Section 4(f) De Minimis Documentation
Bemis Woods Forest Preserve
Forest Preserve District of Cook County

US ROUTE 34
AT
WOLF ROAD

P-91-053-17

Village of Western Springs
Cook County, Illinois

Illinois Department of Transportation
Division of Highways / District One / Region 1

DRAFT– February 2019
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De Minimis Documentation

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1. Project Description

   a. Project Name: US 34 at Wolf Road

   b. Project Number (State and Federal): P-91-053-17

   c. Project Termini: Approximately 750 feet east of Wolf Road and 550 feet west of Wolf Road. The project limits along Wolf Road are limited to the radius returns immediately north and south of the intersection.

   d. Project Type: The proposed project scope consists of the restriping of the intersection to improve the negatively offset left turn lanes, traffic signal replacement, and installation of ADA ramps and crosswalks.

   e. Project Length: Approximately 1,500 lineal feet (0.3 miles).

   f. Purpose and need of the Project: The intersection of US 34 and Wolf Road was identified as a 5% location in both 2012 and 2015. Between the years of 2010 and 2014, there were 85 total crashes consisting of 27 injury crashes. A majority of the crashes were rear end (66%) and turning vehicle (26%) crashes, most frequently for eastbound and westbound traffic. The type and location of the crashes can be attributed to negatively offset left turn lanes along US 34, resulting in poor sight lines of opposing vehicles.

   g. NEPA Class of Action: State Approved Categorical Exclusion

   h. Project Status: The Illinois Department of Transportation (Department) is nearing completion of a preliminary engineering and environmental study (Phase I). The anticipated Phase I design approval date is May 2019. Phase II (Contract Plan Preparation and Land Acquisition) and Phase III (Construction) are included in the Department’s FY 2019-2024 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. Current engineering efforts are targeted to enable a contract letting in the early years of the multi-year program contingent upon plan readiness, land acquisition, and funding availability through future annual legislative appropriations.


2. **Section 4(f) Resources**

   a. **Resource Type:** Forest preserves

   b. **Resource Name:** Bemis Woods

   c. **Official with Jurisdiction (OWJ):** Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC).

   d. **Description of the Role/Significance in the community:**

   i. **Bemis Woods:** Bemis Woods is the westernmost forest preserve in a chain of sites that border Salt Creek from Western Springs to Brookfield. These woods are located between the FPDCC’s Meadowlark Golf Course to the northwest and the Salt Creek Woods Nature Preserve to the east, the 480 acres of Bemis Woods offer a wide range of recreational activities. The woods offer open space for picnics, a one-mile, unpaved Salt loop trail. There are large group shelters for social gatherings, five canoe launches into Salt Creek. Bemis woods is also home to the newly open Go Ape Treetop Adventure Course, which is situated more than 40 feet up in the forest canopy and includes more than 40 obstacles, a double Tarzan Swing, five zip lines and more.
3. **Description of Intended Section 4(f) Resource Use**

   a. **Type and Acres of Impact:** 0.011 acres

      i. **Bemis Woods**

         - Permanent Easement: 0.005 acres for proposed traffic signal equipment and ADA pedestrian landings
         - Temporary Easement: 0.006 acres for grading to existing ground line (See Attachment A-1 for more details)

   b. **Existing function of the Impacted Acres:** The impacted areas for permanent and temporary easements are located at the northeast and northwest corners of US 34 and Wolf Road adjacent to the radius returns. The anticipated improvements are away from recreational uses and amenities, and tree removal is not anticipated. The impacted area for the permanent easement is for placement of traffic signal equipment and pedestrian ramps.

   c. **Description of the relationship of the impacted area to the Section 4(f) function and significance of the resource:** Most of the recreational uses and amenities of the properties described above are located over one quarter mile away from the project intersection and will not be impacted.
4. **Description of Efforts to Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate or Enhance Resource**

   a. **Avoidance and minimization efforts made and benefits to resource:**

       The scope of improvements is limited to restriping of the intersection to better align the negatively offset left turn lanes. Negatively offset left turn lanes in the eastbound and westbound directions are blocking the sight lines of opposing vehicles, resulting in a high number of left turning crashes. The existing signal equipment is outdated and needs to be replaced. The existing traffic signal equipment on the northwest corner of the intersection is located outside of the existing ROW, the intent is to replace the outdated signal and request a permanent easement to accommodate the replaced equipment.

