

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS REPORT



CA0602

Interstate 530 – Highway 67

May 2015



Arkansas State Highway &
Transportation Department



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 1.0 | Introduction and Environmental Setting..... | 1 |
| 2.0 | Alternatives..... | 2 |
| 2.1 | No Action Alternative..... | 2 |
| 2.2 | Action Alternatives | 2 |
| 3.0 | Environmental Constraints | 3 |
| 4.0 | Environmental Impacts..... | 4 |
| 4.1 | PEL Recommendation | 5 |
| 4.2 | Potential Environmental Impacts of the PEL Recommendation | 6 |
| 5.0 | Conclusion..... | 14 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| Figure 1. | I-30 PEL Study Area | 1 |
| Figure 2. | Lane Configurations of the PEL Recommendation | 5 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|----------|---|----|
| Table 1. | Potential Archeological Survey Results..... | 10 |
|----------|---|----|

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Environmental Impacts Map

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Increased congestion, safety and declining roadway and bridge conditions have led to a need for transportation improvements along Interstate 30 (I-30) and Interstate 40 (I-40) through Little Rock and North Little Rock in central Arkansas. The I-30 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study was performed to produce transportation planning products that effectively serve the community's transportation needs.

Figure 1. I-30 PEL Study Area

This report describes the affected environment related to the future implementation of the PEL Recommendation identified as part of the I-30 PEL Study. This evaluation of the affected environment will provide the baseline information to be used in future project development.

The I-30 PEL Study consisted of a quarter-mile wide study area along I-30 and I-40 in Pulaski County. The study area extends approximately 6.7 miles through portions of Little Rock and North Little Rock in central Arkansas, as shown in **Figure 1**. The study area begins at I-530 to the south and extends northerly to I-40 including the Arkansas River Bridge, as well as I-40 from JFK Boulevard to Highway 67 (Hwy. 67).

According to the *2010 Census*, the Cities of Little Rock and North Little Rock had an estimated total population of 193,524 and 62,304, respectively, and Pulaski County had an estimated total population of 382,748. The U.S. Census Bureau (USCB) has estimated a 2.3 percent increase in total population from 2010 to 2014 for Pulaski County. The USCB also estimated a 2 percent and 6 percent increase for Little Rock and North Little Rock, respectively, from 2010 to 2014. The same growth trend is anticipated to continue for the next 10 years. This anticipated growth will continue to affect the communities of these cities by bringing



increased economic opportunities, as well as substantial challenges to the existing transportation system.

All resource descriptions and data presented in this report are within or immediately adjacent to the study area boundaries.

2.0 ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the No Action Alternative and the alternatives resulting from the three-level screening process, leading to the PEL Recommendation.

2.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative represents the baseline condition in the study area as if no additional improvements are implemented other than those already programmed in the fiscally constrained Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (LRMTP) for central Arkansas.

The No Action Alternative provides a baseline to gauge how effective various Action Alternatives would help accomplish the purpose and need. This alternative is required to be considered in the I-30 PEL Study and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses.

The No Action Alternative includes the preservation of the existing transportation network and any programmed transportation improvements that have been identified as fiscally constrained in the LRMTP. As such, the No Action Alternative includes all of the short-term operational improvements currently underway and planned within the study area, in addition to all other programmed transportation projects in the region that are contained in the LRMTP.

2.2 Action Alternatives

The alternative screening process consisted of multiple levels of screening blending a varied group of strategies, study area needs and goals into a set of refined transportation alternatives through a comprehensive evaluation process.

The alternative screening methodology included three levels of screening, which began with the Universe of Alternatives. The Universe of Alternatives for the I-30 PEL Study was developed utilizing the following precedents, processes and guiding documents:

- *2003 Areawide Freeway Study*;
- Metroplan LRMTP;
- I-30 PEL Study travel demand modeling;
- *I-30 PEL Study Purpose and Need Report*;
- *I-30 PEL Study Alternative Screening Methodology*;
- *I-30 PEL Study Environmental Constraints Report*;
- Input from the I-30 PEL Study Technical Work Group (TWG);
- Input from the public through I-30 PEL Study public meetings; and
- Coordination with individual stakeholder groups.

Each of the alternatives in the Universe of Alternatives was carried through the Level 1 Screening and examined with regard to screening criteria that were related to the purpose and need of the project. The Level 1 Screening was a fatal flaw analysis used to identify the Preliminary Alternatives, or resulting alternatives from the Level 1 analysis. The Level 1 Screening process is detailed in the *I-30 PEL Level 1 Screening Methodology and Results Memorandum (Appendix D-3)*.

The Level 2 Screening included evaluating the Preliminary Alternatives mostly qualitatively against detailed screening criteria in four categories (engineering, safety, cost, and environmental) to identify those alternatives suitable for further evaluation. This evaluation used preliminary data, professional judgment, and public input to screen the alternatives. The Reasonable Alternatives were the result of the Level 2 Screening process, which is detailed in the *I-30 PEL Level 2 Screening Methodology and Results Memorandum (Appendix D-4)*.

The Level 3 Screening included evaluating the Reasonable Alternatives mostly quantitatively using screening criteria in four categories (engineering, safety, cost, and environmental) and in more detail than the Level 2 Screening. This detailed evaluation included defining and quantifying costs, mobility, safety, and environmental impacts. One alternative was identified as the top alternative, the 10-lane Collector/Distributor (C/D)¹ Alternative. Slight design modifications (e.g., shortened C/D lanes) were made to this top alternative to achieve additional improvements to mobility and safety. The resulting alternative, called the 10-Lane Downtown C/D Alternative, was identified as the PEL Recommendation. The Level 3 Screening process, including description of the PEL Recommendation, is detailed in the *I-30 PEL Level 3 Screening Methodology and Results Memorandum (Appendix D-5)*.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

The *I-30 PEL Constraints Report (Appendix B)* was prepared for the study to document the existing infrastructure and environmental constraints within the study area. This study area was defined during the early stages of constraints report preparation (spring 2014) in coordination with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD). The study area is described in **Section 1.0**.

In order to identify the environmental and infrastructure constraints associated with the study area, information was collected through database searches, imagery analyses, Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>), desktop geographic information system (GIS) analyses, and limited field reconnaissance of the study area. Data collected during the preparation of the constraints report identified infrastructure elements, socio-economic demographics, land use, natural resources, cultural resources, hazardous materials, and traffic noise receptors.

¹ A C/D system includes one or more freeway lanes that are parallel to, but separated from the through traffic main lanes. The C/D system provides access to the local service interchanges, thereby eliminating most of the weaving areas from the I-30 main lanes.

Data collection has continued since the preparation of the initial constraints report in 2014. Information received from various agency representatives during the TWG meetings, public meetings, and stakeholder meetings was utilized in the identification of additional constraints and evaluation of potential environmental impacts.

