



Southwest Connector PEL Study Community Advisory Group Meeting #2

Thursday, October 02, 2025
Carrie Nelsen (IDOT) – Speaker

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Welcome & Introductions



Carrie Nelsen (IDOT) – Speaker
Scott Manning (HDR) – Speaker

Study Team

Carrie Nelsen, IDOT District 9

Susan Poe, IDOT District 9

Michael Spanberger, IDOT District 8

Scott Manning, HDR

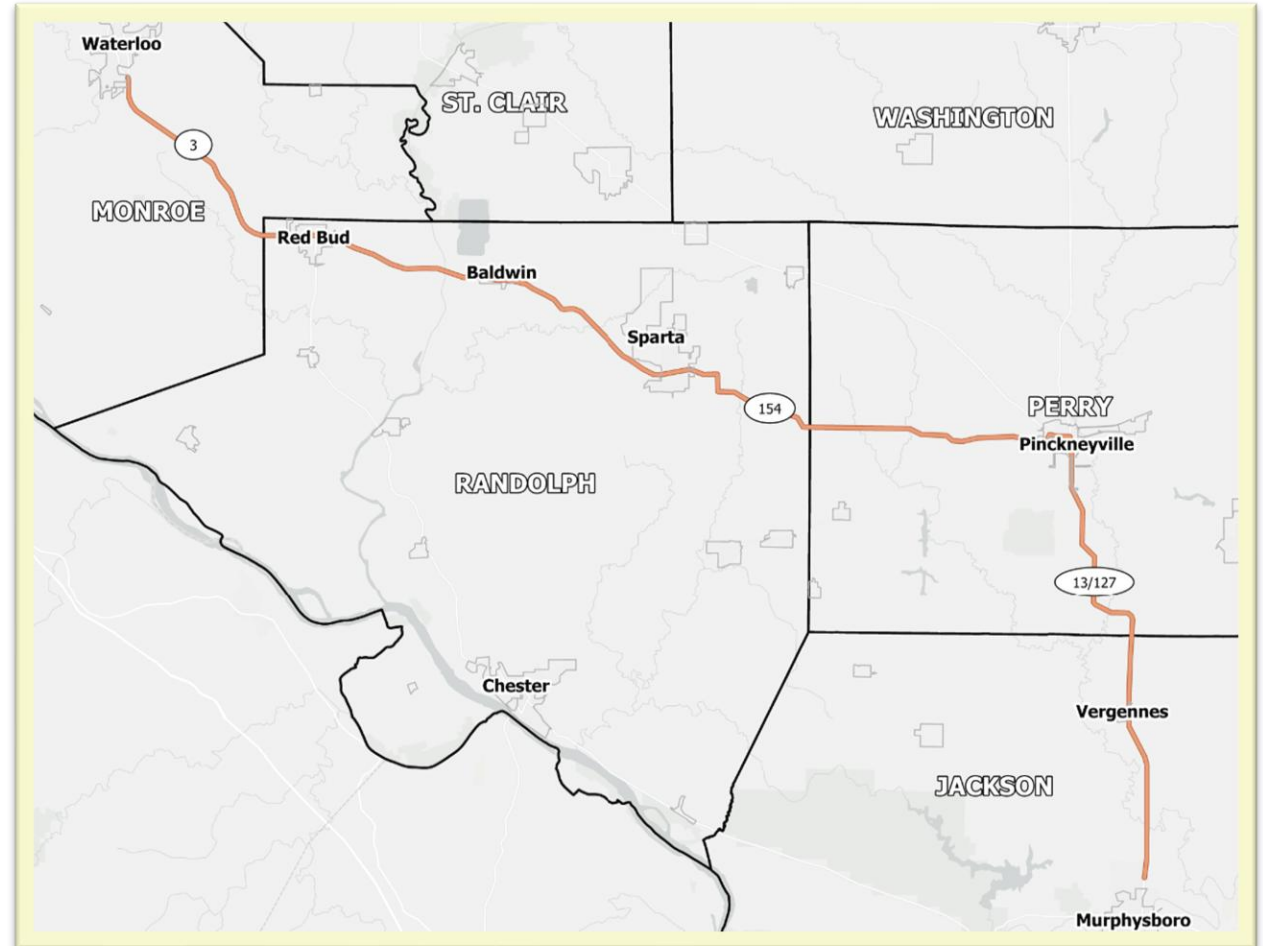
Alyssa Tepper, HDR

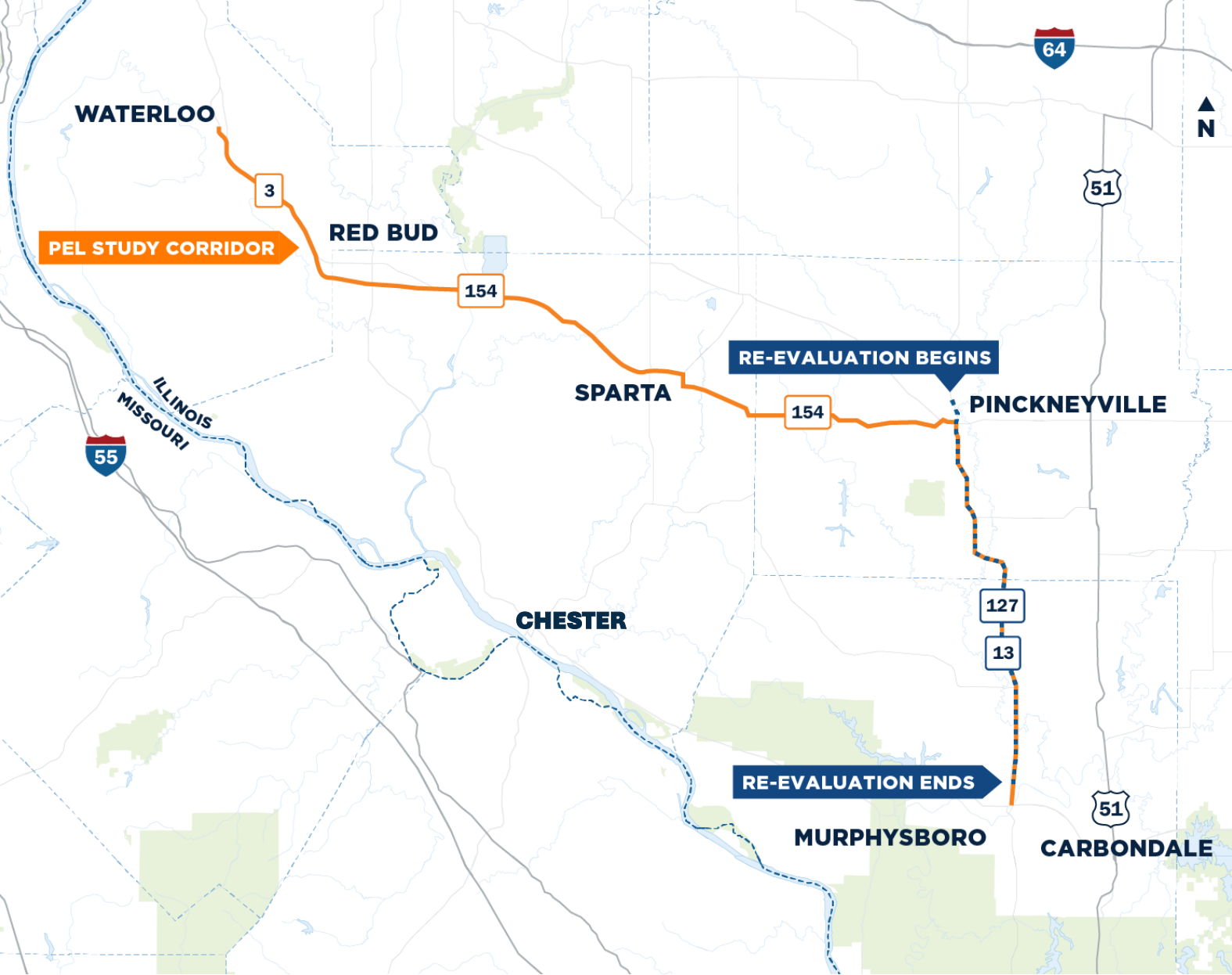
Jeff Young, HDR

Kelly Sims, HDR

Jamy Lyne, KEG

Paul Schneider, Stanley





Agenda

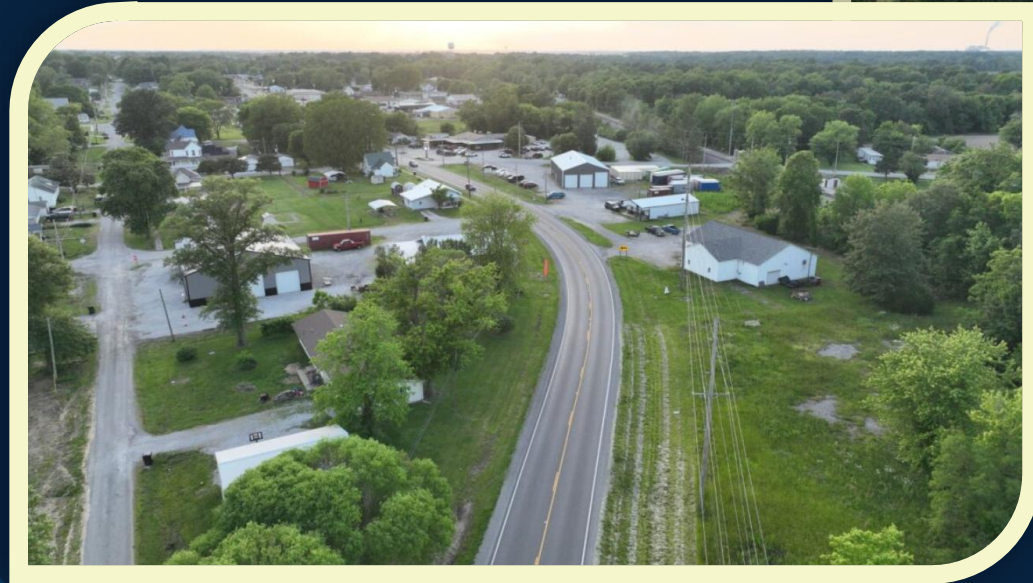
- 01** Welcome & Introductions
- 02** Project Progress Updates
- 03** Problem Statement
- 04** Purpose & Need Statement
- 05** Conceptual Alternatives
Workshop Session
- 06** Screening Process
- 07** Next Steps



