

because of their impacts to wetlands, floodplain, and natural areas. The current version of Alternative N-2 does not relocate the railroad and has a narrow median and a retaining wall on the east side to minimize impacts to natural resources in the Miller-Anderson Woods area.

Like the Central Section, IL 29 in the North Section is designed as an expressway that can be accessed at local roads and noncommercial driveways.

In the North Section, residential and business relocations are found in Henry and Putnam. The North Section would cost approximately \$120 to \$130 million to construct. More information about project impacts will be available at the July 14 and 15 meetings.

### Other Project Update Information

The project team is developing a plan to locate wildlife crossings along the IL 29 corridor to reduce the number of collisions between animals (particularly deer) and vehicles. The plan could include lengthening bridges at stream crossings, which are wildlife movement corridors, to allow deer and other animals to cross between the stream and the bridge embankment. The project team is also investigating the use of large culverts at various locations along the corridor with high vehicle-deer collisions to allow deer and other animals to cross under the highway.

The Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) is continuing field work to evaluate upland and wetland habitat along the project's reasonable range of alternatives. They are also conducting special studies on mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, plants, and fish and mussels in the project area. The data gathered by the INHS will be used by IDOT to make design decisions, and it will be reported in the project's Environmental Impact Statement.

Historical and archaeological studies are also in progress. To date about 1,300 acres have been surveyed by archaeologists. Groundwater studies will be conducted this summer to determine whether the proposed improvements to IL 29 in the Miller-Anderson Woods area would affect groundwater and habitat dependent on existing groundwater levels.

### Mark Your Calendar

## 29 Public Information Meetings

July 14, 2004  
Henry-Senachwine High School  
1023 College Street  
Henry, Illinois

July 15, 2004  
Three Sisters Park - The Pavilion  
17201 North State Route 29  
Chillicothe, Illinois

The meeting format is open house.

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 second issue of  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:

- Alternatives to be Presented at Upcoming Public Meetings
- Map of Alternatives
- Review of Alternatives by Project Section
- Opportunities for Public Participation
- Meeting Dates and Locations

### For More Information, Contact:

Eric Therkildsen, P.E.  
Program Development Engineer  
IDOT District 4  
401 Main Street  
Peoria, IL 61602  
(309) 671-3333

### Published By:



and

**CH2MHILL**

Hutchison Engineering, Inc.  
Lin Engineering, LTD  
Alfred Benesch & Company  
Martinez Corporation

### Alternatives to be Presented at July Public Meetings

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is continuing their study of alternatives to improve continuity and address efficiency concerns in the Illinois Route 29 (IL 29) corridor between IL 6 near Mossville in Peoria County and I-180 in Bureau County. The second set of public information meetings are scheduled to be held on July 14, 2004 in Henry and July 15, 2004 in Chillicothe to inform community members on project progress. (See the back page of this newsletter for locations and times.)

The first set of public information meetings were held in mid-June 2003. At that time, IDOT informed project-area residents about the purpose of the IL 29 study, presented the preliminary IL 29 corridor alignments, and received input from attendees on transportation issues and the preliminary alignments. IDOT received a wide range of public comments at the two meetings. Listed below are the common themes the public provided at the meetings.

- Concerns about residential, agricultural and other environmental impacts associated with the Henry bypass and the bluff alignment west of Sparland.
- Concerns about the visibility of communities and the impacts on local businesses along IL 29 if a bypass were constructed.
- Questions about the need for improvements to IL 29.
- A desire to improve existing roadways before building new facilities.
- Support for improving IL 29 because it would have fewer agricultural impacts than the bluff alignment.
- Support for the bluff alignment because it would reduce impacts to residences and businesses along existing IL 29.

Based on the comments from the June 2003 information meetings, agency input and additional engineering and environmental work, the project team continued to refine the preliminary alternatives in the project's South, Central, and North Sections. The alternatives that remain under consideration and the alternatives eliminated from consideration since the June 2003 public information meetings are shown on page 3. A brief description of changes to the alternatives in the South, Central, and North Sections is found on the following page.

The project team has also begun detailed engineering studies on the alternatives in the North and Central sections. The detailed studies for the South Section are forthcoming. These studies will provide IDOT, agencies, and project-area property owners with information such as the limits of new right-of-way required to construct the proposed IL 29 improvements, changes in access to properties, where interchanges will be needed, and impacts to agricultural land, natural resources such as wetlands and wooded areas, and residences and businesses. Although the preliminary plans for the alignments may need some adjustments, they are useful in helping elicit further comments and input from communities and property owners along IL 29.

