



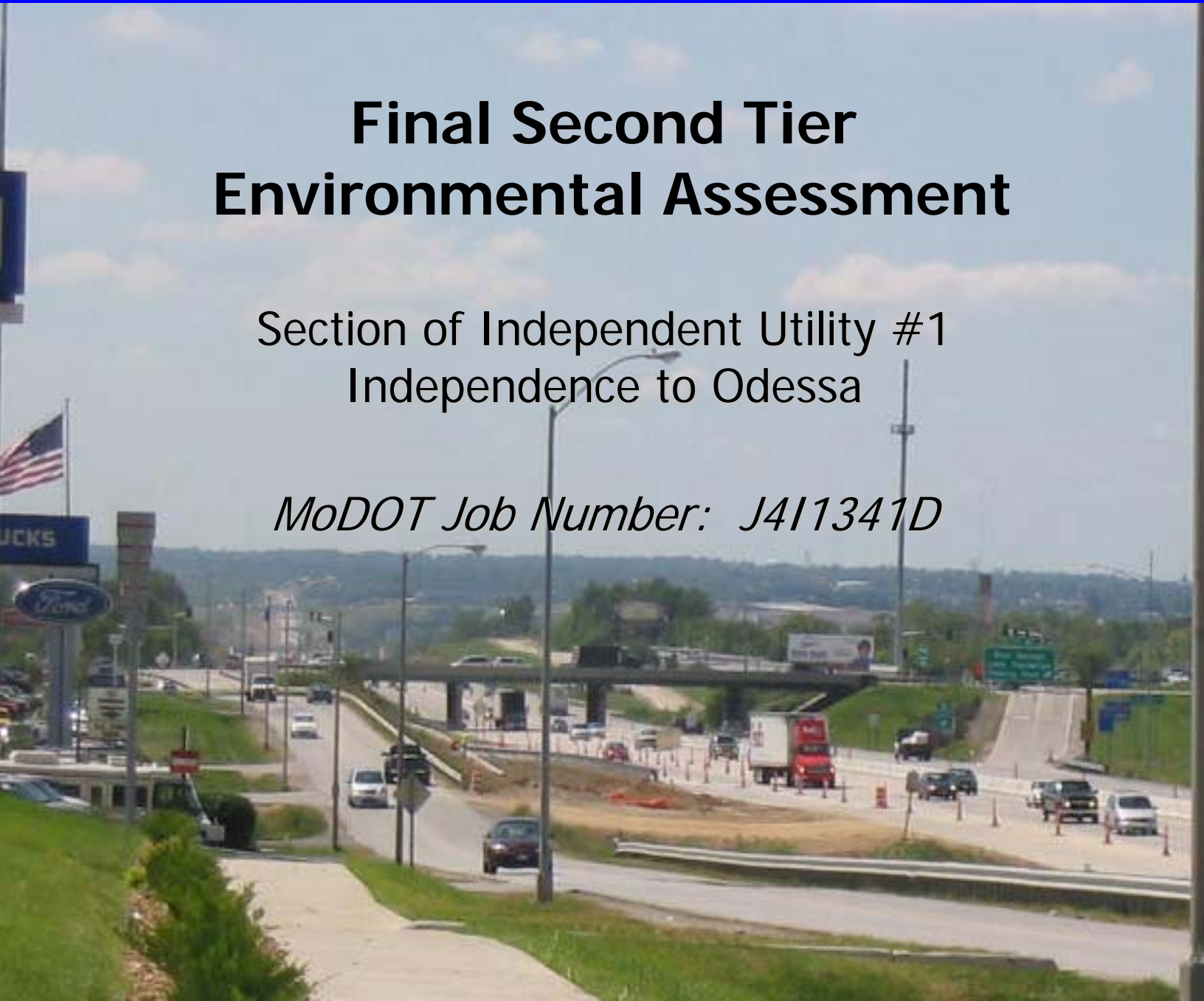
INTERSTATE 70 CORRIDOR

KANSAS CITY TO ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Final Second Tier Environmental Assessment

