



COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP SEES RESULTS

In September of 2006 the Community Advisory Group (CAG) met twice to provide input to the Project Study Team (PST) on what the roadway should look like for the different segments of Illinois Route 159. Please see the map on page 3 showing the different segments of the project. The CAG selected from several roadway sections with the goal of improving safety, reducing congestion, and addressing pedestrian needs and the needs of the community. The roadway sections selected by the CAG are illustrated on page 4 of this newsletter. The PST used these recommendations to prepare preliminary plans for several design alternatives for the CAG to review and provide input. Preliminary design alternatives are potential improvements to Illinois Route 159 that address issues in the Problem Statement. Alternatives may vary by the number and width of lanes, the location of the centerline of the road, or the inclusion of sidewalks or median. The CAG met twice in January of 2007 to review proposed alternatives for the south and north segments of the project and again in March of 2007 to review proposed alternatives for the Central Business District and Historic Section (between Clay Street and East Wickliffe Avenue). The following articles briefly describe the CAG's process of providing input to the PST on the proposed alternatives.

IN THIS ISSUE

This newsletter provides an update on the results of the Community Advisory Group's efforts including a sneak preview at what alternatives will be shared with the public this summer.

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CAG Listens to Presentation of Alternatives

ILLINOIS ROUTE 159 PROBLEM STATEMENT

"The transportation problem in the City of Collinsville along Illinois Route 159 is the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and safety within a highly urbanized and historically significant section of the community that promotes and sustains economic development and redevelopment of the Central Business District."

CAG REVIEWS ALTERNATIVES

As the CAG reviewed the alternatives for each segment, the Project Study Team (PST) presented a comparison of the alternatives based on the criteria listed below:

- Improvements to Safety
- Improved Traffic Flow
- Economic Development and Redevelopment of the CBD
- Historic Preservation (Continued to Page 2)



A MESSAGE FROM IDOT:

Since the last newsletter, members of the Community Advisory Group have been working very hard to provide feedback to the Project Study Team on the alternatives for the proposed improvement to Illinois Route 159. Their efforts have contributed to the development of the alternatives that IDOT will share with the public this summer. I would like to thank the Community Advisory Group for their efforts and encourage everyone in the community to attend the upcoming public involvement meeting to view the alternatives and provide input to the Project Study Team.

Sincerely,
Mary C. Lamie, PE
Deputy Director of Highways
Region Five Engineer



CAG Studies the Impacts to the Community

CAG REVIEWS ALTERNATIVES

(continued from page 1)

- Residential and Commercial Displacements
- Social and Economic Impacts; and
- Ability to Accommodate Aesthetic Improvements

The CAG reviewed the alternatives for each of the segments and recommended that some alternatives warranted additional study for presentation at the upcoming public involvement meeting. After the public involvement meeting this summer, the PST will further analyze the alternatives based on public input and a variety of additional criteria including cost, utility impacts, constructability, and environmental considerations. At the conclusion of the analysis process, the PST will select the preferred alternative for the improvement to Illinois Route 159 and present it to the public at a public involvement meeting.

THE SOUTH SEGMENT

South Morrison Street to Church Street

On January 23, 2007, the Community Advisory Group (CAG) looked at a variety of proposed alternatives for the south segment of this project. The CAG recommended that the Project Study Team (PST) use Roadway Section #1 (five 12 ft. lanes) and Roadway Section #2 (five 11 ft. lanes) to develop proposed alternatives for this segment. Sketches of these roadway sections are shown on page 4 of this newsletter. The PST developed six alternatives using these sections and shared them with the CAG. The CAG raised a number of questions during the presentation. Some of the questions involved lane configuration and right of way acquisition practices. Answers to these technical questions helped the CAG recommend two alternatives and a sub-alternative for further study and presentation to the public. The alternatives recommended were based on Roadway Sections #1 and #2.

THE NORTH SEGMENT

East Wickliffe Avenue to Kinloch Street

On January 30, 2007, the Community Advisory Group (CAG) looked at two proposed alternatives for the north segment of the project. Like the south segment, these alternatives were based on Roadway Section #1 (five 12 ft. lanes) and Roadway Section #2 (five 11 ft. lanes).

After the presentation and a review of the plans, the CAG asked several questions to help them visualize the proposed alternatives by comparing them to a familiar nearby roadway. The CAG asked; "How wide are travel lanes on Belt Line Road?";
(Continued to Page 3)



of Collinsville. On March 13, 2007, the Community Advisory Group (CAG) looked at proposed alternatives for the historic segment of Illinois Route 159 in Collinsville. The CAG was presented with alternatives developed from Roadway Section #2 (five 11 ft. lanes), Roadway Section #3 (four 11 ft. lanes and a raised median), and Roadway Section #4 (four 11 ft. lanes). The CAG learned about the advantages and disadvantages of each of the roadway sections used to develop the alternatives. The CAG then reached a consensus that the PST study and present to the public the alternatives developed from the Roadway Sections #3 (four 11 ft. lanes with a raised median) and #4 (four 11 ft. lanes for this segment of roadway.)

THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

The Project Study Team (PST) looked at two alternatives for improving traffic flow through downtown Collinsville. The first alternative is to carry a five lane section through downtown and remove the “jog” in Illinois Route 159. The second alternative was to create a pair of north-south roads (also called a “one-way couple”) to move traffic through the downtown, similar to the Vandalia Street/ South Morrison Street couple. The PST refined the first alternative to minimize impacts to businesses through downtown, improve intersection flow, and provide possibilities for replacing the on-street parking and/or providing green space in the Central Business District. The one-way couple proposed to the PST during the public involvement effort was to utilize South Morrison Street for southbound traffic and existing Illinois Route 159 for northbound traffic. After reviewing the one-way couple, the CAG decided not to carry this alternative forward. Reasons for not studying this alternative further included the impacts to the South Morrison Street neighborhood, disturbance to the Saint Peter and Paul School Library access, loss of parking in this neighborhood, residential displacements required for this alternative, and potential impacts to businesses due to one-way streets.

THE NORTH SEGMENT

(Continued from page 2)

“How much traffic is on Belt Line Road compared to Illinois Route 159?”; and “How wide are tractor trailer trucks?”. The Project Study Team (PST) explained that Belt Line Road has different design criteria than Illinois Route 159 because they serve different needs. The PST did some research and determined that although lane widths vary on Belt Line Road, lanes are only 10 ft. wide in some locations. Traffic on Belt Line Road is currently about 17,500 vehicles per day, and traffic on Illinois Route 159 is currently about 20,900 vehicles per day. Large trucks are approximately 8 ft. in width. Due to the nature of the traffic, Illinois Route 159 must have at least 11 ft wide lanes. The CAG recommended that the Project Study Team continue to study and present both alternatives to the public this summer.

THE HISTORIC SEGMENT

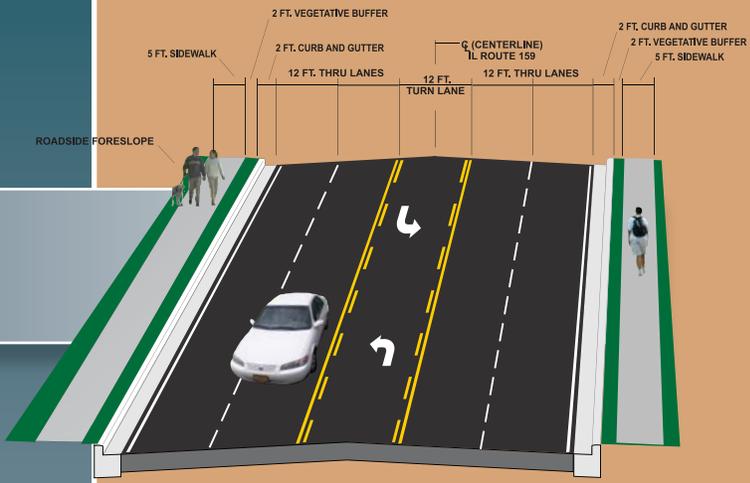
Clay Street to East Wickliffe Avenue

The Project Study Team has received more feedback from the public on this segment of the project than any other because of its importance to the character

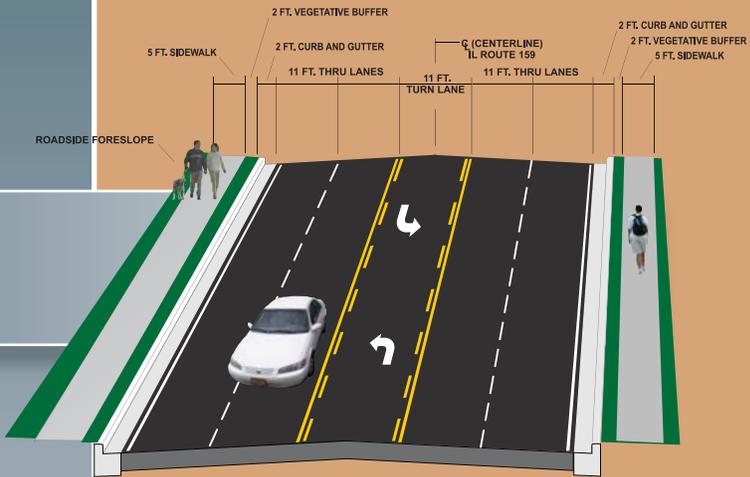


ROADWAY SECTIONS

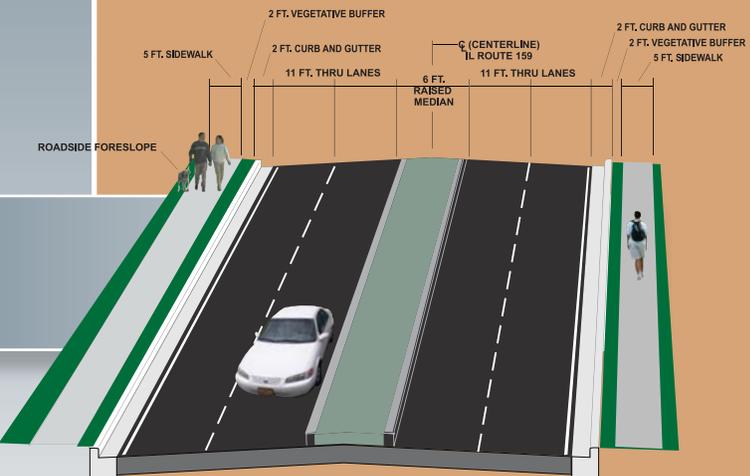
ROADWAY SECTION #1
FIVE - 12' LANES WITH CURB & GUTTER AND SIDEWALK



