

**Date:** July 18, 2013

**Re:** South County Connector Environmental Impact Study

Members of The American Institute of Architects St. Louis Chapter have reviewed the South County Connector Draft Environmental Impact Study and we have concerns on many levels, including the *estimated* cost of spending \$110 million for a roadway to run from Big Bend and Flora Avenues in Maplewood to River Des Peres at Watson in Shrewsbury, approximating the route of Metrolink.

We share the concerns that have been expressed by Maplewood, Shrewsbury, Citizens for Modern Transit, Trailnet and the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis, where one-fourth of the roadway is to be located. We believe that the Connector's impact on the newly redeveloped Deer Creek retail center, its impact on residential areas and its impact on recently developed trails places automotive transportation issues over economic development and quality of life issues in our community.

One of our primary objections is perhaps more subtle. That is, we are concerned that the development of this limited access primary conduit may diminish the character of adjacent neighborhoods, reduce their walkability and even harm the small businesses located on the many secondary alternative routes that we all use when traversing the many options available to travel from Shrewsbury to Maplewood.

The Board of Directors of AIA St. Louis, on behalf of its members, believes that the environmental impact of the current proposal(s) for the Connector is not worth the marginal benefit it might provide by reducing a short trip by minutes.