

Location Public Hearing and Draft Environmental Impact Statement for:

WALNUT RIDGE – MISSOURI STATE LINE (FUTURE I-57)

CLAY, GREENE, LAWRENCE, & RANDOLPH COUNTIES

ARDOT Job 100512

November 13, 2022 – January 24, 2023

How do I become involved?

- Please complete the sign-in form to register your participation in this hearing.
- Review all the materials provided in the location public hearing.
- Written statements may be submitted anytime between November 13, 2022 and January 24, 2023 by using the attached comment form and mailing/emailing it to Garver, Attn: Caitlin Hetzel, 4701 Northshore Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118; or PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com.
- Your attendance and participation are greatly appreciated!

For more information, please call #501-823-0730 or email

PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com

Garver

Attn: Caitlin Hetzel

4701 Northshore Drive

North Little Rock, AR 72118

Location Public Hearing and Draft Environmental Impact Statement Information

What is the purpose of this hearing?

Through the materials at this hearing, we will present the proposed project and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and you will have an opportunity to express your opinions. Public participation is needed to identify and discuss any problems or controversial issues. It is important to clearly identify your issues and concerns, and if needed, you can call or email us for clarification on any matters related to this project. Phone and email contact information is provided below. We request your cooperation and participation.

The meeting information has been prepared to provide general information about the proposed project. Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) and Garver staff are here to answer your questions and provide you information. Additional information is available on the project website or by contacting ARDOT.

What is the Walnut Ridge – Missouri State Line project?

Several planning studies have been completed since the 1990s that identified a need for improvements to the Hwy. 67 corridor. The project is needed because there is a gap in the system linkage that reduces connectivity and mobility of the National Highway System. Additionally, there is a lack of reliable transportation infrastructure to support economic development and a need to enhance resiliency along the route to extreme weather events. Furthermore, federal legislation designated this high priority corridor for future Interstate 57 (I-57). The project’s purpose is to address the above needs by constructing a future interstate facility from Walnut Ridge to the State line within Clay, Greene, Lawrence, and Randolph counties, Arkansas.

What alternatives were considered in the DEIS?

