

A. BRIEF PROJECT HISTORY

The project began in May 1992 with a Stage I Location Study that was guided by a Technical and an Executive Committee. The Stage I study determined the need for the project and defined four feasible alternate corridors. Based on public comment from a November 18 and 19, 1992 public meeting series and technical reviews, two of the corridors, one north and one south of downtown were selected for further consideration. A second round of public involvement meetings on August 17 and 18, 1993 was held to solicit comment on a feasible alignment in each corridor. The stage I study findings are printed in the November 1993 *Stage I Report*.

The Stage II study began in the Fall of 1994. It was guided by a Study Management Group made up of some two dozen representatives from both sides of the river, including federal, state, and local officials in transportation and non-transportation areas, as well as private-sector participants. A four-person Executive Committee developed by agreement between Missouri and Illinois provided project oversight and key decisions. The Stage II study, a major investment study, revalidated the project need and considered a full range of alternatives, including alternate modes, technologies, and alignments. Public involvement meetings on March 29 and 30, 1995, along with a briefing for elected officials, meetings with affected and interested groups, and opinion polling, helped to narrow the range of alternatives to the most feasible. A second round of public informational meetings on July 1 and 2, 1996, plus another elected officials briefing, meetings with affected and interested groups, and opinion polling were used to solicit input on the more detailed descriptions of the most feasible alternatives. Consistent with community input, a project definition for development in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was determined and announced by press release on November 13, 1996. This Stage II project definition included: downtown traffic control measures; a transit pricing option; a preferred build alignment; and further investigation of tolls as a possible new bridge financing method. The Stage II study findings were printed in the May 1997 *Mississippi River Crossing Major Investment Study*. Importantly, this study process resolved the question of where a build option should be built in favor of the north side of downtown.

The study considered all of the bridges across the Mississippi River in the St. Louis area, including the Eads and MacArthur Bridges. The Eads Bridge roadway deck is currently under reconstruction and is anticipated to reopen to traffic in 2002; this bridge, in addition to the rebuilt Chain of Rocks Bridge, will accommodate pedestrian and bicycle crossings. The MacArthur Bridge has a substandard two-lane roadway deck that is privately owned and not for sale. Trying to acquire and rebuild this roadway deck would not yield enough capacity to eliminate the need for a new bridge. Under these conditions, MacArthur Bridge roadway deck improvements would not be cost-effective.

A Corridor Protection Public Hearing was held in Illinois on November 19, 1997 and requisite plans were filed in the St. Clair County Courthouse to permit the Illinois Department of Transportation to preserve the right of way needed to build the approach to the new bridge in the face of mounting commercial development pressures.

A fifth-round open-house public meeting series was held on October 5, 1999 at the Patrick Henry Elementary School in the Near Northside neighborhood north of downtown St. Louis and on October 6, 1999 at the East St. Louis City Hall. These public open-house sessions were again paired with an elected officials/media briefing and meetings with affected and interested groups to provide a public review of the alternatives and major project impacts prior to completion of the DEIS.

The DEIS was circulated on May 5, 2000 and the comment period was held open until July 31, 2000, a total of 87 days. The project's public hearing was held in an open-house format on June 27, 2000 in Missouri and on June 28, 2000 in Illinois and included a briefing for elected officials and media, which provided extensive coverage. Additional meetings with affected and interested parties have continued during the development of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), notably multiple meetings with East St. Louis city officials and public meetings at the East St. Louis City Council chambers.

B. PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the proposed action is to relieve increasingly severe traffic congestion and reduce traffic crashes on downtown St. Louis-area Mississippi River crossings, especially on the Poplar Street Bridge (I-55/70/64), thereby helping to avoid economic stagnation at the core of the region.

Controlling traffic with downtown traffic control measures, providing a transit pricing incentive to use MetroLink, and adding vehicular capacity with a new bridge and related interstate highway network enhancements, with or without toll financing, are the key measures which define the proposed action.