The study area extends approximately half a mile on either side of the existing I-30 facility. Land use within the study area is predominately under urban development with commercial, single and multi-family residential, industrial and civic land uses. Various parks and water features, including the Arkansas River, are also located within the study area. Refer to the *I-30 PEL Constraints Report (Appendix B)* for additional details of the existing environment.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Through the alternative screening process, each Reasonable Alternative was developed to a level of detail that defined the alternative's estimated right-of-way (ROW) requirements, as well as preliminary interchange, intersection, and ramping designs, thus providing connectivity to the local street network and other modes of transportation. The design of each Reasonable Alternative was sufficient for the development of micro-simulation models for traffic and safety analyses and more accurate ROW footprints for environmental analysis. These preliminary designs were overlaid with the environmental resources of the study area, as identified and described in the *I-30 PEL Constraints Report (Appendix B)*. A total of 13 screening measures of effectiveness categories were evaluated for the Level 3 analysis of potential environmental impacts resulting from the Reasonable Alternatives. These measures of effectiveness were developed around the study goals as identified in the *I-30 PEL Purpose and Need Report (Appendix A)*. Impacts to these environmental measures were calculated via spatial analysis with ArcGIS. When possible, impacts were quantified by count or acreage. When quantification was not reasonable, potential impacts were qualitatively assessed utilizing the more detailed preliminary designs of each Reasonable Alternative compared to those available at the time of the Level 2 screening. Details of the environmental screening, including the study goals, environmental measures, and the associated methodology for evaluating impacts of the Reasonable Alternatives, and ultimately, the PEL Recommendation, are provided in *I-30 PEL Level 3 Screening Methodology and Results Memorandum (Appendix D-5)*.

The environmental resources and issues evaluated for the PEL Recommendation consisted of the following:

- Socio-economics²
- Cultural Resources³
- Parks

² For the community analysis, the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB) 2010 Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) data were used to analyze the census block groups and census blocks contained either wholly or partially within the study area.

³ Cultural resources include archeological and non-archeological historic resources.

- Water Resources
- Biological Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Traffic Noise Receptors

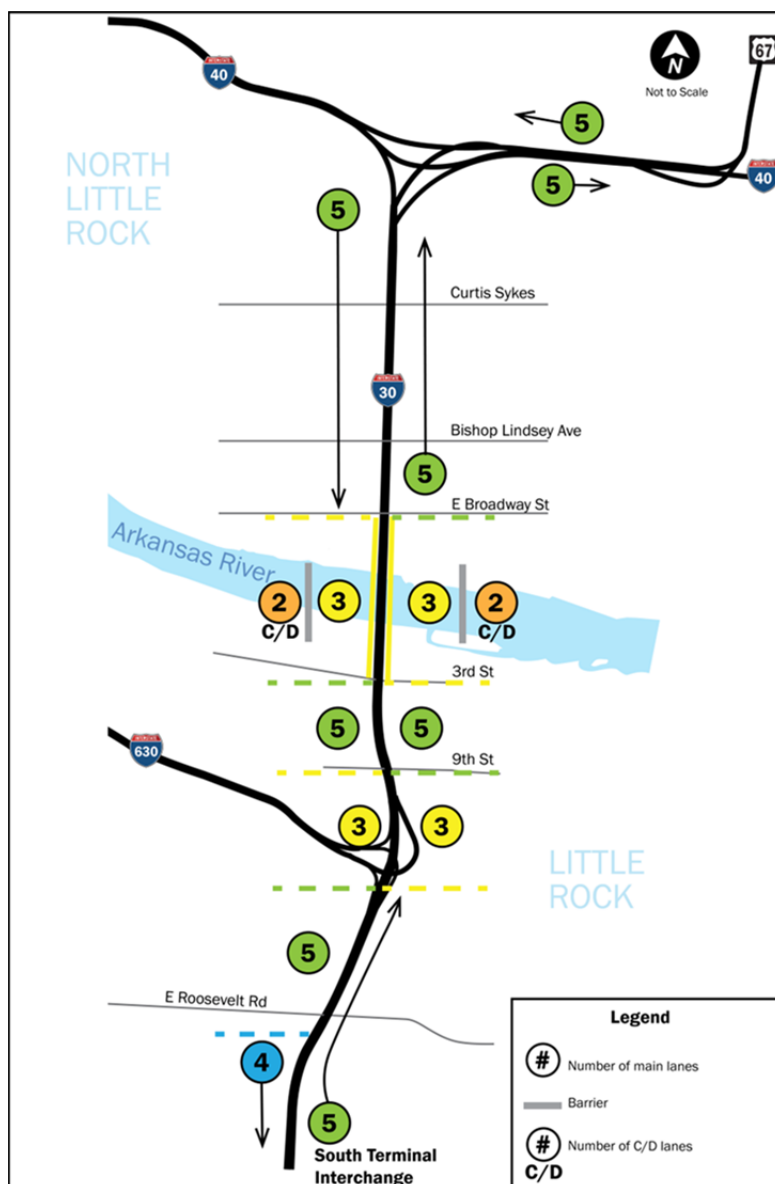
4.1 PEL Recommendation

As a result of the Level 3 Screening, the 10-lane Downtown C/D Alternative was identified as the I-30 PEL Recommendation. The 10-Lane Downtown C/D would include 3 main lanes and 2 C/D lanes in each direction. The C/D lanes for both southbound and northbound travel would extend from the Cantrell Road interchange just north of 3rd Street in Little Rock to just south of Broadway in North Little Rock.

Approximately five miles long, the 10-lane Downtown C/D Alternative would create a new local connection between Little Rock and North Little Rock across the Arkansas River Bridge, allowing motorists to travel between the downtown areas without entering the main lanes of the interstate. Serving as an additional crossing of the Arkansas River that is separate from main lane traffic, the C/D lanes would provide more convenient access to and between the downtown economic districts and support improved connectivity and cohesion of these financially viable commercial and tourist areas. Additionally, motorists would be required to travel at slower speeds on the C/D lanes compared to the main lanes, thereby removing slower moving traffic destined for the downtown areas from the main lanes, resulting in improved safety.

ROW width of the PEL Recommendation is approximately 400 feet and would encompass approximately 942 acres (including 932 acres of existing ROW). The PEL Recommendation is shown in **Figure 2** and the Environmental Impacts Map included in **Attachment A**. A detailed description of the PEL Recommendation is presented in the *I-30 PEL Level 3 Screening Methodology and Results Memorandum (Appendix D-5)*.

Figure 2. Lane Configurations of the PEL Recommendation



4.2 Potential Environmental Impacts of the PEL Recommendation

The following sections include descriptions of potentially affected environmental resources and issues associated with the 10-lane Downtown C/D Alternative.

ROW

The PEL Recommendation has the potential for ROW acquisition needed to accommodate the 10-lane widening including C/D roads and proposed improvements. Approximately nine acres of potential new ROW would be required for construction of the PEL Recommendation.

Parcels

Forty-six parcels would be potentially impacted by the PEL Recommendation. These parcels are a combination of residential and commercial properties.

Structures

Potentially 12 displacements would result from implementation of the PEL Recommendation. Potential displacements would include five residential structures and seven commercial structures. In addition, seven billboards would potentially be impacted. The general locations of potential displacements and billboard impacts are shown in the Environmental Impacts Map included in **Attachment A**. Anticipated residential and commercial displacements and billboard impacts would be determined in future studies in the schematic and NEPA phase of project development.

