



**Community Advisory Group Meeting
Morrison United Methodist Church
Tuesday, May 8, 2012**

MEETING MINUTES

Community Advisory Group Attendees

William Abbott	Whiteside County Board
Heather Bennett	Fulton Co. Chamber of Commerce
John Bishop	Homeowner
Hon. David Blanton	Mayor, City of Rock Falls
Tom Determann	Iowa-Illinois Highway Partnership
Suellen Girard	Morrison Community Unit School District #6
Roger Johnson	Homeowner/Farmer
Glen Kuhlemier	Black Hills RC&D
Karen Nelson	Homeowner
Kay Shelton	Illinois Lincoln Highway Association
Ann Slavin	Friends of the Park/Illinois Bicyclist
Dale Sterenberg	Farmer
Scott Shumard	City of Sterling
Barbara Suehl-Janis	Fulton Kiwanis Club
Bob Vaughn	Morrison Business Advisory Group
Jim Wise	City of Morrison

Special Guests

Linda Blumhoff Whiteside County Highway Department

Project Study Group Attendees

Rebecca Marruffo	IDOT D2	rebecca.marruffo@illinois.gov
Cassandra Rodgers	IDOT D2	cassandra.rodgers@illinois.gov
Jennifer Williams	IDOT D2	jennifer.williams@illinois.gov
Mark Nardini	IDOT D2	mark.nardini@illinois.gov
Jon McCormick	IDOT D2	jon.m.mccormick@illinois.gov
Michael Walton	Volkert, Inc.	mwalton@volkert.com
Bridgett Jacquot	Volkert, Inc.	bjacquot@volkert.com
Jon Estrem	Howard R. Green Co.	jestrem@hrgreen.com
Gil Janes	Howard R. Green Co.	gjanes@hrgreen.com
Shelia Hudson	Hudson & Associates	hudson.shelia@sbcglobal.net
Paula Hughes	Hudson & Associates	picord.hudsonassoc@yahoo.com

Agenda

1. 2011 CAG Meeting
2. 2011 Public Hearing
3. Floodplain Modernization
4. Floodplain Avoidance
5. Build Alternatives
6. Environmental Impacts
7. Next Steps
8. Questions

Meeting Purpose

On Tuesday, May 8, 2012, members from the US 30 Project Study Group (PSG) hosted their eighth Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting at the United Methodist Church in Morrison, Illinois. The purpose of the meeting was to update the CAG on the study's progress.

Opening Remarks

Ms. Jennifer Williams, Project Liaison for IDOT, welcomed the group and thanked the committee for their ongoing commitment to the project. She then reviewed the agenda including who would cover each item.

2011 CAG Meeting

Ms. Bridgett Jacquot reviewed the CAG meeting held in June 2011 including an overview of the study's progression. She also explained that the CAG assisted the Project Study Team with reducing 16 corridors in 2007 to two build alternatives in 2011. A map was presented that highlighted the Build Alternatives 4 (north) and 5 (south).

2011 Public Hearing

Ms. Jacquot discussed the hearing and noted there were 212 people who attended and a total of 88 comments were received from the public. She then proceeded to summarize the comments according to the build alternative preference by stakeholder types and location. The information presented was as follows:

Preference by Stakeholder Types

- ✓ Homeowners and Farmers favored the No-Build Alternative
- ✓ Business Owners, Developers, Others*, and Unidentified Stakeholders** favored Alternative 5

**Others are individuals that represent either special interest groups, elected officials or other entities.*

***Unidentified Stakeholders are individuals that did not indicate their stakeholder type.*

Alternative Preference by Location

- ✓ Comments received from Fulton, Rock Falls, Sterling, and Iowa favored Alternative 5
- ✓ Morrison respondents favored the No-Build Alternative
- ✓ Responses received from other Illinois cities outside of the project study area equally favored Alternative 5 and No Preference to either Build Alternative

Floodplain Modernization

Mr. Mark Nardini presented the Whiteside County floodplain map noting that the revised floodplain limits for the county were published in 2011. He stated that the previous limits were greatly expanded especially in the French Creek area. He also stated that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) cannot approve an alternative with significant longitudinal impacts if a reasonable alternative without significant floodplain impacts is available. Consequently, in order to continue consideration of Alternative 5, it was necessary to investigate a partial realignment to avoid longitudinal impacts in the French Creek floodplain. Adjustments were also necessary for Alternative 4 in order to eliminate longitudinal floodplain impacts along its proposed alignment.