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Project Progress Updates



Scott Manning (HDR) – Speaker
Kelly Sims (HDR) – Speaker

Progress Summary



Launched Project Website

Hosted Virtual Public Information Meeting (07/28 – 08/18)

Drafted and Started Receiving Input on Problem Statement and Purpose & Need

Initiated and Substantially Completed Data Collection

Identified Focus Groups

Initiated NEPA Reevaluation from Pinckneyville to Murphysboro

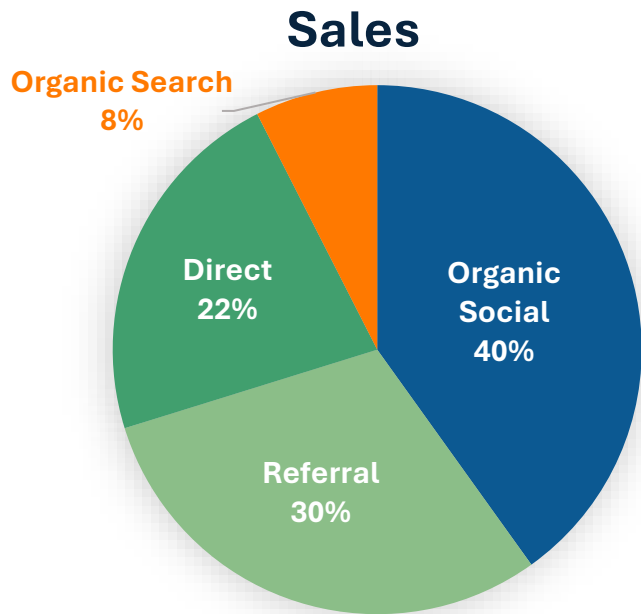
Began Development of Initial Concept Alternatives for Consideration

Ongoing Development of the Community Explorer tool

Began Developing Corridor Conditions Assessment

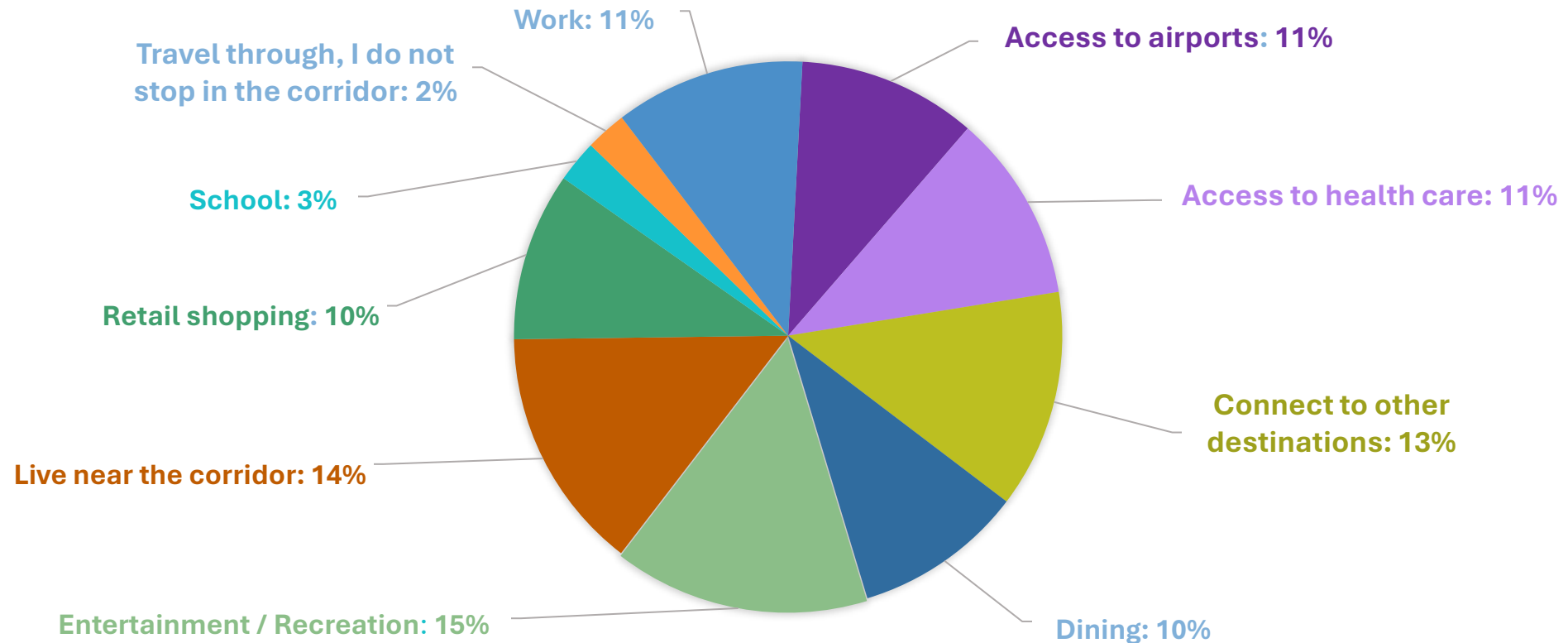
Virtual Public Meeting Results

- July 28 through August 18
 - 8,358 total website views
 - 3,938 virtual meeting views



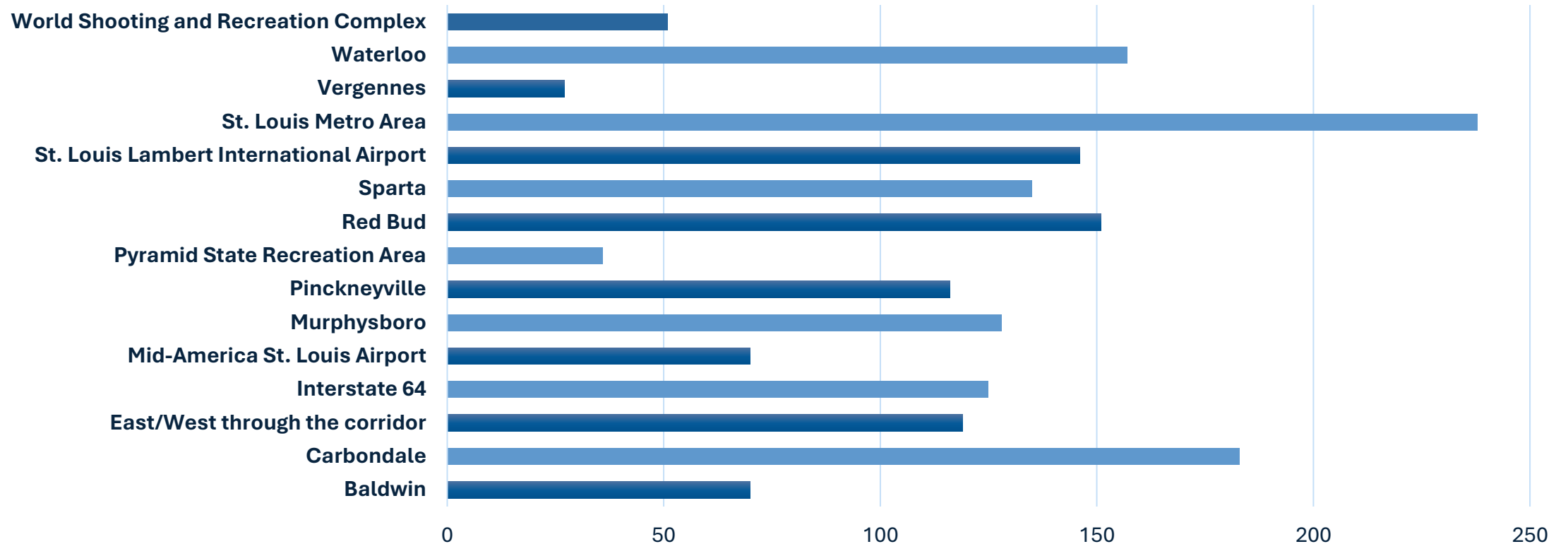
Virtual Public Meeting Results

Why Use the Corridor?



