basically let I-10 become
[23] the city commuter route. I mean I think
[24] Pat Screen said it was Baton Rouge's main
[25] street. And because of that, we have put

[1] a tremendous load on the Interstate that
[2] doesn't need to be there.

[3] Now, the last point I want to
[4] make is that I've been to a lot of these
[5] meetings. I think there's been at least
[6] four or five of them over the past 12
[7] months.

[8] And every meeting that I've
[9] been to, the engineers and the consultants
[10] have said: If we build this, what will
[11] happen is it will get more traffic on it.
[12] In other words, if you build more lanes,
[13] more people's going to get - More people
[14] are going to get on the Interstate. I
[15] mean I think that's intuitive.

[16] And so what you're going to
[17] have is you're going to have five years of
[18] construction. You're going to have homes
[19] destroyed. You're going to have
[20] businesses destroyed. And in the final
[21] analysis, we're going to have the exact
[22] same traffic problems that we have now.

[23] I'm against this plan.

[24] (applause from audience)

[25] **MR. BUECHE:**

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[1] Don Powers is next.

[2] **MR. POWERS:**

[3] I'm Don Powers from the
[4] Greater Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce.
[5] And I really hate to follow all of the
[6] elected officials, but I guess since
[7] that's the way I turned in the card,
[8] that's the way I have to handle it.

[9] **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:**

[10] (inaudible)

[11] **MR. POWERS:**

[12] Something kind. I'd like to
[13] pass at this point. Would somebody else
[14] like to speak?

[15] (laughter from audience)

[16] **MR. POWERS:**

[17] No, seriously, I want to echo
[18] some of the comments previously made by
[19] the elected officials. You know,
[20] obviously, traffic is a major problem in
[21] Baton Rouge, a very significant problem
[22] that's going to have to be addressed in
[23] the future or immediately.

[24] If you look at economic
[25] development - And, obviously, that's what

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[1] the Chamber of Commerce is interested
[2] in - traffic has a major impact on a
[3] community, and companies looking at moving
[4] to Baton Rouge seriously consider
[5] traffic. They consider how long it takes
[6] their employees to make it to and from the
[7] office and to and from their house. They
[8] look at how long it takes to get a product
[9] to the manufacturing plant or get products
[10] to them. So we have to be concerned about
[11] transportation and traffic in the Baton
[12] Rouge area.

[13] I guess one of the more
[14] disappointing issues that came up as a
[15] result of this study is the low rating of
[16] the bypass. The Chamber of Commerce has
[17] been pushing for the past - I think
[18] around four, maybe five years, now, for
[19] some type of a bypass for Baton Rouge. We
[20] feel that in the 1960s when the Interstate
[21] system was being developed, somehow Baton
[22] Rouge was left off of the map.

[23] Lake Charles; Shreveport;
[24] Jackson, Mississippi - You pick a city of
[25] comparable size of Baton Rouge, and you're

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[1] probably going to find a bypass. I know
[2] for a fact that you're not going to find
[3] any other place in the United States where
[4] the Interstate system, a major Interstate
[5] system, tapers down to one lane. So we've
[6] got a major problem we're going to have to
[7] face.

[8] Senator Guidry approximately
[9] four years ago was very successful in
[10] getting us some money for a bypass study.
[11] That bypass study was completed, and the
[12] early recommendations were that it is
[13] feasible, but, obviously, if you look at a
[14] major project of that magnitude, it can't
[15] be constructed in five years. It can't be
[16] built in ten years. The way projects take
[17] a considerable amount of time in this
[18] state, we'd be lucky to see it in probably
[19] 20 years. But still we feel that it's
[20] extremely important that that bypass study
[21] be initiated, that we start today.

[22] It's not going to solve the
[23] problems on the Interstate system today.
[24] We're going to have to have some type of
[25] relief. And Representative Holden was

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[1] absolutely correct. We have to look at
[2] metering. We have to look at lights. We
[3] have to look at alternatives. We have to
[4] look at staggered work hours. We have to
[5] look at a number of different issues and
[6] solutions to the traffic problem in the
[7] Baton Rouge area.

[8] You're not going to have one
[9] solution or one particular idea that's
[10] going to solve all of the traffic problems
[11] of Baton Rouge. It's going to take a
[12] number of different projects to solve the
[13] congestion that we're dealing with today.
[14] Baton Rouge and the
[15] surrounding community, Livingston,
[16] Ascension Parishes, are growing at
[17] significant rates, and we're the
[18] fastest-growing community in the state.
[19] It's going to continue to be like that,
[20] from all of the indications we can see and
[21] all of the economic indicators.

[22] So we're going to have to bite
[23] the bullet. We're going to have to
[24] address the long-range problems and the
[25] solutions to those problems and go from

[1] there.

[2] But as far as the particular
[3] projects tonight, you know, we haven't had
[4] time to review those in detail, Bryan, but
[5] we'll do so in the future and suggest some
[6] recommendations at that point.

[7] Thank you.

[8] (applause from audience)

[9] MR. BUECHE:

[10] Thank you, Mr. Powers.

[11] I should point out that the
[12] bypass study began August the 5th, and
[13] we're going to go through a study of that
[14] bypass in detail, just as we've done this
[15] I-10 Corridor study.

[16] The next name I have here is

[17] Mr. Fred C. Matthews, Sr.

[18] MR. MATTHEWS:

[19] I'm Fred C. Matthews, Jr. I
[20] turned in my card because I didn't know
[21] whether Senator Guidry would arrive on
[22] time.

[23] (laughter from audience)

[24] MR. MATTHEWS:

[25] I concur with everything he

[1] has said. He said it a whole lot better
[2] than I could ever say it.

[3] I live in South Baton Rouge.
[4] I live on East Washington Street. I've
[5] been living there since 1920, 1920.

[6] We are concerned, as Senator
[7] Guidry has said, about the convenience,
[8] inconvenience of the people in South Baton
[9] Rouge. We checked the alternatives. I
[10] talked to those specialists who had a lot
[11] to do with the study. That's a lot of
[12] work. A lot of work, and
[13] congratulations.

