



# Executive Summary

## Summary

The purpose of this project is to correct deficiencies on existing Route 63, to ease congestion throughout the entire route, especially in the small communities of Westphalia, Freeburg, Vienna, and Vichy, and to provide four-lane design continuity along the Route 63 corridor. Both north and south of the study the existing roadway is a four-lane divided highway. There are portions of the existing roadway that have a total crash rate higher than the statewide average. Relocating and improving the existing route will improve safety and increase operating efficiencies leading to a reduction in traffic congestion and pollution. There are no areas of controversy with the preferred route regarding environmental issues. Some controversy exists with affected property owners. MoDOT intends to work with and minimize impacts to all affected property owners after a Preferred Alternative is selected.

The study area is located in central Missouri and crosses Osage, Maries, and Phelps Counties. The study begins approximately 0.75 miles south of the current Route 50/Route 63 interchange in Osage County, where Route 63 changes from four lanes to two lanes. The study extends south through Osage and Maries Counties and ends in Phelps County, just north of Rolla, where the current facility changes from a two-lane roadway to a four-lane divided highway. The study, along the existing roadway, is approximately 47 miles in length.

The proposed action will correct roadway deficiencies on Route 63 by relocating sections on new alignments and improving existing Route 63 in various locations. The Route 63 improvement is planned as a four-lane divided highway with 65 mph design speed.

Reasonable alternatives considered include a “No-Build” alternative, upgrading the existing facility, and various “build” alternatives using a combination of sections that include some on new locations and others along the existing facility. These alternative sections are shown in Appendix C and discussed in Chapter 2 of this document. The reasonable alternatives were then compared on an entire corridor basis and labeled as the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. Mass transit facilities, such as commuter bus, subway, and light rail service currently do not exist within the corridor and are not considered to be viable alternatives for consideration. All three reasonable build alternatives are depicted on the map located on page iv.

The main areas of consideration associated with this study are: 1) right of way acquisitions, 2) total cost, 3) safety and number of vehicle access points, 4) relocations, 5) community impacts, and 6) impacts to the natural environment. As depicted on the Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts table, and as is often the case for large highway projects, there is no alternative that stands out as clearly being the best for most of the environmental impacts. In the case of the proposed alternatives for Route 63, the Preferred Alternative impacts are not always the least, nor does it have the greatest number of impacts when compared to the other two build alternatives. To get a clearer picture of which alternative would be identified as the preferred, the study team compared the alternatives by looking at how many of the considerations had the least and most negative impacts and how well the alternative met the purpose and need of the project.

Using the total costs as the only cost category, since other categories of cost are only subsets of the total, the study team found the following general trend for impacts: Alternatives 1 and 2 did not stand out as having many more negative impacts than the other, but had considerably more than the Preferred Alternative.

The project needs are improve safety, improve traffic flow, and improve corridor continuity. All of the build alternatives meet the purpose and need for this project to some degree and they also improve traffic flow at similar levels. All build alternatives also improve the corridor continuity, since they would provide a four-lane divided highway connecting similar highway segments, except for the section through Vichy for the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 2. Where Alternative 2 falters is in meeting the need to improve safety as well as the Preferred Alternative or Alternative 1. Alternative 2 has the highest number of vehicle access points, which is a contributor to unsafe conditions.

So even though Alternative 2 has the least negative impacts for the most categories, it has a higher number of negative impacts for other categories and does not meet the need for improved safety as well as the Preferred Alternative. Alternative 1 also had a higher number of negative impacts than the Preferred Alternative and is the most expensive to build. Because of the factors of negative impacts for Alternatives 1 and 2 and its ability to best meet the project's purpose and need, the Preferred Alternative became the recommended alternative.

All of the alternatives will require new bridge crossings over the Maries and Gasconade Rivers. A Preferred Alternative has been identified, but the final selection of an alternative will not be made until the Record of Decision has been signed.

Clean Water Act Section 404 permits will be required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) for the stream crossings of the Maries and Gasconade Rivers. In addition, there are potential crossings of wetlands within the project limits; should any occur, these would also require permitting under Section 404. The COE is a cooperating agency on this project and will be involved with ongoing coordination.

Flood Hazard Boundary Maps are available for Osage, Maries, and Phelps Counties. Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), classified as Zone A base (1%) floodplain, occur intermittently throughout the area of the proposed project. Detailed hydraulic analyses are not performed by FEMA for Zone A areas, so no base flood elevations or depths have been determined. Although a floodplain development permit will be obtained for the project, a “no-rise” certificate will not be necessary.

Federal and state resource agencies have been and will continue to be involved in consultation and coordination throughout the various phases of the project development and implementation on this proposed action. Since the proposed project is located in an attainment area, an Air Quality Analysis (AQA) will not be required. Other considerations, such as water quality permits will be adequately addressed as the process moves forward.

Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts				
	No-Build Alternative	Preferred Alternative**	Alternative 1*	Alternative 2*
<b>Engineering</b>				
New Alignment Length (miles)	47.0	44.6	45.6	44
Traffic Flow (Travel Time in minutes)	48.5	41.7	42.0	41.7
Access Points (#)	538	166	143	189
Bridges (#)	0	2	3	2
<b>Costs</b>				
Construction (millions \$)	0	145.5	188.8	137.7
Right of way (millions \$)	0	29	28.4	37.3
Stream mitigation (millions \$)	0	13	10	10
Total Costs (millions \$)	0	187.5	227.2	185
<b>Right of Way Impacts</b>				
Parcels Impacted (#)	0	306	298	320
Residential Relocations (#)	0	27	28	38
Commercial Relocations (#)	0	15	2	33
Right of Way – New (acres)	0	2,796	2,961	2,468
Right of Way – Existing (acres)	0	226	194	292
<b>Environmental Impacts</b>				
Potential Section 4(f) Parklands (#)	0	0	0	0
Wetlands (acres)	0	30.27	32.80	28.15
Creek/Stream/River Crossings (#)	0	70	79	66
Stream length impact (feet)	0	64,811	54,831	51,389
Farmland	0			
Open Area (acres)	0	1,432	1,533	1,317
Forested Area (acres)	0	1,475	1,686	1,402
Floodplain (acres)	0	174.8	100.8	149.8
Threatened & Endangered Species	0	yes	yes	yes
Hazardous Waste Location (#)	0	11	5	21
Airports (#)	0	1	1	1
<b>Cultural Resource Impacts</b>				
Cemeteries (#)	0	0	0	1
Archaeological Sites (#)	0	63	***	***
Potential Historic/4(f) Properties (#)	0	0	4	7
*These figures are based on preliminary data.				
**These figures based on field surveys and reconnaissance.				
***These alternatives were not surveyed for archaeological sites.				

