



May 22, 2012

I-49 Inner City Connector  
Interchange Justification I-49/I-220

### Memorandum of Understanding

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Project: SPN H.003915  
I-49 Inner City Connector  
I-49 @ I-220 Interchange Justification Report

Project Limits: The Inner City Connector project will extend I-49 from the I-49/I-20 interchange to the I-49/I-220 interchange, include an interchange(s) between termini, and include interchange improvements at either end.  
Parish: Caddo

Project Length: Approximately 3.8 miles

The Interchange Justification Report (IJR) will document the study of changes needed at the proposed I-49/I-220 interchange (pending construction) to extend a controlled access highway from the existing I-49/I-20 interchange to the proposed I-49/I-220 interchange within the city of Shreveport. There is a separate Memorandum of Understanding developed for the I-49/I-20 Interchange Modification Report. The project will provide connectivity between existing I-49, south of I-20, with I-49 North, currently being completed. The project may also improve safety of present routes, provide an alternate route for hazardous material currently being transported across Cross Lake, accommodate future potential development and promote orderly growth.

*The study limits for the IJR will be as follows:*

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- *I-220 to the west of I-49: west side of Shreveport Blanchard Highway (LA 173) interchange*
- *I-220 to the east of I-49: east side of North Market Street (US 71/LA 1) interchange*
- *I-49 to the north of I-220: north side of Dr. Martin Luther King Drive (LA 3194), which is the first interchange to be built north of I-220*
- *I-49 to the south side of Ford Street (3 internal interchange scenarios) or Hearne Avenue interchanges (3 internal interchange scenarios)*

*There are four proposed internal interchanges scenarios – one with an interchange at Ford Street, one with an interchange at Hearne Avenue, one with an interchange combining Ford Street and Hearne Avenue, or one with interchanges both at Ford Street and Hearne Avenue*

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*The final location of the selected interchange(s) and the interchange configuration(s) will be determined upon resolution of the NEPA and IMR/IJR processes.*

*A safety analysis will be performed in addition to the operational analysis. A scope for the safety analysis will be developed by the Engineer. This scope will be determined at a date following the acceptance of this MOU. The study limits for the IJR safety analysis will be proposed by the Engineer with concurrence from DOTD and FHWA. The Engineer will not begin Step 5 until this concurrence is received from DOTD and FHWA. The study limits for the IJR safety analysis could extend beyond the locations identified above.*

*The limits of the environmental study area will be proposed by the Engineer in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and could extend beyond the locations identified above.*

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will serve as the framework of activities for the development of the IJR and the roles and responsibilities of the agencies listed below:

- Louisiana Department of Transportation (DOTD)
- Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments (NLCOG)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Caddo Parish (Caddo)

### **Roles of NLCOG:**

- Manage and finance the consultant contract with Providence hired to provide the traffic engineering and environmental planning services.
- Ensure that all environmental and IJR services will follow DOTD and FHWA policy, standards, and reviews to ensure compliance with DOTD and FHWA requirements. This includes strict adherence to NEPA requirements including public involvement.
- Assist DOTD and the Engineer in the preparation of TDM input and runs as needed to develop the IJR. Concur with data used and provide oversight and verification of model output.
- NLCOG will act as a joint-lead agency for the NEPA document.

### Interchange Justification Study

According to the steps outlined in the DOTD's January 27, 2011 *Policy for Evaluating New Access to Controlled Access Facilities*, the following steps apply to this project and will be executed by NLCOG:

- Step 7 - In coordination with Caddo Parish, submit a draft IJR to the agencies for review and comment.

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- Step 8 - After DOTD staff comments have been addressed and the report revised by the Engineer, submit the final IJR to the DOTD.
- Step 9 – Have the engineer address any comments made by the Chief Engineer's Office or his representatives, hereafter referred to as the Access Review Board, then submit the revised final IJR to the Office of the Chief Engineer.
- Step 11 – Have the engineer address any comments made by the Federal Highway Administration, then submit the revised final IJR to the agencies
- Step 13 - Coordinate with FHWA, the lead agency and LDOTD, the joint-lead agency, along with USACE and USEPA for the NEPA document.
- Step 14 - Submit the documentation and a request for project inclusion in the NLCOG State Transportation Improvement Program and execute the request.

### Roles of Engineer:

The Engineer is working directly for NLCOG. All data developed will be submitted through NLCOG for appropriate distribution. Deliverables that are revised and resubmitted shall include a record of all changes made to the previous deliverable.

### Interchange Justification Study

According to the steps outlined in the DOTD's January 27, 2011 *Policy for Evaluating New Access to Controlled Access Facilities*, the following steps apply to this project and will be executed by the Engineer:

- Step 2 - The study limits will be as defined in this MOU.
- Step 5 - After the Engineer has received concurrence from DOTD and FHWA on the scope and study limits of the safety analysis, the Engineer will submit traffic data to detail how traffic was derived for the study area, the source of traffic, how it was balanced, and how it was distributed along the I-49 Inner City Connector, and the I-49, I-20, and I-220 corridors with or without I-69 being in place, depending on the year being used. The submittal will include interchange schematics showing a.m. and p.m. peak hour volumes for each year to be analyzed, traffic from DOTD count stations, revised TDM runs, recent existing counts, traffic counts and estimates from previous studies, traffic factors (K, D, et. al.), growth factors and all assumptions used to derive peak hour volumes.