Section of Independent Utility #1
Independence to Odessa

MoDOT Job Number: J411341D



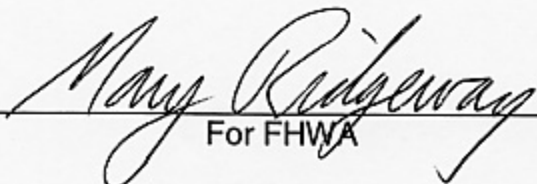
**FINAL SECOND TIER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
SIU #1**

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) propose improving the Interstate 70 (I-70) Corridor in Missouri, between the metropolitan areas of Kansas City and St. Louis, to meet the current and future needs of the traveling public. The First Tier Environmental Impact Statement (First Tier EIS) was completed, with a Record of Decision, in the fall of 2001. The Second Tier environmental decision-making process (Improve I-70) began immediately after the completion of the First Tier EIS Record of Decision. Section of Independent Utility 1 is a proposed 24-mile (39-kilometer) transportation improvement to I-70 extending from Independence to Odessa. The proposed improvement would provide eight travel lanes from I-470 in Independence to Adams Dairy Parkway in Blue Springs, six travel lanes from Adams Dairy Parkway to Route H/F in Oak Grove and a concrete barrier median. From Route H/F in Oak Grove to mile marker 39 east of Odessa the proposed improvement would provide six travel lanes and a grass median generally between 120 to 130 feet (36.6 to 39.6 meters) wide. In addition to the mainline improvements in SIU 1, seven interchanges would be reconstructed in accordance with the current MoDOT access management guidelines.

The FHWA has determined that the selected mainline alternative and interchange alternatives will have no significant impact on the human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the attached Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and the Draft EA which have been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate commitments to mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an EIS is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached final EA.

9-7-06

Date



For FHWA



ATTENTION!

Readers and Reviewers

This I-70 SIU 1 Final EA has been prepared in a Condensed Format. This Condensed Format approach avoids repetition of material from the Draft EA by incorporating by reference, the Draft EA.

In the event that a copy of the Draft EA is needed, please contact us at 1-800-590-0066 to request a copy, or access the project web site at www.improvel70.org to view the document on-line.



Interstate 70 Corridor

Kansas City to St. Louis, Missouri



Jackson and Lafayette Counties in Missouri
Section of Independent Utility #1
Independence to Odessa

MoDOT Project Number: J411341D

Final Second Tier Environmental Assessment

Submitted Pursuant to:
42 USC 4332 (2) (c)

by the

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
and

Missouri Department of Transportation

August 2006

Cooperating Agencies:

United States Environmental Protection Agency
United States Army Corps of Engineers

