



# Project News

Summer 2015 - Issue #2

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## Carpenter Street Update

The Carpenter Street Underpass Project is the initial funded usable segment of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project and is a recipient of a 2013 U.S. Department of Transportation, Transportation



Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant. The Project is intended to reduce congestion, improve safety and provide improved access to area hospitals from locations east of 11th Street. It involves lowering Carpenter Street between 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets, constructing new dual track railroad bridges, and completing three blocks of drainage, grading and sub-ballast south of Carpenter to support future phases of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project.

Work on the Carpenter Street Underpass began in September of 2014. The contractor has completed all of the foundation work for the bridges and walls. The steel beams and concrete deck have been placed for the Norfolk Southern bridge and excavation for the underpass roadway has begun. The next steps will be to complete construction of the Union Pacific bridge, excavation work and wall construction. Construction is on schedule and on budget and is anticipated to be completed in early 2016.

The Project was approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) under the 2012 Springfield Rail Improvements Project Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD included a commitment for continuing coordination between FRA and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency for the evaluation of potential archaeological resources within the project area. *(Learn more about the archaeological site on Page 2.)*

## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

**Thursday, August 27, 2015**

**5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

Come anytime, there is  
no formal presentation

**Prairie Capital  
Convention Center \***  
1 Convention Center Plaza  
Springfield, IL 62701

*\*This facility is  
ADA accessible.*

## For More Information

VISIT: [www.springfieldrailroad.com](http://www.springfieldrailroad.com) / EMAIL: [info@springfieldrailroad.com](mailto:info@springfieldrailroad.com) / CALL: 217-788-2450

## Archaeological Site Findings

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and the City of Springfield are continuing consultation as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act regarding an archaeological site discovered during construction of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project: Carpenter Street Underpass. The portion of the archaeological site in the Carpenter Street Project area was found in September 2014 and contains the brick foundations of seven residences.



The house foundations date back to pre-1870s. A Madeiran Portuguese community resided in the project area and represented one of the earliest and largest Portuguese settlements in the Midwest. By the early twentieth century, the project area represented the western extension of a neighborhood known as the “Badlands.” The Badlands was included in the widespread destruction and violence of the Springfield Race Riot in August 1908, an event that led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The Carpenter Street archaeological site possesses local and national significance for its potential to contribute to an understanding of the lifestyles of multiple ethnic/racial groups in Springfield during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The FRA is leading the archaeological effort and all work is proceeding under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Work completed to date includes a Phase I Study and Phase II Investigation with test pit recovery data by Fever River Research of Springfield, Illinois. Artifacts that have been recovered include household goods such as broken glassware, dishes, nails, and charred wood fragments.

There has been no work on the archaeological site since last fall pending completion of the Section 106 process to determine the appropriate mitigation of the site. The FRA hosted two public meetings in the spring (March 11<sup>th</sup> and May 10<sup>th</sup>) to ensure that interested organizations were provided an opportunity to participate as consulting parties in the Section 106 process and decision-making regarding the archaeological site.

The FRA held the first Consulting Parties meeting on July 23<sup>rd</sup> with 17 groups to begin discussing options for the site. A preliminary consensus from the meeting resulted in a proposal to send a letter to Union Pacific railroad from the Consulting Parties requesting design modifications to the track alignment to minimize impacts to the site, conduct data recovery on the portion of the site affected by the tracks, and preserve in place the remaining portions of the site. They have also suggested that any notable artifacts recovered be displayed at a public venue such as the proposed multimodal facility to be located on the 10th Street tracks.

Consulting parties on the Section 106 process include: Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; Epsilon Sigma Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.; Faith Coalition for the Common Good; Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce; Hospital Sisters Health System; Illinois Legislative Black Caucus; Illinois State Museum Research and Collections Center, Landmarks Illinois; NAACP - Springfield Chapter; Sangamon County Historical Society; Save Old Springfield; Southern Illinois University School of Medicine; Springfield & Central Illinois African-American History Museum; St. John's Hospital; State Representative Al Riley; State Representative Tim Butler; and The Springfield Historic Sites Commission.