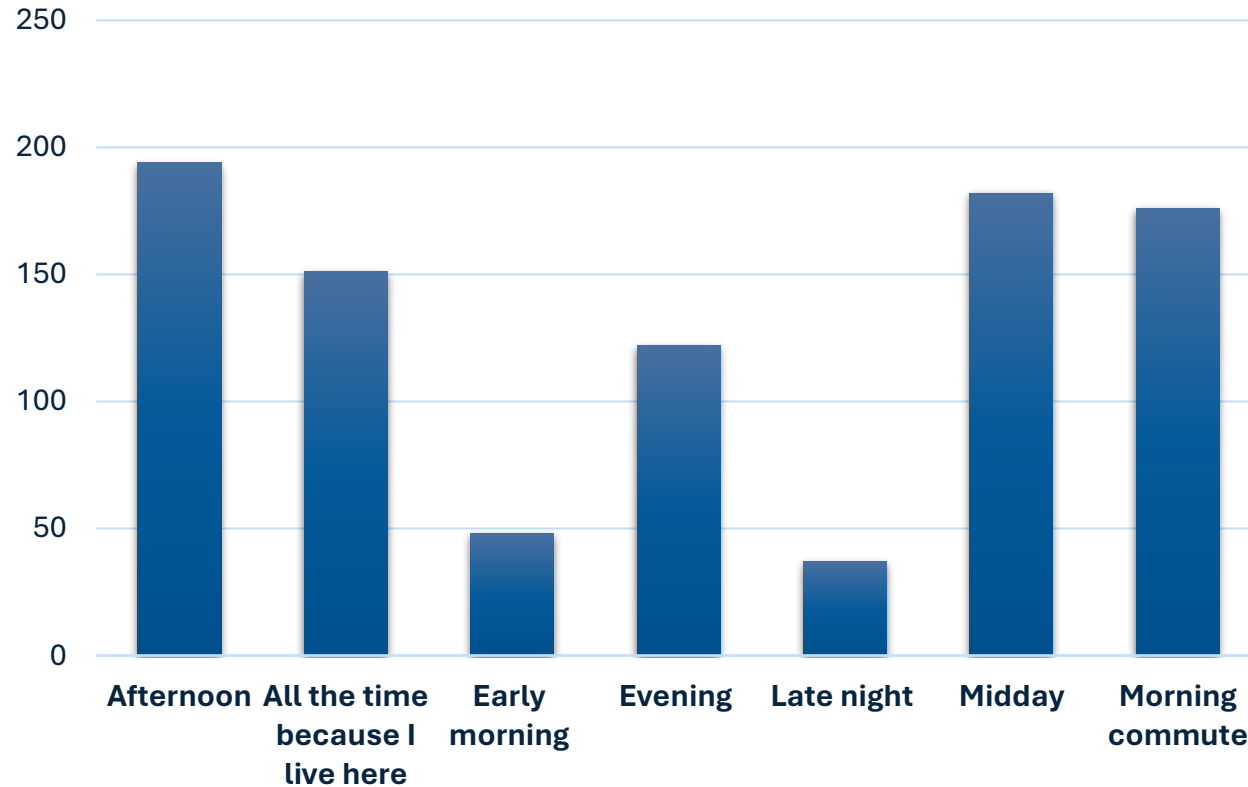
Virtual Public Meeting Results

Typical Destinations When Using Corridor

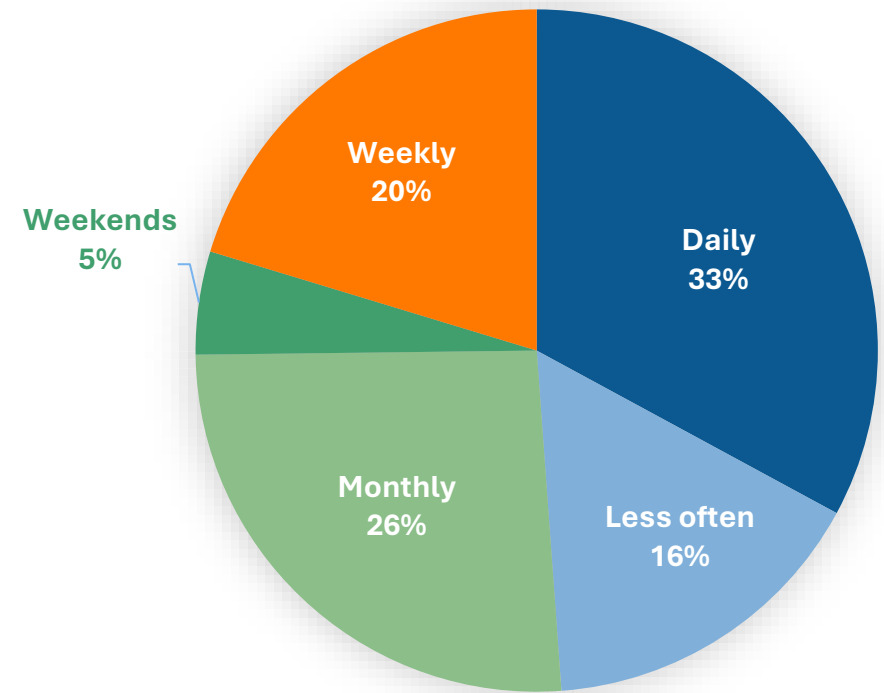


Virtual Public Meeting Results

When do you typically travel the corridor?

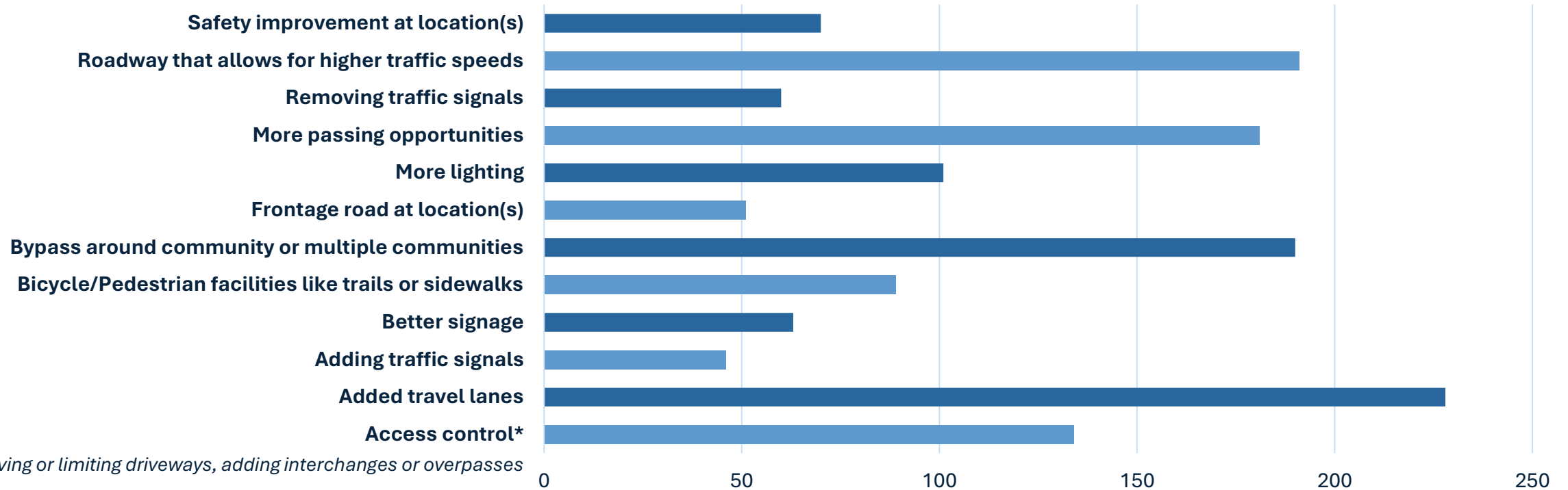


How often do you travel the corridor?