For MoDOT

8/31/06

Date of Approval

For FHWA

9-7-06

Date of Approval

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Summary

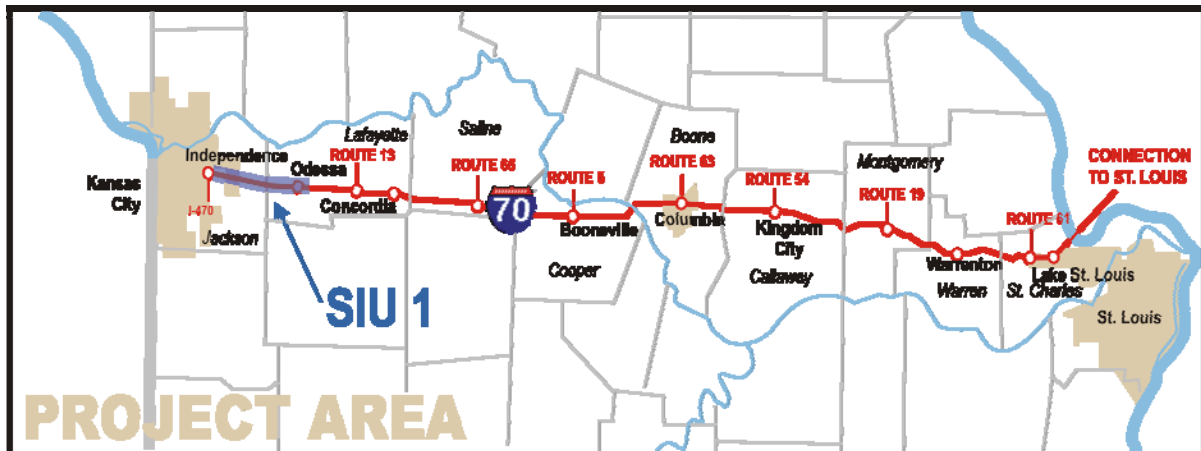
A. Overview

1. Proposed Action

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) propose improving the I-70 corridor to meet current and future transportation needs in Missouri. The location of the proposed improvements is generally between the metropolitan areas of Kansas City and St. Louis. In 2001, MoDOT completed a “First Tier” Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as the first step toward improving I-70. As a result of the First Tier EIS, a preferred strategy consisting of widening and reconstructing I-70 in its existing location was selected.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is part of the “Second Tier” of NEPA environmental review under which a total of seven “Sections of Independent Utility (SIU)” along I-70 are being evaluated. This EA addresses the area designated SIU 1 which encompasses 24 miles (39 kilometers) of I-70 in Missouri generally between Independence and Odessa (Figure S-1). This EA addresses the interchange configurations considered for SIU 1, the widening strategy for urban areas, where the urban to rural transition should occur, decisions on whether I-70 should be widened to the north or south in rural areas and the impacts it may have. The NEPA/Clean Water Act merged process will not be used for the SIU 1 EA. The Missouri Department of Transportation will continue to coordinate with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding Section 404 issues and will submit an application for a Section 404 permit during the design phase.

Figure S-1: SIU 1 Project Area



2. Purpose and Need

The specific purpose and need for the SIU 1 portion of the Improve I-70 Program is summarized as follows:

- **Roadway Capacity** – Increase roadway system capacity in accordance with the projected travel demands to improve the general operating conditions of I-70.
- **Traffic Safety** – Reduce the number and severity of traffic-related crashes occurring along the SIU 1 portion of I-70.
- **Roadway Design Features** – Upgrade current roadway design features to meet recommended design criteria for I-70 improvements, including interchanges, roadway alignment and roadway cross sections.
- **System Preservation** – Preserve the existing I-70 facility as needed to carry existing and future loads.
- **Goods Movement** – Improve the efficiency of freight movement using I-70.
- **Access to Recreational Facilities** – Facilitate the usage by motorists of nearby regional recreational facilities through improved accessibility.
- **National Security** – Increase transportation system security and accommodate the potential movement of personnel and equipment as needed for national security.

3. Selected Alternative

The Selected Alternative for SIU 1 was developed through a comprehensive public and resource agency involvement process and alternative screening effort based on the overall assessment of potential social and natural environmental impacts, engineering performance and the alternatives ability to satisfy the Purpose and Need. The proposed improvements would be staged over time as needs require and funding allows, even though this document discusses the ultimate facility.

The Selected Alternative includes widening I-70 to an eight-lane urban roadway with two additional auxiliary lanes from I-470 to Woods Chapel Road, an eight-lane urban roadway from Woods Chapel Road to Adams Dairy Parkway, a six-lane urban roadway from Adams Dairy Parkway to mile marker 29 and a six-lane rural roadway from mile marker 29 to mile marker 39. The Selected Alternative also includes reconstruction of interchanges at Woods Chapel Road, Route 7, Route AA/BB and Route H/F. The Selected Alternative would also include the construction of replacement interchanges located at 0.25 miles (0.4 kilometers) east of Route D/Z, Hughes Road and 0.3 miles (0.5 kilometers) east of County Road 96/Johnson Road. The reconstruction of bridges at Old Highway 40, Route WW and Route 131, as well as minor improvements to the interchanges at I-470, Little Blue Parkway and Adams Dairy Parkway would also be included as part of the Selected Alternative.

