

Issue #1 - Fall 2014

Public Open House Scheduled for High-Speed Rail Environmental Study

An environmental study for a rail separated overpass, or flyover, will be introduced at a public meeting hosted by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration on Tuesday, September 30, 2014. This meeting is the next step in the Tier 2 Environmental Assessment (EA) and Design Report for the Springfield Flyover component of the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Program, which seeks to enhance passenger service along the Chicago to St. Louis rail corridor.

Prior to the Tier 2 EA, the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement recommended a flyover be studied adjacent to the Village of Southern View. The flyover is needed to reduce delays for passenger trains; increase safety for trains and passengers; meet high-speed rail on-time performance requirements; and reduce railroad delays and congestion. The public open house will

provide a first look at the flyover concept and the Tier 2 EA study process.



IDOT and its representatives will be on hand at the meeting to answer questions. Comment forms will also be available. An open house format with no formal presentation will be used; thus citizens are invited to attend at their convenience.

The meeting will be held between **4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.** at the following location:

Tuesday, September 30, 2014

Route 66 Hotel and Conference Center
625 E. St. Joseph St.
Springfield, IL 62703

For more information:
www.idotHSR.org/SpringfieldFlyover

Visit www.idotHSR.org for more project-specific information, business opportunities, and to comment on the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Program.

Press and Media Related Questions Contact:

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Visit us at www.facebook.com/IllinoisHighSpeedRail

Project Hotline 1-855-IDOT-HSR (436-8477)

Flyover Being Studied to Enhance High-Speed Passenger Service

In 2012, the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Program Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision recommended a rail grade separated overpass, or flyover, to be studied as part of high-speed rail service through the City of Springfield. The Tier 2 Environmental Assessment (EA) will study an area in south Springfield that is bounded by (see map right):

- Stanford Avenue on the north,
- Interstate 72 on the south,
- MacArthur Boulevard on the west, and
- South Second Street on the east.

The Springfield Flyover will allow Union Pacific (UP) and Norfolk Southern (NS) freight trains to cross each other with fewer delays. Right now, UP trains have to wait for clearance north of Stanford Avenue before proceeding. This slows the freight trains down, causes delays, and will make it difficult to run high-speed passenger trains through this area. In order to meet high-speed rail schedule guarantees required by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the at-grade rail crossing must be eliminated.

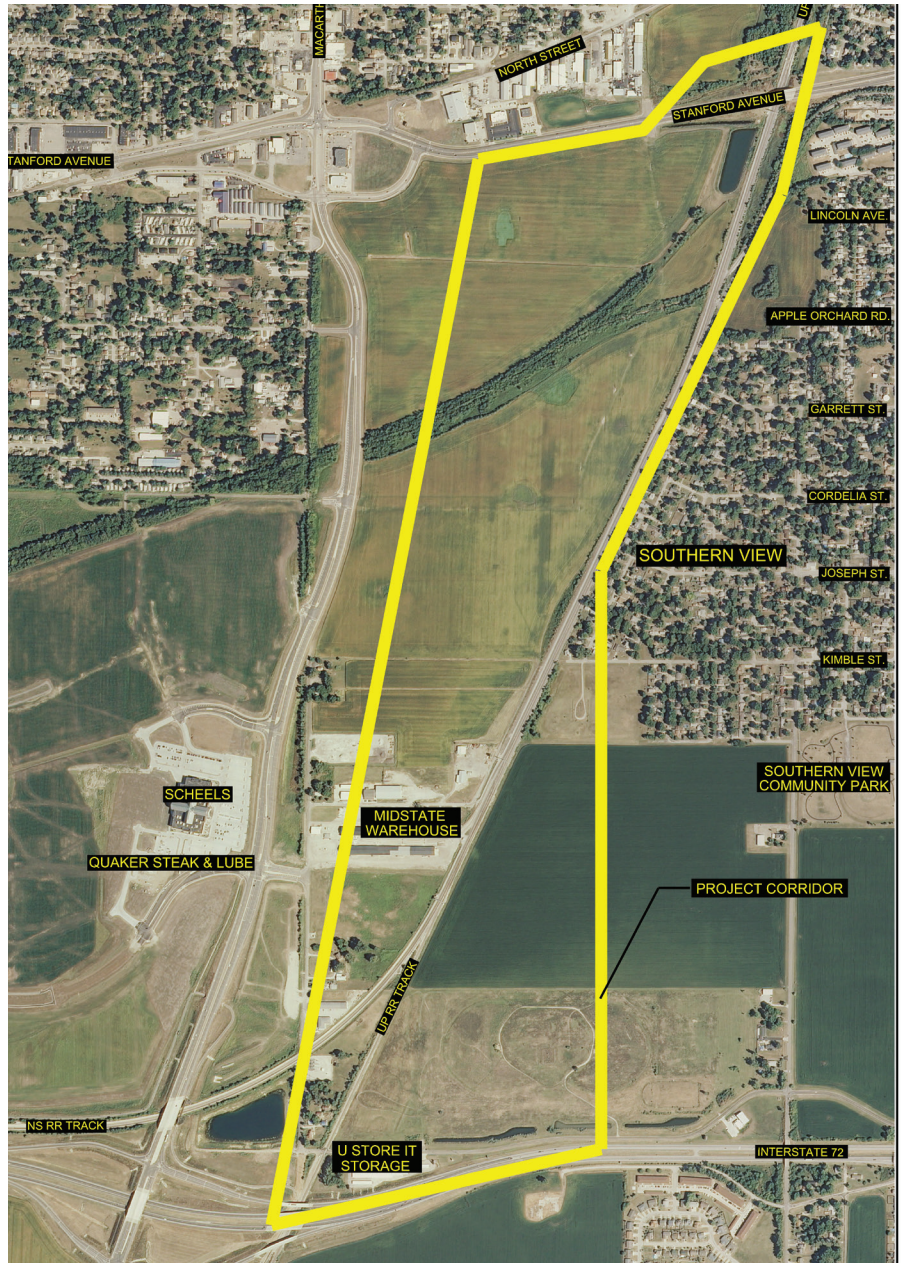
The Springfield Flyover Tier 2 EA, which recently started and will continue through winter 2016, will accomplish the following:

