



## SPRINGFIELD RAILROAD CORRIDOR STUDY MEDICAL ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY NOVEMBER 11, 2010, 1:30 – 3:30 PM

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### **Overview**

The third meeting of the Springfield Railroad Corridor Study Medical Advisory Group (MAG) was held at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 11, 2010 at The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Five committee members were present. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Present the alternatives that have been developed to address Springfield's increasing rail traffic;
- Review the alternative selection process and criteria;
- Provide an update on the study's environmental analysis, corridor redevelopment, and public engagement; and
- Discuss the upcoming public open house.

### Advisory Group Members:

Michael Boer (Mid-Illinois Medical District)  
Mitch Johnson (Memorial Health System)  
Mark Kuhn (Springfield Clinic)

Bob Ritz (St. John's Hospital)  
Dr. Phil Wesley (S.I.U. School of Medicine)

### Study Team Members:

Jimmie Austin (Hanson)      Jonathan Martin (RDG)  
Julie Rutledge (Hanson)      Atia Thurman (Vector)  
Kevin Seals (Hanson)      Leann Smart (Vector)

### ***Review of Study/Public Engagement Synopsis***

Jimmie Austin welcomed everyone and went over the meeting agenda. Due to the volume of information the study team had to share with advisory group members, ***participants were asked to hold their questions until the end of the presentation.*** Kevin Seals then provided a brief review of the study, its purpose and time line. Atia Thurman followed with a synopsis of the study's public engagement and outreach activities to date, including a summary of public input from the first open house held in April.

### ***Alternative Selection Criteria/Alternative Descriptions***

Before presenting the alternatives for addressing Springfield's increasing rail traffic, Kevin Seals went over the factors being considered in the alternative selection process: purpose and need, resource agency input, public input, environmental impacts, displacements, safety, traffic delays and cost. Afterward, Jimmie Austin presented descriptions of the non-viable and viable alternatives. Non-viable alternatives were those not being carried forward for further study. These include elevating or depressing tracks through Springfield, relocating freight outside of

the city either east of I-55 or west of Veteran's Parkway; and the I&M alternatives. The proposed viable alternatives include variations of the following possibilities:

- Double track Third Street;
- Shift Third Street traffic to Tenth Street; and
- Shift Third and Nineteenth Streets' traffic to Tenth Street.

### ***Alternative Technical Comparisons***

Julie Rutledge explored the viable alternatives in considerable detail, explaining the preliminary technical analysis, which assessed the alternatives in terms of their associated traffic delays, expected crash frequency, horn blowing, residential/commercial displacements, and costs. Seven alternatives were critically examined and then compared to one another. They were also compared to a baseline, a standard established by the Federal Railroad Administration to aid in the assessment of alternatives. The study's baseline includes an increase in freight trains with no change in passenger trains; improved crossing protection along the Third Street corridor; no grade separations or additional tracks; and no changes to the Tenth or Nineteenth Street corridors.

Julie Rutledge also provided more detail on the non-viable alternatives and the factors that made them non-viable.

### ***Environmental Analysis***

Kevin Seals compared the viable alternatives in terms of their potential environmental impacts: socio-economic factors, historic sites, noise and vibration, special waste sites, special lands, endangered and threatened species, and water quality.

### ***Corridor Redevelopment***

After the alternatives' analysis, Jonathan Martin addressed the redevelopment opportunities researched and developed by RDG. His first set of slides explored potential opportunities if the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street tracks were abandoned. These included more single-family homes, pedestrian and bike trails, a rebuilt overpass at the Capital building, a market and garden zone, and mixed-use residential and commercial development. Possible redevelopment of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor considered the addition of tracks and highlighted opportunities for mixed-use development, a 50-foot greenbelt adjacent to the corridor, and medium-density residential development along the corridor. Redevelopment concepts for the 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridor focused on single-family in-fill development, a trail, and the creation of a "great street" or "super boulevard."

### ***Upcoming Open House***

Advisory group members were reminded of the upcoming open house, scheduled for November 16, 2011. All were encouraged to attend and asked to remind their constituents of the meeting.

## ***Conclusion***

The presentation concluded with an explanation of the study's next steps. The study team then opened the meeting for questions and answers.

<b>MAG Member Question/Comment</b>	<b>Study Team Response</b>
1. Is this about lobbying the railroad companies to choose a corridor?	We have to think about how the railroad companies can benefit. Reducing at-grade crossings decreases the railroad's liability, and this is our biggest bargaining tool. It can be a challenge to get the railroad companies to work together.
2. Doesn't UP (Union Pacific) have High-Speed Rail money for its tracks?	Yes, but UP cannot do any work in Springfield until our study is complete.
3. Do these three railroad companies use a common corridor anywhere between Chicago and St. Louis?	There are few places where they share right-of-way and there are some shared tracks, but the railroads do not like this. They prefer complete control over their operations and demand their own tracks.
4. Slide 49 refers to the "life of this project," what is the life of this project?	The life of the project refers to the length of time the asset would be valuable. For this project, the life is 75 years.
5. What is the relevance of the RDG corridor redevelopment opportunities to the study?	The redevelopment opportunities explored by RDG can significantly impact the City and County. Both governments felt redevelopment was important to consider and should be part of the study's decision-making.
6. Will FRA (Federal Railroad Administration) even look at this [referring to RDG's corridor redevelopment opportunities]?	No, this is for Springfield's benefit.
7. When President Obama completes his term and picks a location for his library, do we have any idea what city he'll choose? If it were, by chance, in Springfield, near Lincoln's Library, wouldn't the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street rail be in the way?	We cannot speculate on where President Obama's presidential library will be or on the factors that might influence its location.