The FRA will draft a Memorandum of Agreement for approval by the Consulting Parties and may schedule a second

meeting in September for concurrence.

The archaeological site work does not affect the Carpenter Street Underpass project, which is expected to be completed early next year. All of the necessary funding for the archaeological site has not been identified at this time.

## Minority Participation

In 2015, approximately 24% of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project work completed has been performed by minority workers and/or firms. That is about 19% above the federal requirement of 4.5% minority participation.

Additional efforts have been made to increase minority participation including:

- Creation of the Grow Our Own program (Learn more at [www.growourown.net](http://www.growourown.net))
- Development of summer internships for minorities
- Hiring of a local Minority Liaison

The project's minority hiring report is updated monthly and can be found at [www.springfieldrailroad.com](http://www.springfieldrailroad.com) on the resource center page.

## New Project Resource Center Opening in September

The Springfield Rail Improvements Project team will open a project resource center on August 31, 2015. The center will create a consistent presence in the community and provide a one-stop-shop for all project information including construction, right-of-way, and small business and employment opportunities. The center, located in the City of Springfield's Office of Community Relations at 1450 Groth Street, will be open three days a week for three hours each day (see schedule below).

To contact the resource center or to schedule an appointment, call 217-391-1558 or email [resourcecenter@springfieldrailroad.com](mailto:resourcecenter@springfieldrailroad.com).

### RESOURCE CENTER HOURS:

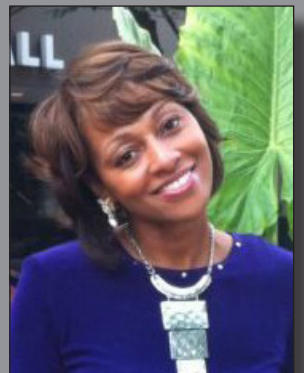
Monday: 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

## Project Team Update - Meet Our Newest Member

The Springfield Rail Improvements project is pleased to introduce Lesa Branham, the newest member of our Public Engagement team. Lesa has more than nine years of experience with minority participation, workforce development, and training opportunities. Lesa's role as local Minority Liaison will include meeting with project stakeholders and working at the project resource center to answer inquiries from the public.