       Additionally, a shared use path is currently in the planning stages by the Village of Western Springs. The shared use path is proposed along the west side of Wolf Road, north of the intersection and will interconnect to the Bemis Woods bike path, located 500 feet north of the intersection. The FPDCC has noted that they recently dedicated easements to the Village of Western Springs along the west side of Wolf Road, north of the intersection.

       Originally, the proposed improvement included pedestrian landings on the northeast corner of the intersection, requiring additional easements from Salt Creek Woods. However, as part of ongoing coordination, it has been determined that a high visibility crossing is needed on the west leg of the intersection to interconnect the proposed shared use path, as well as ADA compliant pedestrian landings on the southwest and northwest corners of the intersection. This ensures that the generators located south of the intersection have a safe means to cross US 34 and connect to the bike path, as well as reduces easements required from FPDCC holdings.

       The proposed improvements will not impact any recreational uses; or areas that utilized OSLAD or LAWCON funds.

   b. **Commitments for mitigation or enhancement:** Pedestrian signals, crosswalks, curb ramps, and sidewalk landings are proposed at the intersection which will improve community access.

       Tree removal is not anticipated as part of the proposed improvements.

       The FPDCC will be compensated for the proposed land acquisition.

       The Department will contact the FPDCC prior to the start of construction to inform them of the initiation of construction activities near their properties. A commitment will be included in the project report as follows: “The Construction
Resident Engineer will contact the FPDCC prior to the start of construction to inform them of the initiation of construction activities near their properties.”

5. Evidence of Opportunity for Public Review and Comment:

a. Type of Public Availability: A newspaper ad was posted in the XXXXX and XXXXX on XXXXX and on XXXX to allow the public 30 days to review and comment on the Section 4(f) impacts (See Attachment E). The Section 4(f) documentation was available for viewing during the comment period at IDOT (201 West Center Court, Schaumburg, IL, at FPDCC (536 North Harlem Avenue River Forest, IL 60305) and on the Department’s website at http://www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/environment/index. Comments could be made by e-mail through the Department website by clicking on the link above.

b. Summary of Comments:
6. **Evidence of Coordination with Official(s) with Jurisdiction (OWJ):**

   a. June 7, 2017 ............................................................ FPDCC Coordination Meeting
   b. June 14, 2018 ........................................................... FPDCC Coordination Meeting
   c. December 12, 2018 ............................................... Transmittal of Draft Section 4(f)
   d. December 12, 2018 .................................................. FPDCC Coordination Meeting
   e. TBD........................................... Transmittal of Section 4(f) with Public Comments
   f. TBD................................................................. Concurrence of No Adverse Impact
   g. TBD................................................................. Transmittal of Final Section 4(f)

   The above items are included in Attachment C, Coordination.

7. **Supporting Documentation**

   a) Section 4(f) Impact Exhibit .................................................. Attachment A-1
   b) Project Location Map ............................................................ Attachment A-2
   c) Regional Location Map .......................................................... Attachment B-1
   d) Cook County Forest Preserve Facility Map .......................... Attachment B-2
   e) Bemis Woods Map ............................................................... Attachment B-3
   f) Salt Creek Trails Map ......................................................... Attachment B-4
   g) Coordination ........................................................................ Attachment C
   h) Proposed Typical Sections .................................................... Attachment D-1
   i) Proposed Plan and Profile Sheets ......................................... Attachment D-2
   j) Public Review and Comment ................................................ Attachment E
Attachment A
Section 4(f) Impact Exhibit
Project Location Map
LOCATION MAP
US 34 at Wolf Road
Cook County
P-91-053-17
Section 4(f) *De Minimis* Documentation
Bemis Woods and Salt Creek Woods
Forest Preserve District of Cook County