Floodplain Avoidance

Mr. Nardini stated that there is a need to consider indirect impacts such as the effect that an alternative's location would have on future opportunities for building and development. Executive Order 11988 prohibits construction and development efforts in floodplain areas. The adjustments to the proposed build alternatives will allow both alignments to continue to be studied as they will be consistent with the spirit and intent of the Executive Order.

Build Alternatives

Mr. Jon McCormick reviewed the build alternatives stating that after the floodplain was revised the next step was to identify adjustments that could be made to minimize floodplain impacts while retaining the basic nature of the original alignments. The requirements in that regard include a connection to Emerson Road and a connection to US 30 to provide effective access to the City of Morrison. He noted the following modifications:

- The revised alignment for Alternative 5 (west to east) extends further east before swinging to the north to cross the railroad. This allows for complete avoidance of the French Creek floodplain. The modification begins just west of Illinois Route 78 to allow the alternative to miss the southern tip of the French Creek floodplain.
- Once across the railroad, Alternative 5 will have a shape similar to the original version. It will cross over existing US 30 to the north, then follow a gradual "S" curve which crosses existing US 30 again before swinging back to the north to rejoin the existing US 30 right-of-way. The "T" intersection with existing US 30 would be 1.7 miles east of Sawyer Road versus 0.9 miles under the original Alternative 5. The reason for the "S" curve was questioned and explained:

- Initial crossing of existing US 30 is necessary to: (1) Allow for a non-skewed intersection from the expressway to existing US 30 (to the west); (2) Preclude an excessive skew or transitions/curves on the bridge over the railroad; and (3) Use roadway curves flat enough to provide for a 70 mph design speed.
- Passing south of the Whiteside County Highway Department and Health Department is necessary because there is insufficient room between the landfill and the cemetery to follow the existing US 30 alignment. Both constraints must be avoided.
- Other features of revised Alternative 5 include a different means of accessing existing US 30 in the vicinity of the landfill through a new connector from Round Grove Road. In addition, cul-de-sacs for existing US 30 are proposed east of the expressway's west crossing and on either side of the east crossing. Access from the expressway to Yager Road will be maintained.
- The new alignment for Alternative 5 was designed to minimize overall impacts and to mimic the original Alternative 5. Traffic patterns are expected to be identical to the original Alternative 5. Other alignments were considered but rejected. One such alignment connected back to the existing right-of-way further east, staying south of the railroad to a point near Round Grove Road. The connection to existing US 30 would have been 3.8 miles east of Sawyer Road, and the determination was that access to the east side of Morrison would be inferior and this would deter motorists from exiting the expressway to reach Morrison from the east. Study of a major interchange would therefore have been needed at IL 78 south of Morrison.
- The process of modifying Alternative 5 actually validated the original work of developing this alternative. There is only a narrow range of alignments that will meet design criteria and minimize overall impacts. It is also important to note that the new alignment is defensible given the many adjacent constraints, including most notably the landfill. The alignment revision can be defended when questioned by property owners who may be newly-affected.
- Alternative 4 was also modified slightly to avoid the French Creek floodplain, but the changes necessary to accomplish this were minimal.

Environmental Impacts

Ms. Jacquot discussed the floodplain impacts by lineal foot for both alternatives before and after the 2012 modifications. After the modifications, the remaining impacts for Alternative 5 are near the Rock Creek crossing. Also noteworthy: the revised Alternative 5 (2012) now impacts 20 acres less than the 2011 Alternative 5; and the revised Alternative 4 and 5 (2012) both impact one fewer property owner.

Next Steps

Ms. Jacquot informed the CAG that the next steps involve assessing the impacts from the realignments in detail and incorporating the information into a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). She shared that IDOT will need to gather public input on the SDEIS through the public hearing process.

She explained that after the public hearing, another CAG meeting will be held to review the public comments and discuss a preferred alternative. The input from the CAG and the public will then be shared with the PSG, and a preferred alternative will be selected. Afterwards, the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be prepared and submitted for review. The final milestone for the Phase I portion of the project will be the Record of Decision (ROD) which will mark the completion of the EIS process. It is expected that this will occur in 2014.

Questions

Q: Is another public hearing required if we get a petition to the district showing support for the new alternative?