- Determine facility requirements based on the railroads' design criteria;
- Develop alternatives focusing on structure type and design speed;
- Evaluate the environmental impacts of alternatives; and
- Select a recommended alternative.

Once the study has developed alternatives and evaluated the environmental impacts, the Federal Railroad Administration will

make the final decision on the Selected Alternative, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation, and in consideration of public input.

The Springfield Flyover will advance the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Program by reducing delays, improving schedule reliability, and allowing more daily passenger rail trips between Chicago and St. Louis.



Tier 2 Study Will Evaluate Environmental Issues

In addition to outlining the need for the project and proposing alternatives, the Tier 2 Environmental Assessment (EA) will determine and evaluate the environmental issues surrounding the flyover alternatives. The public's feedback is needed to help analyze the impacts of the project on the study area and surrounding community.

Environmental issues which will be evaluated include:

- Right-of-way requirements
- Construction
- Commercial and residential displacements
- Agriculture
- Air quality
- Wetlands/water quality
- Noise/vibration
- Threatened/endangered species
- Historic/prehistoric sites
- Aesthetics
- Section 4(f) lands (parks)

The Tier 2 EA is being led by the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration and must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. As such, all reasonable alternatives and the environmental issues will be considered during the study. Public input from the Springfield Flyover study will be considered in the decision-making process.

Seeking Public Feedback for Springfield Flyover Study

Part of the Tier 2 Environmental Assessment is to evaluate the potential impacts, both positive and negative, associated with the Springfield Flyover and its alternatives. The Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration welcome your input throughout the study. You can provide comments and learn more about the project via these outlets:

- Public meetings: Written and electronic comment form
- Project website: www.idohtsr.org/SpringfieldFlyover
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/IllinoisHighSpeedRail
- Toll-Free hotline: 1-855-IDOT-HSR (436-8477)
- Mail: Illinois Department of Transportation
Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation
James R. Thompson Center
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 6-600
Chicago, IL 60601-3229



SPRINGFIELD FLYOVER

Tier 2 Environmental Assessment

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is the Tier 2 Environmental Assessment study process?

The Tier 2 Environmental Assessment (EA) study will update and advance the work completed during the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement for the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Program. It will generally include the following components:

- Purpose and Need – Identification of what the project is intended to address;
- Alternatives Analysis – Evaluation of the preliminary alternatives using established evaluation criteria;
- Environmental Studies – Series of studies to determine the environmental impacts of alternatives;
- Environmental Assessment – Analysis of environmental studies and public input and identification of selected alternative with public review and comment;
- FRA Decision – Based on comments, the EA is submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for a decision on issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or proceeding to an Environmental Impact Statement.

2) What is the Tier 2 EA timeline?

The Tier 2 EA began in summer 2014 and is expected to be completed in winter 2016. See the project timeline (right) for more details.

3) Who will make the final decision on which alternative is chosen?

The Federal Railroad Administration, in coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation, makes the final decision on the Selected Alternative for the Tier 2 EA. This decision-making process will include input received from local municipalities, resource agencies, community representatives and the general public.

www.idothsr.org/SpringfieldFlyover

Study Timeline