The draft and final traffic derivation reports for the IJR will be submitted to the DOTD headquarters office for review and comment. The Engineer will also submit file copies of the draft and final reports to the DOTD District 04 Office and the FHWA.

- Step 6 - The Engineer will develop a preliminary IJR that contains the traffic, safety, geometric, operational and other appropriate analyses for the interchange

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design concepts developed. The opening year for the interchange addition will be 2030 and the design year will be 20 years thereafter. Copies of traffic analyses shall be included in a binder that allows analyses to be easily removed.

The preliminary IJR will be submitted to the DOTD headquarters office for review and comment. The Engineer will also provide file copies of the reports to the DOTD District 04 Office and the FHWA.

- Step 7 – The Engineer will prepare a draft final IJR addressing both DOTD’s *Policy for Evaluating New Access to Controlled Access Facilities* and FHWA’s *Policy on changes in Access to the Interstate System*. The report will include all concepts that have been evaluated, justification and supporting analysis for alternatives eliminated or accepted, and preliminary cost estimates for each. All traffic analyses will be included on a disc in an appendix.

The draft copy will be submitted to Caddo Parish and NLCOG for consideration of a formal submittal to DOTD. NLCOG will transmit the draft IJR to DOTD.

- Step 8 - The Engineer will address comments made by the DOTD on the draft report and submit a final report to NLCOG, who will submit it to DOTD.
- Step 9 - The Engineer will address any comments, in conjunction with NLCOG, made by the Access Review Board. The revised final report will be returned to the Access Review Board.
- Step 11 – The Engineer will address and resolve comments made by FHWA’s independent evaluation of the IJR and send an updated copy to DOTD. A copy of the final report will also be provided to NLCOG.
- Step 12 - The IJR and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes will be conducted concurrently as much as possible.
- Step 13 - Caddo Parish is currently in full attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Should the Parish rating change, the new standards will be reviewed and impacts will be evaluated as appropriate by the Engineer.
  - The Engineer will prepare the environmental document in compliance with NEPA procedures.
  - Project Concepts that are to be shown to the public shall first be approved by the reviewing agencies.
- Step 14 - The Engineer will prepare the documentation and request for project inclusion in the NLCOG Transportation Improvement Program.

### Roles of DOTD:

- Step 5 - The DOTD will review the traffic data submitted by the Engineer. The DOTD will provide comments within 45 calendar days. The Engineer will

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address the comments and resubmit the final report to the DOTD. DOTD should review responses in seven to 30 days and respond.

- Step 6 – The DOTD will review the traffic, safety, geometric, operational, and signing analyses within 60 days. Comments will be responded to and DOTD will have 30 days to review and respond, unless new concepts are developed.
- Step 7 - The DOTD will review the draft IJR and provide comments within 60 days.
- Step 9 - The DOTD will submit the final IJR for review to the Access Review Board with stipulations and recommendations. The review board may generate alternatives or revisions to the report.
- Step 10 – The Access Review Board will submit the IJR to the Secretary with their recommendation. If approved by the Secretary and if funding is known, the Secretary's Office will request approval for a new access point from the FHWA Division Office. If there is no funding identified, the Secretary's Office will request the FHWA Division Office to review the engineering and operations acceptability of the new access point(s).
- Step 11 – The DOTD will assist the Engineer in addressing and resolving comments made by FHWA's independent evaluation of the IJR and all subsequent comments.
- The DOTD will act as a joint-lead agency for the NEPA document.

### Roles of FHWA:

- Step 11 –The FHWA Division Office will conduct an independent evaluation of the IJR within 30 days and may generate comments to be transmitted to the DOTD for response and incorporation. Comments on the revised IJR will be transmitted by the FHWA Division Office to the DOTD within 24 days of receipt for the response and incorporation. Once all comments have been resolved, the FHWA Division Office will send the IJR to the FHWA Office of Infrastructure for their review. All comments from the FHWA Office of Infrastructure must be resolved before the FHWA Division Office will respond to the request.
- Step 12 – The FHWA will make a determination on the request for the new access or the request for Engineering and Operational Acceptability once their comments on the IJR have been addressed. An affirmative determination of Engineering and Operational Acceptability is considered final provided there have been no significant changes in condition. FHWA approval of the requested new access point will not occur until completion of the final NEPA document with a Record of Decision.
- The FHWA will act as the lead federal agency for the NEPA document.

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### **Roles of Caddo Parish:**

- The Parish will support the project through coordination and involvement as necessary.
- The Parish, in coordination with NLCOG, will submit a draft IJR to the agencies for review.
- After DOTD and Access Review Board comments have been addressed and the report revised by the Engineer, the Parish and NLCOG will submit the final IJR to DOTD.

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**Signatories:**

The roles and responsibilities for the I-49 / I-220 IJR are hereby accepted by signature of the stakeholders below:

DOTD *Eric Kubit* 5/31/12  
*for* Sherri LeBas, P.E. Date  
Secretary, Louisiana Department of  
Transportation and Development

FHWA *W. Bolinger* 6/20/2012  
Charles "Wes" Bolinger Date  
Division Administrator, FHWA  
Louisiana Division

NLCOG *J. Kent Rogers* 5/23/2012  
J. Kent Rogers Date  
Executive Director, Northwest Louisiana  
Council of Governments

Caddo *Woodrow Wilson, Jr.* 5/23/12  
Woodrow Wilson, Jr. Date  
Caddo Parish Administrator

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
*Shirley L. Larmann*  
CONSULTANT CONTRACT  
SERVICES