



336 Update

The Official Newsletter of The Route 336 Coalition

Spring
2004

Jobs, Jobs, and More Jobs Will be Created By 336

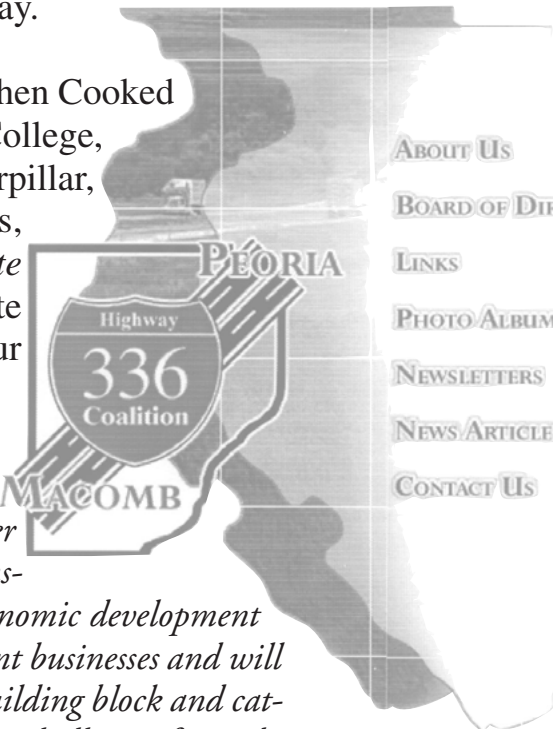
The members of the 336 Coalition have been busy conducting surveys and in person interviews with a number of business and government entities from Peoria to Macomb in an effort to determine what the impact of building 336 from Peoria to Macomb will have on employment in the West Central Illinois area (employment beyond the jobs created during the construction phase of the project).

A preliminary review of the surveys that have been completed indicate that a significant number of new jobs would be created and that overall economic activity will be greatly benefited from the construction of the highway.

To date, a few of those surveyed include Kitchen Cooked Chips, Central Illinois Energy, Spoon River College, City of Peoria, Davis Sand & Gravel, Caterpillar, Lane Transfer, Manufacturing Services, Century Concrete, and others. If any *Update* readers would like the opportunity to complete the survey as well, please contact us via our website at www.336Coalition.org.

"If the central part of Illinois, with Peoria as its center, is going to continue to grow and prosper and keep pace, it must be as well served by transportation as it is with the other ingredients of economic development or it will wither, become less attractive to its current businesses and will decline economically. Highway 336 is a major building block and catalyst to transportation development serving Central Illinois from the Mississippi river to Peoria and, ultimately, to Chicago.

Gerald L. Shaheen
Group President
Caterpillar Inc.



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Great News in the Transportation Bill For 336

The recently passed house version of the Transportation bill contains **\$3 million dollars** for continued (demonstration) funds for Highway 336 from Peoria to Macomb. Those monies will allow IDOT to continue work on 336 following completion of Phase one of the project.

Please extend your hearty thanks to Congressmen LaHood and Evans for their efforts in backing the inclusion of 336 in this important legislation. Any contact you have with Senators Durbin and Fitzgerald should include asking for their support as the Senate deliberates over their version of the Bill.

Of greatest benefit to 336 in the bill, passed by the House, is the increase in formula funding for Illinois. It is likely that it will be those funds that Phase Three of the project (land acquisition and construction) will come from.

Formula funding pertains to the amount of funds returned to Illinois from the federal tax dollars "collected at the gas pump". The House bill contains a 28% increase in funding for Illinois over the prior legislation. Kudos to all of our legislators for their efforts along those lines, especially Speaker of the House Denny Hastert.

Update on "Tea-Lu"

from the desk of 336 Board Member, Jerry Lack, Staff Assistant to Congressman Lane Evans

The U.S. House overwhelmingly approved H.R. 3550, "The Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users" (TEA LU), on April 2nd. The House bill includes \$284 billion for highway, mass transit and safety programs, (including \$3 million for Illinois 336 from Macomb to Peoria). The Senate in March passed its version of the bill which authorized \$318 billion. The Bush Administration has threatened a veto if the final figure in the bill goes above \$256 billion.

For those who are wondering where the nickname of "Tea-Lu" originated, Lu is the name of the wife of the Chair of the Transportation Committee, Congressman Don Young.

A House-Senate conference committee is now working to combine the two bills and assemble a final package to be approved by the full House and Senate. A key issue now being decided is the final funding level. House Speaker Dennis Hastert has said no decisions have been reached on the amount. However, some observers believe the final cost of the bill will be approximately \$290 billion and that the President

would probably support that amount.

Because a final agreement is unlikely to be reached quickly, Congress will take up a bill to extend current highway funding programs, which would expire without legislative action. At issue is how long an extension to approve. While some favor a two-month extension, others prefer it only go for one month to put pressure on the White House to agree to a bill with higher funding levels.

It is also possible that a final bill will only provide funding for about a year. Congress would then revisit the issue to determine if additional funding is available. Many are also urging that any six-year reauthorization include at a minimum the \$318 billion funding level included in the Senate bill.

Cong. Evans will continue to work with Congressman Ray LaHood and the Illinois Congressional Delegation to ensure the maximum amount of funding for Illinois and Illinois 336 is included in the final version of the bill.



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IDOT Upate

IDOT continues to make good progress toward completion of Phase One of the Peoria to Macomb segment of 336.

Completion of the Corridor portion of Phase One is expected sometime this summer. The alignment phase will then commence to define the exact location of the highway within the corridor. The Right-of-way required for the roadway is estimated to be approximately 300 feet but will vary depending on the surrounding terrain.

If you have seen any of those big white "X's" out and about the countryside, they enable IDOT to reference aerial photography which will be used to do the alignment studies. The information will greatly enhance IDOT's ability to factor in a wide variety of variables specific to each potential alignment. That will expedite the process and better enable IDOT to project the expected costs and scope of each alignment.

As was the case with the Corridor portion of Phase One, IDOT will then go on to conduct additional public hearings to gather input from those who have an interest or opinion on any of the proposed alignments.

A trip to the Upgrade 74 website shows that IDOT estimates completion of the much needed improvements to I-74 in Peoria to be at 12%. The moderate Spring weather we have experienced has enabled the construction crews to make considerable progress. The address of that site is www.upgrade74.com.

336 Coalition Membership Drive On Going

Over the past year, the 336 Coalition board has been working hard to increase the Coalition's dues paying membership.

Memberships funds are used to pay for our newsletter, sponsor rallies, and pay for other expenses all aimed at advocating the four-lane highway from Peoria to Macomb.

If you're not currently a member, please consider joining now by completing the enrollment section of this month's *Update*.



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



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