Virtual Public Meeting Results

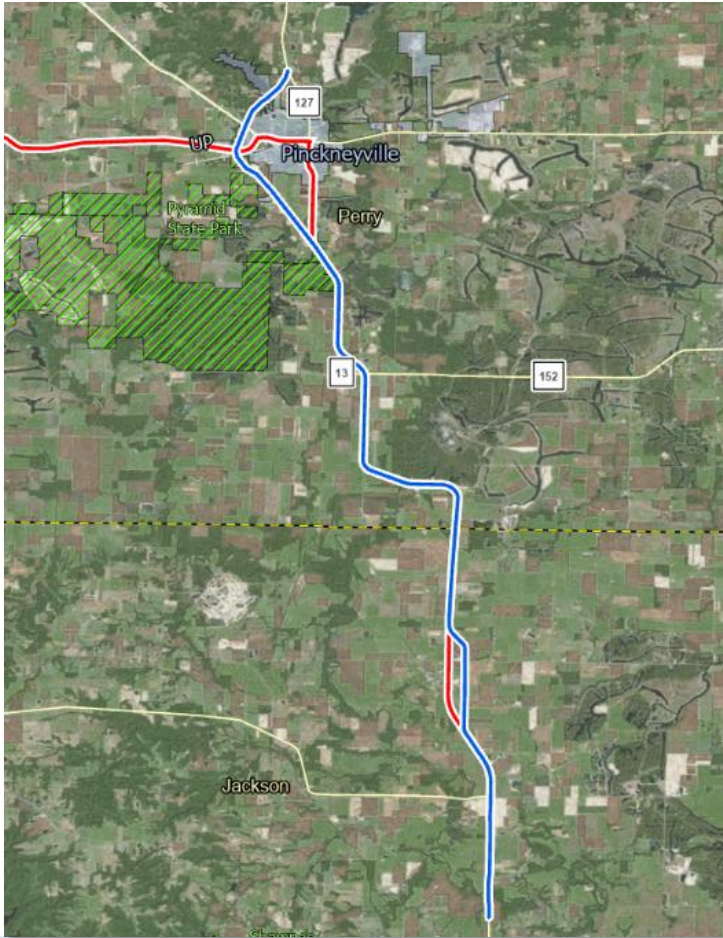
Desired Improvements



*Removing or limiting driveways, adding interchanges or overpasses



NEPA Re-evaluation



- Environmental Assessment for Pinckneyville to Murphysboro
- Review for a change in conditions
 - New regulations or regulatory requirements
 - Existing conditions, i.e., land use
 - Design criteria
- Verify decision in Finding of No Significant Impact is still valid with today's conditions



Focus Group 1 – Major Employers

Gilster-Mary Lee Corporation

The Material Works

Knight Hawk Coal

Peabody Energy

Walmart

Pinckneyville Correctional
Center

Penn Aluminum

Com-Pac Internation

Southern Illinois University –
Carbondale



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Focus Group 2 – Healthcare

Memorial Hospital Belleville
Monroe County Health Department
Memorial Hospital Chester
Red Bud Regional Hospital
Sparta Community Hospital
Randolph County Health Department
Marshall Browning Hospital
Pinckneyville Community Hospital
Perry County Health Department
Memorial Hospital of Carbondale
Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH)

St. Joseph Memorial Hospital
Jackson County Health Department
Medstar Ambulance Service



Focus Group 3 – Freight

St. Louis Regional Freightway

Illinois Trucking Association

Kaskaskia Regional Port District

America's Central Port /

Port of Metropolitan St. Louis

Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis

Southern Illinois Transfer Company (SITCO)

C.H. Robinson

Stoller Trucking



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Problem Statement & Purpose and Need

Draft Updates



Jamy Lyne (KEG) – Speaker

Problem Statement

“

The Southwest Connector corridor between Waterloo and Murphysboro is a two-lane undivided corridor along Illinois Routes 3, 154, and 13/127 in Southern Illinois. The Southwest Connector corridor does not currently provide efficient or reliable travel times between local communities and the Greater St. Louis area, resulting in limitations in accessing healthcare, jobs, education, recreation areas, and services. Existing roadway geometry deficiencies and a lack of passing lanes create hazards and lead to an increase in crashes. Travelers encounter bottlenecks related to truck traffic, farm equipment, school buses, and at intersections through towns. Towns within the corridor have limited pedestrian and bicycle facilities and there are limited transit options. The lack of adequate highways for freight traffic has restricted the region's ability to attract and retain new industry and hampered the competitiveness of existing industry. Poor connectivity has limited the region's ability to leverage its human capital and natural and economic resources.

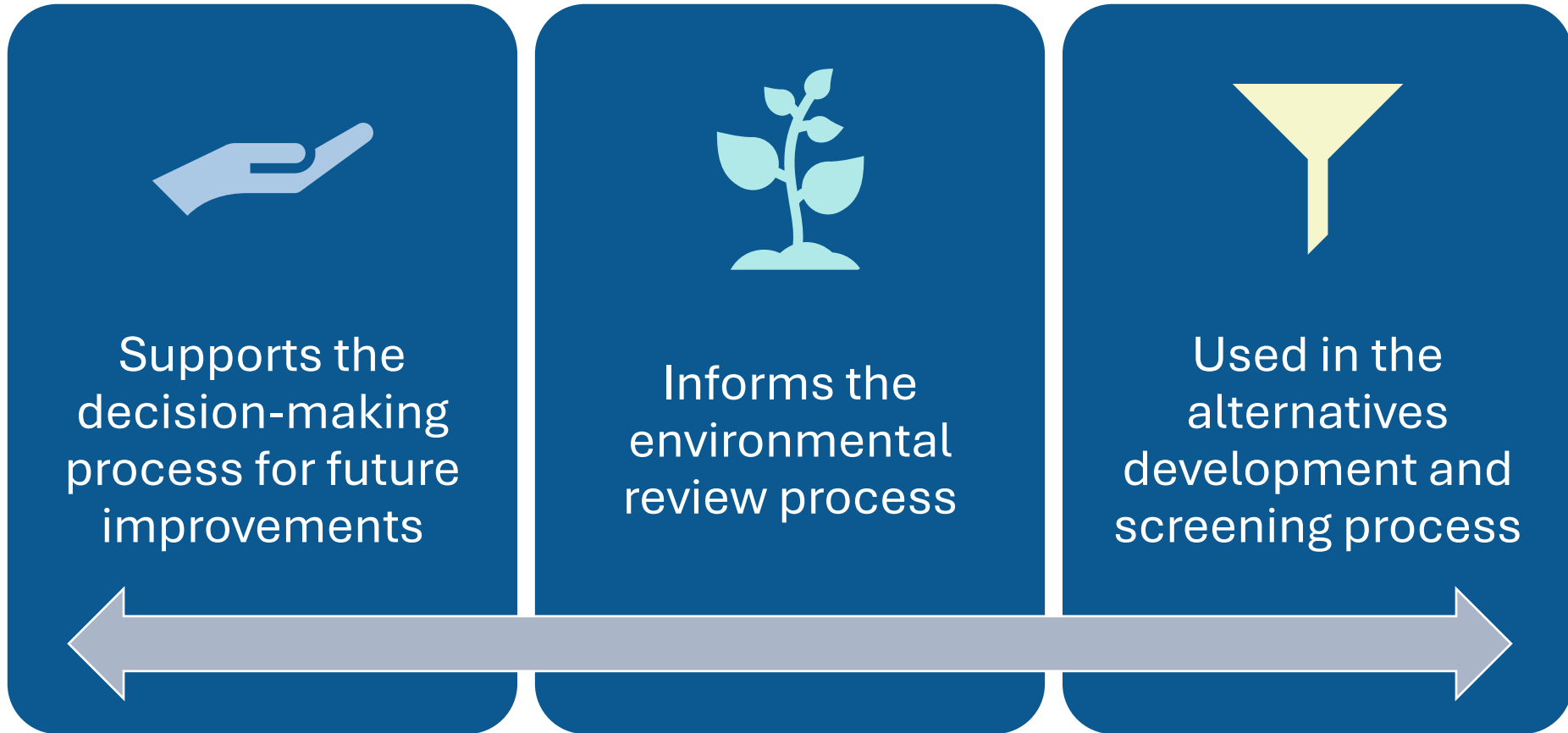
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Purpose and Need



Purpose and Need

Preliminary Purpose Statement

The **purpose** of the project is to address existing deficiencies along IL 3, IL 154, and IL 13/127 to improve safety, mobility, travel time reliability, and access to essential services; expand modal interrelationships; and support economic development initiatives in the 70-mile corridor connecting Southern Illinois communities

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Purpose and Need

Preliminary Needs

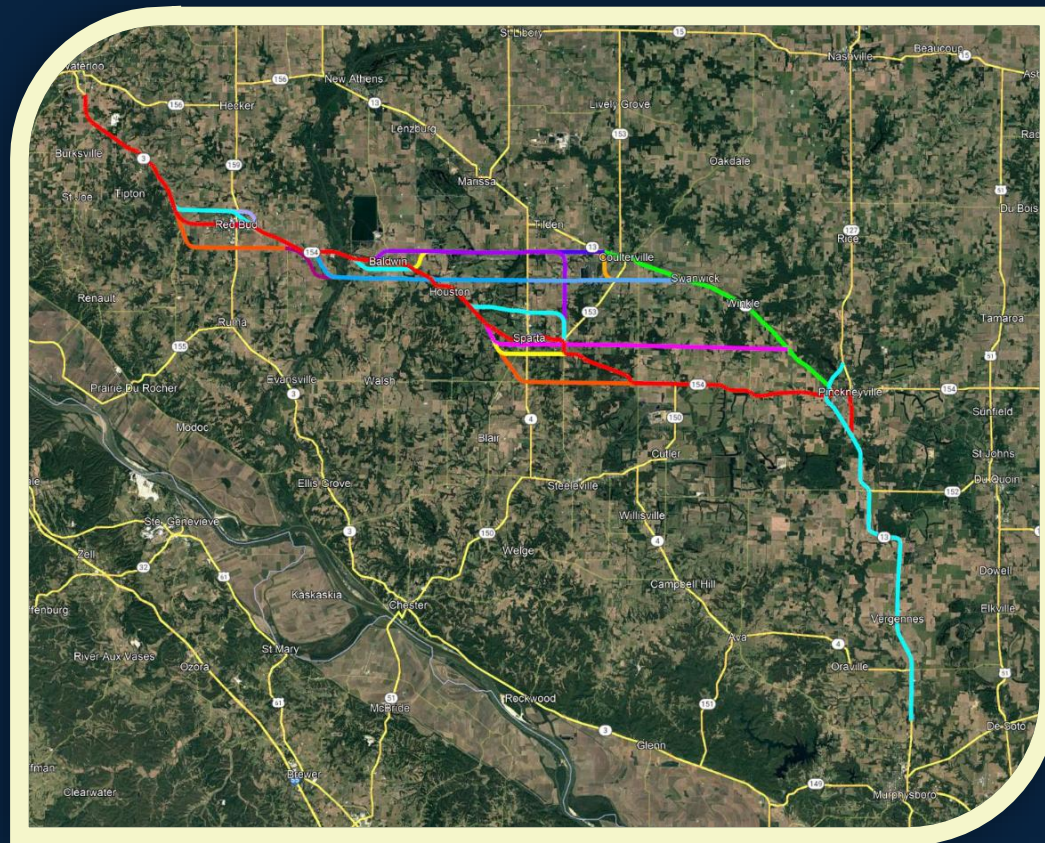
- Increased number of crashes in 2019-2024 compared to 2012-2019
- Roadway deficiencies, including sharp curves, narrow lanes, and areas without shoulders, turn lanes, and passing lanes
- Traffic bottlenecks related to truck traffic, farm equipment, and school buses
- Congestion and operational inefficiencies at intersections and through towns
- Poor travel time and reliability between regional destinations, including healthcare, jobs, education, recreation areas, and services
- Gaps in the regional transportation system
- Limited pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit opportunities



