

North of Putnam, the improvement remains on the west side until south of Miller-Anderson Woods where it would transition to the east side of IL 29. South of Kentville Road the improvements would be centered on existing IL 29 to the north terminus on I-180. Like the Central Section, the expressway section can be accessed at local roads and noncommercial driveways. The estimated construction cost is \$124 million for the North Section.

Next Steps

After the public hearings on June 14 and 15 and after a thorough review of all comments received, IDOT will begin preparing a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The FEIS will summarize the agencies' and public's comments on social, economic, environmental and engineering issues in the DEIS received at the public hearings and during the entire comment period. The FEIS will formally identify IDOT's preferred alternative and will include potential changes to information in the DEIS based on public and agency comments.

After the FEIS is signed by IDOT and FHWA, it will be available for public and agency review. Following completion of the FEIS, IDOT will prepare a Record of Decision, the final step of the IL 29 Study. The Record of Decision condenses the information in the FEIS to explain the reasons for the project decision (preferred alternative). It summarizes the mitigation measures that will be incorporated in the project and documents any required Section 4(f) approval. Completing the Record of Decision would conclude the current phase (preliminary engineering) of the IL 29 Study.



**Illinois Department
of Transportation**

Division of Highways/District 4
401 Main Street / Peoria, Illinois / 61602

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ENCLOSED

Mark Your Calendar

29 Public Hearing Locations

June 14, 2006

Three Sisters Park Pavilion
17201 N. IL Route 29
Chillicothe, IL

June 15, 2006

Henry-Senachwine
High School Gymnasium
1023 College Street
Henry, IL

The public hearing format is
open house. There will be no
formal presentation.

Please stop in any time between
4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

29 update

The Illinois Route 29 Design Study

This is the third issue of
29 update, a newsletter prepared
by the Illinois Department of
Transportation (IDOT) and CH2M HILL
to provide information regarding the
IL 29 Design Study.

In This Issue:

- Public Hearing Scheduled
- Review of Preferred Alternative
- Map of Preferred Alternative
- Opportunities for Public Participation
- Public Hearing Dates and Locations

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**Illinois Department
of Transportation**

and

CH2MHILL

Hutchison Engineering, Inc.
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Martinez Corporation

IL Route 29 Study Public Hearings Scheduled

In late April 2006, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration signed the Illinois Route 29 (IL 29) Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS, which represents the culmination of several years of engineering and environmental analyses and public input, identifies the preferred alternative to address the transportation needs in the IL 29 corridor between IL 6 near Mossville in Peoria County and I-180 in Bureau County. The DEIS is available for public review and comment at IDOT's website (www.dot.state.il.us/desenv/env.html) and at the libraries listed on page 2.

Two public hearings are scheduled to present information and obtain public input on the proposed improvement. The first hearing will be held on June 14, 2006 at the Three Sisters Park Pavilion in Chillicothe, and the second hearing will be held on June 15, 2006 at the Henry-Senachwine High School Gymnasium in Henry. (See the back page of this newsletter for locations and times.) Study staff will be available to answer questions and receive comments. A court reporter will also be available to take oral comments. Visit the IL 29 Website at www.dot.il.gov/il29/default.aspx for additional information about the IL 29 Study, the DEIS and the Public Hearings.

Overview of the Recommended Improvements

One build alternative, referred to as "the preferred alternative" has been identified to address the transportation needs of the project area. It evolved from a structured evaluation process conducted between 2002 and 2006 that involved coordination and input from resource agency officials, elected officials, and the public. Figure 1 illustrates the preferred alternative, as well as those alternatives that were eliminated from further consideration since the last public meetings in July 2004. IDOT used input from the previous public meetings, as well as engineering and environmental data, in developing the preferred alternative. This alternative has been designed to minimize social and environmental impacts while addressing the transportation needs in the project area.

Following is an overview of the preferred alternative in the project's South, Central and North sections.