Affected property owners would be provided relocation assistance in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) policy, as mandated by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Properties Acquisitions Act (URARPA), amended in 1987. Relocation resources would be provided including any applicable special provisions or programs to all displaced persons without discrimination.

Socio-Economics

Community Impacts

Various schools and public facilities are located near the PEL Recommendation, but no potential impacts are anticipated to these facilities. Public facilities which often function to facilitate community interaction and unite community spirit such as churches, schools, daycares and community centers, are not likely to be impacted from the PEL Recommendation. The PEL process takes into consideration community needs and stakeholder input; however, more detailed design approaches and solutions would be determined during the schematic and NEPA phase of project development and a more detailed community impacts assessment would be performed at that time.

Using the USCB *2009-2013 ACS 5-year estimates*, the age distribution for the PEL study area consists of approximately 7.1 percent under 5 years of age, 13.4 percent for ages 5 to 17, 24.4 percent for ages 18 to 34, 40.0 percent for 35 to 64 and 15.1 percent for age 65 and older. The largest population is within the age group between the 35 to

64 age ranges. The gender distribution of the total population is approximately 46.7 percent male and 53.3 percent female.

The most recent data available regarding disability status is from the *USCB ACS 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates*. Disability types considered in the ACS include hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty and independent living difficulty. The *USCB ACS 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates* disability data is not available at the block group level; therefore, data was gathered for the 13 census tracts either partially or wholly contained within the PEL study area. For the PEL study area, the disability population consists of approximately 16.5 percent of the total population.

In accordance with FHWA Title VI, consideration of populations in relation to age, gender and disability is included in the assessment of potential community impacts. A detailed assessment of potential impacts to these populations would be included during future phases of project development.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Populations

Executive Order (EO) 13166 on LEP calls for all agencies to ensure that their federally conducted programs and activities are meaningfully accessible to LEP individuals. The USDOT defines LEP persons as individuals with a primary or home language other than English who must, due to limited fluency in English, communicate in that primary or home language if the individuals are to have an equal opportunity to participate effectively in or benefit from any aid, service, or benefit provided by the transportation provider or other USDOT recipient.

Census block group data was obtained from the *USCB 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates* database. According to the information, the “Ability to Speak English,” for the population five years and older indicates approximately 1.3 percent of the population within the 22 census block groups of the study area speaks English less than “very well.” Fifteen of the 22 census block groups contain no LEP populations according to the 2009-2013 ACS. LEP populations among the 22 census block groups ranged from approximately 0.0 to 9.7 percent.

Environmental Justice (EJ) Populations

EO 12898 entitled “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations” requires each Federal agency to “make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” FHWA has identified three fundamental principles of environmental justice:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations;

- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income populations.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Order 6640.23A defines a minority as a person who is:

- Black (having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa);
- Hispanic or Latino (of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race);
- Asian American (having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent);
- American Indian and Alaska Native (having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition); or
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other Pacific Islands).

EO 12898 further defines a minority population as any readily identifiable groups of minority persons who live in geographic proximity, and if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who would be similarly affected by a proposed FHWA program, policy, or activity.

Minority Population

For the I-30 PEL Study, the USCB *2010 Census* data was used at the census block level to determine presence of minority populations within the study area. The minority study area consisted of census blocks within 250 feet on either side of the PEL Recommendation ROW. A total of 715 census blocks were identified within the study area. Only 274 census blocks within the study area are populated according to the *2010 Census*. Out of the 274 populated census blocks, 209 census blocks (77 percent of the census blocks) have a minority population 50 percent or more of the total population. For the entire study area, the minority population consists of 62 percent of the total population. The minority population includes the following populations: Black or African American (55.3 percent), Hispanic or Latino (3.0 percent), two or more races (1.6 percent) and Asian (1.2 percent).

Low-income Population

Low-income is defined as a household income at or below the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) poverty guidelines. The poverty guidelines are provided by the DHHS. In 2015, the DHHS poverty guideline for a four person family is \$24,250. The USCB *2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates* were used at the census block group level for the median household income within the PEL study area. The only available information for household income is provided at the block group level. The I-30 PEL study area consists of 22 census block groups. For the overall I-30 PEL study area, the median household income is \$26,561. The median household income ranges from

\$9,686 (census tract 28, block group 2) to \$90,962 (census tract 33.04, block group 2) within the study area. Eight out of the 22 census block groups in the study area have a median household income less than the DHHS poverty guideline of \$24,250 and accounts for approximately 42 percent of the total households in the study area.

The potential effects to EJ populations would be evaluated in accordance with the requirements of EO 12898 during the NEPA phase of project development.

Cultural Resources

In April 2014, AHTD began assessing the potential impacts to cultural resources by establishing Areas of Potential Effect (APE). For archeological resources, the APE encompasses the proposed and existing right-of-way (ROW). The APE for the footprint of historic structures and viewshed is 100-feet from the proposed ROW.

Archeological Resources

AHTD conducted background research including a historical records check at the Arkansas Archeological Survey (AAS). During this research, three cemeteries close to the APE and on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were identified, including the Oakland Cemetery, Fraternal Cemetery, and the National Cemetery located between the I-530 and I-630 interchanges east of I-30. They also identified two intact archeological sites directly within the APE. In addition, review of the AAS further revealed three archeological sites near the APE that were recommended for further investigation if the project limits are extended beyond the APE.

Historic Resources

A total of 164 historic-age standing structures were evaluated within the historic APE, of which 45 were either listed on the NRHP (2 listed structures: Terminal Warehouse Building and Reichardt House), located within a NRHP eligible historic district (21 structures), or were recommended potentially eligible by AHTD (22 structures). Of these 45 structures, one NRHP-eligible historic property, the Locust Street Bridge extending over the Union Pacific Railroad in North Little Rock, would be impacted by the PEL Recommendation. Section 4(f) use determinations for this NRHP-eligible historic property would be evaluated during the NEPA process. A description of these structures, including photographs and details related to the Locust Street Bridge, and the methodology described above are included in the *I-30 PEL Cultural Resources Survey Methodology Memorandum (Appendix G)*.

Upon completion of the background research, four scenarios were identified that had the potential to impact cultural resources and would trigger additional coordination with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) and/or investigations. The scenarios would vary based upon specific site conditions. The four scenarios included encountering 1) areas where additional ROW would be acquired; 2) bridge widening due to potential excavation beyond depths of previous disturbance and existing construction fill; 3) previously recorded archeological sites; and 4) areas of high probability based on the identification of previous structures that no longer exist as shown on the Sanborn 1913 maps or upland areas based on an overlay of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic map, soil type, and contours. **Table 1**

summarizes these potential survey areas due to their probability of containing intact cultural deposits.