The proposed action will provide needed traffic capacity and travel efficiency, improve system linkages and community access, reduce traffic crashes, increase user benefits, including reducing travel times, and help prevent economic stagnation. Without a new bridge, unmet demand will result in increasing abandonment of the core and reinforcement of the region's propensity to sprawl.

C. PROJECT NEED

As the only core-area interstate crossing of the Mississippi River, the eight-lane Poplar Street Bridge is severely overburdened. Its capacity is inadequate to meet the needs of the through and local motorists, including truckers, traveling on and between I-55, I-44, I-64, and I-70, as well as in and out of downtown St. Louis. Its 30-year-old design is now substandard. Too many decision points are placed in too close proximity at both approaches to the bridge so that motorists do not have adequate distance to weave or

merge into and diverge out of the traffic flow. The substandard design of the approach ramps compounds the resulting congestion problems and leads to traffic crashes.

1. Traffic Capacity and Travel Efficiency

Traffic projections show that conditions in the Poplar Street Bridge corridor will continue to worsen, resulting in a Level of Service F, indicating traffic failure, on all key interstate highway segments by the year 2020, if no improvements are made. Without the proposed action, congestion will double, lasting for three hours, and the average delay will stretch from ten minutes per vehicle today to 55 minutes in 2020. Building the project (without tolls) will result in net travel time savings of an estimated 15,880 vehicle-hours per day. Relocating I-70 will significantly improve travel efficiency by shortening through movements on I-70 by 3.5 kilometers (2.2 miles) and through I-70-I-64 movements by 2.6 kilometers (1.6 miles). Reducing driver travel time and distance with the proposed action will yield \$52 million in annual user cost savings in the design year 2020, as well as lower motorists' operating and maintenance costs.

2. System Linkage and Community Access

The core-area interstate highway network does not provide adequate traffic distribution. I-55, I-70, and I-64 share the same 3.2-kilometer (two-mile) roadway section from their East St. Louis interchange to the west Poplar Street Bridge approach in Missouri. Having all interstate movements through the core area of St. Louis on one stretch of roadway with frequently changing horizontal and vertical alignment, as well as multiple underdesigned on- and off-ramps, results in peak-period congestion. The proposed action is designed to provide an alternate linkage in the core-area interstate system and upgrade the interchange complexes at both ends of their existing common stretch. These upgrades will improve both mainline interstate operating conditions, and enhance safety and community access.

The proposed action will divert some of the interstate and downtown-destined traffic from the Poplar Street Bridge, reducing traffic demand on the Poplar Street Bridge and on the narrow, depressed interstate highway section opposite the Arch that leads to the Poplar Street Bridge. It will bracket downtown St. Louis with new interstate access on the north and with improvements in the existing access on the south side of downtown. The new northside access will distribute traffic to the uncongested northwest quadrant of downtown, where motorists can access downtown via major arterials, Tucker and Fourteenth Street. The new access will also permit Seventh, Ninth, and Tenth Streets to revert to two-way local-only neighborhood traffic flow. North of the new bridge interchange with existing I-70, local access to and from I-70 will be consolidated at a single compressed diamond interchange at St. Louis Avenue. Improvements on the south side of downtown will include an extension of Spruce Street over existing I-70, better linking the south side of downtown with the Arch grounds and the riverfront and providing two-way circulation around the Arch grounds.

On the Illinois side, the proposed action will siphon traffic off the most congested part of the interstate network and simplify and enhance the interchange of existing I-55/70 with I-64, plus provide new community access. These physical changes will permit providing flexible and close-in freeway management opportunities to use in conjunction with the traffic control center. Dynamic message signs on westbound I-55, I-70, and I-64 in Illinois will alert motorists to incidents or unusual congestion on the downtown bridges and inform them of which system linkage (the Poplar, King, Eads, or the new bridge) they should use to avoid congestion.

3. Traffic Safety

The Poplar Street Bridge has an accident rate more than three times higher than either Missouri or Illinois' statewide averages. The proposed action is estimated to eliminate more than 165 traffic crashes in the year 2020, including one fatality and 49 injury accidents. These avoided traffic crashes are anticipated to yield more than \$4.6 million in accident savings in the design year 2020.

