



Update

JANUARY 2011 ▪ NO. 2

Illinois Department of Transportation
Gary Hannig, Secretary

State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor



Project Moves Forward as IDOT Gathers Stakeholders' Comments

Vandebrook Drive Intersection Added as Southern Project Limit

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is currently studying improvements to Illinois Route 3 in Waterloo from Vandebrook Drive to North Market Street. To more accurately address design challenges specific to certain geographic areas, the project has been categorized into three segments: the Southern Segment—South Library Street to Vandebrook Drive (more rural); the Central Segment—Illinois Avenue to South Library Street (more right-of-way concerns due to the close proximity of homes); and the Northern Segment—North Market Street to Illinois Avenue (more development). This approach allows the Community Advisory Group to apply appropriate design solutions for each section. The Vandebrook Drive intersection was outside the southern project limit when the project began, but has since been included as the new southern limit of the project.

The Illinois Route 3-Waterloo improvement project is using Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS), an interdisciplinary approach that allows stakeholders to become involved with helping a project become a more integral part of its surroundings, or “context.” As part of the CSS process, the Project Study Team (IDOT and its engineering consultant) met with numerous area residents and groups to gather and discuss their comments regarding existing issues on the Illinois Route 3 transportation corridor. Some of the recurring comments were:



- Access to Illinois Route 3 from Illinois Avenue needs to be improved;
- Access to Illinois Route 3 from the Vandebrook Drive intersection needs to be improved.
- Traffic noise levels are high south of the Illinois Route 156 intersection;
- Access for pedestrians and bicyclists along the Illinois Route 3 corridor needs to be improved; and
- Access for farm machinery needs to be maintained.

The Project Study Team will carefully evaluate all comments received to determine what actions may be appropriate.

Message from the Region 5 Engineer

Participation by interested stakeholders has helped us to identify key issues that we are now evaluating to determine what actions might be appropriate.



We encourage you to share any suggestions you might have with us regarding the project, either by contacting us directly (see page 4) or by attending a future public information meeting.

Mary C. Lamie, P.E.

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Stakeholder Outreach

The Illinois Route 3–Waterloo Project Study Team has made it a high priority to provide as much information as possible to stakeholders through an “outreach program” comprised of this newsletter, the project website, public information meetings, direct mailings and local media announcements. To date, the Project Study Team has conducted two public information meetings and three Community Advisory Group (CAG) meetings.

Public Information Meetings

The first public information meeting, held on June 23, 2010, at Waterloo City Hall, was attended by 125 people, who were able to view aerial photos and existing data about the project, such as crash and preliminary traffic analyses. The public was asked to identify for the Project Study Team issues they might have regarding the portions of Illinois Route 3 being studied, and improvements they thought might be needed.



On December 1, 2010, at Waterloo High School, 131 people attended the second public information meeting. Attendees were able to view exhibits showing the outcomes of the Community Advisory Group meetings, as well as the “Project Problem Statement” and the selected design alternates, for which they could provide their input about each alternate. Exhibits presenting traffic and crash data for the area were also on display, and can be viewed on the project website.

Project Problem Statement

A Project Problem Statement is a concise narrative, prepared at the start of a project to define the problem to be solved. The problem statement developed by the Community Advisory Group for the this project is as follows:

“The transportation problem along Illinois Route 3 between Vandebrook Drive and North Market Street in Waterloo is poor intersection performance and traffic congestion throughout the corridor resulting in traffic delays and safety concerns for the users of the corridor.”

Community Advisory Group Meetings

The Community Advisory Group (CAG) includes representatives from business-focused groups, residents, the city and other civic organizations with an interest in the project. The Project Study Team sent invitations to potential members, who subsequently contributed additional names. Members were then carefully selected to ensure a representative cross-section was obtained. The CAG has met and will continue to meet during the project development process to help the Project Study Team by providing input on the issues that are important to the community and assisting in developing alternatives. The CAG has developed a “Project Problem Statement” (sidebar) to define the transportation challenges on Illinois Route 3 in Waterloo, identified important features within the community to be preserved, recommended roadway sections (or “footprints”) for use in developing alternatives and provided input on those alternatives.

At the first CAG meeting, on October 20, 2010, the Project Study Team introduced and explained the CAG process, explained the ground rules, asked members to fill out a Community Context Audit Survey (see page 3) and defined a Project Problem Statement. As a group, the CAG members reviewed how the process works and discussed the ground rules before reviewing the context audit together. Each question was open to discussion, and revisions were made in real time to reflect the consensus answers. The group then drafted, discussed and finalized their Project Problem Statement for the project.

On October 27, 2010, CAG members at the second meeting worked to identify mainline typical roadway sections for the Project Study Team to analyze further. They were broken into groups and used typical IDOT roadway sections that they could place on top of large aerial photos of the three project segments (Southern, Central and Northern) to visualize how they fit. The groups spent time at each section developing a group consensus for roadway selections to be studied further. They then reconvened as the entire CAG to discuss their selections and came to a consensus on roadway sections for the Project Study Team to analyze further. Options selected for further study can be viewed on the project website.

An informal third CAG meeting was held on November 17, 2010, to allow the members to preview and make verbal and written comments regarding the information gathered from attendees at the second public information meeting. Conceptual displays were then created based on the results of the second CAG meeting and comments from the third CAG meeting.