Table 1. Potential Archeological Survey Areas

| Scenario | # of Areas | Source | Recommended Investigation |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Proposed ROW | 7 | Preliminary Schematic | Shovel testing |
| Bridge Widening | 22 | Preliminary Schematic | Augering |
| Recorded Archeological Sites | 2 | AHTD Memorandum | Documentation |
| High Probability | | | |
| Sanborn | 32 | Sanborn maps (1913) | Shovel testing |
| Upland | 4 | USGS Topo | Shovel testing |
| Total Potential Survey Areas | 67 | | |

Source: Project Team, 2015

This memorandum notes, as per coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on January 23, 2015, surveys shall also be conducted in any locations where construction impacts the soils within 2 feet of the original ground surface. Also per SHPO coordination, no further investigations are proposed for standing structures; and construction monitoring is anticipated to be necessary in some areas.

Pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.13, if cultural resource material is discovered during implementation of the project, the FHWA shall ensure that all construction activities cease in the area of discovery and the consulting parties are notified. The FHWA and the SHPO shall determine if the discovery is eligible for the NRHP. If so, the FHWA and the AHTD would develop a treatment plan for the historic properties which shall be reviewed and approved by the SHPO. Disputes arising from such review shall be resolved in accordance with stipulations provided in a Memorandum of Agreement or Programmatic Agreement, if needed.

Parks

Three parks potentially impacted by the PEL Recommendation were identified within the study area: North Shore Riverwalk Park, Julius Breckling Riverfront Park, and the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park. The PEL Recommendation could potentially impact approximately 1.7 acres of the North Shore Riverwalk Park, approximately 0.5 acre of the Julius Breckling Riverfront Park, and approximately 0.4 acre of the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park. Section 4(f) applicability would be determined during the NEPA process. Additionally, airspace agreements previously executed between the cities and FHWA at the I-30 Arkansas River Bridge will be closely examined during NEPA for potential effects to parks. None of the potentially impacted parks were purchased or improved with Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF), therefore Section 6(f) would not apply.

Surface Water Crossings/Wetlands

The PEL Recommendation would have potential impacts from permanent fill resulting from the construction of bridges and roadway widening. The PEL Recommendation could potentially impact approximately 0.9 acre of water features such as stream crossings, approximately 0.3 acre of emergent wetlands, and approximately 0.9 acres of

forested/shrub wetlands from permanent fill activity. The potential impact to the Arkansas River is approximately 0.8 acre. Based on these identified potential impacts, the PEL Recommendation would require an Individual Permit for Section 404 because of impacts to the Arkansas River that exceed approximately 0.5 acre. A jurisdictional wetlands determination and permitting determinations would be completed during the NEPA phase of project development.

Habitat

The PEL Recommendation could potentially impact approximately 0.4 acre of non-maintained herbaceous habitat, approximately 1.9 acres of woodland habitat (forested/shrub), and approximately 0.1 of riparian habitat. The majority of the vegetation present is herbaceous vegetation associated with the PEL Recommendation's existing ROW and adjacent developed parcels. Approximately 75 percent of the vegetated area within the alternative area is considered herbaceous. Of the total herbaceous percentage, approximately 1.5 to 2.0 percent is not maintained on a regular basis. This area is located near the southern part of the study area on either side of the railroad crossing. The maintained herbaceous vegetation may provide minimal habitat for some wildlife species, but overall it is considered poor habitat. The better or good quality habitat is found in the forest/shrub wetlands and the upland forest/shrub areas. Because these areas are located immediately adjacent to, or between, the existing roadway, the use of these areas by a variety of wildlife would be limited.

The Arkansas River and adjacent wetlands are considered good quality habitat for aquatic and riparian species. Again, these areas are immediately adjacent to the existing roadway as well as parks and other urban features. Human disturbances would limit, to some degree, the wildlife that may use these areas.

Woodland habitat is the forest/shrub areas located within the existing ROW primarily at the interchanges. The woodland habitat comprised approximately 7 to 8 percent of the total vegetated area. Riparian areas were very limited as most areas that could also be considered riparian were mapped as wetlands. The majority of streams through the project limits are maintained and contain limited riparian vegetation.

Hazardous Materials

There are eight hazardous material sites that could have a negative effect on the construction of the PEL Recommendation. These sites are identified to contain underground storage tanks and pose a potential risk due to the location and possibility that contamination may exist in the proposed ROW area of the PEL Recommendation. Four sites are Leaking Petroleum Storage Tank (LPST) sites, one is a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) site, and three sites are Petroleum Storage Tank (PST) sites. Locations of these sites are shown in the Environmental Impacts Map included in **Attachment A**. A more detailed analysis of hazardous materials, including field reconnaissance would occur during the NEPA phase.

Traffic Noise Receptors

Several facilities and residential areas are located adjacent to the alignment for the PEL Recommendation. These include 134 residential parcels (includes three apartment complexes with a total of 38 units on the first floor), 8 school parcels (University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Shorter College, Rockefeller Early Childhood [4 parcels], Pine Elementary School and Calvary Academy), 4 churches (Independence Baptist Church, Friendly Chapel Flame, First Pentecostal Church of Jesus Christ and Institute of Basic Life Principles), and 2 daycares (Alexander Turner Child Development Center and UAMS Headstart). A traffic noise modeling analysis and noise mitigation assessment, as applicable, would be completed in the NEPA phase.

Public/Agency Input

Details on all four public meetings held as part of the PEL Study are included in the *I-30 PEL Public Meeting #1 (#2, #3, and #4) Summary and Analysis Report(s)* (**Appendix C-2**). Summaries of each meeting are provided below.

Public Meeting #1 served to acquaint members of the public with the overall PEL process, solicited input on the PEL study area and environmental constraints and requested input on the problems as experienced by the public and the goals they would like to see achieved for the for I-30/I-40 facility. Common issues raised by the public related to increased congestion, safety concerns, ramp spacing and weaving problems, improved bicycle/pedestrian and transit accommodations and the desired protection of environmental resources, including historic structures/districts.

The Universe of Alternatives, Level 1 Screening process and resulting Preliminary Alternatives were presented at Public Meeting #2. In addition, attendees were asked to identify the Preliminary Alternatives they would like to see studied further in the PEL process. Similar problems and themes as those in Public Meeting #1 were identified in Public Meeting #2 such as congestion, ramping and weaving issues and a desire for the accommodation of additional transportation modes. The Preliminary Alternatives that ranked highest among the public for additional study included various solution types such as interchange improvements, bottleneck removal, I-30 express bus transit, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, queue warning and crash investigation sites.

The Level 2 Screening process and the resulting Reasonable Alternatives were presented at Public Meeting #3. Similar to previous public meetings, comments received generally provided suggestions for improvements such as ramping, interchange configuration, lighting recommendations, etc. A small sampling of commenters (9 total) cited a specific preference for one of the identified Reasonable Alternatives. Of those, 6 commenters expressed preference for the 8-Lane C/D, 1 commenter for the 10 Main Lane and 2 for the 10-lane C/D.

The Level 3 Screening process and resulting PEL Recommendation were presented at Public Meeting #4. Of the 35 comments received, one commenter cited specific preference for a 10-lane alternative, one commenter cited specific opposition for a 10-lane alternative, and two commenters cited portions of the project they favored such as

improving bicycle/pedestrian access and the replacement of the I-30 Arkansas River Bridge, but opposition to other aspects such as roadway widening. The remaining commenters generally stated issues of concern such as potential traffic noise impacts, access changes and ROW impacts; provided suggestions for improving future meetings; were complementary to the public meeting or provided specific suggestions for design improvements such as ramping modifications.