**Attachment B**
Regional Location Map
FPDCC Facility Map
Bemis Woods Forest Preserve Map
Salt Creek Trails Map
Central Zone

1. Andrew Toman Grove
2. Arie Crown Forest
3. Bemis Woods-North
4. Bemis Woods-South
5. Brezina Woods
6. Brookfield Woods
7. Brookfield Zoo
8. Callahan Grove
9. Cermak Family Aquatic Center
10. Cermak Quarry
11. Cermak Woods
12. Chicago Portage Natl Historic
13. Cummings Square
14. G.A.R. Woods
15. Hal Tyrell Trailside Museum
16. Ida Lake
17. LaGrange Park Woods
18. Maywood Grove
19. McCormick Woods
20. Meadowlark Golf Course
21. Miller Meadow-North
22. Miller Meadow-South
23. Summit
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Attachment B-1
Regional Location Map
Attachment B-4
Salt Creek Trails Map
Attachment C
Coordination
General Discussion:
The purpose of this meeting was to coordinate various Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) projects which are currently in Phase I, Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Studies, and to discuss various locations selected by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) where IDOT action is needed. The following is a brief summary by project:

**FPDCC Items:**

**Various FPDCC Corridors** – The FPDCC requested a status update on the IDOT’s tree clearing contract CN 62C86. The Bureau of Maintenance stated that there have been some delays after the December 2017 work order which have delayed implementation of the 2018 clearings. A list of the outstanding areas will be sent to the FPDCC.

**Illinois Route 7 (IL 7) from 131st Street to 135th Street**

*McGinnis Slough*

The FPDCC requested a status update on IDOT’s improvement of IL 7 from 131st Street to 135th Street. The FPDCC noted they would reach out to Orland Park to request action on the collapsed culvert issue. The improvement is in the middle years of the Department’s FY 2019-2024 Proposed Highway Improvement Program.

*Post Meeting Note – IDOT’s Traffic Operation’s Permit Section (Permits) noted that they have continued to work with AutoMedics to replace the collapsed culvert. The contractor hired by the business owner submitted plans which had an undersized 36” culvert being proposed and IDOT notified them that the culvert needed to be 48” to meet the ditch’s water flow. Requests for status of the revisions have gone unanswered by the Contractor. IDOT is working with the Office of Chief Counsel on having the business address the situation.*

*Permits also noted that the FPDCC should reach out to the Cook County Zoning Department which would have a stronger ability to force the needed improvements due to their non-compliance since it is believed to be outside of the municipal boundaries for Orland Park.*
**US Route 34 at Wolf Road**  
*Bennis Woods South / Salt Creek*

This was the 2nd presentation for this project. It was last presented at the June of 2017 coordination meeting. The purpose of this presentation is for IDOT to update FPDCC about the status of the project, proposed improvements, and potential impacts.

US Route 34 (US 34/Ogden Avenue) at Wolf Road is a four-legged signalized intersection located in Cook County. US 34 is a state route and Wolf Road is a Cook County route. The southeast and southwest quadrants of the intersection are located within the Village of Western Springs. The northeast and northwest quadrants are in Unincorporated Cook County.

The land use in the northwest and northeast quadrants consists of FPDCC holdings. Bemis Woods is located in the northwest quadrant and Salt Creek Woods is located in the northeast quadrant. The southwest and southeast quadrants are comprised of residential areas.

US 34 consists of two lanes in each direction with left turn lanes on each leg. The north side of the roadway consists of an open drainage system with 3' paved shoulder/3' aggregate shoulder along the north side of the road and a closed drainage system with curb and gutter along the south side of the roadway.

The proposed scope of work consists of traffic signal replacement, restriping of US 34 in order to provide positively offset left turn lanes to improve sight lines in the eastbound and westbound direction, and pedestrian accommodation improvements on all four corners of the intersection including high visibility cross walks, pedestrian signals and ADA compliant curb ramps.

