



Potential I-55 Improvements
at Airport Road and at IL 126/Essington Road
Community Advisory Group Meeting #2
July 19, 2011

Overview

The Villages of Romeoville, Bolingbrook and Plainfield are conducting a Phase I Preliminary Engineering & Environmental study for potential improvements along I-55 between the US Route 30 and Weber Road interchanges. The public involvement portion of this study will follow the guidelines set forth by NEPA and the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS). A key component of the success of the study is public involvement. As part of the robust public involvement process, a Community Advisory Group (CAG) was created. The CAG is a voluntary group of stakeholders that includes community officials, residents, business owners and users of I-55. The CAG serves an active part of the decision making process. The role of the group is to provide detailed insight of community and stakeholder interests

Community Advisory Group Meeting #2

The second CAG meeting for the potential I-55 interchange improvement study was held on July 19, 2011 at the Romeoville Village Hall from 9:30 am – 11:30 am. The meeting included introductions, distribution of updated content for the CAG binders, a PowerPoint presentation, and one small group workshop. The workshop was to garner feedback on the draft problem statement.



The following CAG members were in attendance:

Jim Sanders, Plainfield
Laurie McPhillips, Will Co Board & Forest Preserve District of Will Co.
Scot Dutler, Plainfield resident
Cameron Bettin, Plainfield Park District
George M. Milton, Plainfield resident
Dennis Poma, Plainfield resident
Barb Poma, Plainfield resident
Michael A. Lambert, Plainfield resident
Bill Lamb, Plainfield resident
Tom Mooney, Plainfield resident
Randall Jessen, Plainfield Superintendent of Public Works
Greg Bott, Plainfield Park District
Nathan Darga, Romeoville Planner
Eric Olson, Romeoville resident
Suzanne Benedetto, Plainfield resident
Dave Sniegowski, Plainfield property owner
Jim Klick, Airport Support Network representative
Mike Evans, Bolingbrook Chamber of Commerce
Kevin Calkins, Plainfield resident
Jon Zabrocki, Romeoville Village Engineer
Thomas Pawlowicz, Bolingbrook Assistant Village Engineer
Andi French, Plainfield Township
Bridget Domberg, Romeoville Chamber of Commerce
Ron See, Bolingbrook resident
John Noak, Mayor of Romeoville
Steve Gulden, Romeoville, Village Manager
Dr. Bernice Holloway, Romeoville Village Clerk
Ken Griffin, Romeoville Village Trustee
Brad Johnstone, Plainfield resident

Also present at the meeting were 12 members of the general public and 1 representative from Clark Dietz who is conducting a Phase I study for improvements at the Weber Road interchange with I-55. Steve Schilke, Patrick Rinoa and Justin Romeo from IDOT were present. Dave Heslinga, Mike Rechtorik, Eric Lindemann, Nate Groff and Heidi Voirol of V3 Companies and Mark Dwiggins from the Upchurch Group presented the meeting and facilitated the small group exercises. Clarita Lao from Huff & Huff was present as the environmental sub consultant for the study.



Summary of Activities

The meeting began with a welcome and introductions of the project team members, CAG members and the general public. CAG members were divided into five groups for the draft problem statement workshop and each was given more information for their binders and a copy of the draft problem statement.

The presentation began with a review of the phase 1 study process and project schedule. The discussion then moved on to a review of the first CAG meeting. There was a brief review of the CAG #1 meeting objectives and the introduction to Community Context. A summary was presented for the results of Exercise 1a - "Is there a need for improved access to I-55 between the U.S. 30 and Weber Road interchanges? Why or why not?" The results from Exercise 1b was also presented - "If access improvements such as new interchanges are to be evaluated as part of this study, what are the community values, environmental resources and economic interests that need to be considered in this evaluation?" Copies of these results are found in the CAG 1 summary that was distributed to be included in the binders.

The next portion of the presentation focused on the results of the Community Context Audit. The results were shown graphically and reflected the opinion of the surveys received to date. Based on the responses it was clear that natural resources were important to respondents and an emphasis was also placed upon accommodating non-motorized traffic.

As part of assisting in the review of the draft problem statement an explanation of the Problem Statement Development process was presented and changing demographics data was given to facilitate the discussion. The CAG was presented with a draft copy of the problem statement and small group discussions were conducted to provide feedback on the statement. Facilitators collected the group feedback and presented the information to the entire audience present.

Draft Problem Statement Presented

Forecasted growth in Will County and the Villages of Romeoville, Bolingbrook and Plainfield will cause a significant increase in travel demand on an already congested roadway network that provides access to and from I-55. Opportunity for traffic to either enter I-55 in a southbound direction or exit I-55 in a northbound direction is not available over a six-mile length of the interstate highway between interchange locations at US Route 30 and at Weber Road. Access improvements are needed within the study corridor to reduce traffic delay and congestion at the existing interchanges and to provide greater opportunity for economic development and employment opportunities for the forecasted growth in the three affected communities while being sensitive to existing environmental features.

Summary of comments received:

- The last sentence should include community and neighborhood
- Should be complimentary functions between all proposed improvements within the study corridor
- To the second sentence add "to facilitate regional connectivity as well as full access to and from I-55"



- In the third sentence after needed add “including non-motorized transportation and mass transit
- Non-motorized needs are not being met
- Need integration to/with access to mass transit
- Include truck traffic as a concern
- The problem statement should not limit the section between Weber and US Route 30
- Safety, cost, residential neighborhoods and natural/human environment should be included as a consideration
- Note that it is public roadway that is congested

The comments will be considered and a revised draft problem statement will be presented at the next meeting.

After the draft problem statement workshop a brief discussion was made of the project purpose and need and of the alternative evaluation process. Lastly, the engineering toolbox was discussed. The toolbox highlighted possible improvement options for the area. They included arterial roadway improvements as well as interchange configurations and improvements for non-motorized traffic.

The CAG meeting was closed and then opened to public comment. The following is a sample of the comments received:

1. I have been through this public involvement process with I-355 in the past. Don't be afraid of it. It actually works.
2. How do you weigh the impact of the feeder roads to the Interstate? *Reply: Once the alternatives have been narrowed down to just a few we will look at the projected ADT and the impacts to the local roadway network.*
3. What is the approximate date for the next CAG meeting? *Reply: We anticipate that the next CAG meeting will be sometime in October.*
4. I'm concerned with the CSS model. How are we assured that our community concerns are being heard? Will the decisions come from the CAG? Who makes the ultimate decision? *Reply: IDOT does listen. The CAG can make recommendations but the Project Study Group will make the final determinations.*
5. Reiterate the comment made regarding the public involvement process and that it works.
6. What's the funding source? What's the time frame of when things can happen? *Reply: Phase I of this project is fully funded with Federal and local funding. However Phases II and III are not currently funded by IDOT's fiscal year 2011 to 2016 Proposed Improvement Program but will be considered when prioritizing for future programs. The entire Phase I process is expected to last 36 months.*
7. What is the area to be considered for improvements? Can it be widened beyond Weber and US Route 30? *Reply: This study is limited to the area between Weber and US Route 30. The limits will not be expanded.*
8. Clark Dietz commented on the I-55/Weber Road alternative status.



9. How and what is the process that we can get educated on the improvements for the I-55/Weber Road project? *Reply: There is a link on the I-55 website to the Weber Road study www.dot.state.il.us/WeberRoad/index.html. The website has information regarding that study as well as study related documents.*
10. The Mayor of Romeoville commented on the trail plans for the Village. He will provide maps of the Village's and Park District's trails at the next meeting. He also suggested that Bolingbrook and Plainfield also provide maps.