4. Economic Growth and Development

Land at the periphery of the St. Louis region is readily available for development. This region's propensity to build at the fringes will be reinforced by core-area disincentives resulting from inadequate river-crossing infrastructure. The locally unacceptable levels of congestion resulting from inadequate infrastructure will stifle downtown-area development and may be expected to lead to an exodus of existing businesses. Without a new bridge, unmet traffic demand will move with new growth and development to the edge of the region, leaving the core in decline. The proposed action is fundamental to sustain the kinds of growth envisioned by the St. Louis 2004, Downtown Now, National Stockyards redevelopment, and related core-area plans and proposals.

D. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The proposed project lies within the core area of St. Louis, which has seen intensive human settlement and varied land use for more than 100 years with a broad range of land uses and activities normally associated with urbanized areas, including special wastes, historic structures, special lands, and archaeological artifacts. The project study area contained about 50,000 people, or two percent of the St. Louis metropolitan area in 1990. About three-quarters of the declining study-area population is African-American, and with the exception of downtown St. Louis, the population is predominantly low-income. Wetlands, floodplains, and threatened and endangered species are present in the study area on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River.

E. LOCALLY-PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The locally-preferred alternative includes: downtown traffic control measures; transit pricing; and the build alternative, which involves restructuring the core-area interstate highway network, including building a new bridge across the Mississippi River. Toll financing is not a part of the definition of the locally-preferred alternative.

1. Downtown Traffic Control

A series of core-area traffic control measures will be implemented to address traffic on the downtown bridges and the key roadway links that feed them. These measures will build on the **intelligent transportation systems (ITS) network Gateway Guide** currently being developed at the new MoDOT Chesterfield traffic control center. Traffic data will be collected, processed, and distributed to motorists in the core area to improve management of both recurrent congestion and non-recurrent traffic incidents, such as traffic crashes, disabled vehicles, construction zones, etc. Among the measures to be employed are additional detection stations, closed-circuit television cameras at additional key traffic monitoring locations, and additional dynamic message signs. Traffic control operators will be able to distribute information directly to motorist-assist patrols, police, and motorists via the variable message signs and highway advisory radio in order to alert the public, for example, to be able to avoid a congested bridge and choose an alternative. Operators can also adjust traffic signal timing to sort traffic, for example, in the evening peak period on downtown streets leading to the core bridges, as well as route traffic during special events.

2. Transit Pricing

The transit pricing incentive involves funding the operating cost of a 25-cent reduction in the price of each morning and evening peak-period MetroLink trip between Illinois and downtown St. Louis. Currently, the basic \$1.25 MetroLink trip translates to an average discounted fare of 60 cents for passengers because of the use of passes and other discounts. Further reducing that cost to the passenger to a nominal 35-cent level as a result of the project's 25-cent per trip incentive will draw additional transit ridership from current vehicular trips. Considering the cost of operating an automobile and parking it downtown, this option coupled with a new bridge could draw more than 20 percent additional riders to transit, which will be extended to Mid-America Airport by about 2003. Additional coordination will be needed between Bi-State, IDOT, and MoDOT, and both the Madison and St. Clair County Transit Districts to establish and fund the appropriate allocations for this transit pricing incentive.

3. Build Alternative

The build alternative involves restructuring the core-area interstate highway network with the addition of a new eight-lane Mississippi River bridge to better distribute traffic, see **Figure FS.1**. I-70 will be relocated northward as a four-lane roadway from a point east