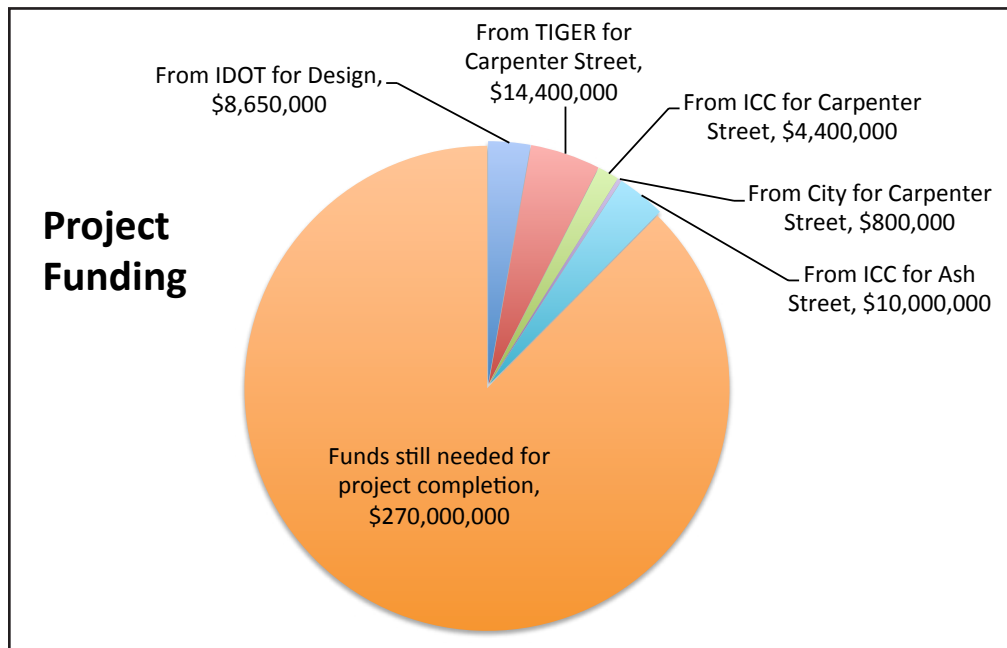




## Next Construction Segment - Ash Street and Laurel Street

Usable Segment 2 is the next piece of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project that is scheduled for construction. This segment will consist of constructing new underpasses at Ash and Laurel Streets in the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. It will also include construction of railroad embankment, drainage, and track from South Grand Avenue to south of Ash Street.

Construction will be staged to allow either Ash Street or Laurel Street to remain open at all times. Design plans for this portion of the project are nearing completion. The City has applied for a \$16 million dollar grant from the Federal TIGER program. The remaining funding for this \$48 million dollar project would come from federal, state, and city sources. If awarded the TIGER grant, the City hopes to begin construction in the summer of 2016 with completion in 2019.



## Project Funding Status

As of the summer of 2015, the City of Springfield has obtained almost \$45 million of the anticipated \$315 million dollar overall cost of the Springfield Rail Improvement Project. The largest single funding source to date is the \$14.4 million the City received from the Federal government for the Carpenter Street Underpass.

## Public Engagement Program

Since August of 2013, the Public Engagement program for the Springfield Rail Improvements Project Public has included:

- Creating and disseminating the fall 2013 newsletter to 3,000+ community members
- Hosting of two Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings in 2013 and 2014
- Presenting at bi-monthly Steering Committee Meetings
- Presenting to local elected officials
- Conducting media briefings and sending press advisories
- Updating the project website
- Responding to public correspondence received via mail, phone calls and emails
- Assisting FRA with hosting two Section 106 Public Informational Meetings in winter and spring 2015
- Designing and distributing the summer 2015 newsletter to community members



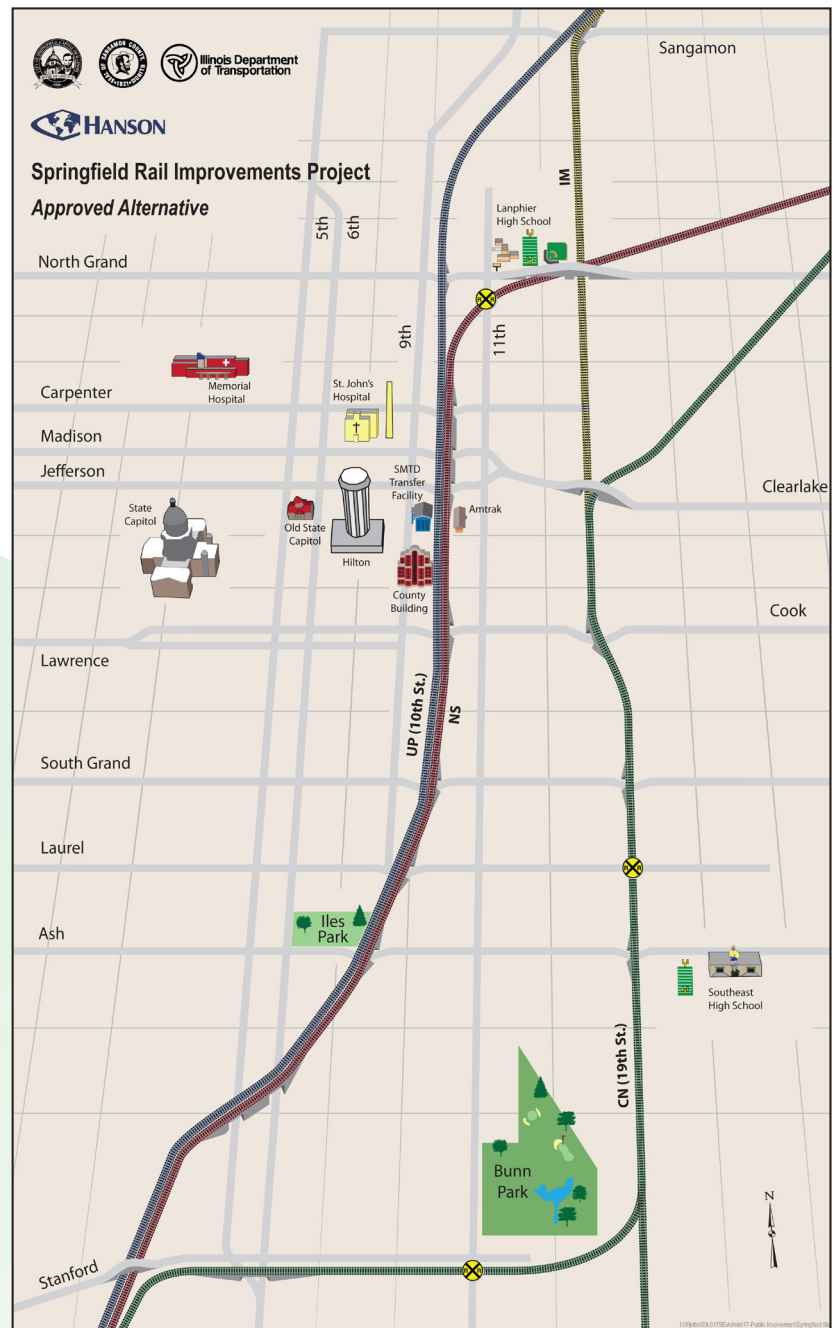
- Promoting and hosting a Public Meeting on August 27, 2015
- Briefing the media on project updates
- Hosting a Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting in November 2015