[14] What I'm going to say now,
[15] you're going to say: Oh, no, we can't do
[16] that. This is another alternative. Some
[17] 30 years ago the present highway was
[18] adequate. Today it's inadequate. Ten,
[19] fifteen, or twenty years from now, with
[20] all the alternatives, will we have to
[21] stop, take another look, and do it all
[22] over again in order to satisfy the heavy
[23] traffic?

[24] The thing that I want to say,
[25] you see, this cost a lot of money. But

[1] what is money for in the first place? In
[2] New Orleans the people down there said -
[3] They had a lot of people, too, who opposed
[4] the Interstate or the expressway that's
[5] jumping all over New Orleans, I think west
[6] of Carlton Avenue, somewhere down in
[7] there, and all the way to the Superdome.

[8] They spent millions of
[9] dollars. It's paid off today.

[10] This may sound a little
[11] off-key, but maybe you ought to think
[12] about it. Maybe we could jump Baton Rouge
[13] from the bridge all the way to the
[14] divide. Cost, I'm talking jump. Oh,
[15] yeah, that costs millions of dollars. So
[16] what? So what? Jump Baton Rouge.

[17] I enjoy going to New Orleans,
[18] getting up on that high level and on into
[19] the Superdome, no stops.

[20] Think about it.

[21] (applause from audience)

[22] MR. BUECHE:

[23] Thank you, Mr. Matthews.

[24] I said "Matthews, Sr." That
[25] was Fred C. Matthews, Jr. I'll make that

[1] correction.

[2] The next card is Mr. Rob
[3] Wright.

[4] MR. WRIGHT:

[5] This is my first meeting. I
[6] just want to say that I - I agree
[7] wholeheartedly with what Councilman Benham
[8] and that gentleman said earlier about
[9] these programs, the long range -
[10] (inaudible)

[11] We live on Morning Glory.
[12] It's in the LSU area. And we see every
[13] day what the LSU rush hour traffic does to
[14] that whole area. LSU - (inaudible)

[15] MR. BUECHE:

[16] I don't know if the tape
[17] recorder could pick that up, so I'm going
[18] to say that the gentleman said he
[19] concurred with Councilman Benham's
[20] remarks.

[21] Is that correct?

[22] MR. WRIGHT:

[23] Yes.

[24] MR. BUECHE:

[25] Good.

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[1] Thank you, Mr. Wright.

[2] Now, Mr. Jim Bordelon.

[3] **MR. BORDELON:**

[4] Well, you're at an advantage.

[5] You know my name; I don't know yours.

[6] I'm not an elected official.

[7] I have no agenda to advance other than my

[8] own personal one, which is that of an

[9] unfortunate user of the Interstate system

[10] in Baton Rouge.

[11] I commend - I'm an engineer.

[12] I commend the efforts these gentlemen have

[13] done here.

[14] However, I think we're looking

[15] at a system that was, at the very best,

[16] when it was designed and implemented back

[17] in the late '50s and early '60s - It's

[18] poor design, has gotten worse as time has

[19] gone by. And I see a lot of these efforts

[20] being put forth here amount to a very

[21] complicated and very expensive patch job.

[22] It's like putting a \$4,000 stereo onto a

[23] \$2,000 car. It just doesn't make sense.

[24] You ought to go out and buy a new car.

[25] I guess I've got a couple of

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[1] points here I'd like to get across, in no

[2] particular order or fashion or rhyme or

[3] reason.

[4] There have been a lot of

[5] comments made about a bypass around Baton

[6] Rouge. And I've traveled a lot around the

[7] country, and Baton Rouge is the only

[8] country - or only city I've been to that

[9] does not have a bypass. I travel the

[10] bridge every day coming from a chemical

[11] plant across the river, and without

[12] exception - and especially on Fridays in

[13] the summer - there are Texas plates on

[14] vehicles from Texas, license plates from

[15] Texas and points west that plug up the

[16] bridge, and traffic continues on through

[17] Baton Rouge.

[18] So without having anything but

[19] anecdotal data, I can't agree with the

[20] premise that a bypass would not help

[21] alleviate a lot of the problems with

[22] Interstate in Baton Rouge.

[23] With regard to some of the

[24] comments made about traffic flow, I would

[25] like to see some emphasis put on

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[1] metering. As far as some of the other

[2] things as far as helping drivers determine

[3] what's the best route to take, I can only

[4] say from my own experience that a lot of

[5] drivers can't appear to read, much less

[6] use their turn signals -

[7] (laughter from audience)

[8] **MR. BORDELON:**

[9] - so traffic controls like

[10] that, I think, are idealistic at best.

[11] So I guess that's all I have

[12] to say. Thank you.

[13] (applause from audience)

[14] **MR. BUECHE:**

[15] Thank you, Mr. Bordelon.

[16] Marshall Mary.

[17] **MR. MARY:**

[18] Okay. I'm glad to have a

[19] chance to speak tonight.

[20] I'm a citizen, and I live on

[21] Hollydale Avenue. And when I look at

[22] these plans, I am alarmed by the noise

[23] impact that some of these create. I think

[24] a number of you-all are here today because

[25] you're already concerned about the noise

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[1] levels in your neighborhoods, and a lot of

[2] you-all are living - I noticed that when

[3] we were looking at these various plans up

[4] here, a lot of people that were here

[5] tonight were commenting on, you know,

[6] their adjacency to the current

[7] Interstate.

[8] Several of the plans propose

[9] additional lanes, and I think that all of

[10] us would be impacted by that. When I

[11] asked one of the engineers about what sort

[12] of noise-abatement procedures were

[13] available, I was told that there would

[14] probably be sound walls included. But

[15] that part of the plan, I can tell you, is

[16] not as well-developed as the adding

[17] additional lanes are.