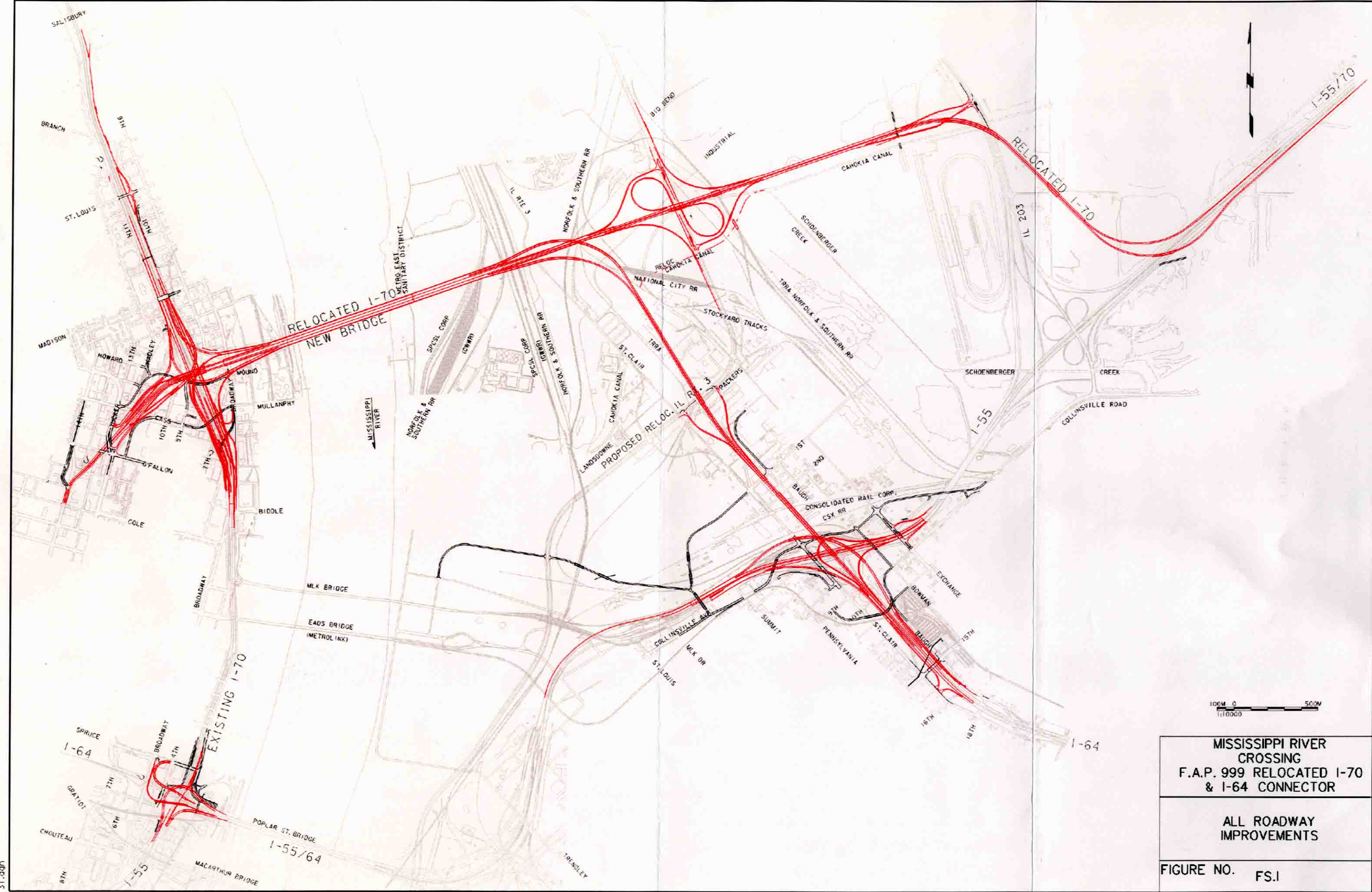
of IL Rt. 203 in Illinois to a point north of downtown St. Louis near the Ninth & Howard X-bridge over existing I-70 in Missouri. A four-lane I-64 Connector will be extended northward from the current I-55/70/64 interchange in Illinois parallel to St. Clair Avenue to the relocated I-70 alignment and the new Mississippi River crossing. I-44 will be signed common with I-55 from their juncture south of downtown St. Louis to the Poplar Street Bridge, and existing I-70 from the Poplar Street Bridge to the new bridge in Missouri will be resigned I-44.

