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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIMPO Hosting Public Meetings for Transit Study

Marion, IL

The Southern Illinois MPO (SIMPO) is sponsoring a comprehensive analysis of public transit service in Williamson and Jackson counties. There are three primary providers of public transportation services within the SIMPO boundary. These are; RIDES Mass Transit District, Jackson County Mass Transit District (JCMTD), and Saluki Express. The purpose of the study is to assess these systems, quantify current and future demand for transit service in the region, identify opportunities for system coordination, identify options to meet projected demand and evaluate the potential for additional funding.

The project recently completed its *Assessment of Existing Conditions* report. This report provides a detailed profile of the region's transit systems, as well as a demographic analysis of the SIMPO region. This report's findings will be the basis of the study's final recommendations. The report is available on the SIMPO web site at: <http://www.greateregypt.org/SIMPO/simpo-hosting-public-meetings-for-transit-study/>

The study will host two public workshops on Thursday, March 2 to receive your input. The public will have the opportunity to discuss transit needs with the study staff and receive information about the ongoing transit study. The two locations and times for these workshops are:

Southern Illinois University Student Center
1255 Lincoln Drive
Carbondale, Illinois 62901
Thursday, March 2 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The Pavilion of the City of Marion
1602 Sioux Drive
Marion, IL 62959
Thursday, March 2 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Southern Illinois University and the Saluki Express also recently announced plans to reduce some transportation services due to funding constraints. The three transit providers (Saluki Express, RIDES and JCMTD) are currently working together to evaluate ways to mitigate this pending service reduction. These workshops will provide an opportunity to provide input on those plans as well.

These will be "drop in" events. You're invited to participate at the time and location most convenient for you.

The study also includes a public survey via the internet which asks for input on the region's transit services. Feedback on this survey is desired from everyone, whether or not they currently use the local transit system. The survey may be accessed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SI-Transit>.

For more information about the Transit Study, please contact Joe Zdankiewicz at (618) 997-9351 or jozdankiewicz@greateregypt.org. or visit <http://www.greateregypt.org/SIMPO/simpo-hosting-public-meetings-for-transit-study/>