[18] And stop and consider, too,

[19] that even if sound walls were incorporated

[20] to try to abate the noise along the

[21] widened portions of the Interstate, that's

[22] not a painless solution in that you'll

[23] have something that looks like the Berlin

[24] Wall running through your neighborhood,

[25] which is going to be less than

[1] attractive.

[2] Now, I think this city is
[3] missing a great opportunity here by
[4] overlooking one of the alternatives here
[5] that several speakers have addressed
[6] tonight, which is the bypass. And I say
[7] that because not only does this city need
[8] an alternative to I-10 running right
[9] through the heart of the city, but it's
[10] also an economic development opportunity,
[11] which is a benefit that has not been
[12] addressed in the course of this study, and
[13] that you have an opportunity to create a
[14] new economic development zone along the
[15] bypass.

[16] Also consider that you can
[17] take industrial dangerous chemical traffic
[18] out of the heart of the city. In many
[19] cities that have these bypasses, if they
[20] happen to pass through a rural and
[21] undeveloped area, you see sometimes signs
[22] that require haulers carrying dangerous
[23] chemicals to take that route. So we have
[24] an opportunity to get dangerous haulers
[25] out of the city center.

[1] I'll also mention, too, one
[2] last thing on the bypass, that it would be
[3] a unique opportunity that I don't see too
[4] often around here that we could get ahead
[5] of the population development instead of
[6] trying to always build infrastructure to
[7] adapt to what's already there. This will
[8] be a chance to be out in front of the
[9] development in terms of our
[10] infrastructure.

[11] One last comment: When I
[12] looked at some of the plans, I noticed
[13] that they include limiting access to the
[14] Interstate from some of the neighborhoods
[15] that live close to the Interstate. And
[16] Senator Guidry brought that issue up.

[17] And if we're really serious
[18] about reducing congestion, whose
[19] congestion are we going to be reducing?
[20] If we limit access to the Interstate and
[21] make it less accessible, all we're going
[22] to be doing is increasing congestion on
[23] some of the side streets in some of the
[24] neighborhoods that currently have access.

[25] So I can tell you that I have

[1] grave concerns in those areas, noise
[2] impact, increased congestions on the side
[3] streets, and I would like us to really get
[4] a serious study going on a bypass
[5] alternative for the city.

[6] Thank you.

[7] (applause from audience)

[8] MR. BUECHE:

[9] We started the bypass study on
[10] August 5th, and we're going to do that for
[11] the next 15 months, just as we've done
[12] this I-10 Corridor study.

[13] The next card is John
[14] Jumonville.

[15] MR. JUMONVILLE:

[16] First of all, no, I'm not
[17] connected with the Jumonvilles in Pointe
[18] Coupee or points outside of Baton Rouge.
[19] (laughter from audience)

[20] MR. JUMONVILLE:

[21] I'm simply a concerned citizen
[22] who drives the same corridor you do and is
[23] dissatisfied with it.

[24] The only comment I have to
[25] make is that, given that the current

[1] Interstate 10/I-110 interchange was poorly
[2] constructed, poorly designed - And I know
[3] it happened before national guidelines
[4] were administered for the best way to do
[5] those things nationwide - if any of these
[6] alternatives are selected and if we don't
[7] straighten that situation out so that it
[8] conforms with existing ways of
[9] accommodating a through Interstate and a
[10] business spur, which is what Interstate
[11] 110 is, if we don't set that interchange
[12] up in a proper fashion so that it can
[13] accommodate traffic the way it should
[14] accommodate it, like other interchanges do
[15] throughout the United States, then we've
[16] really missed - we've really missed it.

[17] And it's nice that we have all
[18] these other alternatives, and I commend
[19] the people for doing the study, for making
[20] the alternatives available, but to not
[21] look at that real hard and correct it,
[22] 2010, 2020, we're going to be looking at
[23] it again. And for the national - For the
[24] national highway transportation
[25] organization to approve something that

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(1) will not directly look at that hard and
(2) correct it once and for all and bring it
(3) up to standard, I think we've really
(4) missed it.

(5) Thank you.

(6) (applause from audience)

(7) MR. BUECHE:

(8) This is the last card I have,
(9) so if any of you wish to speak after this,
(10) you'll have an opportunity.

(11) But Lori Burgess.

(12) MS. BURGESS:

(13) Good evening. I'm Lori
(14) Burgess, and I live in a South Baton Rouge
(15) community where that exit ramp has been
(16) closed.

(17) And I personally can say that
(18) there is a major problem for me using the
(19) Interstate system. I'm totally thrown
(20) around. In trying to get around Baton
(21) Rouge, I realize there's a problem on the
(22) Interstate and a problem with the overall
(23) traffic control, but I think that you're
(24) not being sensitive to people in my
(25) residential area, and that is a major

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(1) concern for me.

(2) As well, I would like to ask
(3) why - and I wonder why - the component
(4) of mass transportation was not included in
(5) this study. In all the major cities it
(6) plays a vital role, and it hasn't been
(7) mentioned other than in other people's
(8) comments. And I would like to see that
(9) being considered in the overall plan.

(10) That's my comments. Thank
(11) you.

(12) (applause from audience)

(13) MR. BUECHE:

(14) Before Bryan and I get very
(15) cautious about answering questions, is
(16) there anyone else that would like to make
(17) a statement for the record?

(18) Yes, sir?

(19) MR. WEST:

(20) (inaudible)

(21) MR. BUECHE:

(22) You can, but the tape recorder
(23) will pick you up if you're here.

(24) MR. WEST:

(25) My name is Edward West. I own

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(1) my own business over near Monterey and
(2) Greenwell Springs. And I have a lot of
(3) customers in West Baton Rouge Parish. The
(4) owner of the business before me lived in
(5) Brusly, so he was kind of a hometown guy.
(6) So I drive across that bridge about three
(7) or four times a week, and back,
(8) naturally.

(9) I think that - I like this
(10) plan. I really do. I like the second one
(11) on the wall or the third one. The
(12) additional lanes is what we need. The
(13) problem is the Washington Street ramp, and
(14) the problem is the College Drive coming
(15) into it. And I'm for closing Washington
(16) Street because it would make things a lot
(17) easier for a lot more people, a lot more
(18) people that pass through here every day
(19) than the ones that just live right at the
(20) bottom of that ramp.