A multitude of outreach methods were utilized to specifically inform and engage EJ populations in the PEL process, as outlined below:

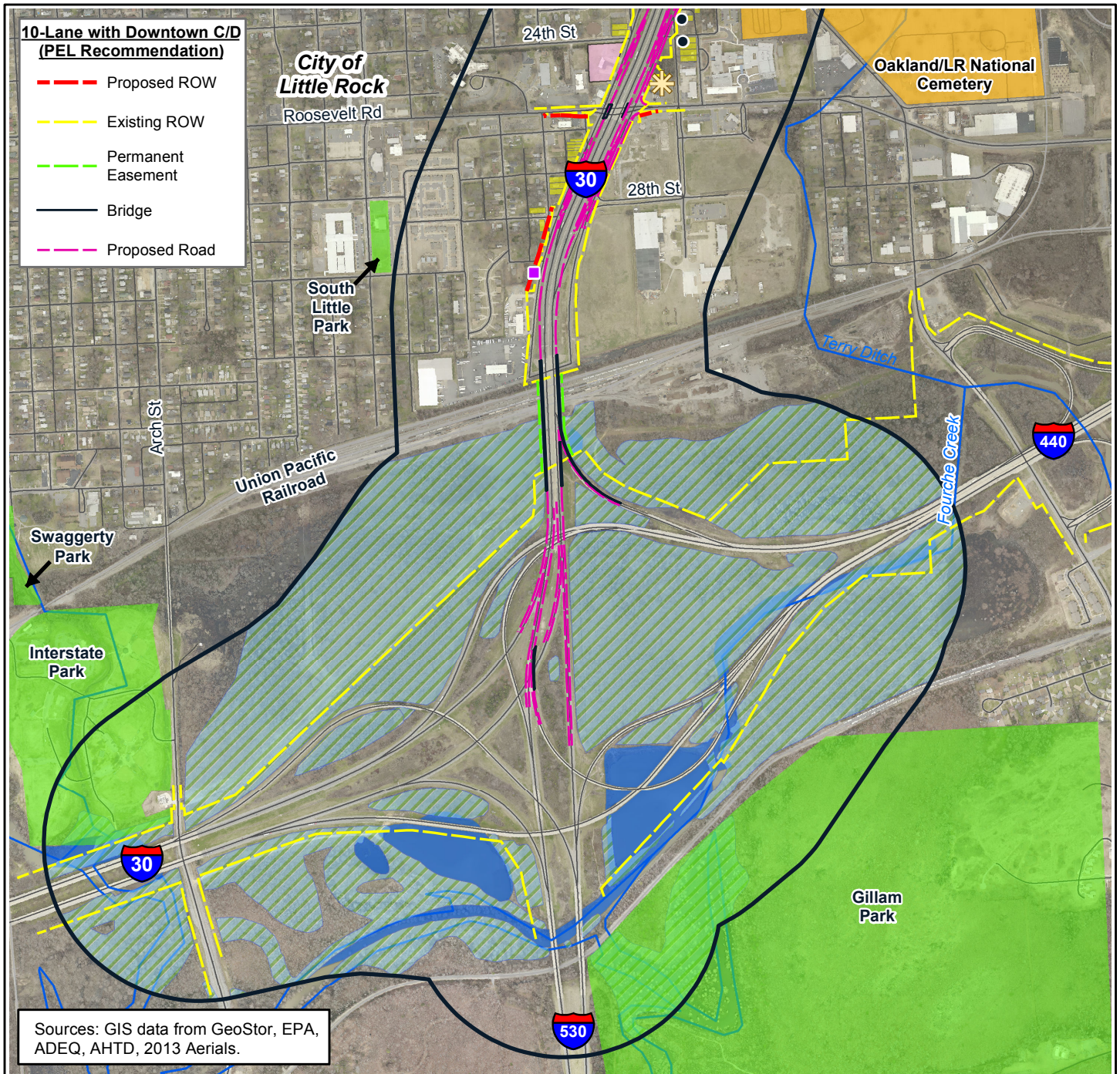
- Community meetings - Four community meetings were held at minority churches in October 2014 where Study Team members were able to reach out on a more personal level to attendees. Topics of discussion included the overall PEL process and inviting questions and comments for potential transportation solutions.
- Fliers and letters: Fliers advertising the public meetings were distributed throughout low-income and minority communities, focusing on areas of congregation and public use such as churches, gas stations and community facilities like the Boys and Girls Club of Little Rock. With the goal of reaching out to parents, fliers were also sent home with students of the Horace Mann Arts and Science Magnet School, an institution with a predominantly EJ study body (location of Public Meetings #2 and #4). Fliers and letters inviting participation at all the public meetings were mailed to ministers of minority congregations throughout the study area; and fliers were distributed to organizations/groups geared towards EJ communities including but not limited to the NAACP (Little Rock and North Little Rock chapters), Arkansas Hispanic and Black Chambers of Commerce, the Little Rock Housing Authority and various neighborhood associations of EJ areas.
- Visioning Workshop – Representatives of minority and low-income communities participated in the visioning workshop held in November 2014, providing input on priorities important to their communities, from aesthetic issues to preserving and enhancing historic and community resources. These same representatives will be invited to the second visioning workshop to be held during the NEPA phase of project development.
- Advertisements: For all of the Public Meetings, advertisements were placed in the Spanish newspaper *El Latino*, and public service announcements were made on radio stations generally catering to minority populations.

Agency coordination was primarily conducted through four Technical Workgroup Meetings (TWG). At these meetings, PEL Study documents, analyses, and the specific information and exhibits to be presented at upcoming public meetings were presented and comments solicited on these materials. In general, TWG members did not cite preference or opposition for any specific Reasonable Alternative or for the PEL Recommendation. Comments received typically related to specific mobility, design, cost, and environmental impact questions/comments. TWG comments received at all four TWG meetings and the responses to those comments are presented in the *I-30 PEL TWG Comment Documentation* appendix (**Appendix C-3**).

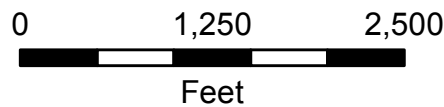
5.0 CONCLUSION

This inventory and preliminary evaluation of the potentially affected social, economic, and natural environment in the I-30 PEL study area provides the baseline information to be used in further project development efforts and environmental studies during the NEPA phase. The affected resources described in this report were examined using information that was reasonably attainable, stakeholder and agency coordination, and public involvement. All environmental resources described in this report would be re-examined during NEPA following additional engineering study and design refinements, field work, and continued agency, stakeholder, and public coordination on the proposed project.