A: Yes. The general public must have the opportunity to review and comment on the changes as well. Also, a public meeting will be conducted, when the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is completed.

Q: Does the schedule still allow for selection of a preferred alternative in 2012?

A: No. The expectation is that a public hearing will be held in early 2013 with selection of a preferred alternative following shortly thereafter. Subsequently the FEIS will be prepared and a public meeting will be held. It is expected that the Record of Decision (ROD) will be signed in 2014.

Q: How would the results of the public hearing comments be summarized in terms of preferred alternative?

A: Of those who stated preference for a build alternative during the public hearing comment period last year, a majority indicated that they preferred Alternate 5 (south). This does not represent a majority of those who responded, only of those who specifically stated a preference for one build alternative over the other. Neither of the build alternatives has been selected as the preferred alignment at this point in time due to the need to provide an opportunity for public comment on the recently revised alignments.

Q: Is the project in the Department's multi-year program?

A: No

Q: How many years will it be before the study becomes invalid?

A: The study will not expire as long as it keeps moving (i.e. dollars are expended or work is accomplished). Even if it were to expire it would be a relatively minor effort to update the EIS. This is not an unusual situation given the amount of funding typically required for the magnitude of projects requiring an EIS.

Q: Once the study is completed, will the project be “shovel ready”?

A: No. Phase II engineering would first be needed. It was also noted that operationally independent segments will be considered to make funding of construction more possible. A report describing the segments and their cost will be included as a part of the FEIS.

Q: What will be the deciding factor in selecting a preferred alternative?

A: Public opinion is one of the considerations, as are cost, impacts, and others. The opinion of FHWA will be a significant factor since they have final approval of the document. It is first necessary to complete the preliminary design, total the impacts and sort through the data to determine which factors will differentiate the alternatives from each other.

Q: If all the affected communities draft a resolution supporting an alternative, will that have an effect on the decisions?

A: The resolution would be considered as an additional piece of public input.

Q: Will the opinions expressed in previous letters, resolutions and meetings be considered?

A: Yes. They will be included as a part of the EIS and will be considered when selecting the preferred alternative.

Q: Is the time, effort and expense involved in revising the alternatives necessary?

A: The Department was prepared to submit the project to FHWA in order to secure their concurrence on a preferred alternative following the Public Hearing in 2011. However, FHWA indicated Alternative 5 could not be considered a viable option given the impacts to the newly delineated floodplains. Had the Department not decided to revisit the alignment, Alternative 5 would have been dismissed and Alternative 4 would have been the only viable build alternative. The Department's efforts in revising the alignments allow for the potential selection of Alternative 5 once the effort is completed. That is not to say that the Department has already determined which alternative will be recommended. It is first necessary to complete the analysis before that can happen. While the frustrations regarding the process are felt by all, it is necessary to follow the process if the project is to move forward.

Q: The effects of the project are already being felt even though construction may not occur for many years. For example, owners wishing to sell their property have a significant obstacle in doing so if the property is slated for acquisition for the project. Can anything be done about this?

A: After the ROD is in place, owners finding themselves in this situation can request a hardship acquisition.

Mr. Mike Walton explained the next steps, which include revising the project schedule, publishing a newsletter, hosting another public hearing, and presenting a Final Environmental Statement report. After highlighting the next steps, Mr. Walton thanked everyone for attending and their ongoing support of the project process.

The meeting concluded at approximately 7:15 pm.

