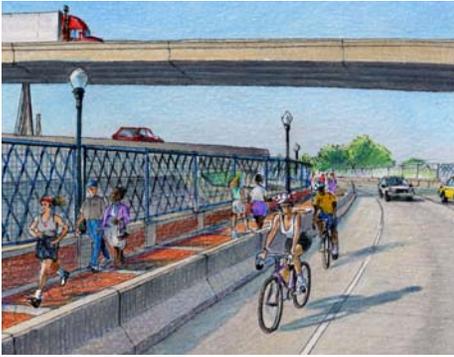


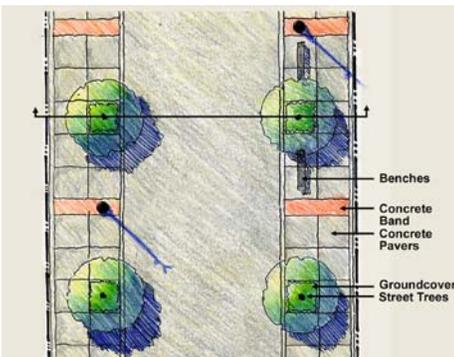
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



The Illinois and Missouri Departments of Transportation are committed to bringing the best transportation improvement project possible to the St. Louis, Missouri and Southwestern Illinois areas. A quality program of community engagement is helping these agencies accomplish this task.

A number of community-based committees have worked with IDOT, MoDOT, the Project Management Consultant, and the bridge design team to address regional and community issues relative to the project and to the new bridge design. These committees have been instrumental in many project decisions, and in selecting the world-class, signature bridge that will help define the region's skyline for generations to come. The community input stressed during the design phase will continue through project construction. Neighborhood meetings, presentations, ad hoc committees, newsletters, a web site, and other methods will work to ensure that information is exchanged with the public as project decisions are considered and made.

CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS APPROACH



Because the host environments in Illinois and Missouri are very different, IDOT and MoDOT have created two distinctive urban design plans for the project—one for each side of the river.

Though the two plans are different, the processes that produced them and the importance of community input to each were the same. The process brought together area residents, urban designers, and transportation professionals to determine the best urban design approach. It focused on the following steps:

- **Data Collection and Analysis**—Neighborhoods and communities near MRB improvements were examined for their physical and cultural characteristics. Existing architectural design features were noted.
- **Identify Opportunities**—Places to apply urban design enhancements were identified. Initial ideas for the look of bridges, retaining walls, landscaping and other elements were developed.
- **Gather Public Input**—Public and committee meetings were held to share initial ideas for urban design, and to gather citizen input.
- **Create an Urban Design Plan**—Initial ideas were refined based on citizen input, and urban design plans were finalized. The plans are being used by engineers responsible for designing and constructing MRB improvements.

OUTCOME

Planning for the New Mississippi River Bridge Project began more than a decade ago. Officials at IDOT and MoDOT started with a “blank slate,” taking an objective look at the area's transportation problems and considering a wide range of options in how to address them. A tremendous level of study and technical analysis has been conducted, along with extensive public input and community coordination. All these activities have resulted in the federally-approved plans for the location and basic layout of the improvements included in the New Mississippi River Bridge Project.

CHALLENGES

The future of cities depends on quality transportation. Statistics show the transportation network at the core of the St. Louis/Metro East-Illinois urban area will be at the point of failure within 20 years.



The Poplar Street Bridge, a focal point of interstate traffic movement through downtown St. Louis since the 1960's, is severely over-burdened, and the forecast shows congestion on the entire core highway network will only get worse.

- By the year 2020, the 90-minute period of rush-hour congestion will double to three hours.
- Average delays will increase from 10 to 55 minutes. In the transportation business, this is considered “traffic failure”—a highway that doesn't function.

FUNDING

Making this regional transportation linkage a reality is expected to cost over \$1 billion dollars (2002 dollars). This includes the design, construction, land acquisition, utility and railroad relocation processes, and all phases required to complete the project.

As with most projects, the timeline for these activities is dependent upon funding. Illinois and Missouri will share in the cost of the project. The two states have already committed over \$308 million. Of this amount, Illinois funds support the relocation of Illinois Route 3 and reconstruction of the existing I-55/64/70 Interchange in East St. Louis, and Missouri funds support preliminary design plans for the new I-70 Interchange. Federal funding is being pursued for the remainder of the MRB project.

KEY WORDS

Applicable Project Delivery Stages: Administration, Planning, Design

Applicable Transportation Professionals: Highway Engineers, Structural Engineers, Landscape Architects, Wetland Biologists, Historians

Applicable Transportation Modes: Highway, Transit, Bicycle, Pedestrian

Transportation Topics: Visual Quality, Environmental Justice, Safety, Mobility, Context Sensitive Solutions/Design

WEB LINKS

<http://www.newriverbridge.org/>

<http://www.modot.state.mo.us/>

<http://www.dot.state.il.us/>

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