Preliminary Conceptual Alternatives

Workshop Session

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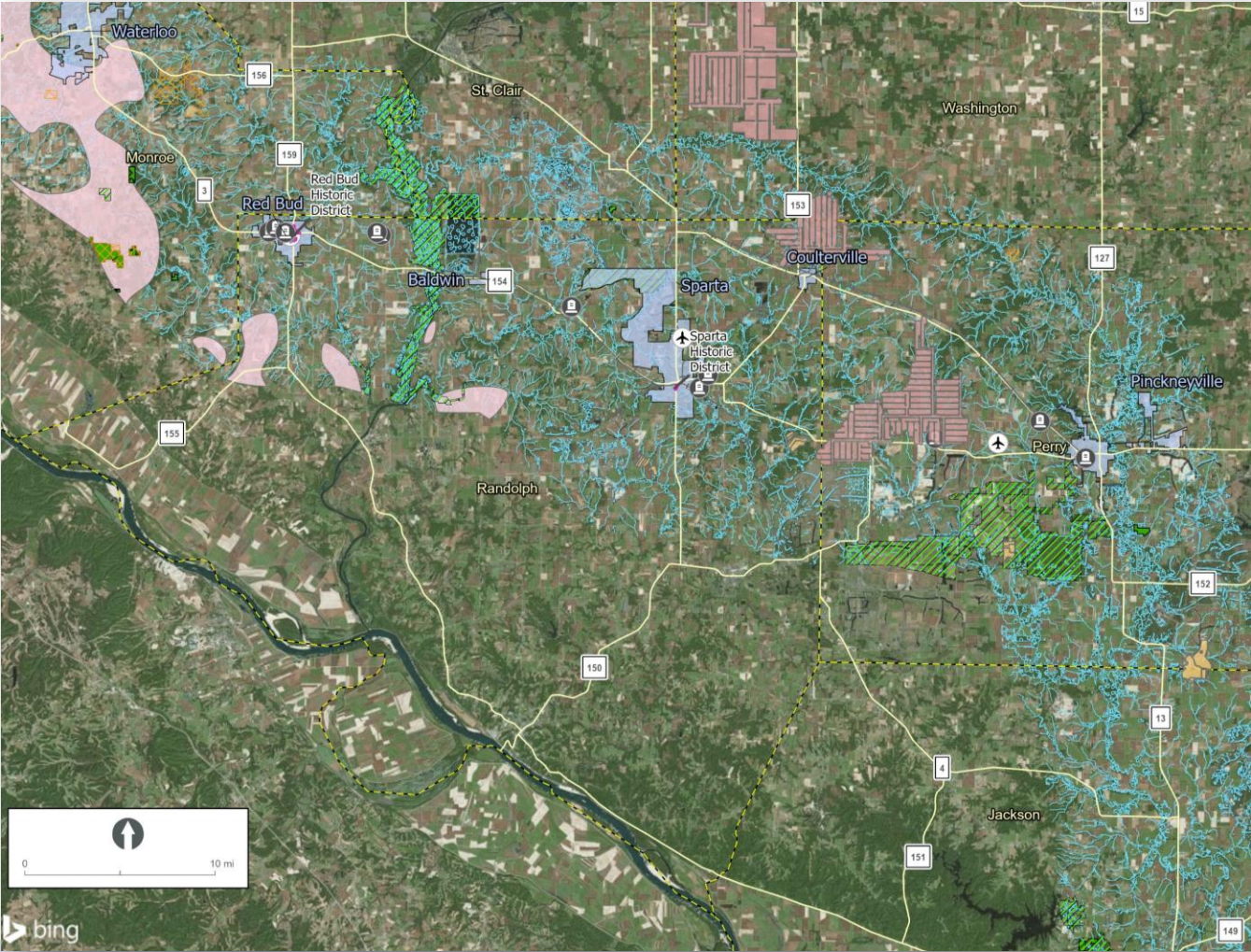
Paul Schneider (Stanley) – Speaker

Preliminary Conceptual Alternatives - Overview

- Conceptual Alternatives are **preliminary** at this point
- We need your input on:
 - Local plans that may impact potential locations for spot safety improvements
 - Sensitive populations or resources that may impact locations
 - Additional concepts for locations



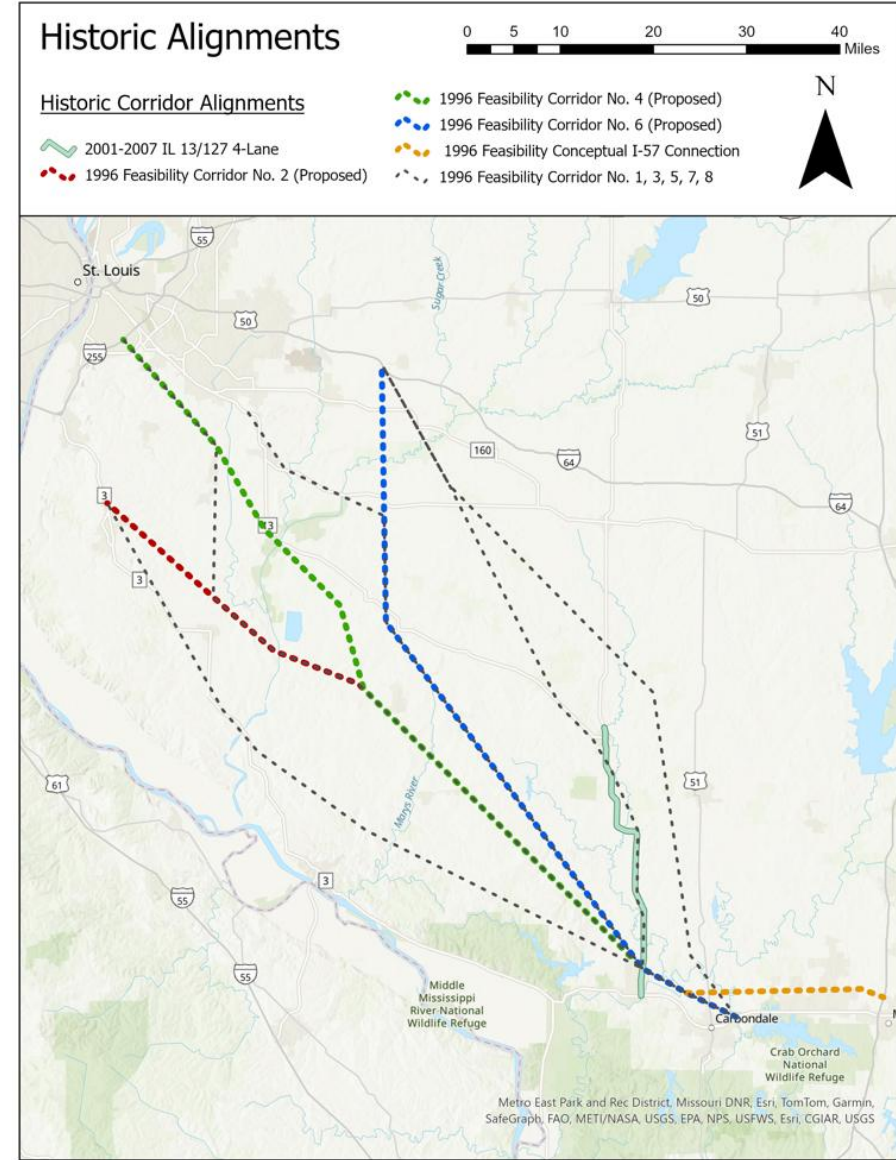
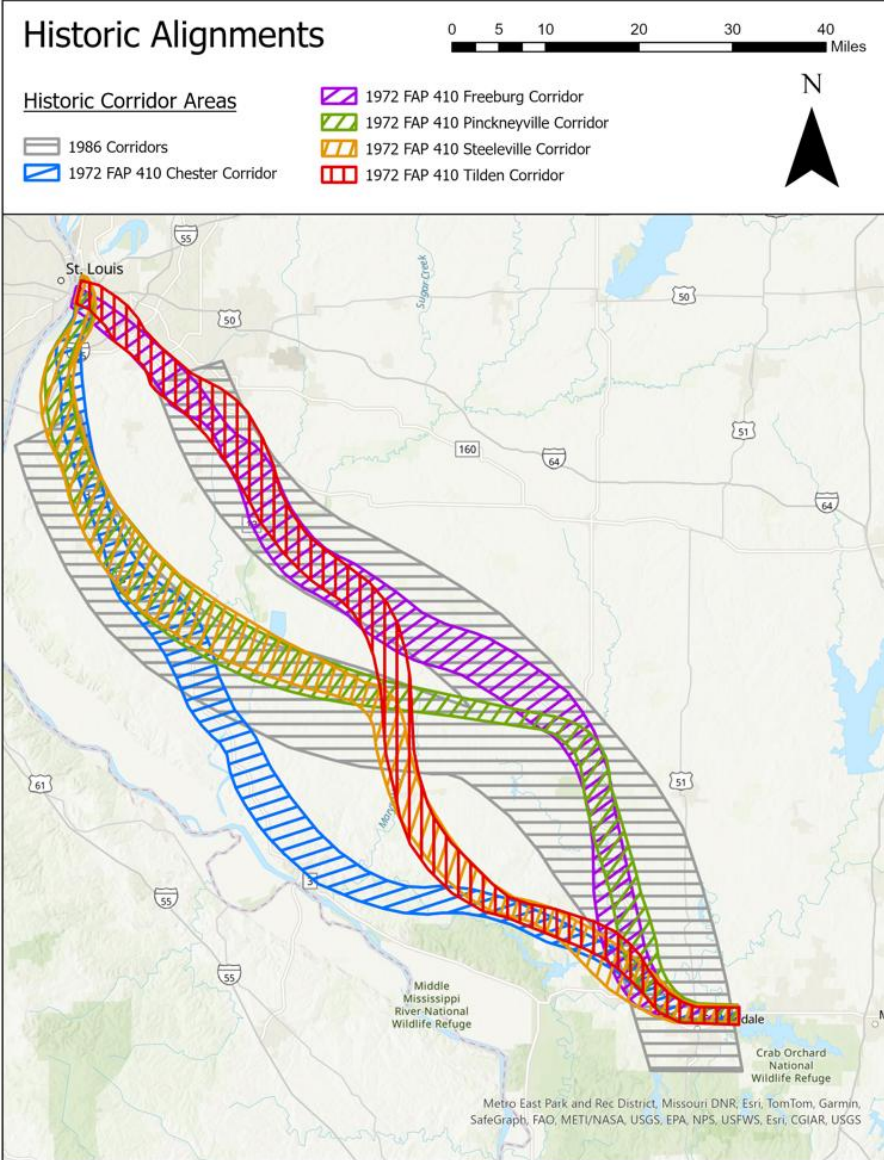
Known Constraints