Attachment A: Environmental Impacts Map

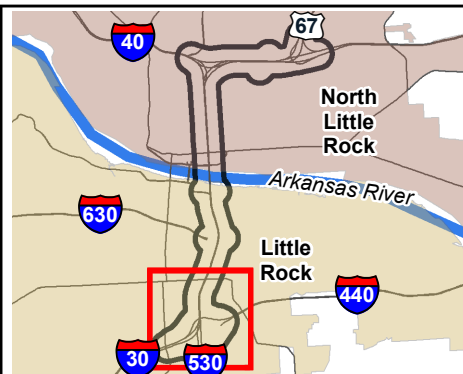


Disclaimer: Due to privacy protection, Environmental Justice information is not shown. To protect sites from looting and further destruction, all archeological site information and locations are not shown



LEGEND

- Study Area Limits
- NRHP Listed Structure
- NRHP Eligible Site
- Residential Displacement
- Commercial Displacement
- Billboard Impact
- Hazardous Material Site
- Historic District
- Cemetery
- Park
- Residential Parcel
- Church, School or Daycare Parcel
- Wetland
- Stream
- Water Body
- Road
- Rail Road



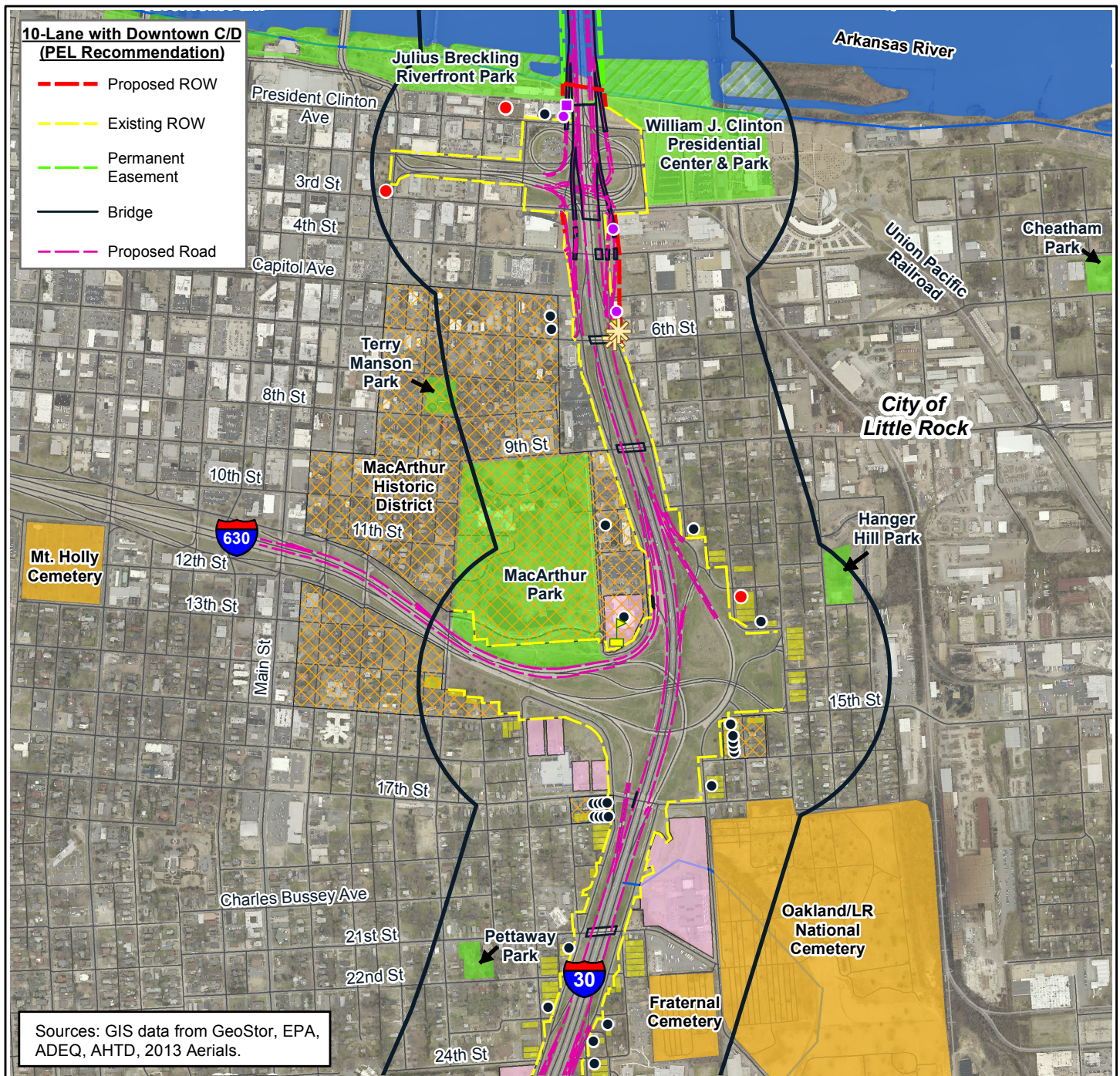
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS MAP

Sheet 1 of 5

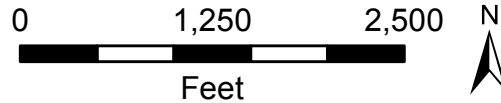
I-30 from I-530 to Hwy. 67

I-30 PEL Environmental Impacts Report

Pulaski County, Arkansas



Disclaimer: Due to privacy protection, Environmental Justice information is not shown. To protect sites from looting and further destruction, all archeological site information and locations are not shown



LEGEND

- Study Area Limits
- NRHP Listed Structure
- NRHP Eligible Site
- Residential Displacement
- Commercial Displacement
- Billboard Impact
- Hazardous Material Site
- Historic District
- Cemetery
- Park
- Residential Parcel
- Church, School or Daycare Parcel
- Wetland
- Stream
- Water Body
- Road
- Rail Road