This is a Highway Safety Improvement Project (HSIP) which was identified as a 5% location, between the years of 2010-2014, a total of 85 crashes occurred. The majority of crashes were rear end and left turn collisions in the eastbound and westbound direction due to the negatively offset turn lanes that result in poor sight lines of opposing vehicles.

Based on the items discussed on the last coordination meeting, IDOT verified the existing right-of-way information and identified the anticipated needs. Temporary (0.009 acre) and permanent (0.006 acre) easements will be needed to improve sight distance issues and accommodate traffic signal equipment and ADA ramps improvements on the northwest and northeast corners of the intersection. IDOT will follow up and provide the FPDCC with a Section 4(f) Report to document the *de minimis* findings to the FPDCC property.
Post Meeting Note – IDOT is working on revisions to the Section 4(f) Report and will send it to FPDCC once it is ready.

By: Brenda Alicea and Griselda Monsivais – IDOT

Joliet Road at Brainard Avenue
Arie Crown Forest / Sundown Meadow

This was the 3rd presentation for this project. It was last presented at the December of 2016 coordination meeting. The purpose of this presentation was to inform FPDCC about a request IDOT received from the City of Countryside. Updated project information will be provided as well.

The proposed improvements consist of traffic signal replacement and the addition of right turn lanes on the north and east legs. The scope of improvements will require work on the south leg of Brainard Road for detector loop placement and the installation of pedestrian landings.

A draft copy of the Section 4(f) de minimis report was prepared and submitted to the FPDCC on June 29, 2015. The report was advertised for public comment from October 29, 2015 to November 27, 2015 in the Des Plaines Valley News and the La Grange Suburban Life. The Department received no comments.

The Section 4(f) de minimis Document and letter was forwarded to the FPDCC for concurrence on April 8, 2016. Due to requests by the City of Countryside, the concurrence was placed on hold.

The City of Countryside requested additional sidewalk be incorporated at the intersection. The City is in the process of building a new town hall facility on the northwest corner of the intersection. There is also an ongoing study for a proposed bike path along the west side of Brainard Avenue, from 55th Street to Joliet Avenue. A proposed sidewalk will improve connectivity for the generators surrounding the project area and benefit the increased number of pedestrians that are anticipated due to the projects noted above.

The request by the City of Countryside also includes proposed sidewalk along the south side of Joliet Avenue, within the FPDCC limits, as well as the inclusion of a proposed multi-use gravel path connector to the Arie Crown Trail which will improve interconnectivity from the intersection to the trail. Incorporating that additional sidewalk resulted in the following additional easement needs from FPDCC property.

- PE: 0.34 acre vs 0.21 acre
- TE: 0.083 acre vs. 0.040 acre
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General Discussion:
The purpose of this meeting was to coordinate various Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) projects which are currently in Phase I, Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Studies, and to discuss various locations selected by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) where IDOT action is needed. The following is a brief summary by project:

FPDCC Items:

87th Street at Damen Avenue
The FPDCC’s Major Taylor Trail, located in the Dan Ryan Woods, crosses 87th Street just west of Damen Avenue. The FPDCC has been working with CDOT, Mike Amsden on a potential bump out on 87th Street to reduce the crossing width and provide traffic calming on 87th Street. In reviewing IDOT’s Multi-Year Program, there are no planned improvements within the FPDCC’s project where IDOT could look to incorporate these improvements on; as such, the improvement would need to be done through IDOT’s Bureau of Local Roads and Streets or through Traffic Permits. The FPDCC will need to coordinate with CDOT on the funding source, because with State/Federal Funds the project would go through the IDOT Bureau of Local Roads, with Zubair Haider, Local Roads Field Engineer (847-705-4206 / Zubair.Haider@illinois.gov). If it’s not utilizing State/Federal funds then the project would need to be submitted to Tom Gallenbach, in the Bureau of Traffic Operations – Permits (847-705-4130 / Thomas.Gallenbach@Illinois.gov).