B. Environmental Consequences

The following is a summary of the engineering, social, economic and environmental impacts anticipated for the Selected Alternative:

1. Socioeconomic Resources

a. Land Use

The Selected Alternative will impact 469 acres (189.8 hectares) of land in SIU 1.

b. Displacements and Socioeconomic Impacts

The Selected Alternative will result in the displacement of 40 residential units and 20 businesses. The Selected Alternative will require 71 total parcel acquisitions and 310 partial parcel acquisitions. Due to the dispersed nature of potential displacements along the 24-mile study area, the lack of concentrations of minority or low-income populations, no undue or disproportionate impacts will occur to minority or low-income populations.

2. Natural and Cultural Resources

a. Air Quality

The project conforms to the existing State Implementation Plan and the transportation related requirements of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments.

In the May 3, 2005 Federal Register, EPA issued the final rule for the Air Quality Redesignation for the 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard for some Counties in the States of Kansas and Missouri. This rule redesignated the Kansas City Maintenance Area as being in attainment for the 8-hour standard, effective June 2, 2005. The 2005 Kansas City Maintenance Plan for Control of Ozone, adopted on July 21, 2005, lists various transportation control measures as part of the contingency measures to be implemented in case of a violation of the 8-hour or 1-hour ozone standard.

b. Noise

The Selected Alternative would impact noise sensitive receptors in SIU 1. The Missouri Department of Transportation will comply with FHWA's Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). Construction noise would be monitored and abated in cases where the criterion is exceeded. Noise mitigation measures for sensitive receptors have been incorporated into the Selected Alternative based on an analysis of reasonableness and feasibility. The Missouri Department of Transportation is not committed to any noise mitigation measures at this time, but noise mitigation analysis would be re-evaluated after the final design phase to reflect those design details and MoDOT's Noise Policy will be followed.

c. Parklands, Other Public Lands and 4(f) Resources

There would be no permanent incorporation, temporary occupancy or any constructive use of existing 4(f) resources due to the SIU 1 Selected Alternative.

d. Prime Farmland and Conservation Reserve Program

The Selected Alternative would convert approximately 186.7 acres of Prime Farmland, 263.3 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 3.6 acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands to highway right of way.

e. Water Resources and Water Quality

Impacts associated with the Selected Alternative could include both short term and longer term water quality impacts. These impacts may include sediment loading due to construction activities, pollutant loading from stormwater runoff, as well as continued commercial and residential development along the corridor that could contribute sediment, nutrient, and chemical loading.

f. Floodplains

The Selected Alternative would impact 102.5 acres (41.5 hectares) of floodplain. The Selected Alternative would also impact and cross 8.22 acres (3.33 hectares) and 1,805 feet (550 meters) of regulatory floodway.

g. Wetlands and Waters of the United States

The Selected Alternative would impact 42 stream crossings (which equates to 19,000 linear feet), 10.8 acres (4.4 hectares) of vegetated wetlands, 0.8 acres (0.3 hectares) of jurisdictional ponds, and no Wetland Reserve Program lands.

h. Threatened and Endangered Species

No threatened or endangered species would be impacted by the Selected Alternative. However, MoDOT will review the Natural Heritage Database to see if any new locations are identified prior to final design.

i. Cultural Resources

No known National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-eligible cultural resource sites would be impacted by the Selected Alternative.

j. Hazardous Waste

The Selected Alternative will impact five sites ranked "Moderate-to-High" whose past or present use indicates a potential for hazardous waste contamination of soils and possibly groundwater. In the event contamination is encountered, MoDOT would develop an appropriate course of action and coordinate with the Missouri Department Natural Resources' (MDNR) Hazardous Waste Management Program.

k. Visual Quality

The Selected Alternative will have a minimal impact to the viewsheds and local vantage points within the SIU 1 Project Area.

C. Areas of Controversy and Issues to be Resolved

The vast majority of issues presented in this EA are clearly defined, create little or no controversy and would be considered resolved.

