



# 336 Update

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROUTE 336 COALITION

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## Route 336 Project Picks Up Momentum

With construction underway on the four-lane Route 336 from Quincy to Macomb, the prospects of extending the road from Macomb to Peoria through Fulton County is picking up momentum among area residents, businesses and community leaders.

The proposed road would be a divided four-lane highway that would be accessible by crossroads, such as state and county highways and townships roads. Similar highways with this type of accessibility include Route 67 between Macomb and Monmouth, and Route 24 from Bartonville to Kingston Mines. The exact route of the 336 road through Fulton County has not yet been determined, but a plan developed in the 1970s outlined a possible path.

"Following the kickoff meeting last August, area legislators and community leaders have been solidly behind this project," noted Keith Miller, Spoon River College President and Vice President of the 336 Coalition. "It is imperative that residents of this region demonstrate their determination to bring the road into reality."

Preliminary studies on the road were completed in the 1970s by the Illinois Department of Transportation. But lack of a strong community effort to promote the road, along with questions about state and federal funding sources, led to the project not being pursued.

"This project is being revitalized because it is clear, now more than ever, that the economic viability of the Fulton County area will depend on being connected to a quality four-

lane highway system," said Mark Johann, President of the 336 Coalition. "Studies have shown that poor transportation is detrimental to our community's further progress."

The preeminent study on the road issue, entitled "The Impact of Poor Highways on Economic Development in Fulton County", was conducted in 1992 by the Economic Development Corporation of Fulton County. Among other findings, it noted that:

- \* Fulton County is a viable location for economic activities because of its central location between Chicago and St. Louis;

- \* Previous studies, two by Arthur Anderson Consulting and one by the Western Illinois Regional Counsel", noted the inadequate highway system and the need for a coordinated effort to put a highway in Fulton County;

- \* Economic development efforts in Fulton County are thwarted by what potential business developers have called "poor transportation."

In essence, the lack of a four-lane road through Fulton County has hindered community growth.

The strategy of the 336 Coalition is to build on the state-wide awareness of the needs for roads in the region. This awareness is evidenced in the 336 four-lane development between Quincy and Macomb and the upgrading of Route 67 between Galesburg-Monmouth-Macomb.

"It's important to understand that we are not working in competition with these other projects," Johann noted. "We want to be included with them to continue the preliminary studies needed for the Macomb to Peoria leg of the highway."

The 336 Coalition achieved its first huge success last fall when 400 people packed The Grand Room of the Heritage Inn in Canton to support the 336 campaign.

"This project has been going on for about 30 years," Johann said. "We see the resurgence of this effort as the beginning of the end, with the end being the completion of the project. We're committed to making Fulton County the Gateway to Western Illinois."



**The area between Macomb and Peoria needs a four lane road for economic progress**

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## Frequently Asked Questions (about the Route 336 project)

### ***What is the project status right now?***

Road projects are completed in three phases. The first is planning and corridor identification. Some of this work has already been done on the Macomb to Peoria section of the road, but since it was completed in the 1970s it will need to be re-examined and updated. During this process, there will be a number of hearings where public input will be sought. The discussion will center on corridor identification and environmental issues. After Phase I, the project moves to Phase II: creation of the construction plans and bidding process. Phase III is construction. Public support for this project is critical during all three phases.

The position of the 336 Coalition is this: we are working toward the completion of Phase I; a process that actually started 30 years ago. Let's get it done!

### ***What about funding for the project?***

Funding is an important consideration in each phase. We're estimating that Phase I planning will take 5 to 7 million dollars and can be completed in two to four years. We have an advantage because some of the planning from the 1970s could still be valid. However, it all has to be revisited.

### ***Just how realistic is a four-lane road in Fulton County?***

It is very realistic. We have the attention of a lot of the decision makers. Our challenge is to get the planning phase underway in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). We've been successful in getting our case in front of the people who are important. It is also important that progress is being made on the western extension of this same road. In some respects, this is not a "new" project, but just a logical extension of one of the most visible road projects in the state.

### ***What's the next step?***

The key is to maintain visibility and keep working with area legislators and IDOT. We don't want the project to end up like it did in the 1970s, dying for lack of momentum. That's where the 336 Coalition comes in.

We need to have our membership grow and remain active. We want people who are willing to write letters, attend meetings and get involved. Private citizens, business owners, community leaders and elected officials have to work together to get this project through. Now is the time to get involved!