South Section

The preferred alternative is a 4-lane freeway on new alignment to the west of the City of Chillicothe. From the IL 6 interchange, the proposed alignment continues north, west of Old Galena Road, passing west of the Caterpillar Tech Center on Cedar Hills Drive. North of Cedar Hills Drive the alignment curves northeast and crosses Old Galena Road, Wayne Road, Rome West Road and Krause Road, west of Galena Knolls Subdivision. North of the Galena Knolls Subdivision, the alignment curves north across a planned extension of McGrath Street, Cloverdale Road, Sycamore Street, Truitt Avenue, the BNSF Railroad and Senachwine Creek. The alignment then curves northeast along Senachwine

Creek and connects with existing IL 29 north of Chillicothe. Interchanges are proposed at Cedar Hills Drive, Rome West Road, an extension of McGrath Street, Truitt Avenue, and with existing IL 29 north of Chillicothe. Access to the new freeway would only be allowed at interchange locations. Road closures are proposed at Dickison Lane and Boy Scout Road. The cost for construction of the South Section is approximately \$161 million.

Central Section

Within Chillicothe, existing IL 29 would be reconstructed from the Truitt Avenue intersection to the proposed interchange north of Chillicothe. From Truitt Avenue to Gail Avenue, IL 29 would have two lanes each direction separated by a 12-foot-wide bi-directional turn lane. There would be sidewalks on both sides of IL 29. Between Gail Avenue and the interchange north of Chillicothe, IL 29 would have two 12-foot-wide lanes in each direction separated by a raised median. Bicycle and pedestrian access would be provided with the reconstructed roadway. Improvements in Chillicothe would also include the replacement of the BNSF Railroad bridge over IL 29.

From the interchange north of Chillicothe to south of Henry, the preferred alternative is a 4-lane divided expressway generally following existing IL 29. Improvements to this portion of IL 29 were designed with narrow medians and retaining walls in some locations to minimize impacts to Illinois Department of Natural Resources properties, natural areas and other sensitive properties. In Sparland, the preferred alternative would be on new alignment east of the railroad tracks with a bridge over IL 17. An interchange would be constructed in Sparland providing access to IL 17 and the local road network. North of Sparland, IL 29 would be widened to the west of existing IL 29. Direct access to the highway would be permitted at local roads, residences, and field entrances. The estimated cost to construct the Central Section is \$247 million.

After evaluating traffic data, the Bluff Alignment was eliminated from further consideration because it would not alleviate future congestion on existing IL 29. In 2030, the project's design year, a reconstructed IL 29 (4-lane divided highway) would carry three to four times more traffic than the Bluff Alignment. The failure of the Bluff Alignment to attract traffic from IL 29 means that it does not meet the project's goal of increasing transportation efficiency between IL 6 and I-180. In addition, the Bluff Alignment had a much greater impact on agricultural land than the preferred alternative.

North Section

In the North Section, the proposed project is a 4-lane expressway following existing IL 29, except near Henry, where the proposed design is a 4-lane expressway on new alignment west of the community. The new alignment would have an interchange with Western Avenue to provide access to Henry. Old Indian Town Road would remain open by bridging over the proposed alignment. Both Whitefield Road and County Line Road would remain open and have access to the proposed alignment.

North of Henry, the improvements follow existing IL 29 with widening to the west. In Putnam, the Bradford Road/IL 29 intersection would be expanded from 50 to 64 feet wide to accommodate large trucks traveling to the grain elevator. Bradford Road would be extended on new alignment along the east side of the grain elevator and connected to Senachwine Lake Road. The only access to the grain elevator would be from the proposed extension of Bradford Road. Road closures are planned at Douglas, Courtland, and Main Streets, as well as at Senachwine Lake Road.

continued on page 4

Opportunities for Public Participation

IDOT continues to seek input from representatives of communities, agencies, businesses and the general public on the IL 29 Study. Opportunities for you to contribute to the project and provide input to the process include:

- Use the comment form included in this newsletter to express your ideas, comments, or opinions on the project. Mail the completed form to IDOT on or before June 25, 2006 or submit the completed form at either of the public hearings.
- Attend the public hearing on June 14 in Chillicothe or June 15 in Henry. Provide comments to staff members, the court reporter or submit a written comment.
- After the public hearings, mail your comments to the address below on or before June 25.
- Visit the IL 29 Website to offer your comments and to learn more about the project. The Website address is www.dot.il.gov/il29/default.aspx

The IL Route 29 Draft Environmental Impact Statement is available for public review and comment at www.dot.state.il.us/desenv/ev.html or at the following libraries:

Peoria Public Library

107 NE Monroe
Peoria, IL

Lacon Public Library

205 6th Street
Lacon, IL

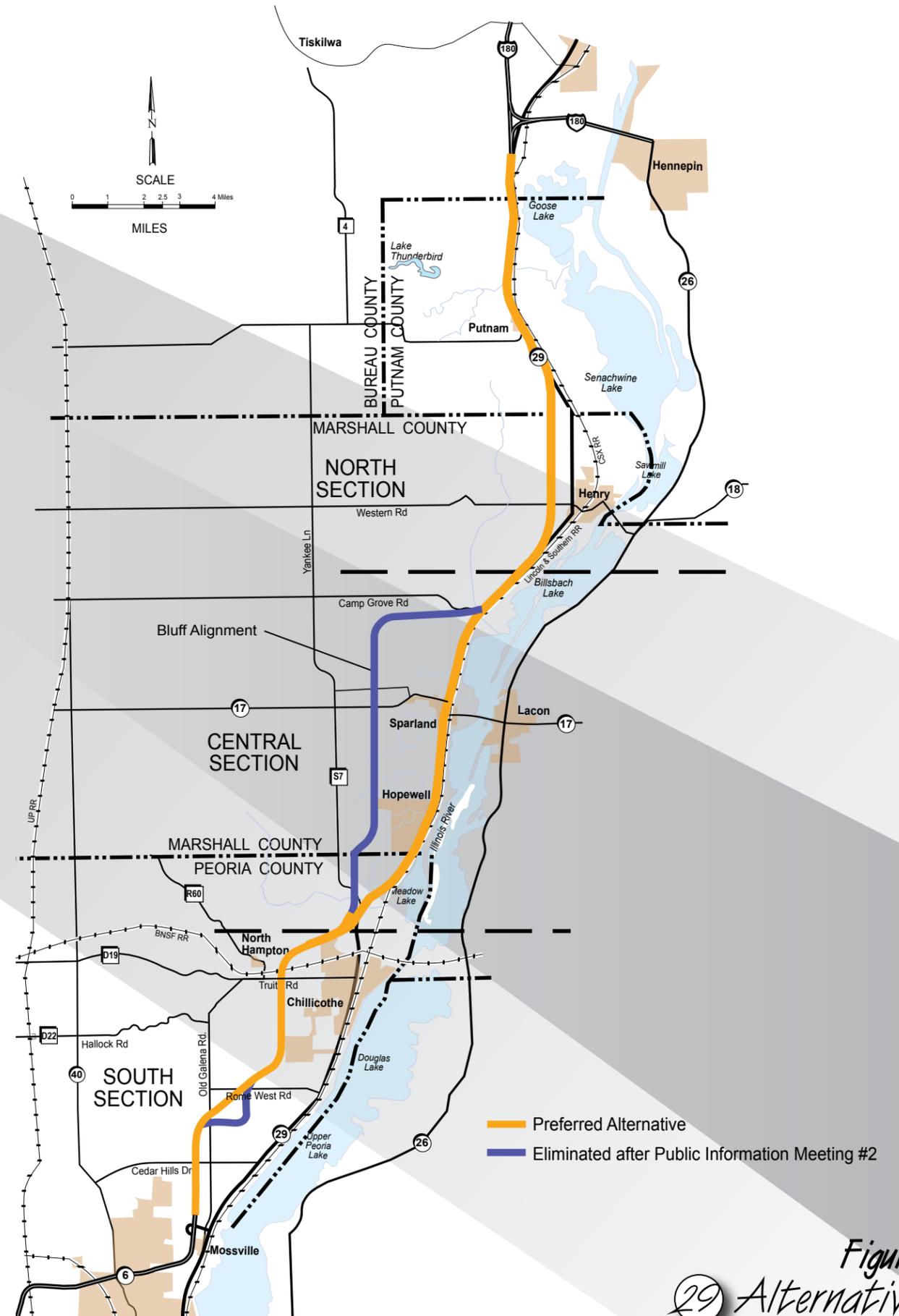
Henry Public Library

702 Front Street
Henry, IL

Chillicothe Public Library

430 N. Bradley Avenue
Chillicothe, IL

Comments on the DEIS are due by June 25, 2006, and should be sent to Eric Therkildsen, P.E. at the address listed on page 1.



*Figure 1
29 Alternatives*