### Alternatives Update

#### South Section

At the first public information meeting Alternative S-4 crossed over the Cedar Hills Drive/Old Galena Road intersection bisecting the two Mossville Caterpillar facilities before connecting with the proposed Chillicothe bypass. That portion of Alternative S-4 has been eliminated from consideration. Under the current plan, it now crosses Cedar Hills Drive just west of Caterpillar's facilities and crosses Old Galena Road north of the Tech Center. An interchange is proposed at Cedar Hills Drive. After



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401 Main Street / Peoria, Illinois / 61602

crossing Old Galena Road the alternative continues northeast crossing Rome West Road and Wayne Road west of Galena Knolls Subdivision. From that point the alignment is generally the same as shown at the June 2003 public meetings. Because of the change in alignment west of Caterpillar, this alignment is now referred to as Alternative S-6B. Alternative S-6B was not displayed at the June 2003 public meetings.

A variation of Alternative S-6B was developed to follow property lines more closely. This alternative, called Alternative S-6C, is the same as Alternative S-6B to the point where it crosses Old Galena Road. Northeast of there, it has a more east-west alignment than Alternative S-6B, crossing Rome West Road along the east side of Galena Knolls Subdivision before rejoining Alternative S-6B and the alignment displayed at the June 2003 meetings. An interchange is planned at Truitt Road for Alternatives S-6B and 6C.

North of Chillicothe, three interchanges are being looked at to connect existing IL 29 to the Chillicothe bypass. The interchange configurations will be displayed at the July public meetings. Between the south project terminus at IL 6 and the proposed interchange north of Chillicothe, the alternatives in the South Section are being designed as a freeway. This means that the only points of access to the highway would be at interchanges.

Alternative S-5, which was located east of Alternative S-4 has been eliminated from consideration because it is less compatible with Chillicothe's plans for growth than Alternative S-6B/C, and it had greater potential impacts to the gravel pit and the Chillicothe Recreation area.

Impacts of the proposed improvements in the South Section are primarily to agricultural land. Alternatives S-6B and S-6C would each affect approximately 350 acres of farmland and would cost approximately \$160 to \$170 million to construct.

### Central Section

Two alternatives remain under consideration in the Central Section, Alternative C-2, which is located along the bluff west of Hopewell and Sparland, and Alternative C-3/C-3A, which follows existing IL 29. Alternative C-2 follows Hardscrabble Road extended and ties into existing IL 29 near Camp Grove Road. An interchange has been developed to connect the bluff alignment (Alternative C-2) to existing IL 29 north of Chillicothe. Three interchange options are being considered to connect Alternative C-3/C-3A to existing IL 29 north of Chillicothe. In addition, three interchange options have been developed in Sparland with Alternative C-3/C-3A to connect IL 29 and IL 17.

The segment of Alternative C-3/C-3A from north of Chillicothe through Sparland is being designed with a narrow median and retaining walls to minimize impacts to Department of Natural Resources properties, natural areas, and other properties. The bluff alignment (Alternative C-2) is designed with a wider median, and it does not require retaining walls. Both alternatives are designed as expressways meaning that access to the highway would be permitted at local roads, residences, and field entrances.

Improvements to IL 29 from Wilmot Street in Chillicothe, through the viaduct area, to the proposed interchange north of Chillicothe are under consideration. This would be constructed with either alternative in the Central Section.

The bluff alignment would require more new right-of-way and farmland than improvements along IL 29. Widening IL 29 would affect more acres of wetlands and floodplain than the bluff alignment and would displace more residences and businesses. The bluff alignment would cost approximately \$180 to \$190 million to construct, while improvements along existing IL 29 would cost between \$220 and \$240 million.

### North Section

Two Henry bypass alternatives, H-3 and H-4, were displayed at the June 2003 public meetings. Improving IL 29 through Henry was eliminated before the June 2003 public meeting because of adverse impacts to the high school, fairgrounds, and local businesses/residences. After the June meetings, Alternative H-3, which was located about 1 mile west of Henry, was eliminated from further consideration because of its distance from Henry and greater impacts to farmland. Alternative H-4 was carried forward to preliminary design. An interchange is being developed along Alternative H-4 at Western Avenue.

At the June 2003 public meetings, there were two alternatives displayed from the north end of the Henry bypass to the north project terminus at I-180. Alternative N-4, which was located on new alignment east of Putnam, was eliminated from consideration because of its impacts on farmland and wetlands.