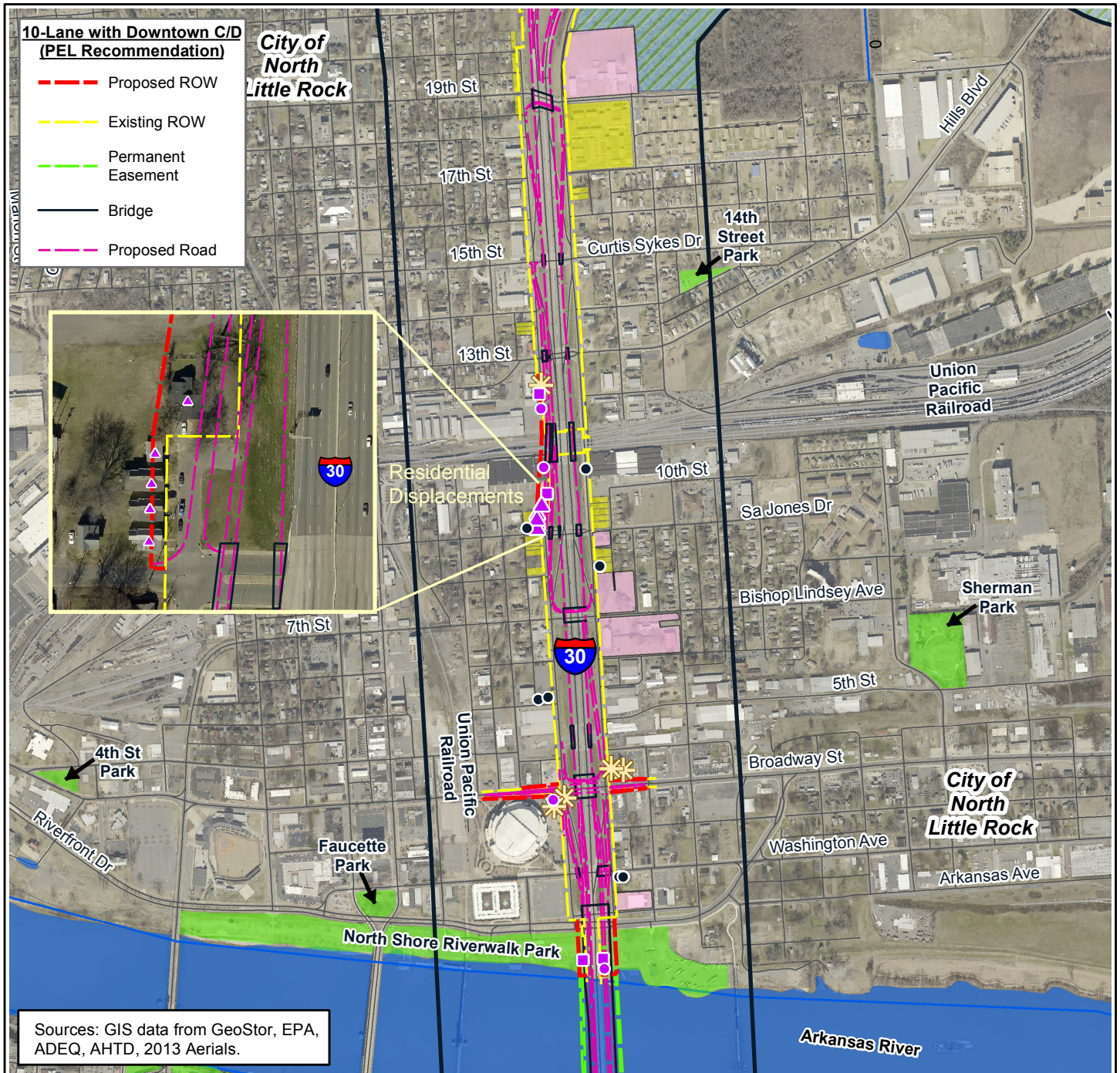
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS MAP

Sheet 2 of 5

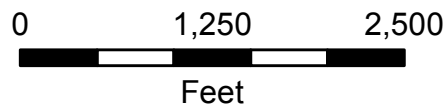
I-30 from I-530 to Hwy. 67

I-30 PEL Environmental Impacts Report

Pulaski County, Arkansas

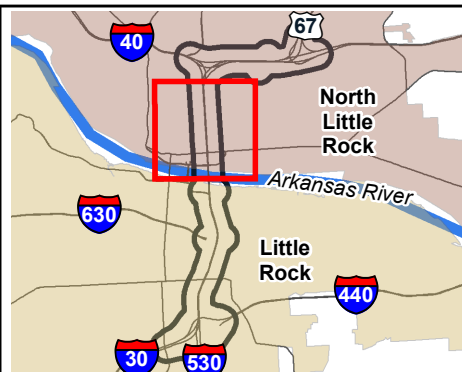


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LEGEND

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Study Area Limits | Park |
| NRHP Listed Structure | Residential Parcel |
| NRHP Eligible Site | Church, School or Daycare Parcel |
| Residential Displacement | Wetland |
| Commercial Displacement | Stream |
| Billboard Impact | Water Body |
| Hazardous Material Site | Road |
| Historic District | Rail Road |
| Cemetery | |