The existing I-55/70/64 interchange in Illinois will be reconstructed above the water table, because existing deep wells are reaching the end of their useful life and inadequate space is available to locate new ones. The reconstructed interchange will enhance safety and improve local access. The eastbound I-64 exit ramp to St. Clair Avenue will be relocated southward to Fifteenth Street, and the return movement will also be relocated southward to a point midway between Fifteenth and Eighteenth.

St. Clair and Baugh Avenues, which are presently a one-way pair between Ninth/Tenth and Fifteenth will be made two-way, better accommodating access and circulation at the new Emerson Park MetroLink station. **A painted pedestrian crosswalk with a median in St. Clair Avenue will be provided at the Fifteenth Street intersections with Baugh and St. Clair Avenues and a pedestrian/bicycle overpass will be built near Fifteenth Street to better connect the Miles Davis Elementary School with the Emerson Park neighborhood. Ninth Street will be extended as a two-way local street with a sidewalk from a point midway between Pennsylvania and St. Clair Avenues paralleling MetroLink over I-64 to the intersection of Ninth and Bowman; and Bowman Avenue will be extended from Ninth over I-55 to relocated Collinsville Avenue.** Collinsville Avenue will be relocated northward from midway between Summit and Pennsylvania Avenues through the interchange tying into Collinsville Road at Ninth Street and into Lake Avenue east of Exchange Avenue. **Also, a prominent new East St. Louis street is proposed to extend from a raised section of Collinsville Avenue between MLK Drive and Summit Avenue over I-55/64 to relocated IL Rt. 3 and the East St. Louis riverfront at the Missouri and C Street intersection. A First Street extension is proposed to connect the new high-profile East St. Louis street with the Goose Hill neighborhood.**

A half-diamond I-70 interchange accommodating movements to and from the west will be built at IL Rt. 203; movements to and from the east are accommodated at the existing IL Rt. 203 interchange. A half-diamond I-64 Connector interchange accommodating movements to and from eastbound I-64 will be built at relocated IL Rt. 3, and a partial-cloverleaf I-70 interchange with relocated IL Rt. 3 will be built for east- and westbound I-70/new bridge traffic.

On the Missouri side, a directional interchange will be built to connect existing and relocated I-70, I-44 (existing I-70 south of the new bridge), and downtown at Tucker and Fourteenth, two major arterials in the northwest quadrant of downtown. The interchange will include a relocated North Cass Avenue alignment between Broadway (at Mound) and



**MISSISSIPPI RIVER
CROSSING
F.A.P. 999 RELOCATED I-70
& I-64 CONNECTOR**

**ALL ROADWAY
IMPROVEMENTS**

FIGURE NO. FS.1



ST. LOUIS

Thirteenth/Tucker, providing access to all four quadrants of the interchange. A relocated South Cass Avenue alignment between Broadway (at Mullanphy) and O'Fallon near Tucker will provide additional local circulation. The directional interchange will be only two-levels above groundline with the bridge structures above groundline concentrated within a two-block industrial area of the existing Ninth & Howard X-bridge. A landscaped median will be introduced into Cass Avenue between Ninth and Tenth to enhance the residential environment for the Cochran Gardens townhouses.

The four-lane parkway access to Fourteenth Street will extend under Tucker. The parkway will terminate in a signalized intersection near Carr, where northbound Fourteenth Street will include a protected left-turn bay so that neighborhood traffic will have ready access between downtown and points to and from the north. A landscaped median will be introduced into Fourteenth Street between Cass and Carr to enhance the adjacent O'Fallon Place townhouse residential environment. Seventh, Ninth, and Tenth Streets will revert to two-way local-only traffic north of Cole Street with the removal of interstate traffic presently cutting through the Columbus Square and Cochran Gardens neighborhood and past the Patrick Henry Elementary School on the way into and out of downtown.