- Sinkhole Areas
- Illinois Protected Natural Lands Private
- Illinois Protected Natural Lands Public
- Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
- Historic District Boundary
- NWI Wetlands
- Cemetery
- Airport
- Railroad
- Surface Mines
- Underground Mines



Previous Alternatives



Conceptual Alternatives – Toolkit

Alternatives to be developed could explore one or more of the following tools as improvements or safety countermeasures:



Potential Roadway Improvements

- Four-Lane Roadway
- Limited Access Bypass
- Wider Shoulders
- Passing Lanes
- Center Rumble Strips

Safety Improvements

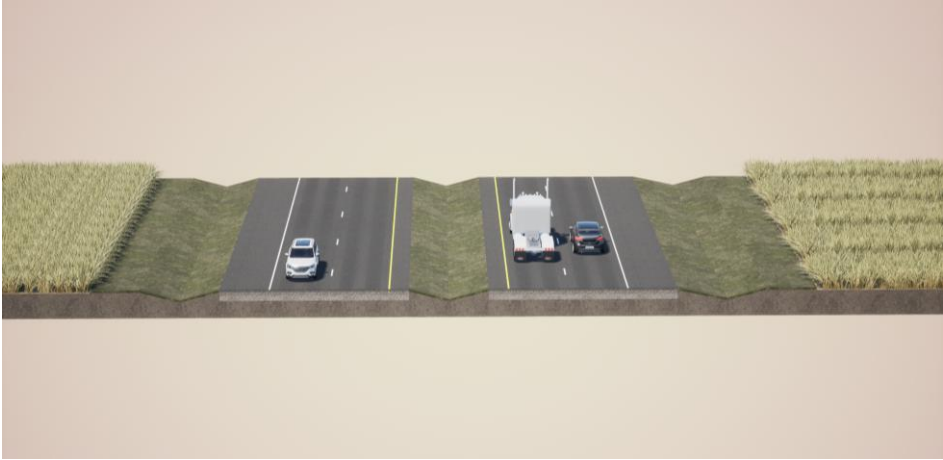
- Divided Highway with Median
- Median Barrier
- Reconstructing Curves
- Redesigning Select Intersections
- Constructing Dedicated Turn Lanes at Key Intersections

Intersection Improvements

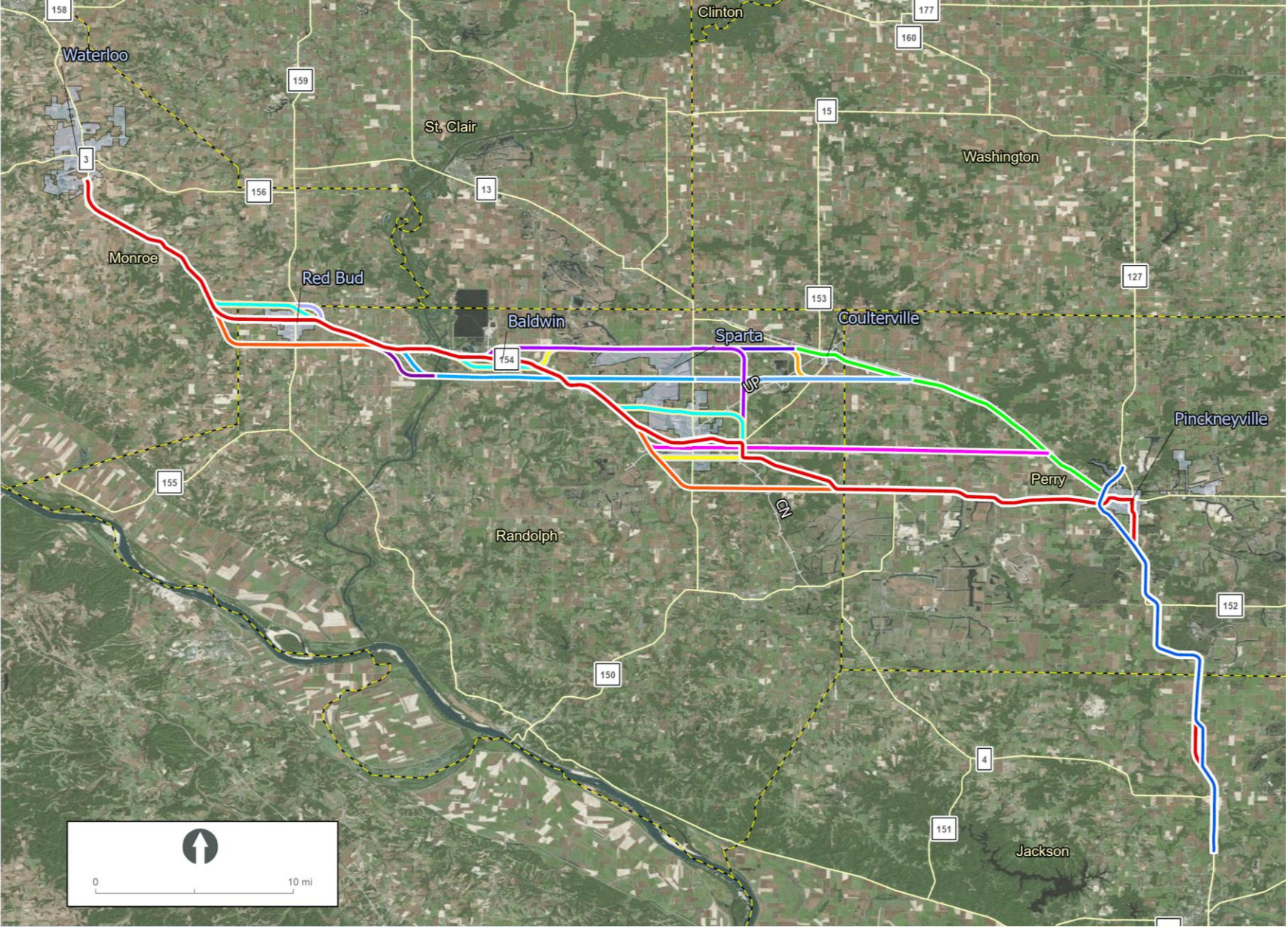
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities or Connections