Several variations of Alternative N-2, which follows existing IL 29, were evaluated after the June 2003 public information meetings. The alternatives widened IL 29 to the east (north of Putnam) and required relocating the railroad. Those alternatives were eliminated from consideration

## Opportunities for Public Participation

IDOT encourages public participation in the process of studying the improvement of Illinois Route 29. IDOT will be seeking input from representatives of communities, agencies, businesses, and the general public. Several specific activities will provide opportunities for you to contribute to the project:

- This is the second issue of a series of informational newsletters. Like this newsletter, future publications will provide a detachable comment form on which you may offer ideas, comments, or opinions.
- At open-house public information meetings to be held in July and again later in the study process, the project staff will display exhibits, provide information and solicit input on the study.
- When the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Combined Design Report have been completed, a public hearing will be held to inform the public of the study findings and again solicit input. These documents will result in alignments and right-of-way requirements, NOT construction plans.
- In addition, IDOT will hold individual meetings with representatives of local units of government, interest groups, civic groups and industries to discuss and address specific interests and concerns.
- Your letters with comments and suggestions are always welcome at the IDOT District office. Please address your letters to:

Eric Therkildsen, P.E.  
Program Development Engineer  
IDOT District 4

401 Main Street  
Peoria, IL 61602

Those letters received within 10 days of the public information meetings will be included in the official project record.

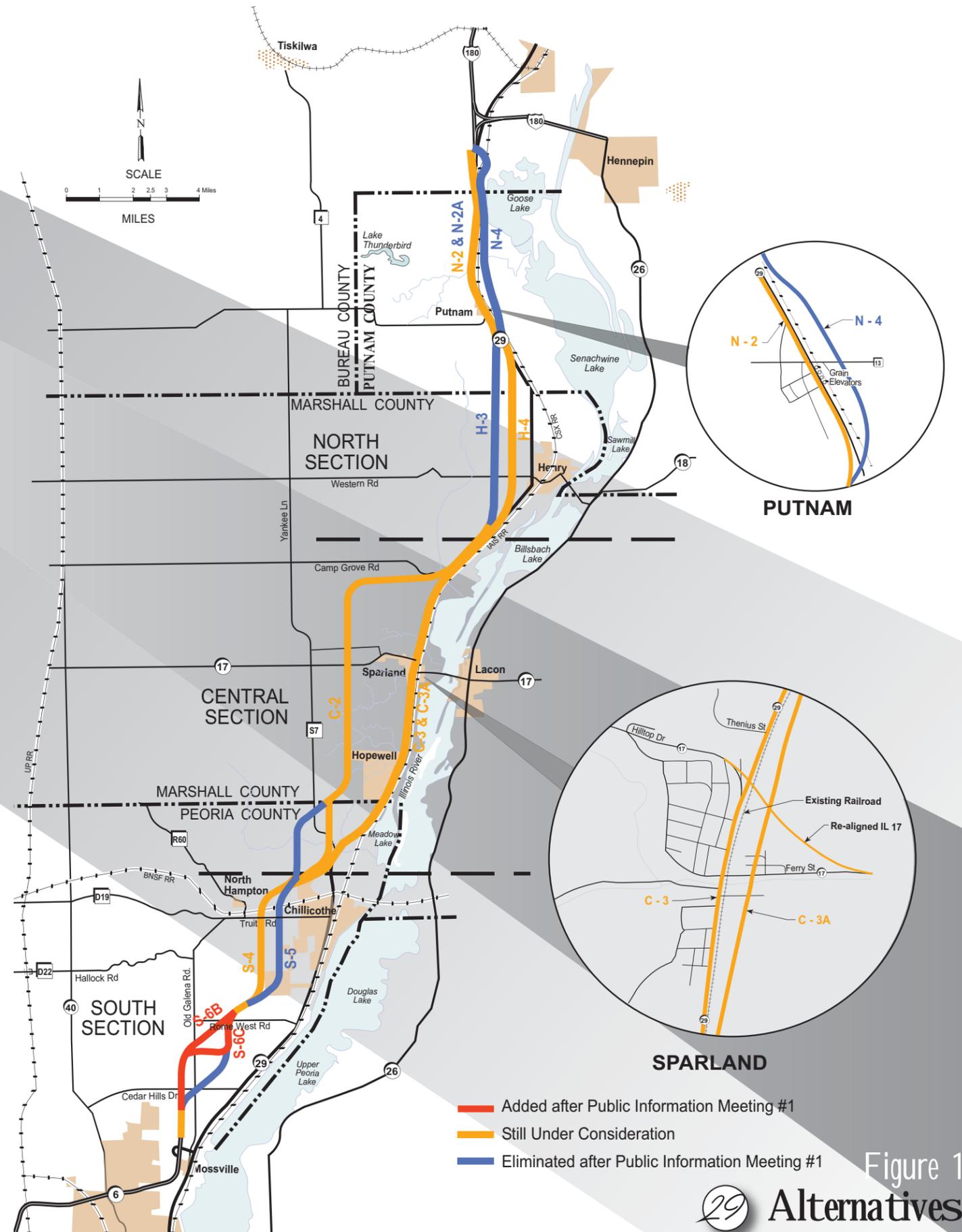


Figure 1  
29 Alternatives