A compressed diamond interchange will be completed at St. Louis Avenue to provide local access to and from I-70 north of the Tucker/Fourteenth access points. The deteriorated St. Louis Avenue viaduct will be rebuilt for strength, and the Madison viaduct will be reconstructed for a wider horizontal and higher vertical clearance. Improved access will be provided directly from northbound Broadway to the reversible lanes, and the southbound Broadway viaduct over the interstate will be reconstructed about a block north of its present crossing. The existing Ninth & Howard and Seventh & Cass X-bridges will be removed, and replaced with the relocated Cass crossings. The I-70 pedestrian overpass at North Market will be rebuilt, and the railroad trestle south of Madison Street will be removed.

On the south side of downtown, the approach to the Poplar Street Bridge in Missouri will be rebuilt to simplify the number of close-together decision points, which will make the bridge approach safer and better able to handle traffic demand. The connections to and from I-55 will be made two lanes wide and will have more gentle vertical grades and horizontal curves. The access to and from existing I-70 and Memorial Drive will be removed, with downtown access relocated so that motorists will exit the bridge to one-way-northbound Fourth, at Spruce, and return from one-way-southbound Broadway. Spruce Street, with a sidewalk, will be extended eastward from Fourth over the interstate to a raised Poplar/northbound Memorial Drive intersection, which will better connect the south side of downtown with the Arch grounds/riverfront and provide for two-way circulation around the Arch grounds. Southbound Memorial Drive will be connected to Fourth near Poplar, and the sharp curve in Fourth immediately south of this point will be flattened. Poplar will be closed between Fourth and Broadway, and will be cul-de-sac immediately west of Broadway to safely accommodate the I-64 on-ramps. Spruce will be made one-way westbound between Fourth and Broadway to accommodate the revised local access to and from the interstate.

F. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The proposed action is expected to have multiple effects on the man-made and natural environment. Standard policies and procedures, as well as mitigation measures, will be implemented to minimize adverse effects where avoidance is not possible.

Economic: The proposed action is expected to enhance economic development in the core of the region, including benefitting the plans and proposals for the reinvigoration of downtown St. Louis, the north riverfront, and the Metro East area, notably East St. Louis and the National Stockyards redevelopment area. The project's increased visibility and improved accessibility may be expected to refocus development to vacant and underutilized parcels in the core area. The project will yield some 6,000 person-years of construction jobs, and it will create another 15,000 person-years of indirect and induced employment. Its income effect on the local economy will be in the range of \$1.2 billion.

Residential: The proposed action will displace existing houses, for which federal relocation guidelines will be applied to assure every household of safe, decent, and sanitary replacement housing. The project is expected to displace 13 occupied dwelling units in Illinois and five in Missouri. The Illinois displacements involve three single-family and five two-family units located adjacent to the existing I-55/70/64 interchange **and one vacant single-family rental unit along Collinsville Avenue.** The Missouri displacements involve only one single-family house west of existing I-70 (which is the only house on a commercial strip of Tucker), a loft unit east of and adjacent to existing I-70, and a single-family and a two-family unit east of existing I-70 on Tenth Street facing I-70 at St. Louis Avenue. Adequate relocation housing stock is available.

Environmental Justice: The project will not disproportionately, adversely affect low-income or minority persons in Missouri. All of the residents adjacent to the project in Illinois are low-income, minority residents. While no groups of non-minority, non-low-income residents have been avoided to the detriment of minority or low-income populations within the project area or region, the project will cause disproportionately high and adverse effects, which will be predominately borne by minority, low-income residents in Illinois. All reasonable measures will be taken to mitigate these unavoidable effects, **including extensive local-access enhancements providing more crossings of the interstate than exist today in East St. Louis.**

Businesses: The project is expected to displace **seven** small businesses in Illinois and 47 businesses in Missouri, and assistance will be made available for each business that will be relocated. The typical business to be relocated is a small business employing fewer than six persons; the exceptions are the seven businesses employing more than a dozen persons. Together all of the businesses to be relocated employ some 400 persons. Every effort will be made to help the businesses find suitable replacement sites within their present taxing jurisdictions. The city of St. Louis has designated a North Riverfront Redevelopment Initiative area to accommodate businesses that will need to be relocated for the Mississippi River crossing project. Another 16 businesses will suffer a partial taking,

which will be compensated; these businesses are expected to be able to continue in operation at their present location. The project will require changes in rail lines in the stockyards area in Illinois and at the north and south Missouri interchanges. Similarly, three overhead AmerenUE transmission routes will need to be modified by relocating towers and raising electrified lines or other means to provide adequate clearance.