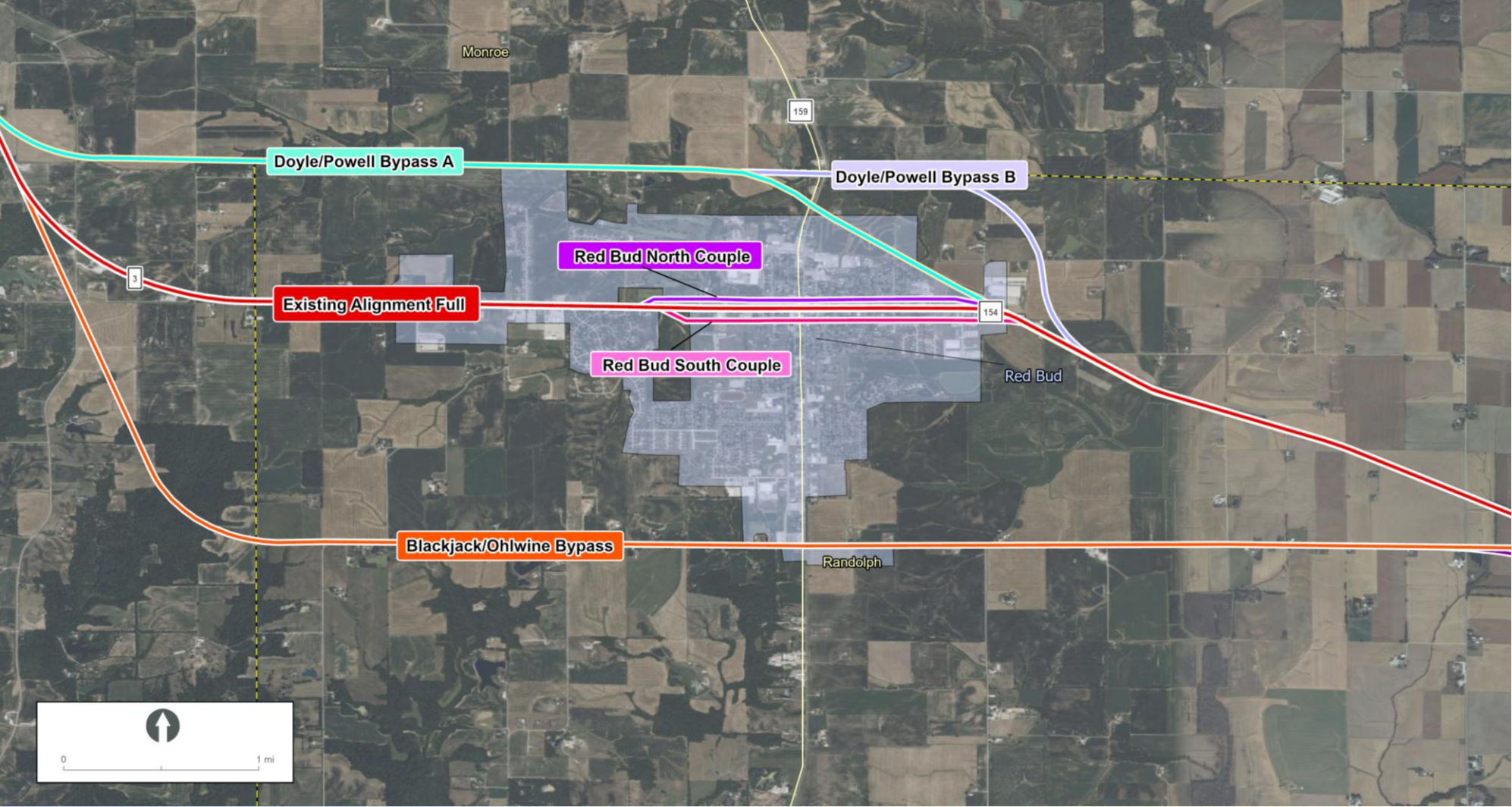
Conceptual Alternatives – 3D Visualizations



Conceptual Alternatives

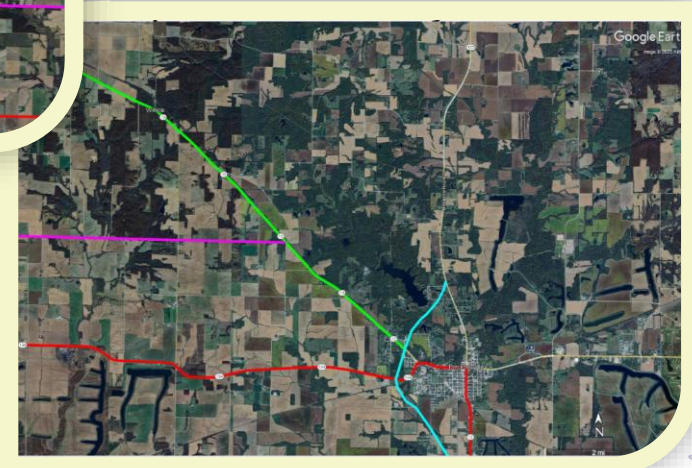
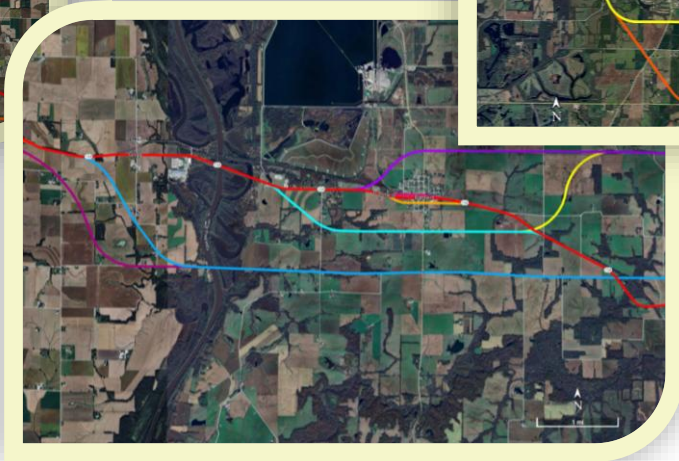
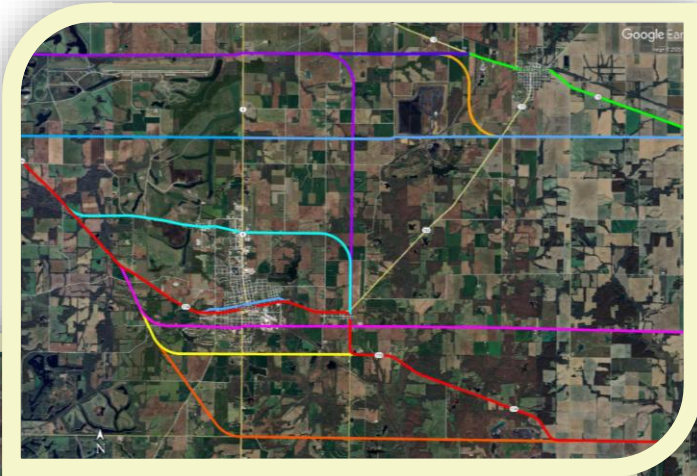
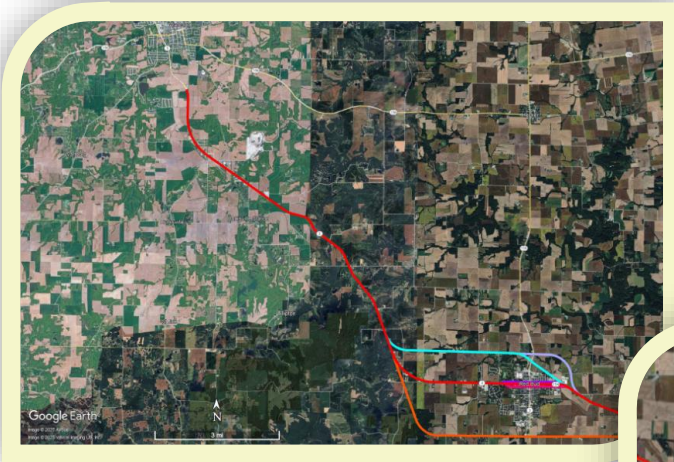