U.S. 30 Environmental Impact Statement and Phase I Design Report

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP



MAY 8, 2012



Illinois Department of Transportation



AGENDA

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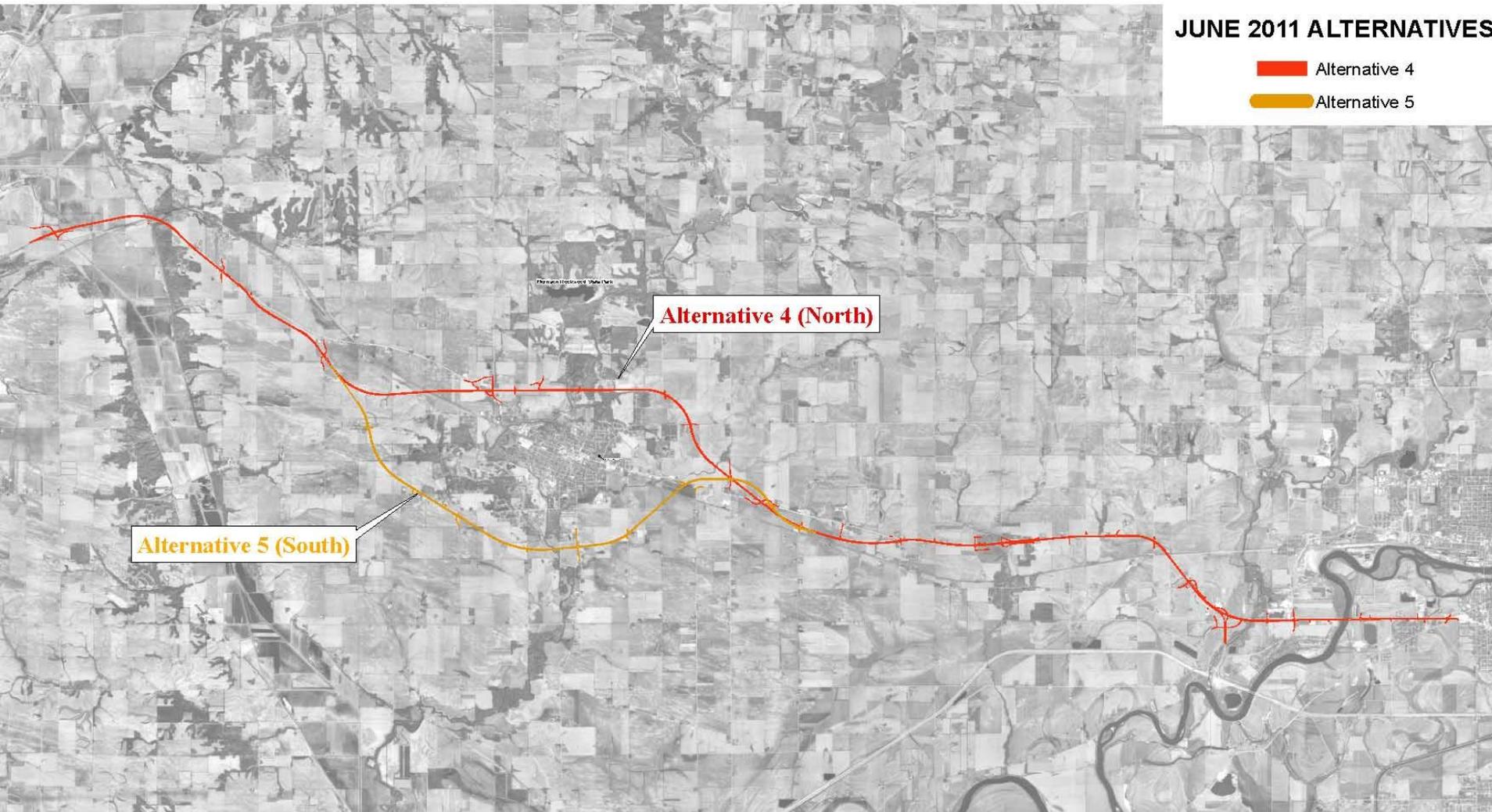


2011 CAG Meeting

JUNE 2011 ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 4

Alternative 5



Illinois Department of Transportation



2011 PUBLIC HEARING

Preference Percentage by Stakeholder Types

Stakeholder Types	No-Build	Alt. 4	Alt. 5	Alt. 4 or No-Build	Alt. 5 or No-Build	Alt. 4 or Alt. 5	No Preference
Homeowners (21)	38% (8)	0% (0)	24% (5)	0% (0)	14% (3)	0% (0)	24% (5)
Farmers (18)	50% (9)	11% (2)	6% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	6% (1)	27% (5)
Business Owners (8)	25% (2)	12% (1)	38% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	25% (2)
Developers (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Others (21)	5% (1)	0% (0)	76% (16)	0% (0)	0% (0)	14% (3)	5% (1)
Unidentified Stakeholders (19)	16% (3)	0% (0)	58% (11)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	26% (5)



