

The preliminary environmental analysis was applied to a 60-meter (200-foot) study buffer surrounding the proposed centerlines of each alternative alignment, in effect, 30 meters (100 feet) on each side of the centerline. Impacts to critical environmental features were tabulated for those located within this buffer zone. Sources of data included regional information obtained from the SPC geographic information system, historical aerial photography, recent aerial photography (April 2001 and June 2002), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle maps, statewide and national environmental data files, resource inventories from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), other project files, and field observations. All information was aggregated to allow comparison of alternative alignments within each section.

Technical information on the site-specific project was first presented to the public in a series of open house meetings held throughout the project area. The first round of public meetings was held between October 23, 2001 and November 1, 2001. This initial series of meetings introduced the project to the public, presented project needs, and identified potential areas of community concern. Nearly 300 people attended the meetings.

Similar information was provided to a special inter-agency task force comprised of representatives from environmental resource and transportation agencies with jurisdiction over, or having operating interests in, transportation projects in Pennsylvania. These agencies are shown in Figure 2.6-1.

**2.7 Preliminary Alternatives Dismissed from Further Study**

Although it would have been possible to compare potential alignments for the entire length of the project (from PIA to the Greensburg/Hempfield Township area), only alignments within each section were compared to one another because all three study sections exhibited different characteristics. Section A (PIA to Downtown Pittsburgh) is suburban in nature to the McKees Rocks area, where the corridor transitions to urban neighborhoods. Fast developing commercial hubs, new employment activity centers, and clustered residential neighborhoods are all found within Section A. Section B (Downtown Pittsburgh to the Monroeville/Penn Hills area), on the other hand, is almost completely urban in character (and mostly built-out), with dense residential neighborhoods, the region’s foremost commercial and employment centers, and unique recreational activity areas and tourist attractions of regional importance. Section C (the Monroeville/Penn Hills area to the project’s terminus in Westmoreland County) is both suburban and rural in nature, and includes parts of Westmoreland County’s two fastest growing residential communities (Murrysville and Penn Township), as well as some active farmland.

**Federal Agencies**

- Federal Aviation Administration
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**State Agencies**

- Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
- Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
- Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission

**Local Agencies**

- Port Authority of Allegheny County
- Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
- Westmoreland County Transit Authority

**The Pennsylvania High-speed Maglev Project  
Environmental Resource and Transportation  
Agencies with Jurisdiction over  
Transportation Projects in Pennsylvania  
Figure 2.6-1**