Tax Revenues: Tax losses from displacements will be a small fraction of any tax jurisdiction's income and will not negatively affect private property values. The project will enhance property values in some areas closest to access points.

Historic/Archeological: The project will not adversely affect Illinois properties listed in or eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The project will adversely affect four industrial buildings in Missouri that are considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, for which a number of mitigation measures are included in the project's **signed Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement**. Archeological resources associated with the pre-historic Cahokia Mound builders and pre-1900 archeological resources may be encountered during construction, and appropriate documentation will be developed according to the mitigation plan prepared as part of the archeological studies undertaken following land acquisition.

Air Quality: The project conforms to the State Implementation Plan for air quality and the Clean Air Act Amendments for transportation-related improvements. The project is included in the region's Transportation Improvement Program and its Long-Range Transportation Plan. The project is expected to enhance air quality by reducing congestion. Also, the project's maximum carbon monoxide concentrations at the worst-case intersections of Tucker & Cole and Tucker & O'Fallon will not exceed National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Noise: A noise wall/berm is proposed to reduce noise levels for the Cochran Gardens public housing. **A combination noise wall and landscaping enhancement will be built along existing I-70 from Palm Street, which will be cul-de-saced, to Tyler Street in response to community interest.** Intensified landscaping will be placed along I-64/St. Clair Avenue in Illinois in lieu of noise walls, according to the preferences of the city of East St. Louis. Noise walls are not cost-effective north of the I-55/64 interchange, where commercial/industrial redevelopment is proposed. Also, the East St. Louis Housing Authority is considering eliminating its **11** remaining public housing units in this area.

Natural Resources: The project will have no measurable effect on the total groundwater supply. The project will directly impact 133 hectares (328 acres) of land, more than half of which is disturbed or developed with urban land uses. The project will remove some generally marginal wildlife habitat, including about 1,600 to 2,200 Illinois- and federally-threatened decurrent false aster (*Boltonia decurrens*) plants, which thrive in disturbed areas and which represent about two percent of the estimated plants located within about one kilometer (0.62 miles) of the project. This loss will be mitigated as part of the project's

wetlands compensation plan. The project is not expected to adversely affect threatened and endangered bird species, which use habitat within close proximity of highways in the project area for foraging. Similarly, the project is not expected to adversely affect the federally- and state-endangered pallid sturgeon, hatchery reared specimens of which have been released into the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers to help protect the species.

Water Resources: The project will involve: placing, **at most, a single pier** in the Mississippi River; relocating a 935-meter (3,070-foot) section of the Cahokia Canal; displacing an old 4.4-hectare (10.8-acre) oxbow of the pre-canal Cahokia Creek adjacent to the Gateway Golf Links; and displacing a section of the Old Cahokia Creek adjacent to existing I-55/70; as well as filling about one-third of a borrow-pit lake adjacent to the Milam landfill. Pier placement in the river is expected to involve a worst-case bottom displacement of **500 square meters (5,400 square feet)**. Construction practices and scheduling will be employed to minimize fisheries impacts.

Floodplain: The project will displace a net **51,000 cubic meters (66,750 cubic yards)** of 100-year floodplain water storage, which will be compensated by acquiring and lowering sites to provide one-for-one compensation. Sites will be acquired at the juncture of the Cahokia Canal and Schoenberger Creek (also known as Landsdowne Ditch) and at the throat of the Cahokia Canal enclosed section. Multiple stormwater detention areas will also be provided to accommodate project run-off.