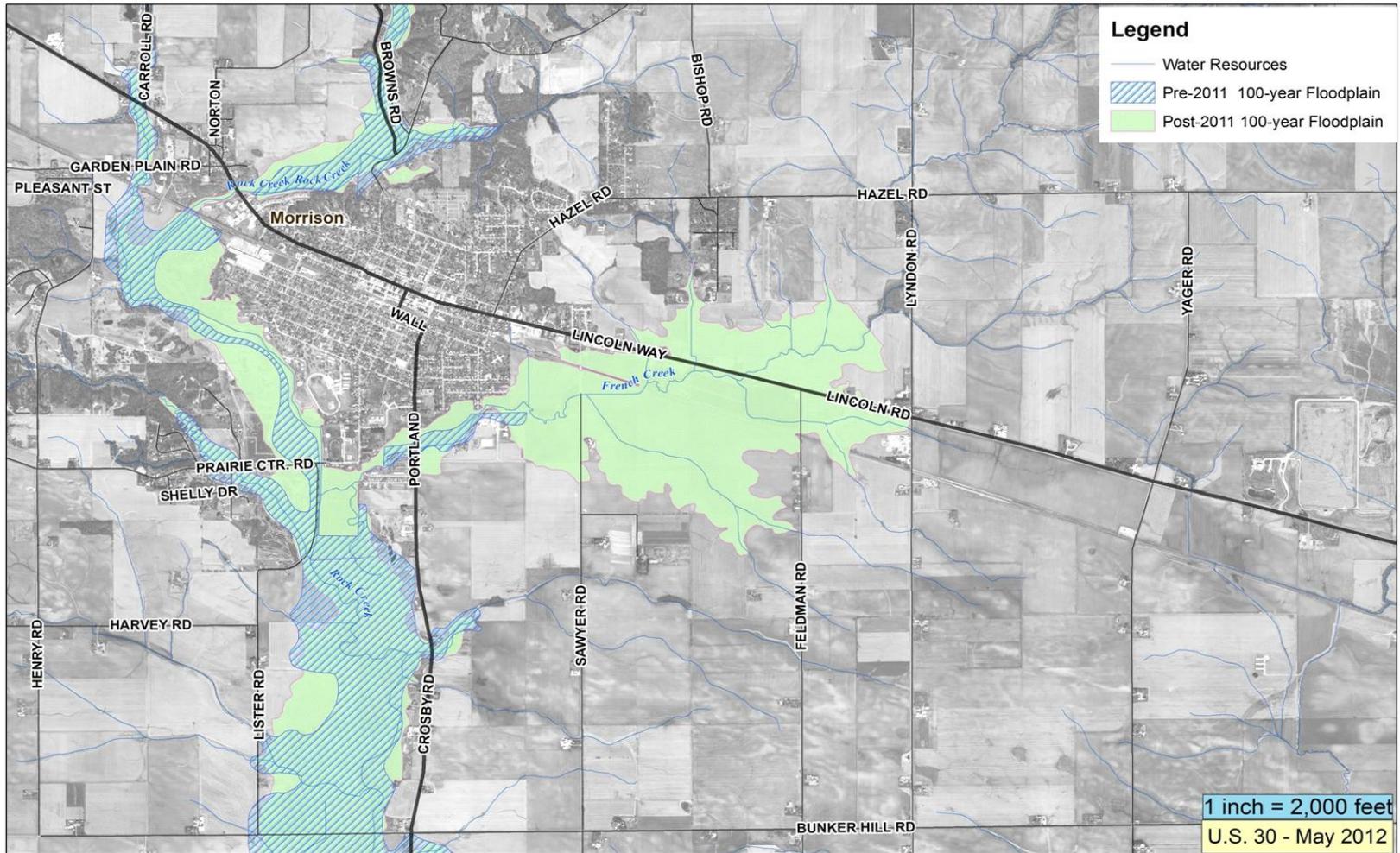
2011 PUBLIC HEARING

Alternative Preference by Location

Location	No-Build	Alt. 4	Alt. 5	Alt. 4 or No-Build	Alt. 5 or No-Build	Alt. 4 or Alt. 5	No Preference
Fulton (16)	0% (0)	6% (1)	81% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13% (2)
Morrison (56)	41% (23)	4% (2)	25% (14)	0% (0)	5% (3)	2% (1)	23% (13)
Rock Falls (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	75% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Sterling (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Other Illinois cities (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)	40% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	20% (1)	40% (2)
Iowa (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)	66% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	17% (1)	17% (1)
Total	23	3	37	0	3	4	18