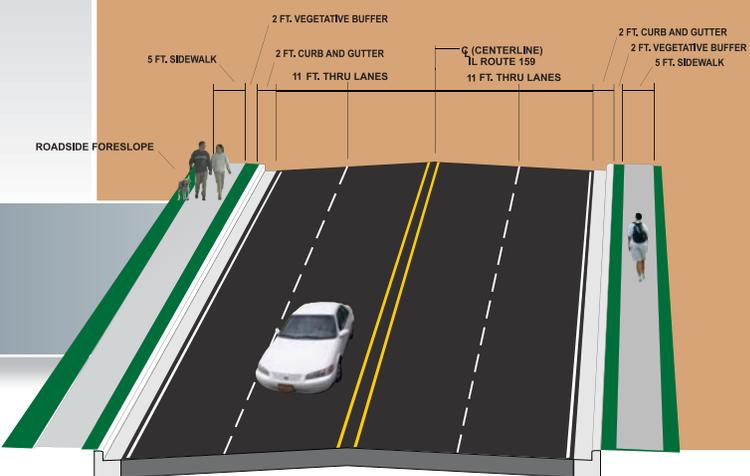
ROADWAY SECTION #2
FIVE - 11' LANES WITH CURB & GUTTER AND SIDEWALK



ROADWAY SECTION #3
FOUR - 11' LANES WITH RAISED MEDIAN, CURB & GUTTER AND SIDEWALK



ROADWAY SECTION #4
FOUR - 11' LANES WITH CURB & GUTTER AND SIDEWALK





CAG Reviews Alternatives

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Project Study Team developed a Purpose and Need statement for the proposed improvement to Illinois Route 159. This statement was based on the Problem Statement developed by the Community Advisory Group (shown on page 1 of this newsletter), other public input, and analysis of the traffic and safety data for this section of roadway. The Purpose and Need Statement is necessary to gain the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval for IDOT to proceed with right of way acquisition and final design plans. The following is an abbreviated version of the Purpose and Need Statement. The complete Purpose and Need Statement may be viewed on the project website at www.dot.il.gov/ilroute159 or contact the project study team for a copy of the complete statement. (See Page 6 for the Contact Information.)

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve traffic capacity, to reduce traffic congestion, to improve safety and to enhance economic opportunities by upgrading the existing Illinois Route 159 corridor which extends through the City of Collinsville from south of Belt Line Road (near Kinloch Street) to just north of South Morrison Avenue (near the Madison/St. Clair County Line), in Madison County, Illinois. The project length is approximately 2.5 miles (4.0 km).

The existing roadway exhibits variable urban typical sections with curb and gutter and sidewalks ranging from 5-lanes at Belt Line Road, transitioning to a 3-lane section at the

north project terminus near Kinloch Street, and then intermittent 2 or 3-lane sections along the remainder of the route throughout the City. A one-way pair system is currently being utilized to handle traffic through a portion of the downtown section between Clay Street and Main Street. The existing roadway transitions back to a 5-lane rural section with no curb and gutter and no sidewalks at the south project terminus located near South Morrison Avenue. Several signalized intersections exist along the portion of this route being studied.

In July of 2005, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) started a study to address the identified needs for this project. Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) guidelines have been utilized for this project. As a part of the CSS approach to public involvement, a Community Advisory Group (CAG) has been formed to provide input on both the purpose and need for this project and to comment on potential transportation solutions developed for this project. Membership of the CAG is drawn from a cross-section of affected groups, agencies, and organizations. The CAG has developed a statement that describes the need for roadway improvements along IL-159 through Collinsville. The CAG reports:

“The transportation problem in the City of Collinsville along Illinois Route 159 is the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and safety within a highly urbanized and historically significant section of the community that promotes and sustains economic development and redevelopment of the Central Business District.”



CAG Compares Alternatives



Illinois Department of Transportation

1102 Eastport Plaza Drive
Collinsville, Illinois 62234



WHAT'S NEXT?

The Project Study Team will conduct a community, open-house format, public involvement meeting this summer (2007). Based on the public's input and other screening criteria, the Project Study Team will select a preferred alternative. Technical staff will take this alternative forward through preliminary design and present it back to the public at the project's final Public Involvement Meeting tentatively scheduled for spring of 2008.



CONTACT INFORMATION

You may submit questions or comments on this project by writing us at:

***Illinois Route 159 Project Team
c/o Volkert and Associates, Inc.***

***103 Lanter Court
Collinsville, IL 62234***

Or you may submit questions or comments on the project website at:

www.dot.il.gov/ilroute159



Illinois Department of Transportation