Additionally, the project team has made presentations to municipal officials, stakeholder organizations and community groups throughout the project. By going into the community to conduct these presentations, the team is able to share important information with the public; answer pressing questions; and obtain feedback on the project's activities and findings. More than 30 presentations have been made to organizations throughout the Springfield region including:

- AARP
- Capital Area Association of Realtors
- County Board Members
- Faith Coalition for the Common Good
- Frontier's International, Inc.
- NAACP - Springfield Chapter
- Optimist Club
- Randall Court Homeowners' Association
- Rotary Club
- Springfield Public School Board
- Visions in Progress Neighborhood Association

If you or your organization is interested in scheduling a presentation, please contact Jimmie Austin of Hanson Professional Services Inc. at (217) 747-9257 or send an email to [info@springfieldrailroad.com](mailto:info@springfieldrailroad.com).

## Future Rail Corridors Map



## Other Springfield Rail Projects - Springfield Flyover

The Springfield Flyover project is part of the Chicago to St. Louis High Speed Rail Program currently underway in the City of Springfield. The Flyover will help relieve rail traffic congestion on the Union Pacific/Amtrak and Norfolk Southern corridors. This project is located between Stanford Avenue and I-72 along the existing Union Pacific (Amtrak) line located west of the Southern View neighborhood. It includes a new track alignment and railway flyover to separate the Union Pacific/Amtrak operations from the Norfolk Southern operations. IDOT is currently funding a detailed environmental study and alternatives analysis of the Springfield Flyover project. The project's next steps include hosting a Public Informational Meeting, determining a preferred alternative, and drafting the Environmental Assessment. However, there is no funding currently available to purchase property or construct the Springfield Flyover project.



Springfield Rail Improvements Project  
c/o Vector Communications  
701 N. 15th Street, Mailbox 43  
St. Louis, MO 63103

*You're Invited . . .*

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### August 27<sup>th</sup> Public Open House

The Springfield Rail Improvements Project team will host a Public Open House from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2015 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. Interested citizens and business people will be able to talk with project team members to learn about the project activities. Although there will be no formal presentation, informational stations will be staffed by team members who will share updates on the project's construction segments, land acquisition, funding and the new resource center. In addition, the open house will have a station dedicated to public feedback where participants will be encouraged to complete a comment form about the project.

Once the open house is complete, you can learn more and view the information that was presented at [www.springfieldrailroad.com](http://www.springfieldrailroad.com).



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