## Lawmakers Voice Support for 336 Project

Imagine a meeting room filled with the most influential people in Western Illinois, all talking about the 336 road project. You've just imagined a meeting that took place on January 22, 1999 in the Graham Hospital Board Room in Canton.

The purpose of the meeting was to get uniform support from all legislators of both parties. The project was explained and the problems were all put on the table. In addition, a strategy was determined that all in attendance would support to get project moving.

"A lot of work went into that meeting," said 336 Coalition President Mark Johann. "The turnout was more than we hoped for. More people of importance to this project were in the same room than any other meeting that has ever convened in Fulton County."

Those in attendance included Congressmen Ray LaHood and Lane Evans; State Senators Carl Hawkinson, Laura Kent Donahue and George Shadid; State Representatives Rich Myers, Art Tenhouse, Mike Smith and Don Moffitt; Peoria Mayor Bud Grieves, Macomb Mayor Tom Carper, Canton Mayor Donald Edwards; and Fulton County Board Chairman Bernard Oaks.

"State Representatives Dave Leach and Ricca Sloan expressed their desire to be there but could not," said Johann. "We have contacted them, sent them information, and they are on board!"

The outcome was to move quickly to have a meeting with Governor George Ryan. That meeting was held on April 19. All the elected State officials expressed an interest to attend that meeting, including Congressman Ray LaHood.

"At this point, everything is proceeding as we hoped it would," said Johann.

Other rallies and interest projects are scheduled for this summer and fall to maintain project visibility with lawmakers.



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## Area Communities Support 336 Project

Support for the 336 Coalition's efforts to construct the Macomb to Peoria portion of the four-lane highway from area communities continues to grow. In addition to resolutions of support from the Fulton, Peoria and McDonough County boards, proclamations of support have been received from other communities in and around Fulton County.

The towns of Bushnell, Cuba, Norris, Farmington, Lewistown, Hanna City and others have endorsed the project, even though the exact route of the project has not been determined. In Bushnell, for example, the City Council, Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Association have all endorsed the project.

"Right now, we have Route 67 eight miles to our west as four-lane access," said Don Swartzbaugh, President of the Bushnell Chamber of Commerce. "But we are seriously limited when it comes to roads to the east. We would consider a four-lane road from Macomb to Canton to Peoria a significant benefit to our local manufacturing base and our residents, especially if it passed directly next to the city."

In addition to municipalities, letters of support have been received from the Fulton County Farm Bureau, International Union of Operating Engineers and the West Central Illinois Building and Construction Trades Council.

"The preliminary studies from the 1970s have shown that the proposed four-lane road would not require the acquisition of significant amounts of farmland," said 336 Coalition Treasurer Jim Fassino. "And the labor union support is even further testimony to the need for the roads by the trade workers whose jobs require a solid transportation base."


Additional support has been received from state and federal politicians, larger communities in the area and numerous organizations throughout the region.

## Join The 336 Coalition **TODAY!**

It's extremely important that individuals and organizations join the efforts of the 336 Coalition. For this project to become a reality, a strong and consistently committed effort must be shown to state and federal agencies. Your support facilitates effective communication with these agencies, and keeps you informed on the progress being made to benefit our region through economic development.

### WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN?

- \* *You and your company are concerned about the future of Western Illinois*
- \* *You want to provide a high quality of life, both in the near future and for years to come*
- \* *You acknowledge the need for safe and efficient travel in the area*
- \* *You want to see business and industry grow in this region*



**YES!** I want to keep the momentum moving for a four-lane highway in Western Illinois. Sign me up for membership in the 336 Coalition.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Company (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Donations of all sizes will be accepted. Please make checks payable to the "336 Coalition" and mail to:**  
**336 Coalition, P.O. Box 761, Canton, IL 61520**

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

*Individual - \$25 • Business and Industry under 20 employees - \$100 • Business and Industry over 20 employees - \$200 • Cities, Townships and Municipalities - \$500 • Counties - \$1,000*

**Macomb**

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### **336 Coalition Officers**

President	Mark Johann, Norwest Bank
Vice President	Dr. Keith Miller, Spoon River College
Treasurer	Jim Fassino, MidAmerica National Bank
Secretary	Tony Rolando, Canton Chamber of Commerce

### **336 Coalition Officers**

Rod Ahitow, Illinois River Correctional Center  
 Leonard Barnard, Fulton County Board Liaison  
 Ed Cox, Spoon River Electric Cooperative  
 Jim Davis, Maurer-Stutz, Inc.  
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