FLOODPLAIN MODERNIZATION

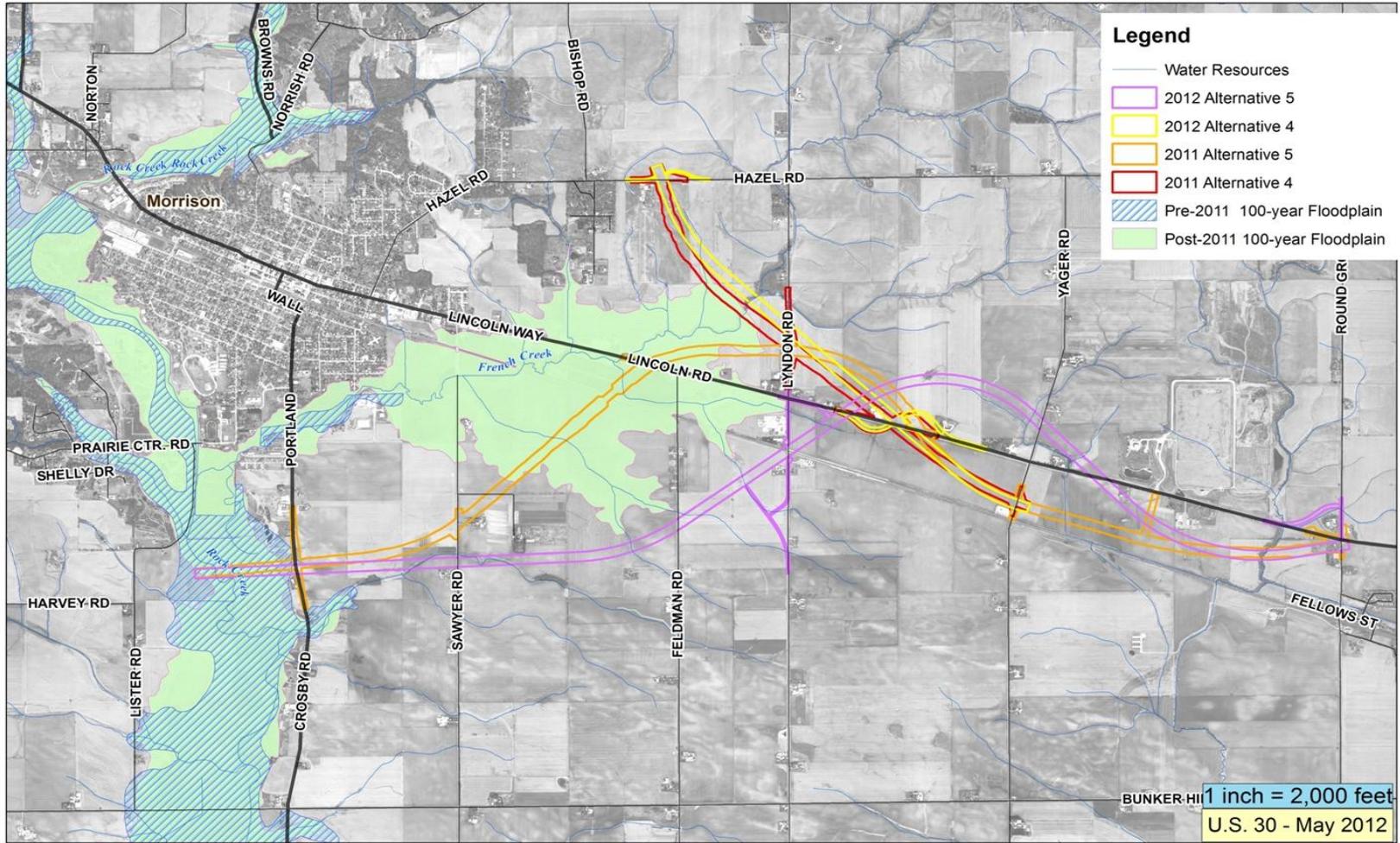


FLOODPLAIN AVOIDANCE

Executive Order 11988: Floodplain Management



BUILD ALTERNATIVES



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Comparison of Floodplain Encroachment Impacts (Linear Feet)			
Alternative 4		Alternative 5	
2011	2012	2011	2012
4,595	0	21,090	4,735



NEXT STEPS

- Prepare Supplemental DEIS
- Public Hearing
- Selection of Preferred Alternative
- Prepare Final EIS



QUESTIONS