(21) The reason I like the third
(22) plan is because it uses frontage roads
(23) more than closing the ramp. Maybe we
(24) could work the ramp in with those frontage
(25) roads, and you'd still have some ready

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(1) access without having to come right up
(2) there at the bridge.

(3) I didn't realize that I was
(4) going to be the only one here that liked
(5) these plans, so -

(6) (laughter from audience)

(7) MR. WEST:

(8) That's why I didn't sign a
(9) card to speak. I thought I'd be one in a
(10) million.

(11) You know, I was coming here to
(12) look at them because I sent the DOTD a
(13) letter back in October of '95 that looks a
(14) lot like a lot of these plans. And I
(15) was - I told my wife, I said: They're
(16) going to call that the Edward West
(17) Memorial Highway. It's just like I wanted
(18) it.

(19) (laughter from audience)

(20) MR. WEST:

(21) That bridge thing with the two
(22) lanes going around the curve, I said:
(23) Scrape those reflectors off. For God's
(24) sake, there's concrete over there.
(25) So I hope we can do something

[1] to advance Baton Rouge. I mean everything
[2] I've heard tonight says: Stop. Don't do
[3] anything, you know. But we all complain
[4] about the bumper-to-bumper traffic and the
[5] stopping and everything, so -

[6] I mean "displacement"? I'm
[7] getting displaced. I'm not even having
[8] the Interstate coming through my
[9] business. My landlord walked in the other
[10] day, and it was the day before rent, so I
[11] thought he was just coming in to get his
[12] money and all. He told me: Ed, I decided
[13] I'm going to move this building, meaning
[14] to sell it.

[15] And I'm like: What am I going
[16] to do? You know, my lease goes through
[17] March. That didn't - wasn't no problem
[18] for him.

[19] I'm out, you know. Probably
[20] by December I'll have to move. But it
[21] could be an advantage to me to move,
[22] because you get - I mean do I want a
[23] storefront? Do I want to go put my
[24] printing shop in a strip center where I'll
[25] get walk-in business? I mean I might make

[1] a lot more money because I was forced to
[2] do something that I was putting off or
[3] said I didn't have enough money to do. I
[4] mean if my business -

[5] Well, let me go on to this
[6] Atlanta rail thing.

[7] I lived in Atlanta for three
[8] years. And nobody uses the rail line to
[9] get to work. It's - It's across. It's
[10] just a - Well, it goes to the airport
[11] now. It's just a big egg in the middle of
[12] the city. It goes out to the perimeter
[13] loop and it stops.

[14] I mean I lived well outside
[15] the perimeter, so I would have had to have
[16] drove my car in to a park-and-ride lot,
[17] and then I couldn't leave my car in a
[18] park-and-ride lot and think it wasn't
[19] going to be there when I got back, you
[20] know? And so I just - We all drove to
[21] work over there, and we had three-hour
[22] rush hour, folks, two times a day. It was
[23] all Interstates. When I first moved there
[24] it didn't even go to the airport. Now it
[25] does.

[1] And the noise over there is
[2] tremendous around the perimeter loop.
[3] It - Around the Interstate highway it's
[4] just noisy.

[5] And I lived - I lived way up
[6] in the country in Atlanta. I lived right
[7] next to a railroad track. They had - And
[8] I'm not lying to you - 20 to 24 trains a
[9] day, both directions, five minutes apart.
[10] And I mean I was 70 yards from the tracks,
[11] and I was in a little 8-by-8-by-24-foot
[12] travel trailer in a lot. And it would
[13] literally shake everything, you know, when
[14] those trains came by.

[15] But there - After about a
[16] year of living there, I realized that I
[17] would suddenly hear the train, and it was
[18] the caboose. The whole train, 75 cars,
[19] done gone by, and I didn't even know it
[20] had come because I got used to it.

[21] So you'll either get used to
[22] it, or you can move to a better place

[23] or -

[24] (laughter from audience)

[25] MR. WEST:

[1] And bypass? I wouldn't use
[2] it. It's just more miles. I'd rather
[3] hope that the traffic's light and go
[4] straight through.
[5] I go through Birmingham a lot
[6] when I go back to visit Atlanta. I've
[7] never used that 485 thing. That'd take me
[8] out, God knows, three times as far as I'm
[9] going to go already.

[10] Limiting access, that's not a
[11] drawback. That's what we need to do to
[12] make the Interstates flow smoother.
[13] Either that or let people get into - get
[14] on the road when they want to merge, you
[15] know? When somebody pulls up on a ramp,
[16] most of us, to get on the road - You
[17] know, take your foot off the gas and back
[18] off.

[19] (laughter from audience)

[20] MR. WEST:

[21] You know, just take your foot
[22] off the gas. Let them on. They're going
[23] to get on. If you don't let them on,
[24] they're going to stop the whole
[25] Interstate. Which is better, you know?

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[1] But if you're not going to do
[2] that, then close the ramp down, one of the
[3] two.

[4] Traffic management, mass
[5] transit, I wouldn't ride a bus because it
[6] takes too - You have to plan three hours
[7] to get somewhere and transfer, and, you
[8] know, you have to be there on time and
[9] have money and all that. I don't ride a
[10] bus. I mean I like my car.

[11] Traffic management, hey,
[12] you-all know better than anybody that
[13] nobody can tell you what to do. I mean
[14] you see a roadblock, you're going to drive
[15] through it.

[16] (laughter from audience)

[17] MR. WEST:

[18] Why you want to control what
[19] the people are doing? What you want to do
[20] is you want to open it up, you know. But
[21] this traffic management is saying: Well,
[22] you're going to come to work at 8:00.
[23] You're going to come to work at 10:00.
[24] And we're going to work four days a week,
[25] you know.

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[1] I'm self-employed. I'm the
[2] only one there. I'm one employee, you
[3] know, and I'll just be in my car
[4] delivering everything I got.