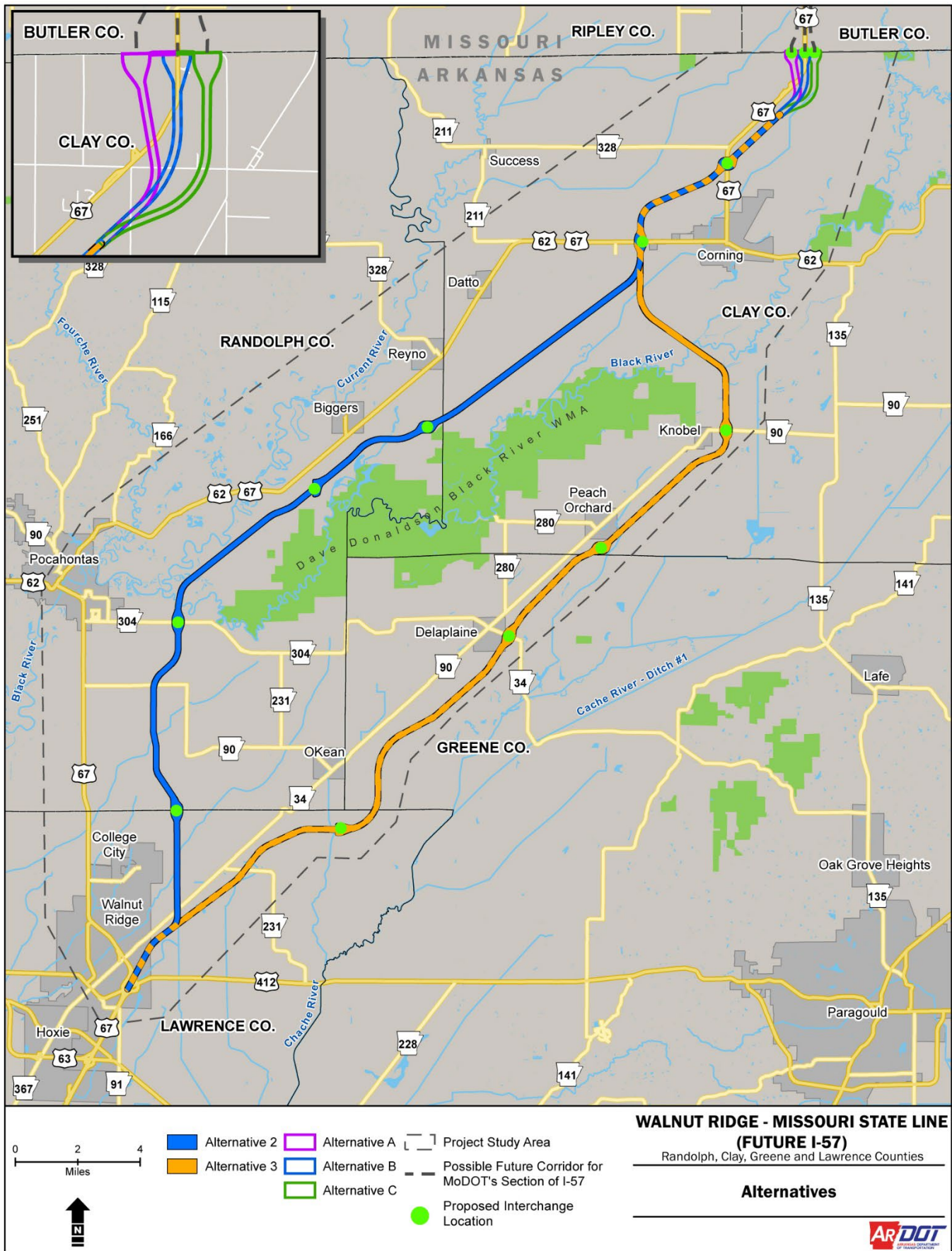
In addition to the required No Action Alternative, action alternatives that were carried forward and analyzed in the DEIS include Alternatives 2, 3, A, B, and C (**Figure 1** on next page). Alternatives 2 and 3 are Main Corridor Alternatives while Alternatives A, B, and C are Missouri Connector Alternatives.

All five action alternatives are fully-controlled access highways, meaning vehicles can only enter or exit the roadway at interchanges. This type of facility is also referred to as an interstate highway or freeway. Alternatives 2 and 3 each have six proposed interchanges and Alternatives A, B, and C each have one proposed interchange at the Arkansas-Missouri State line.

Alternatives 2 and 3 both begin at the Hwy. 67/412 interchange at Walnut Ridge and both terminate north of Corning with the option to tie into one of the three Missouri Connector Alternatives. Alternative 2 is primarily located between Hwy. 67 and the Dave Donaldson Black River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Alternative 3 is primarily located parallel to and east of the Hwy. 34/90 corridor.

Approximate Lengths of Each Alternative:
Alternative 2 – 39.2 miles
Alternative 3 – 41.3 miles
Alternative A – 2.5 miles
Alternative B – 2.3 miles
Alternative C – 2.8 miles