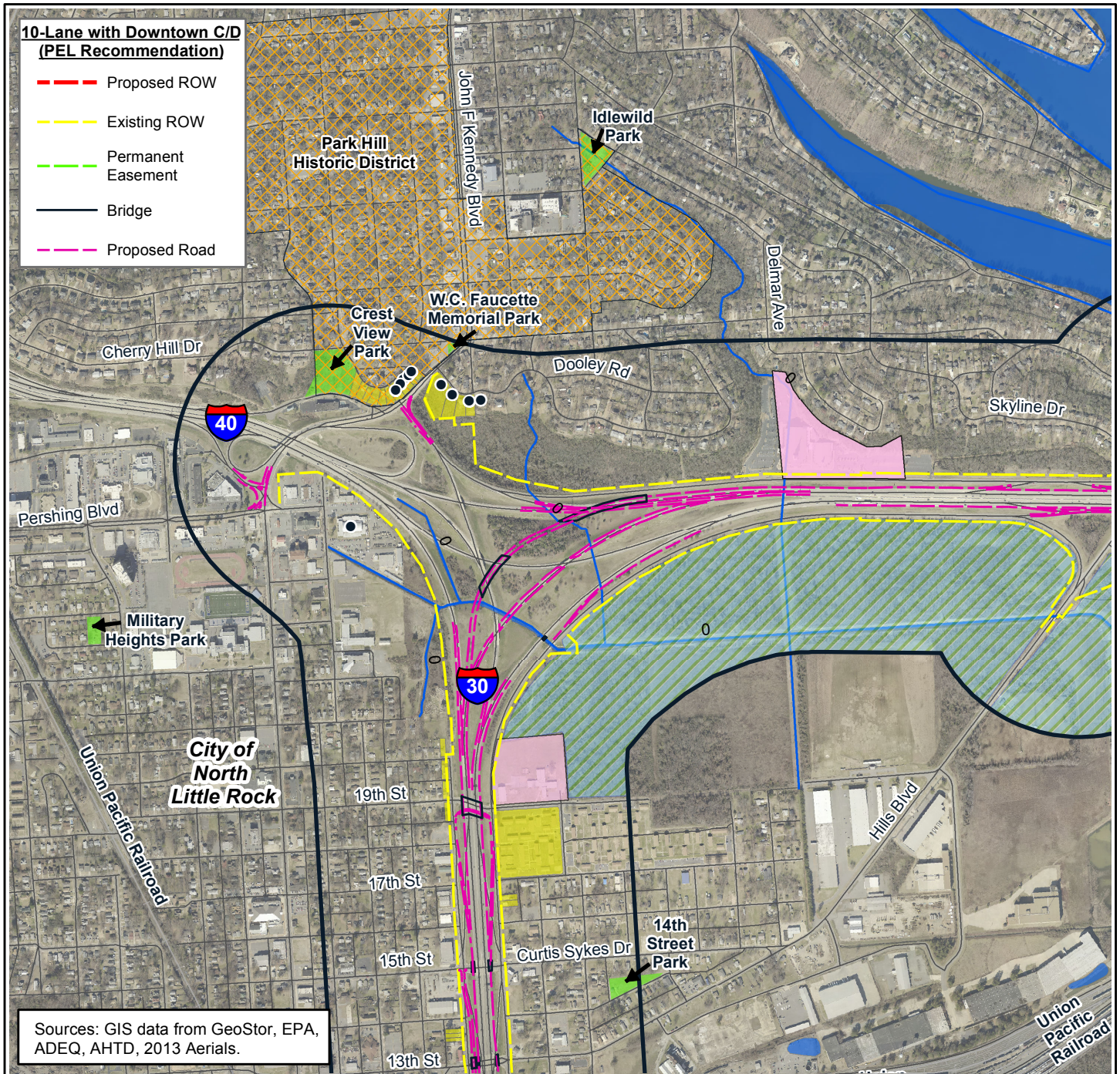


ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS MAP Sheet 3 of 5

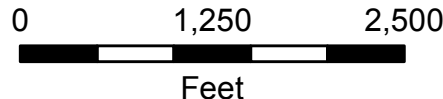
I-30 from I-530 to Hwy. 67

I-30 PEL Environmental Impacts Report

Pulaski County, Arkansas

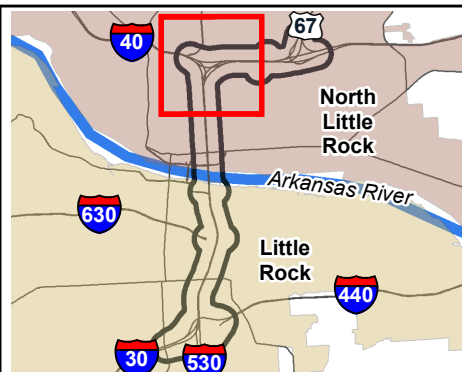


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LEGEND

- Study Area Limits
- NRHP Listed Structure
- NRHP Eligible Site
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- Commercial Displacement
- Billboard Impact
- Hazardous Material Site
- Historic District
- Cemetery
- Park
- Residential Parcel
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- Stream
- Water Body
- Road
- Rail Road



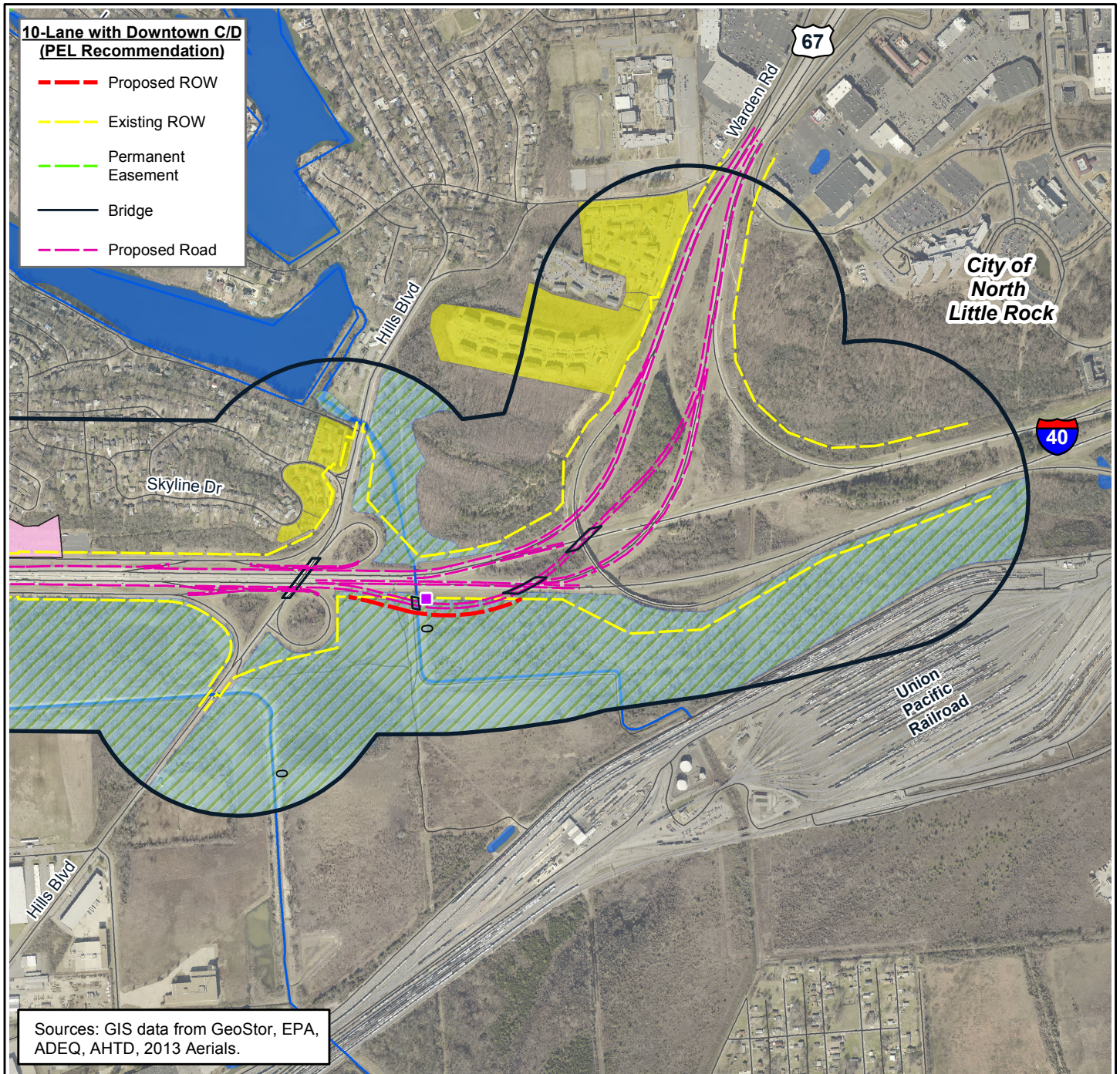
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS MAP

Sheet 4 of 5

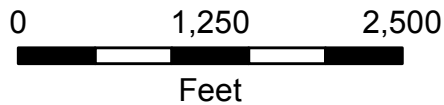
I-30 from I-530 to Hwy. 67

I-30 PEL Environmental Impacts Report

Pulaski County, Arkansas

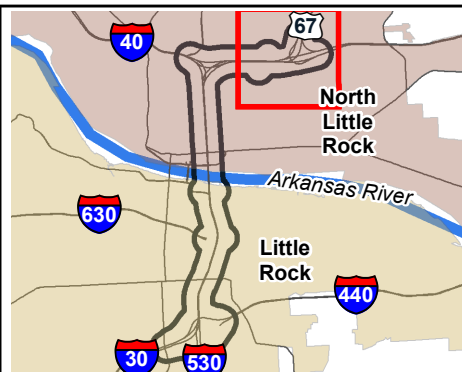


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LEGEND

- Study Area Limits
- NRHP Listed Structure
- NRHP Eligible Site
- Residential
- Displacement
- Commercial
- Displacement
- Billboard Impact
- Hazardous Material Site
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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS MAP Sheet 5 of 5

I-30 from I-530 to Hwy. 67

I-30 PEL Environmental
Impacts Report

Pulaski County, Arkansas