[5] That's all I got to say is
[6] just I hope that it will not be a little
[7] bit too selfish of them to realize that
[8] there's hundreds of thousands of cars that
[9] run through that road every day, and to
[10] worry about a ramp here or a ramp there,
[11] that's kind of selfish, I think.

[12] And if everybody - I live way
[13] out - I live by the Winn-Dixie on Earl
[14] Springs Road. I have no ramp to the
[15] Interstate anywhere near my house and
[16] don't want one there. And I drive a good
[17] ways to get to the Interstate.

[18] And if I was on Washington
[19] Street, I'd want that thing gone, to tell
[20] you the truth. Because they've got to
[21] have traffic coming through there all
[22] night, all day long. I'm not sure it's
[23] traffic they really want, either.

[24] So I would - I like these
[25] plans, and I hope that I don't - Sounds

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[1] like I'm a minority. I hope you got a
[2] whole lot of letters back there somewhere
[3] that -

[4] (laughter from audience)

[5] MR. WEST:

[6] Because I feel like I'm a
[7] minority now.

[8] But I like number 6 or number
[9] 7 over there. Number 3, it'll be
[10] insufficient in a couple of years, you
[11] know. There's just not enough done.
[12] But down at the College Drive
[13] is great. That's in all of them. I see
[14] that's already planned, as a matter of
[15] fact. I'm glad to see that. I'll be
[16] excited when I get home and tell her
[17] there's more of the Edward West Memorial
[18] highway to go.

[19] (laughter from audience)

[20] MR. WEST:

[21] But that - the widening
[22] around the river and doing something
[23] with - doing something with Washington
[24] Street so that it doesn't come up right
[25] there in the middle of - or at least

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[1] where it doesn't force people to have a
[2] forced merge - We've got to have another
[3] lane there.

[4] And I really - If you say:
[5] Stop. Don't do nothing, then I hope we
[6] don't hear nothing more about complaining
[7] about traffic, because we've got to do
[8] it.

[9] Thanks.

[10] (applause from audience)

[11] MR. BUECHE:

[12] Thank you, Mr. West.
[13] Anybody else want to make a
[14] comment?

[15] Yes, sir?

[16] MR. MARCEL:

[17] I'd better come up there.
[18] I really wasn't going to say
[19] anything, but after him, I can't do that.
[20] (laughter from audience)

[21] MR. MARCEL:

[22] Because I grew up on East
[23] Washington Street and Georgia Street, just
[24] like Senator Guidry did, and it displaced
[25] my father's business, the Interstate

[1] that's there right now, and pretty much
[2] put him out of business. We hear the
[3] noise at my father's house. It displaced
[4] my grandmother's house, one of my uncles'
[5] houses. So I have long memories about
[6] 110.

[7] And without question,
[8] something has to be done. But we're
[9] already 20 years behind for this plan.

[10] And, brother Ed, I go to
[11] Atlanta a lot, too. I don't know what
[12] folks you know in Atlanta, but the folks I
[13] know are happy for that train.

[14] And you really need to look at
[15] that loop, because that loop would help
[16] your business more than anything. Folks
[17] coming from Brusly could drop right off
[18] at - What? - Monterey and Greenwell
[19] Springs. And you could get home easy
[20] coming from across that river yourself.

[21] We're 20 years behind on
[22] that. I'm already closing in on 60. By
[23] the time all this is done, I'll already be
[24] dead and gone. I don't even have to worry
[25] about it.

[1] (laughter from audience)

[2] **MR. MARCEL:**

[3] But as the old folks say, most
[4] of what I'm hearing here is, what they
[5] say, throwing good money after bad. And
[6] we're not supposed to do that. But, yes,
[7] some ingenious person's going to have to
[8] figure out how to solve the traffic
[9] problem. We have to get it away from the
[10] Interstate, and it has to go around.

[11] I came through Jackson,
[12] Mississippi just the other day and saw
[13] Loop 220. And it boggles the mind every
[14] time I drive to Houston when I see a loop
[15] in Lake Charles.

[16] But yet we're supposed to be
[17] the fastest-growing region in the state,
[18] and we're still driving on highways that
[19] were outdated when they were constructed
[20] in the 1960s.

[21] We have some serious work to
[22] do. That's all I have to say.

[23] (applause from audience)

[24] **MR. BUECHE:**

[25] Would you give me your name,

[1] for the record?

[2] **MR. MARCEL:**

[3] Earl Marcel.

[4] **MR. BUECHE:**

[5] Earl Marcel.

[6] Thank you, sir.

[7] Going once, going one -

[8] Catherine Schoeber (spelled

[9] phonetically). Catherine's on our

[10] Steering Committee is why I know who she
[11] is.

[12] **MS. SCHOEBER:**

[13] Good evening. I'm Catherine
[14] Schoeber. I'm president of the Lakeshore
[15] Civic Association. Many of you may have
[16] received a card that I sent out to you
[17] notifying you of this particular meeting.
[18] As he explained, I also served on the
[19] Steering Committee for this study.

[20] I have a question regarding
[21] your sincerity about public input. You've
[22] chosen to have this meeting tonight during
[23] the summer school session, when next week
[24] most of the private schools will reopen
[25] and most vacationing families will

[1] return. If you were really sincere about
[2] having that public input, I think it could
[3] have waited until next week.

[4] Tonight on television DOT's
[5] Secretary Denton made a statement that we
[6] were holding this meeting tonight to get
[7] public opinion because he really wants
[8] public opinion. I have before me - and
[9] the document will state it was a study,
[10] the minutes of the meeting on University
[11] Lakes, October the 11th, 1995. We told
[12] you what we thought. We gave you our
[13] ideas. You trashed them.

[14] Number one, on University
[15] Lakes, recommended solutions: A bypass.
[16] Ignored.

[17] Washington Street, recommended
[18] solution: Number one, improve transit
[19] service. Senator Guidry brought this up.
[20] Mr. Holden brought it up. Not
[21] considered.