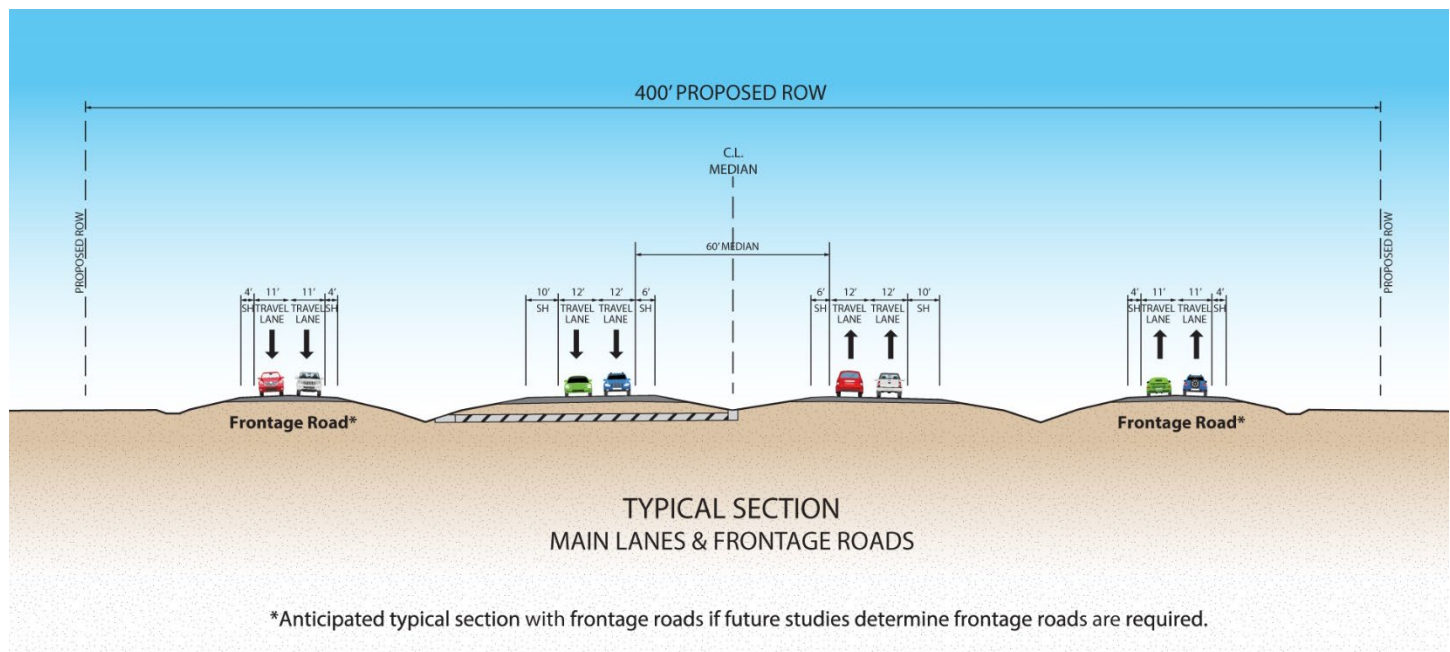
Figure 1: Action Alternatives Carried Forward in the DEIS



What will the roadway look like?

As shown in **Figure 2**, the proposed roadway for all action alternatives would be a four-lane divided highway with a depressed grass median and an approximately 400-foot-wide right of way (ROW). If future studies determine frontage roads are required, the travel lanes will be 11 feet wide with 4-foot-wide shoulders on each side.

