



County refines plans for South County Connector

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(KMOV) -- The Saint Louis County Highways and Traffic Department says it's narrowed down a potential route for a major new road project, aimed at giving drivers an alternate route between south and central St. Louis County communities.

John Hicks, the county's Transportation Development Analyst, says the county is now presenting two alternatives to the public, but both roughly follow a route from River Des Peres Boulevard at Watson Road, through a portion of the Shrewsbury MetroLink parking lot, across I-44, into Big Bend Industrial Court, crossing Deer Creek Center and ending at Hanley Road near Flora Avenue.

The county has published its latest plans on-line. Click on this [link](#) and scroll down to pages 9 and 10 to see maps of the two alternatives that are on the table.

Hicks said the road would alleviate traffic on other north-south routes even though the corridor would not connect to I-64 or I-170.

"It will alleviate traffic right now there are bottlenecks through the communities and providing additional crossing points to Interstate 44 and additional crossing points to railroads in the area will certainly improve that access," said Hicks.

The corridor would be made up of four lanes, two in each direction, with a bike lane and a sidewalk on at least one side of the roadway, explained Hicks. The speed limit would likely not exceed 35 miles an hour.

But, Ann Mack of Trailnet argues that the proposed road project is based on outdated thinking.

"It's inexcusable to spend this kind of money in what are highly walkable, bikeable, grid-based entering suburbs when the blue line transit is right there," said Mack.

The proposed corridor would run parallel to the blue line MetroLink track.

"It's basically more designed for say the 1950's than for 2050. We know from our demographic changes with the millennials and boomers that people want bikeable, walkable, and transit oriented transportation," said Mack.

Trailnet is holding its own presentation on Wednesday, May 8th at 7 p.m. at Shrewsbury City Center.

The St. Louis County Department of Highways and Traffic will hold a public hearing on Thursday, May 30th from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. also at the Shrewsbury City Center. The county is taking [comments](#) through July 19th, as well.

Hicks said the current proposals would impact industrial and business properties along with Metrolink and Laclede Gas property. He said it's possible the road project would impact four to six residential properties, but the final design has not been drawn up yet.

The proposal would still have to get federal approval before the county could ask for the \$110 million it's expected to cost to build the connector.

Hicks said, "Realistically, the funding will occur. It's more of a question of when it will occur. The interchange at I-44 is on the regional long range transportation plan. It has

been for a number of years."