[22] **Questionnaire results,**
[23] combined survey results, what specific
[24] solutions should the planners consider
[25] when they determine alternatives for

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[1] solving I-10 problems? Number one
[2] response: Build a bypass around Baton
[3] Rouge, 58 percent. Fifty-eight percent.
[4] Additional lanes, 14 percent. One-four
[5] percent.

[6] It speaks for itself. I don't
[7] need to elaborate on and on about that.

[8] I have an interest in my
[9] area. We have a community that has been
[10] very valuable and services more than just
[11] the residents of the area. It serves the
[12] whole community. We're the only area that
[13] shares our lakes with the entire
[14] community, and a lot of people do utilize
[15] those lakes. And I cannot see disfiguring
[16] that without any real consideration given
[17] to the people and the property and the
[18] residents.

[19] I would like you to identify
[20] specifically which small businesses in the
[21] Perkins Road area will be affected and how
[22] so. The gentleman here from Perkins Road
[23] Hardware, I'm sure he'd like to know
[24] that. Identify specifically which
[25] residences will be affected. Barbara and

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[1] Rick Whitaker would like to know this.

[2] There are five historically
[3] sensitive sites under consideration that
[4] may have to be altered, according to plan
[5] 7. That was not brought out anywhere in
[6] this meeting tonight, but it needs to be
[7] brought out that the recommendations that
[8] were given to the committee were 2, 3, 6,
[9] and 7. So when you're looking at these
[10] alternatives, look at 2, 3, 6, and 7,

[11] with 7 being what their goal target is.
[12] And some of the statistics were screwed -
[13] were skewed -

[14] (laughter from audience)

[15] MS. SCHOEBER:

[16] That, too. Freudian.
[17] - because you took some
[18] information from truckers. I mean why do
[19] we care what truckers want to do? This is
[20] our community. We live here. We care
[21] about what happens here.

[22] And on alternative 7, low on
[23] the grid is addressing the noise, and we
[24] already exceed federal guidelines on
[25] noise.

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[1] So - and as respectfully as
[2] possible - I would like to mention that
[3] Parsons, Brinckerhoff is an employee of
[4] DOTD, and the results of these surveys and
[5] their recommendations have to be
[6] considered that they have been contracted
[7] by DOTD to do this work.

[8] I'd just like to close by
[9] saying I think your sincerity has to be
[10] questioned.

[11] Thank you.

[12] (applause from audience)

[13] MR. BUECHE:

[14] I don't doubt Catherine's
[15] sincerity, and she worked hard on that
[16] Steering Committee.

[17] I sincerely would like to know
[18] if anyone else would like to comment.

[19] Yes, sir? Please state your
[20] name for the record.

[21] MR. LANAUX:

[22] My name is Keith Lanaux. I'm
[23] a resident of the City Park Lake area.

[24] And sitting there listening to
[25] these excellent comments that people have

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[1] made here tonight, it dawned on me there
[2] are really three dominant groups that
[3] attend these meetings, and it's true of
[4] this meeting. And, obviously, it's those
[5] people whose ox is being gored. Those
[6] people that are worried about the
[7] Washington Street situation, Concord,
[8] Stratford, looking at the plans I've seen,
[9] they've really got something to worry
[10] about.

[11] Well, my ox is being gored. I
[12] have a big house. I'm two houses north of
[13] the Interstate on East Lakeshore Drive.
[14] That bridge over City Park Lake is one of
[15] the noisiest bridges that you could
[16] imagine. And now I see plan 7, I think it
[17] is, is going to wind up with four bridges
[18] across City Park Lake, one of the most
[19] beautiful spots in Baton Rouge, enjoyed by
[20] all of the people of this area. So I
[21] belong to the oxes-being-gored group.

[22] Secondly, the group that comes
[23] here because they are concerned commuters
[24] that use the Interstate to get to and from
[25] work naturally are concerned. We all know

[1] that there's a traffic problem there, and
[2] we've got to address the problem somehow.

[3] The through travelers, the
[4] truck drivers, the people who are going
[5] all the way from the East Coast to the
[6] West Coast, they're concerned. They get
[7] slowed down in Baton Rouge. And I'm
[8] concerned that they're concerned, but I'm
[9] a damn sight more concerned about Baton
[10] Rouge every day than I am about going from
[11] the East Coast to the West Coast.

[12] There's a third group, and
[13] we've heard from them. And I don't
[14] remember the gentleman's name from the
[15] Chamber of Commerce. There are people
[16] here - and I'm sure public officials,
[17] people with DOTD - who are addressing the
[18] overall importance of transportation to
[19] the community, all forms of
[20] transportation.

[21] We are focusing here tonight
[22] on this Interstate, and if we aren't
[23] careful about it, we're going to plaster a
[24] great big Band-Aid on this alimentary
[25] canal that runs right through our city,

[1] and that will work to the detriment of our
[2] addressing the other transportation needs
[3] of a growing community.

[4] Now, I belong to that group,
[5] too. Until the City bought it from me, I
[6] owned the city bus lines, until about
[7] 1970. And before I put money into it and
[8] helped get a federal grant for the City to
[9] improve the bus lines - which need a new
[10] face now - I made extensive studies about
[11] transportation in Baton Rouge, what it
[12] looked like then.

[13] Well, that's 26 years ago.
[14] Twenty-six years have passed. We have a
[15] bigger city. We have more problems. At
[16] that time, that Interstate bridge didn't
[17] go rumbling by my house. It wasn't there
[18] at City Park Lake.

[19] Now, what I'm hearing today
[20] concerns me in that a lot of work and
[21] thought has gone into alternative ways of
[22] doing this thing, but one of the criteria
[23] was that this Band-Aid, whether it's
[24] Band-Aid 3, 6, 7, whatever it is, has to
[25] meet the criterion of addressing the

[1] supposed problem in the year 2020. Well,
[2] there's a lot of us in this room who won't
[3] be here at that time. Therefore, we're
[4] not all that worried about it.