Wetlands: The project will displace about **16.89 hectares (41.74 acres)** of wetlands, which will be mitigated by building wetland replication areas to duplicate and maintain the functional values of the affected wetlands at graduated impact-to-mitigation ratios from 1.5:1 to 5.5:1. **A total of 101.5 hectares (250.8 acres) will be acquired at three sites to mitigate the project's wetlands impacts. Decurrent false aster will be planted at all suitable sites. A total of 9.4 hectares (23.24 acres) of existing wetlands will be preserved and 88.53 hectares (218.76 acres) of former wetland will be restored to wetlands. A conceptual wetland compensation plan has been developed for the three sites.**

Special Waste: Soil management will be undertaken at hazardous and non-hazardous waste sites in the project right-of-way. These include part or all of: three Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act sites; 31 underground storage tank or leaking underground storage tank sites; and 66 sites with high volatile organic compounds, lead and heavy metals, or polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, etc.

Parkland: The proposed action will require a less-than-one-acre (less than 0.4-hectare) construction easement at the southwest corner of the 36.4-hectare (90-acre) Jefferson National Expansion Memorial to change the groundline to accommodate the Spruce-Poplar-Memorial Drive intersection and relandscape the site. The project's **signed Memorandum of Agreement** includes a number of mitigation measures.

Aesthetics: The project will be designed to be aesthetically pleasing. The **minimum 457-meter (1,500-foot)** main span structure over the Mississippi River is proposed to be a signature bridge, which will be designed so that it does not compete with the Gateway Arch, located over a mile away. The design of the main span has not been determined at this time. Study is underway to evaluate alternate concepts for this structure, which is expected to become a landmark, like the Near Northside water towers. The project's north interchange in Missouri will be only two levels above groundline, no taller than nearby existing industrial buildings, and its structures above groundline will be concentrated within two blocks of the interchange centroid. Access to Fourteenth Street will be extended under Tucker and O'Fallon to minimize visual intrusion. Both the new north interchange and the project's rebuilt south interchange in Missouri will be landscaped appropriately as entries into the city and the state. These interchanges could also include coloring and patterning of concrete surfaces and use of distinctive steel paint colors. A deteriorated, old railroad trestle will be removed from the north riverfront as part of the project. Landscaping will also be incorporated into the project right-of-way in Illinois.

G. OTHER FEDERAL ACTIONS

A number of other federal actions are required to implement the proposed action. These include permits required under the U.S. Rivers and Harbors Act and the U.S. Clean Water Act. The United States Corps of Engineers will need to issue a Section 10 permit(s) for filling in U.S. waters and a Section 404 permit(s) for activities affecting jurisdictional wetlands. The United States Coast Guard will need to issue a Section 9 permit to allow a bridge to be built over the Mississippi River. The states of Illinois and Missouri are granted the authority to issue water quality certificates under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act for activities in waterways and wetlands and for issuing stormwater discharge permits under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program. Additional, related state review and permitting will be required.

H. PROJECT COST AND SCHEDULE

The proposed action, including downtown traffic control, is expected to cost **\$584.1** million in current dollars to build with **\$255.6** million in Missouri costs and **\$328.5** million in Illinois costs. An additional **\$102.7** million in separate Illinois-FIRST funding will be expended to reconstruct the existing I-55/70/64 interchange out of the water table, a project that needs to be accomplished whether or not the proposed action is built. (Similarly, the relocated IL Rt. 3 project is a separately-funded project; Illinois-FIRST funds have been programmed for the north part of this project from the McKinley Bridge in Venice to St. Clair Avenue through the relocated I-70 interchange.)

Design on the Illinois FIRST-funded project components began in 2000; they involve canal and railroad relocations and bridge modifications relating to relocating IL Rt. 3 and rebuilding the I-55/64/70 interchange. With advancement of preliminary tasks at local risk,

the project will be readily defined for consideration in the next federal transportation bill in 2003. With federal matching funding available in 2004, sequenced construction could begin, with a goal that all project segments would be completed and opened to traffic in 2010. The main span with local access points on both sides of the river will likely be an early phased construction objective. Reconstruction of the Poplar Street Bridge approach in Missouri, which is dependent on relocating I-70 across the new bridge, will likely be the last segment completed and opened to traffic.