



# The Future of Route 63

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## Westphalia Public Mtg. Comments

**DATE:** November 14, 2006

**TIME:** 4-7 p.m.

**SUBJECT:** Route 63 EIS/Location Study  
Public Meeting

**LOCATION:** Knights of Columbus  
819 Route 63  
Westphalia, MO 65085

### Summary

Approximately 122 people attended the Route 63 Environmental and Location Study public meeting on Tuesday, November 14, 2006, at the Knight of Columbus Hall in Westphalia.

The meeting was held to gather public comment about potential future improvements to Route 63 from ½ mile south of the Route 50/63 junction to just north of Rolla. To publicize the meeting, advertisements were placed in the Rolla Daily News, The Unterrified Democrat, and the Maries County Gazette. A news release was sent to all local media and flyers were distributed throughout the area.

### Participation

- There were 122 individuals who signed guest registers.
- There were 13 comments cards (2 with maps) completed at the meeting.
- There were 10 comment cards mailed in (2 with maps) after the meeting.
- Overall, the comments were positive toward something happening within the study area.

### Comments/feedback about potential transportation solutions

#### 1. Four-lane highway – bypass towns

- Three attendees said it would be best to bypass the towns to keep the speed consistent and one suggested the new highway be built on the west side of the existing alignment.
- Two attendees said the towns need to be bypassed to remove the through traffic (truck traffic especially) out of the local traffic. One also said that new housing construction in Freeburg is increasing at a fast rate and might make the process of acquiring right of way more difficult.
- Three attendees said Junction 133 in Westphalia is dangerous and a new one should be constructed. They recommended the new highway go south of the Knight of Columbus Hall and connect at the new bridges at the south side of Westphalia over the Maries River. After that connection, they suggest a direct line to Freeburg. Widening the existing highway should not be an option, as there are too many turn-offs and it is dangerous for school buses. One suggested that going to the east of both Freeburg and Vienna would be best.
- One attendee expressed concern for safety for school bus children. He said there was a need to slow down traffic through the Freeburg area because children were crossing the road to the gas station across from the Holy Family School. Bypassing the town by straightening the alignment would be best.

## 2. Passing lanes

- Two attendees suggested passing lanes on hills (climbing lanes). One suggested the north side of Westphalia was a good area because of truck traffic and a blind turn going into County Road 609.

## 3. Turn lanes through towns

- Three attendees said that turn lanes would help with the traffic congestion and accidents. One suggestion was to add a center turn lane through Westphalia starting at County Road 511 and ending at either Maries Avenue or Mill Avenue.

## 4. Local business loss

- Five attendees expressed concern that a negative impact, i.e. loss in customers, would occur if a new highway bypassed the towns.

## 5. Intersections

- Two attendees said they did not want the highway to go to the east of Route E and Route 63 junction. One said he was building a new house in that area and the other said the curve is already bad due to blind spots. One attendee said they wanted something done to this intersection.
- One attendee suggested the straightening of Highway T to line up with County Road 611, with an overpass or turn lanes.

## 6. Property

- Three attendees expressed deep concern for the property owners affected in the study, regarding changes in property values and fair reimbursement for right-of-way acquisition. They also want a safer highway but did not want it in their back yard.

## 7. Wal-Mart Distribution Center in St. James

- Four attendees said that the most truck traffic they experienced was from Wal-Mart-owned trucks coming from the St. James distribution center. One said he thought the traffic would get even worse when the new Wal-Mart on the east side of Jefferson City (City View) is completed.

## 8. Road closure

- One attendee expressed concern for the safety of motorists and highway workers if improvements were added to the existing alignment. He also said that any “temporary” improvements, such as removal of sight restrictions, and widening shoulders would be patching a problem, not always solving it.
- One attendee said there is a need to consider major disasters and how Route 63 would be used as an emergency route. How would traffic patterns on Route 63, being an interstate connector and a major north/south corridor, be altered if a major disaster occurred?

## 9. Accidents

- One attendee said there is a need to design a safer highway for the smaller vehicle. He said trucks are getting bigger and cars are getting smaller. Routing major traffic around most commercial zones will help with the accidents and create a safer community.

- Two attendees said a new four-lane with bypasses of the towns would greatly improve traffic hazards.
- One attendee expressed a need for a new four-lane highway and to bypass all towns because of increasing danger on the existing highway due to truck traffic and slow-moving farm machinery.
- One mailed request suggested adding rumble strips to outside corners of the existing highway until it is determined what will happen after this study. He expressed a concern for the shoulders in the Osage County area. He said they are soft and dangerous.

10. Re-routing the entire highway

- One mailed request suggested relocating Route 63. The writer said Route 63 should branch off of Route 54 south of Jefferson City, near Route B, and go straight to the existing Route 63 south of Vienna. The new route would put be closer to Meta, where there is already heavy truck traffic, and reduce traffic on Routes 133 and B. He also suggested that right-of-way would be less expensive in western Osage and Maries Counties than along the present Route 63.