[5] Well, I'm wondering, for
[6] instance, that to project out to the year
[7] 2020 in this study which says you'll
[8] need - One of these gentlemen told me you
[9] needed eight lanes, both directions, on
[10] this Interstate to carry all this
[11] cross-country traffic through here, to
[12] carry all these trucks bringing dangerous
[13] chemicals, to carry all the commuters, and
[14] to carry all the people who just live
[15] around the Interstate. Sixteen lanes?
[16] Maybe I misunderstood.

[17] If that's true, I wonder in
[18] those studies for the year 2020 if they
[19] considered that by that time there should
[20] indeed be not just the south loop that'll
[21] wind up coming in across another bridge
[22] over the river into Brusly. How about the
[23] north loop? Was that taken into
[24] consideration? Do the traffic densities
[25] projected for the year 2020 assume that

[1] there is a north loop and a south loop
[2] going around the city and that there have
[3] been other much-needed improvements, some
[4] of which are being paid for by the State
[5] and some by the City, Parish, on the
[6] secondary roads and arteries?

[7] I'm beginning to wonder if
[8] this is a great big old Band-Aid. And I
[9] see a lot of work, saying I'm not
[10] necessarily opposed to it, but I am very
[11] concerned that it may not address what the
[12] whole transportation system within our
[13] community should look like in the year
[14] 2020, if that's the criterion.

[15] Now, it seems to me that we
[16] have no choice other than to address some
[17] of the short-range serious problems, and I
[18] think it's number 3 that addresses
[19] those - Well, we're already addressing
[20] one up here on this bridge where people go
[21] over there and the cattle fall over, the
[22] trailers fall over, and all of that.

[23] I have come from North Baton
[24] Rouge, from downtown. I haven't
[25] personally perceived quite the magnitude

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(1) of the Washington Street cross-over that
(2) maybe some others have, so I don't know
(3) what the facts are. But that's a serious
(4) problem for those people who live there if
(5) you take their ingress and egress out. I
(6) can see that.

(7) I believe it's a serious - I
(8) saw Carl Hymie (spelled phonetically) here
(9) earlier tonight. Seems to me it'd be a
(10) problem for the Perkins Road Hardware if
(11) you take that down-ramp there - We've
(12) already got some roads in there that are
(13) helping some people. Now we're talking
(14) about taking them out so more trucks can
(15) go rumbling across from the East Coast to
(16) the West Coast and so that all of our
(17) commuters from suburbia can come into
(18) town.

(19) Now, I belong to all three of
(20) those groups. My ox is being gored. I'm
(21) seriously interested in public
(22) transportation in this city, and I was in
(23) 1970, put my money where my mouth was.
(24) I'm still seriously interested in it
(25) today, but I've got some haunting feelings

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(1) that that whole thing isn't being looked
(2) at correctly.

(3) The other thing about the
(4) traffic there, yeah, it's bad. We've got
(5) that problem at the bridge that's got to
(6) be corrected.

(7) If that Washington Street
(8) problem is as serious as it, there's
(9) probably some better ways to do that than
(10) to almost disenfranchise these people from
(11) the use of the Interstate which they - I
(12) believe Senator Guidry stated that those
(13) are the people that got hurt when that
(14) bridge came through there back in the
(15) early '60s or whenever it was.

(16) Let's try to minimize that
(17) hurt, if we can. There may be other
(18) solutions completely outside of the
(19) context of this bolder plan to solve that
(20) problem.

(21) College Road, that's such a
(22) bad problem that - That's far enough away
(23) from me that it isn't goring my ox right
(24) now, but I think almost everyone here
(25) would agree that's a real serious

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(1) problem.

(2) The I-10/I-12 thing, that is a
(3) possibility that you could put a Band-Aid
(4) on that situation out there without its
(5) adversely impacting much of anybody, as
(6) far as I can see.

(7) So that's all I have to say on
(8) the subject, but there are these three or
(9) four reasons why people come to these
(10) meetings, and I've got all three or four
(11) of these reasons - all four of these
(12) reasons, and that I personally believe
(13) that we need to be convinced - I think
(14) the Chamber does. I think those of us who
(15) read the newspaper, read these reports and
(16) so on, that we are not taking this
(17) Interstate problem out of the broader
(18) context of what should transportation look
(19) like in Baton Rouge, including the bus
(20) system - or train system or whatever it's
(21) going to be - in the year 2020.

(22) And I want to hear more about
(23) that before I'll say I'm for it or agin'
(24) it. I have concerns about it, but I think
(25) we need to look at the big picture down

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(1) the road.

(2) Thank you.
(3) (applause from audience)

(4) MR. BUECHE:

(5) Anyone else?

(6) Yes, ma'am? And you'll state
(7) your name so we will misspell it when we
(8) transcribe it?

(9) MS. WILCOX:

(10) My name is Allison Wilcox. I
(11) do plan to be here in the year 2020.
(12) That's one reason I'm interested in the
(13) roads.

(14) And the City of Austin was
(15) mentioned earlier. I just happened to
(16) have lived in Austin before I moved to
(17) Baton Rouge. We went through years of
(18) arguing about what was going to be done,
(19) construction to widen the Interstate;
(20) elevated lanes in the four-lane streets
(21) that go through town were added and loops
(22) that took years and years to construct,
(23) years to acquire the right of way.
(24) Businesses were upset and moved.
(25) It all takes everybody working

[1] together, looking at the whole picture.
 [2] You can't just look at what's going to
 [3] happen on the Interstate. You have to
 [4] look at everything. I'm glad to hear that
 [5] we are working with other groups. And
 [6] that's - That's real important. The
 [7] community has to work together, and we
 [8] have to remember that just because your ox
 [9] isn't being gored, somebody else's is.

[10] So we have to solve the
 [11] problem, remember the small problems that
 [12] happen, but work together as a community.

[13] That's all I have to say.

[14] (applause from audience)

[15] MR. BUECHE:

[16] Tom Marino.

[17] MR. MARINO:

[18] My name is Thomas Marino. I'm
 [19] a local businessman.