Red Bud Example



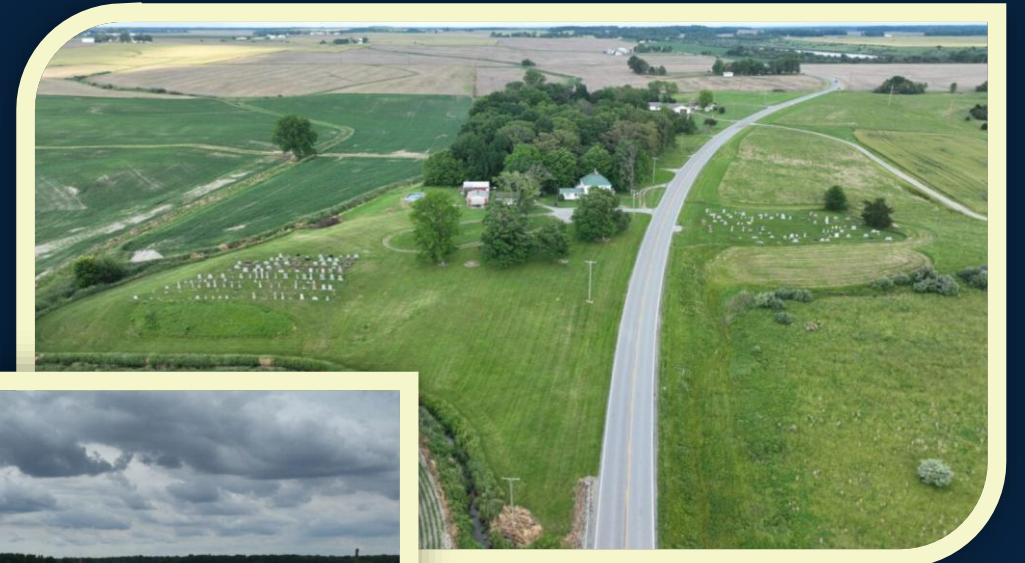
Conceptual Alternatives Workshop Session

- Review Roll Plot Maps





Screening Process



Screening Phases

Full Range of Alternatives



Initial Alternatives

- Alternatives that do not meet the Purpose and Need or have excessive impacts and/or costs are eliminated

Traffic and Safety

- Remaining alternatives are evaluated for travel time reliability and safety performance
- Alternatives with no or low improvement to travel time and reliability and safety are set aside

Impacts

- Remaining alternatives are evaluated for impacts to adjacent land and natural, historic, and cultural resources, technical feasibility, and construction cost

Multimodal

- Remaining alternatives are evaluated for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit mobility and safety



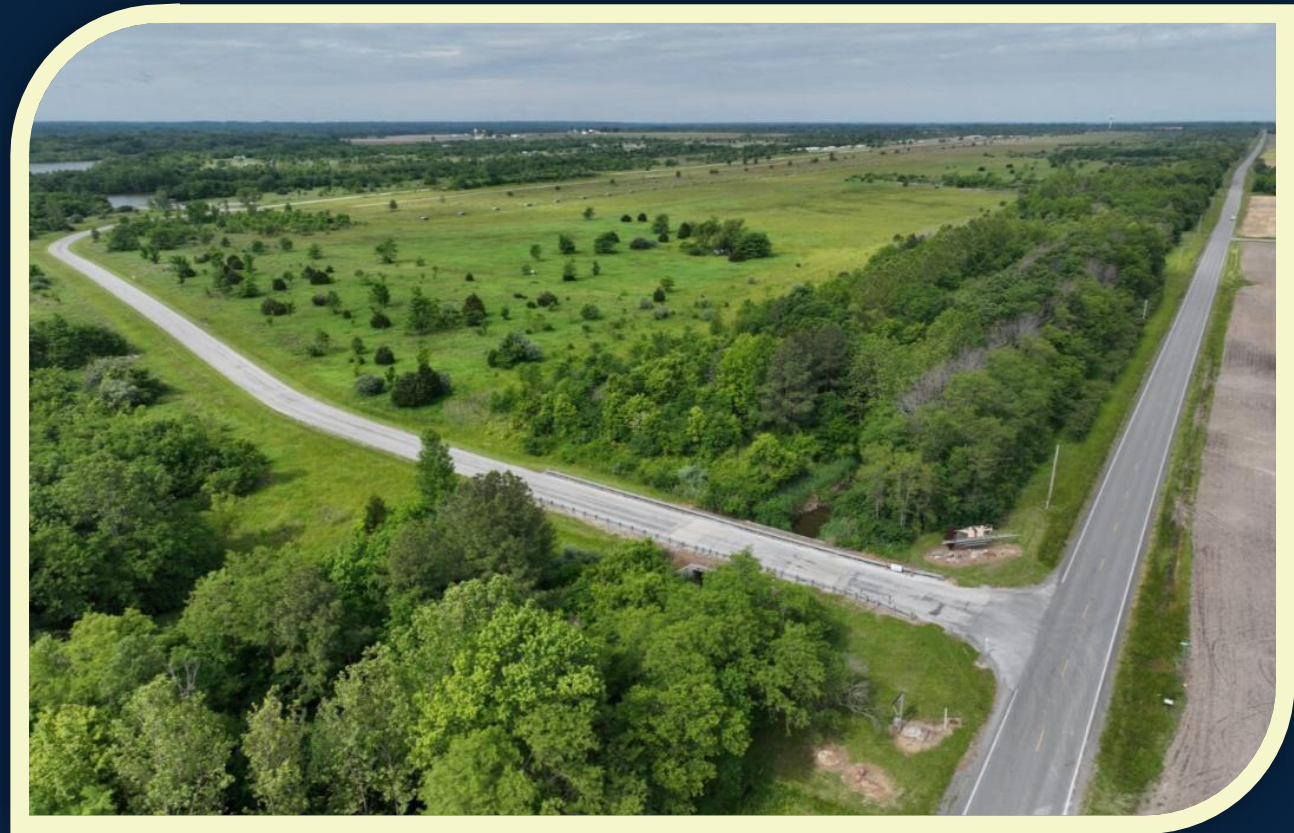
Purpose and Need Screening Criteria



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Next Steps



Scott Manning (HDR) – Speaker

March – May 2025: Data Collection

June 2025: CAG #1 – Problem Statement

Summer 2025: Virtual Public Information Event #1 (On-Demand)

Fall 2025: CAG #2 – Purpose & Need and Alternatives ([We Are Here](#))

Winter 2025/2026: CAG #3 – Alternatives

Winter/Spring 2026: Hybrid Public Meeting #2

Summer 2026: IDOT/FHWA NEPA Merger Meeting

Fall 2026: CAG #4 – Alternatives and Screening

Winter 2026/2027: CAG #5 – Results of Level 2 Screening

Spring 2027: Hybrid Public Meeting #3

Fall 2027: IDOT/FHWA NEPA Merger Meeting

Fall/Winter 2027: PEL Report

Next Steps...

- Meet with Focus Groups
- Identify Reasonable Alternatives to Present for Public and Stakeholder Input
- Complete Re-evaluation of 2007 Preliminary Engineering Study for Illinois 13/127 from Pinckneyville to Murphysboro

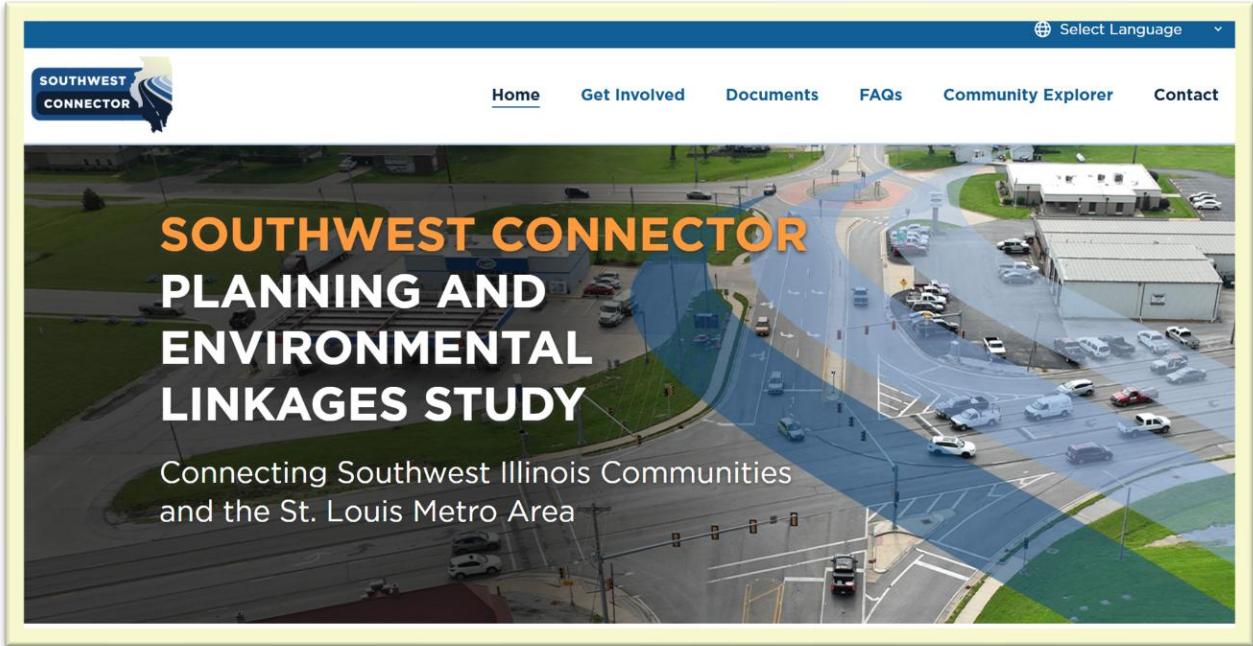
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How to Reach Us

- southwestconnector.com
- contact@southwestconnector.com



Glossary

- CAG – Community Advisory Group
- CEQ – Council of Environmental Quality
- FHWA – Federal Highway Administration
- NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act
- NOI – Notice of Intent
- PEL – Planning and Environmental Linkages
- PWG – Project Working Group
- P&N – Purpose and Need