Figure 2: Typical Sections of Action Alternatives

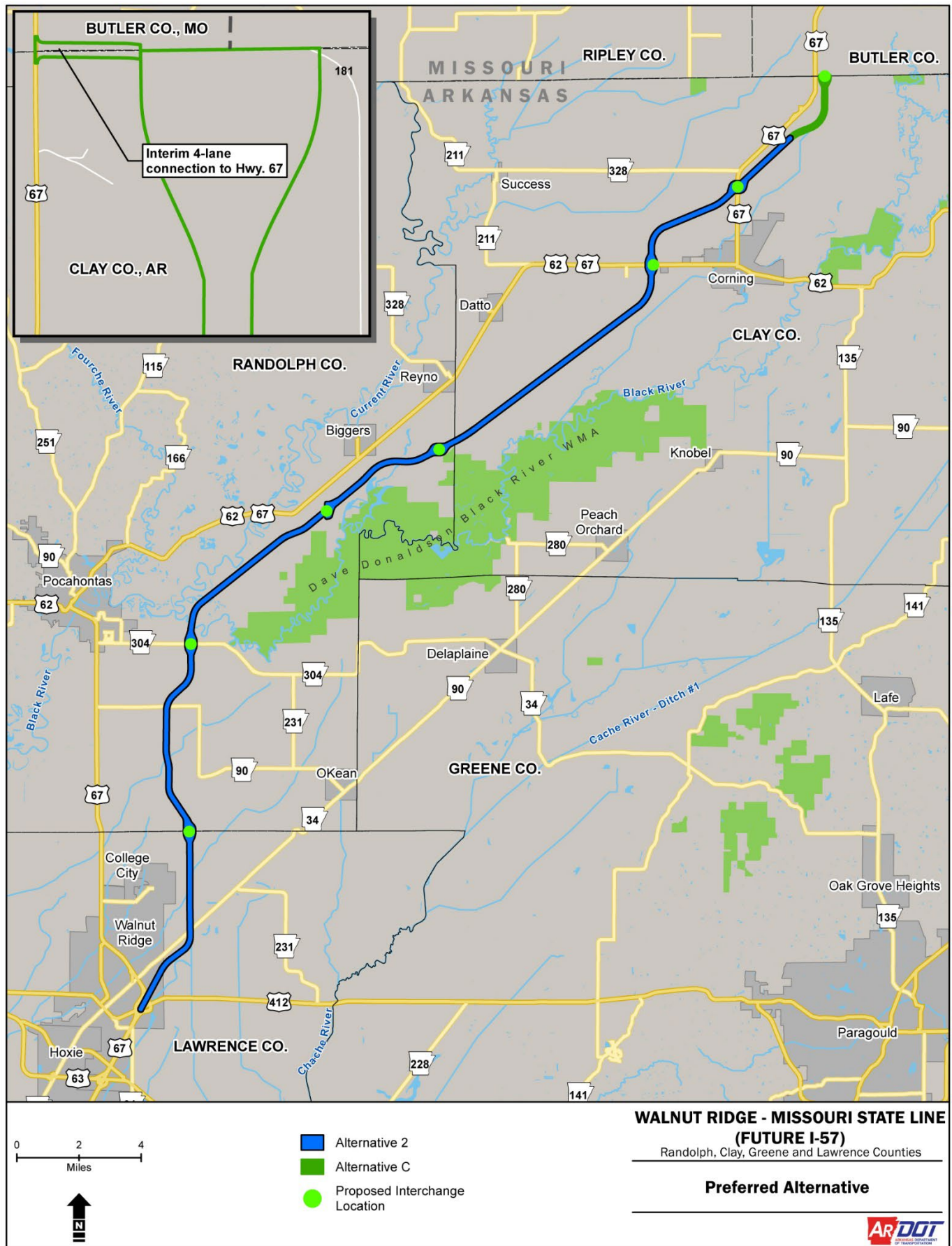


What is the preferred alternative?

As shown in **Figure 3** on the following page, the Preferred Alternative is a combination of Alternative 2 and Alternative C and would provide a future interstate connection from Walnut Ridge to the Missouri state line.

Alternative C includes a 0.17-mile section of County Road 278 to accommodate an interim four-lane roadway that would tie the preferred alternative back into Highway 67 if Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) has not already completed their project at the state line.

Figure 3: Preferred Alternative with Two-Mile Connection in Missouri



What are the Impacts from the Preferred Alternative?

Regarding the environment, the most important impacts from the project are shown in Table 1. While every effort has been made to minimize negative impacts during the alternative studies, additional efforts will be made during the detailed design. There is not an alternative that avoids all impacts.

The Preferred Alternative best maximizes the benefits from the project while minimizing the negative impacts to the extent possible.

