

Highway 67 Improvements Study

Summary of Preliminary Findings

November 12-13, 2014

With the completion of the Highway 67 freeway between North Little Rock and Walnut Ridge expected in 2015, the Arkansas State Highway Commission commissioned Highway 67 Improvements Study to consider alternatives for improving Highway 67 between Walnut Ridge and the Missouri State Line.

- The study was conducted with the goals of increasing accessibility to and enhancing the economic viability of northeast Arkansas, aiding interstate commerce, and improving a vital regional connector between Arkansas and Missouri.
- A comprehensive list of improvement alternatives were developed, including new location routes on multiple alignments, improving existing highways, and doing nothing, as shown on the attached map.
- Two public meetings were held in September 2012 to gauge the opinions and desires of local citizens and to gain insight on possible concerns with each alternative. Over 300 comment forms were received, along with letters of support from numerous public officials. This information was used as a tool to guide the study.
- All identified alternatives were compared using a range of criteria, including cost, congestion relief, travel time improvement, environmental and community impacts, ability to construct in phases, attractiveness to traffic, and community support, as detailed in the attached table.
- The following alternatives are being recommended for removal from further consideration. The no-action alternative was retained to provide a baseline against which to compare construction alternatives.
 - Alternative 1 – Improve Existing Highway 67 without Bypasses
 - Reductions in travel distances or travel times were at best marginal.
 - Diversion from other routes was minimal, and any diverted traffic would increase congestion in central Pocahontas.
 - A number of property owners in both Corning and Pocahontas would be impacted, and floodways near Pocahontas would be encountered.
 - A majority of 2012 meeting commenters preferred bypasses around Corning and Pocahontas.
 - Alternative 3E/3W – Southern New Location Alternative
 - These alternatives were longer, more expensive, and more prone to flooding than others. Construction phasing would be very difficult.
 - Very little support was indicated at the 2012 public meetings.
- Public input from this meeting will be evaluated along with the information in the planning study to determine which alternatives will be carried forward through the environmental review process. This Federally mandated process considers highway needs as well as natural, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts when selecting a preferred alternative
- No funds have been identified to construct any improvements identified in this study.