Issues to be resolved include:

- Final permitting issues will be resolved through independent regulatory processes and procedures. The results will be incorporated into the final design process and requirements.
- Final design details and corresponding impacts and mitigation measures, especially as they relate to property impacts, local circulation and access will be addressed when funding for final design, right of way acquisition, and facility construction is made available.

D. Public and Agency Coordination

Consultation and coordination related to planned improvements to I-70 began with the First Tier Study during the year 2000 and has continued through the Second Tier Studies. During the I-70 Improvement Study, MoDOT provided numerous opportunities for public, local, state and federal agency input. These efforts are documented in the First Tier EIS.

1. Public Involvement Process

The Second Tier public involvement program provided further and more specific opportunities for public and agency input. These efforts have involved interested agencies, local units of government and the general public through various means. The program has resulted in a wide range of comments and input into the development and evaluation of the various improvements defined in this EA.

The SIU 1 public involvement process started with initial strategy meetings to determine the goals and objectives of the public involvement plan. Once the goals and objectives were established, a public involvement plan was prepared.

Implementation of the public involvement plan included a project Web site and email address, public meetings, contact points including a post office box and telephone hot line, a mailing list, media relations, newsletters and other written materials and stakeholder briefings.

Three project newsletters were mailed to individuals within SIU 1. Postcard notices were mailed to the SIU 1 mailing list to inform and remind individuals of the public meetings. Two public meetings were held for SIU 1 in Independence and Oak Grove on November 18 and 19, 2003,

respectively. Approximately 160 people attended the meetings and 42 comment forms were received.

Twelve special briefings were also conducted for 11 stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups included: the City of Bates City, the City of Blue Springs, the City of Grain Valley, the City of Independence, the City of Oak Grove, the City of Odessa, the Mid-America Regional Council's Total Transportation Policy Committee (TTPC), the Oak Grove Chamber of Commerce, a group of Oak Grove citizens and a group of Odessa citizens.

a. Public Hearings

Two official public hearings regarding SIU 1 were held as part of the public involvement process. The first public hearing was held at the Odessa Community Building on November 29, 2005. Approximately 65 people attended this meeting, 14 comments were received, 13 by forms and one transcribed. The second public hearing was held at Vesper Hall in Blue Springs on November 30, 2005. Approximately 60 people attended this meeting and 8 comments were received, two by forms and six transcribed. Substantive comments, pertaining to SIU 1 and regarding the preservation of Route 131 at its current location, were submitted at the public hearing and after a stakeholder briefing with Odessa citizens on January 13, 2006.

b. Agency Coordination

Agency coordination has been integrated into the I-70 study, including the First Tier and Second Tier environmental decision-making process. The First Tier EIS initiated the environmental scoping process, including the environmental scoping meeting, to identify issues and concerns that would affect the selection of the Selected Alternative and the final location. In addition, informal coordination has occurred through both the First and Second Tier process with periodic meetings in which resource agency personnel attended and participated. The resource agencies played a key role in the overall decision-making process for this study.

c. Study Management Group

The Study Management Group (SMG) assembled during the First Tier Environmental Process was continued through the Second Tier Process. Periodic SMG progress meetings were held during the Second Tier process with resource agency personnel, including representatives from MDNR, the Missouri Department of Conservation, USACE, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the EPA. In total, seven SMG meetings were held during the Second Tier environmental decision-making process.

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Guide to Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADT	average daily traffic
CRP	Conservation Reserve Program
dBA	A-weighted decibel
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EUAC	equivalent uniform annual cost
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
LOS	level of service
MDNR	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
MoDOT	Missouri Department of Transportation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAC	noise abatement criteria
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
SHPO	State Historic Presentation Office
SIU	section of independent utility
SMG	Study Management Group
SO₂	sulfur dioxide
SPUI	single point urban interchange
STRAHNET	Strategic Highway Network
TTPC	Total Transportation Policy Committee
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WRP	Wetlands Reserve Program