[20] Actually, I think this report
 [21] has merit. However, the findings could be
 [22] good if I believed them, believed the
 [23] findings, but I don't. I feel as if
 [24] interface with the City and with the
 [25] actual users of the Interstate, not just

[1] fifty million dollars. It was ignored in
 [2] this study.

[3] When we talk "bypass," a new
 [4] bypass, I'm totally in favor of it,
 [5] heading south down the river toward
 [6] Gonzales. Ascension Parish needs it.

[7] However, Airline Highway as it
 [8] presently exists and has existed since the
 [9] 1930s bisects the population centers of
 [10] Baton Rouge. It could serve as a bypass
 [11] that would be used, as many of you, I'm
 [12] sure, if you were passing through Houston,
 [13] you would take the 610 or the Sam Houston
 [14] to bypass Center City traffic. Interstate
 [15] traffic coming through Baton Rouge, if it
 [16] had an option, would use something like
 [17] this.

[18] DOTD is apparently of the
 [19] opinion that no one would use it. I beg
 [20] to differ. I think they would.

[21] This road, U.S. 61, was
 [22] pointed out to me as far as its validity
 [23] as a bypass by the gentleman from Parsons,
 [24] Brinckerhoff, Bryan Davis. If seems that
 [25] back in 1968, prior to the construction of

[1] trucking companies, not just interest
 [2] groups, is really missing.

[3] Baton Rouge is an interesting
 [4] place to live. People have a lot to
 [5] offer.

[6] DOTD historically has not been
 [7] interested in hearing it. The approach,
 [8] as many other people said, as presented in
 [9] these plans, is, I believe, a Band-Aid.

[10] It's more of the same. It doesn't take
 [11] advantage of the wisdom that we could
 [12] glean from other cities the same size,
 [13] larger, and even smaller than Baton
 [14] Rouge.

[15] The most prominent oversight
 [16] on DOTD's part, in my opinion, is this
 [17] entire project was flawed from the
 [18] standpoint of they view Interstate 10 as
 [19] the sole transportation asset in Baton
 [20] Rouge.

[21] Baton Rouge is full of
 [22] assets. There's a big one; it's called
 [23] Airline Highway. It's totally
 [24] underutilized. There's a bridge which to
 [25] replace would cost in excess of a hundred

[1] Interstate 12, U.S. Highway 61, Airline
 [2] Highway, was cited by the Feds or by a
 [3] group of consultants hired by the Feds and
 [4] DOTD as a road to upgrade into what they
 [5] called Interstate 410.

[6] That was - What? - 28
 [7] years ago. It fell through the cracks.
 [8] If they thought it was good enough back
 [9] then when Baton Rouge was half the size it
 [10] is now, why isn't it being looked at now?

[11] And if you'd like to see that
 [12] plan, Mr. Davis has a copy, and it's a
 [13] very enlightening plan. I'm sure Don
 [14] Powers would like to see it.

[15] As presently programed by
 [16] DOTD, the State plans on adding between
 [17] two and four lanes to Airline Highway in
 [18] the Old Hammond Highway area. I think
 [19] that's a bad idea.

[20] New Orleans had a similar
 [21] situation on the Westbank. It's called
 [22] U.S. 90 or the Westbank Expressway; same
 [23] kind of road, divided highway road,
 [24] neutral ground in the middle. They spent
 [25] their money building outside service

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[1] roads, transferred track to the service
[2] roads, and then dug up the existing road,
[3] which is something we could do here to get
[4] that inner city bypass to suck traffic off
[5] of I-10 from downtown, from the CBD, all
[6] the way up to Airline Highway.

[7] Reprograming of money is
[8] something that people like Representative
[9] Daniel and Senator Guidry, Representative
[10] Holden could do if we tell them we're
[11] interested in it. They have the power,
[12] but they need the input from us as
[13] citizens.

[14] Basically, that's all I have
[15] to say.

[16] In closing - I'll
[17] reiterate - I feel the plan is flawed
[18] because it's short-sighted and not
[19] comprehensive. It doesn't use existing
[20] assets. It needs work, maybe an
[21] additional study, but not necessarily by
[22] Parsons, Brinckerhoff. I've got to
[23] reiterate, I really don't feel it's
[24] comprehensive enough.

[25] And as Representative Daniel

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[1] said, not all the blame should be placed
[2] on DOTD. There are some good people in
[3] DOTD, a lot of them, actually. They are
[4] severely limited by past administrations.
[5] I hear a lot of good about Frank Denton.
[6] I hope what I hear is right. He wouldn't
[7] have achieved the goals in private life
[8] that he did - I believe he's a general in
[9] the military - was a general in the
[10] military and a vice president with one of
[11] the largest construction companies in the
[12] U.S.

[13] He can change things. But the
[14] representatives and the senators need your
[15] help to help him.

[16] That's all I have to say.

[17] Thank you.

[18] (applause from audience)

[19] MR. BUECHE:

[20] We can keep going. Anyone
[21] else?

[22] Going once, twice -

[23] UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

[24] (inaudible)

[25] MR. BUECHE:

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[1] No more comments.

[2] Anyone want to throw questions
[3] at Bryan and me that are not too
[4] difficult?

[5] I don't see any hands, so I'll
[6] quickly say thank you-all for coming out,
[7] and all of the comments will be part of
[8] the record and will go into whatever
[9] decision is being made.

[10] (Whereupon the proceedings were
[11] concluded.)

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[2] REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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[7] I, CHARLOTTE C. CHAMEL, Certified

[8] Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that

[9] the above was transcribed by me in

[10] shorthand from an audiotape and

[11] transcribed under my personal direction

[12] and supervision, and is a true and correct

[13] transcript, to the best of my ability and

[14] understanding;

[15] That I am not of or related to any

[16] parties hereto, and not in any way

[17] interested in the outcome of this matter.

[18]

[19]

[20]

[21] CHARLOTTE C. CHAMEL

Certified Shorthand Reporter

[22]

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