Rand Road over Des Plaines River
The FPDCC has a specification for erosion control blanket that does not include the nylon mesh, is organic and is more animal friendly, as snakes can get caught in the mesh. They were told by Serin Keller, in the Bureau of Design, that the specification is not approved by Springfield.

Post Meeting Update
John Sterenberg of FPDCC provided comments on the Rand Rd. over Des Plaines River project which requested a specific erosion control blanket to be used on all FPDCC property during construction. However, that particular erosion control blanket does not meet IDOT’s minimum requirements. The only way to use that specified item on the project is if FPDCC paid for it. The option was offered to FPDCC and IDOT is currently waiting for a response.
Des Plaines River Trail east/west connections from North Avenue to Irving Park Road

The FPDCC is in the early planning stages to add east/west connections to the Des Plaines River Trail from North Avenue to Irving Park Road. They should coordinate any plans with Carlos Feliciano, District 1 Bicycle Coordinator (847-705-4106 / carlos.feliciano@illinois.gov).

IL Route 171 (Archer Avenue) at 95th Street

The FPDCC requested an update on the subject project. IDOT has a contract to line the culvert on the east side of the intersection. The FPDCC requested additional updates on the intersection improvement project via a short email to John Sterenberg.

IDOT Items:

The following are the discussions had for various Phase I projects that IDOT has or will coordinate with the FPDCC. See agenda spreadsheet for additional project information:

Des Plaines River Road over Ditch

The proposed project will study the rehabilitation of a 2x2 box culvert located under Des Plaines River Road north of Winona Avenue in the Village of Schiller Park, adjacent to the FPDCC Catherine Chevalier Woods and River Bend Family Picnic Area. The project will also review erosion concerns in the area and evaluate pedestrian accommodations since there is a worn trail from the sidewalk in front of the picnic area north. The project is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year and is anticipated to have a contract letting in the early years of the Department's FY 2018-2023 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. An initial coordination letter was sent to the FPDCC on June 7, 2017.

The Bureau of Maintenance stated they have a tree clearing contract in the vicinity of the culvert and would provide an update post meeting.

Post meeting update:

The Bureau of Maintenance stated as of June 9, 2017, the Contractor for 62C86, has not gotten to the tree clearing near the project limits, however the plans do not have any tree removal at the culvert location.

US 34 at Wolf Road

The proposed scope of work consists of traffic signal replacement, restriping of US 34 in order to provide positively offset left turn lanes to improve sight lines in the eastbound and westbound direction, as well as upgraded pedestrian accommodations on all four corners of the intersection, including high visibility cross walks, pedestrian signals and ADA compliant curb ramps.

This is a Highway Safety Improvement Project (HSIP) which was identified as a 5% location, between the years of 2010-2014, a total of 85 crashes occurred. The majority of crashes were rear end and left turn collisions in the eastbound and westbound direction due to the negatively offset turn lanes that result in poor sight lines of opposing vehicles.

US 34 (Ogden Avenue) at Wolf Road is a four-legged signalized intersection located in Cook County. US 34 is a state route and Wolf Road is a Cook County route. The southeast and
southwest quadrants of the intersection are located within the Village of Western Springs. The northeast and northwest quadrants are in Unincorporated Cook County.

The land use in the northwest and northeast quadrants consists of Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) holdings. Bemis Woods is located in the northwest quadrant and Salt Creek Woods is located in the northeast quadrant. The southwest and southeast quadrants are comprised of residential areas.

The entrance to Bemis Woods is located 1,000' west of the intersection on US 34 and the entrance into Salt Creek woods is located nearly 1,000' east of the intersection, also on US 34.

The FPDCC noted that Bemis Woods has recently added a zip line park to this facility and would like to pursue the addition of an eastbound left turn lane, as there is currently no channelization into Bemis Woods. They inquired about the possibility of including this as part of the scope of the improvements. It was noted that the access is located outside the limits of the improvement.