Table 1: Preferred Alternative Environmental Impacts Table

Resource Category	No Action Alt.	Preferred Alternative
RIGHT OF WAY, COST, & SOCIAL IMPACTS		
Length (miles)	47.6	42.0
Required ROW (acres)	0	2,339
Required ROW from EJ Populations (acres)	0	645
Total Cost (millions) ¹	0	543
Landowners Impacted (#)	0	101
Residential and Business Relocations (#)	0	14*
Access and Economic Growth Opportunities	None	High
WATER & BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES		
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	0	85,630
Wetland Impacts (acres)	0	42.4
Possible Farmed Wetland Impacts (acres)	0	618.6
Floodplains Present (acres)	0	489.6
Federally-protected Species w/ Habitat Impacts (#)	0	17
FARMLAND & OTHER RESOURCES		
Active Cropland Impacts (acres)	0	2,196
Split Farms (#)	0	79
Irrigation Wells Impacted (#)	0	33
Flood Protection Levees (#)	0	1
Public Water Assessment Areas Impacted (acres)	0	549
NRHP Sites Impacted (#)	0	2
Major Pipeline Crossings (# >24" diameter)	0	5

¹ Costs are based on conceptual design with 25% contingency; utilities other than gas transmission lines greater than 24" in diameter are not included.

*Additional relocations not identified in the DEIS were added along County Road 278 at the State line per new ARDOT policy to increase full control of access near on and off ramps from 300 feet to 1320 feet.

What happens after this hearing?

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and ARDOT invite interested individuals and entities to provide comments on the DEIS. The DEIS and appendices can be viewed and downloaded from the project website at: Future57.TransportationPlanroom.com or at <https://www.ardot.gov/>.

The public comment period began November 13, 2022 and will extend until January 24, 2023. FHWA and ARDOT will review all comments and consider and respond to all substantive comments received within the comment period. Personally identifiable information provided by individuals submitting public comments may be published.

Copies of the DEIS have been placed at the Randolph County, Lawrence County, Greene County, and Corning Public Libraries. The following contact information can also be used to request copies of the DEIS:

Mail: Garver
Attn: Caitlin Hetzel
4701 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118

Telephone: (501) 823-0730

E-mail: PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com

After a review of comments received from citizens, public officials, and public agencies, a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) document will be prepared and submitted to FHWA, documenting the final environmental clearances and impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative. If the FHWA approves the FEIS and issues the ROD, the FHWA could issue a single document that consists of the FEIS and ROD pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 304a(b) [and 23 U.S.C. 139(n)(2)] unless the FHWA determines that statutory criteria or practicability considerations preclude issuance of such a combined document. If FHWA issues the ROD, it would identify the Selected Alternative and conclude the NEPA process.

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ARDOT) LOCATION PUBLIC HEARING – CITIZEN COMMENT FORM

ARDOT JOB 100512 WALNUT RIDGE – MISSOURI STATE LINE (FUTURE I-57) CLAY, GREENE, LAWRENCE, AND RANDOLPH COUNTIES

LOCATIONS (PLEASE CHECK THE NIGHT(S) YOU ATTENDED):

- ☐ Tuesday, December 13 – Williams Baptist University, 22 McClellan Dr., Walnut Ridge, AR
- ☐ Wednesday, December 14 – Pocahontas Community Center, 300 Geneva Dr., Pocahontas, AR
- ☐ Thursday, December 15 – M.B. Ainley Community Center, 536 E. Elm St., Corning, AR
- ☐ Was unable to attend in person

Make your comments on this form and provide it to ARDOT or Garver personnel by Tuesday, January 24, 2023.

Please Print:

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Comments _____

Alternative: Use the QR Code to fill out an online comment form.



Use additional sheets if necessary

**Written comments should be received by Tuesday, January 24, 2023
at the following address:**

Garver
Attn: Caitlin Hetzel
4701 Northshore Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118
Email: PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com

Oral Comments should be received on or before January 24, 2023.

Leave a comment by calling:
Telephone: 501-823-0730

For additional information, please visit: Future57.TransportationPlanroom.com