Looking Ahead

Surveys Help Keep Goals Consistent

Community Advisory Group (CAG) members were asked to complete a Community Context Audit Survey at the first CAG meeting, the results of which were then used to create a guide to identify various community characteristics that make each transportation project location unique to its residents, businesses and the public in general. This information defined the context of the proposed transportation improvements based upon community goals and local plans for future development. The survey took into account the community’s history and heritage, present conditions and anticipated conditions. The survey considered the interaction of persons and groups within the Waterloo community relating to mobility and access (vehicular, non-vehicular and transit modes), safety, local and regional economics, aesthetics and overall quality of life.



What’s Next...

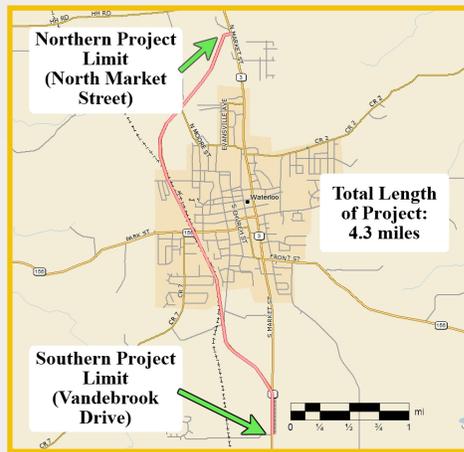
As shown on the time line below, the Illinois Route 3–Waterloo project is in the middle of Phase 1, the Preliminary Design and Environmental Study. This phase includes the engineering and environmental analyses of potential design alternates of the Illinois Route 3 corridor. Alternatives will be evaluated on how well each meets the project purpose and need; its potential effect on the environment, residences and businesses; and how it improves the transportation system with regard to safety and mobility. The comments from the second public information meeting will also be incorporated into this analysis, which will help the Project Study Team and the CAG to further narrow the design alternates for consideration and presentation to the public at a third public information meeting in Spring 2011.

Work continues on preparing exhibits showing detailed intersection designs, including signalization, along with proposed lane configurations; refining roadway section footprints; determining the location of the shared-use path; evaluating drainage alternates to minimize geographic impacts; and related tasks. After a final phase of analysis, it is anticipated that the Project Study Team will then present the “preferred” alternative at a fourth public information meeting in Summer 2011.

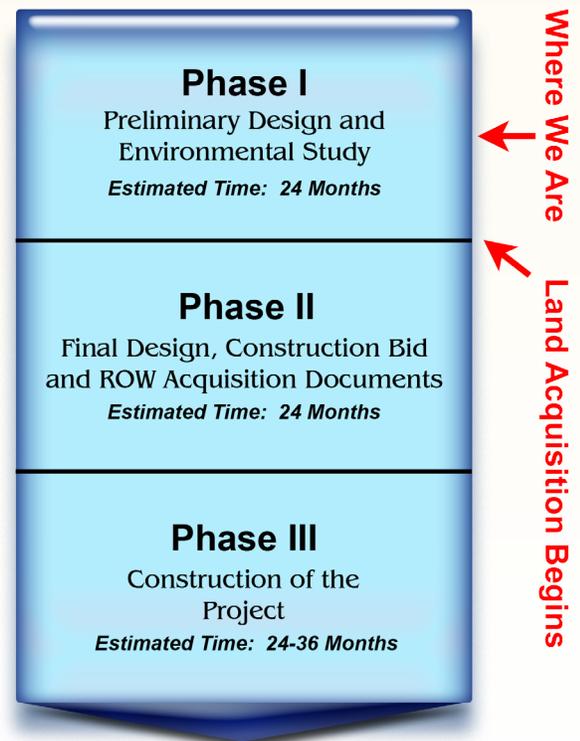
Vandebrook Intersection Added to the Project

On August 25, 2010, at an informational meeting held at Waterloo City Hall for the residents of the subdivisions off of Vandebrook Drive, IDOT announced that, based on public comments received, the Vandebrook Drive intersection had been added to the project limits.

In the interest of enhancing motorists’ safety, several actions were quickly taken. The City of Waterloo increased the intersection’s width to the north by adding pavement to improve turning movements. IDOT installed larger “Intersection Ahead” signs at this location, and conducted a “no-passing-zone” study which concluded that no policy changes in the vicinity of the intersection were required. As part of the overall project study, the Vandebrook intersection will be evaluated to see if traffic signals, turn lanes and other design aspects are warranted.



Project Time Line



Contact Information



This newsletter is published to provide regular updates regarding the progress of the Illinois Route 3–Waterloo Project.



IDOT is committed to conducting business in a sustainable manner. To that end, we have chosen to print this newsletter on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper stock and to print with a commercial printer that also holds the certification. The Forest Stewardship Council is a non-profit organization devoted to encouraging the responsible management of the world's forests. FSC sets high standards that ensure forestry is practiced in an environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable way.

We welcome your questions and comments, which you may submit by mail to:

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By email to:

IL3@HornerShifrin.com

Or through our project website at:

www.dot.il.gov/ilroute3

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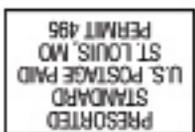
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