**Post-meeting update:**
Since this is an HSIP funded improvement, the source of funding is limited to addressing the crash history of the intersection in order to remain eligible for funding. It is recommended that the FPDCC pursue the installation of the left turn lane under a separate, locally let contract, or via permit through the District One Bureau of Traffic-Permits Section. For information about permits along state highways, contact Mr. William Weitzel, Cook County Permit Coordination at (847)705-4132.

Wolf Road consists of one lane in each direction with an exclusive left turn lane and right turn lane on the north leg, as well as an exclusive left turn lane on the south leg. The north leg is comprised of an open drainage system with a 3' paved shoulder and a 5' aggregate shoulder on the north and a closed drainage system with curb and gutter on the south leg.

The FPDCC noted that they recently dedicated easements to the Village of Western Springs along the west side of Wolf Road, north of the intersection. The Village of Western Springs is planning on adding a shared use path to interconnect to the FPDCC bike path, located 500’ north of the intersection. It was not certain if the improvement is in the planning stages. IDOT will contact the Village of Western Springs and Cook County to determine what stage the project is in. As part of the proposed improvements, high visibility crosswalks and pedestrian countdowns will be included on all four legs of the intersection.

The FPDCC noted that they receive many complaints regarding safety, due to the lack of crossings and sidewalks across US 34 and north on Wolf Road. There is currently a mid-block crossing into Bemis Woods that includes flashers and a high visibility cross walk. The FPDCC noted that while it helps, it is located at an unsignalized entrance to the FPDCC.

IDOT requested Plats and available existing right-of-way from the FPDCC.

Once the existing ROW is verified, it will be determined if IDOT will need to pursue de Minimis findings for this project improvement.

**IL 7 from 131st Street to 135th Street**
This was the second presentation of this project to the FPDCC. IL 7 from 131st Street to south of 135th Street is located in the Villages of Orland Park and Palos Park in Cook County. The general scope of work for this improvement consists of drainage and roadway improvements to decrease flooding on IL 7. Proposed improvements include culvert
replacement, ditch, and in-stream work, installing a closed drainage system, shifting the horizontal alignment, raising the roadway profile, and traffic signal replacement. A draft 4 (f) De Minimis document was given to the FPDCC for review. A pdf of this document will be emailed to the FPDCC as well. After FPDCC review, the Department will seek public comments on the Section 4(f) impacts. In order to maintain project schedules, the Department is targeting an advertisement in July 2017. A project update will be given at the September 2017 FPDCC coordination meeting.
# Attendance Roster

**Bureau:** Programming  
**Section:** Project & Environmental Studies

**Project/Topic:** FPDCC / IDOT Quarterly Coordination Meeting  
**Date:** June 8, 2017  
**Time:** 9:00 AM  
**Location:** 4th Floor Executive Conference Room

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees</th>
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**Note:** Some email addresses have been anonymized for privacy.
Attachment D
Typical Sections
Proposed Plan and Profile Sheets
EXISTING US 34

STA. 497+37.00 TO STA. 499+50.00

EX HMA SURFACE COURSE

EX AGGREGATE SHOULDER

EX GROUND

EX B-6.12 CURB & GUTTER

EX PAVED SHOULDER

EX GUARDRAIL

LANE 2

LANE 1

TURN LANE

SHLDR

FLUSH MEDIAN

EX ROW 63.2' TO 60.7'

EX ROW 36.8' TO 39.3'

46.1' TO 27.2' - STA. 504+64.55 TO STA. 511+92.99

51.0' TO 44.3' - STA. 501+77.45 TO STA. 503+64.57

49.7' TO 51.0' - STA. 501+04.82 TO STA. 501+77.45

59.5' TO 36.9' - STA. 500+41.45 TO STA. 512+98.82

EXISTING US 34

STA. 500+50.00 TO STA. 502+16.00

ATTACHMENT D-1

TYPICAL SECTIONS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

US ROUTE 34 AT WOLF ROAD

TYPICAL SECTIONS
Attachment E
Public Review and Comment