

State of Illinois  
Pat Quinn, Governor

Illinois Department of Transportation  
Ann L. Schneider, Acting Secretary



## ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ROUTE 159 NEWSLETTER

Issue 8 - Summer 2011

### CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

An August 26, 2010 groundbreaking ceremony marked the beginning of construction for the IL Route 159 improvements in Collinsville. The view is changing along the south and central sections of IL Route 159 with building demolition, earthwork, storm sewer, curb and gutter, waterline, sidewalk, pavement, and parking lot construction in progress. The upgrades to the water line and sewer systems will improve the capacity and reliability of the systems.

A contractor can face many challenges when constructing any roadway project. When one adds in maintaining traffic flow on a heavily traveled route and providing continued accessibility to all residents and businesses, it is even more of a challenge to keep the traveling public and the workers safe with minimal inconvenience. The staging and coordination of work plays a major role in completing the project in a timely manner. All sections of the IL Route 159 project will be staged to keep traffic flowing in both directions at all times, plus give access to all businesses and residents throughout the project.



South Segment Traffic Control

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This newsletter provides an update on the land acquisition efforts and final design work currently underway for this project

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### SOUTH SEGMENT UPDATE (From South Morrison Street to Church Street)

Waterline construction, which began on the south end of this segment and will continue to move north throughout the summer, is 60 percent complete. Tree removal is under way, and temporary pavement is being constructed. This will enable the contractor to close one side of the roadway and maintain two-way traffic flow and access to side streets, entrances, and driveways at all times. Progress is also being made on constructing the double box culvert at the south end across from the City of Collinsville Street Department Maintenance Yard.

This summer and fall one can expect to see the construction of permanent pavement, storm sewer, and curb and gutter for the northbound lanes from the beginning of the project to Clinton Street. Earth excavation will be completed, along with removal of existing curb and gutter, to allow temporary pavement to be constructed along the edge of the northbound lanes. This temporary pavement will be the driving lanes for the next stage, which is estimated to begin near the end of summer.



## MESSAGE FROM IDOT

The IL Route 159 project is an example of the extraordinary change that can be brought about in the span of a few years. In January of 2009, the Phase I Project Report for the IL Route 159 improvement was approved; and preparation of final design and construction bid documents began. In the 2 ½ years since final design commenced, construction on two of the three design sections has started. The ongoing construction encompasses an area of IL Route 159 from South Morrison to E. Johnson Street (SS Peter & Paul Church). While funding for construction of the third design section (E. Johnson St. to Kinloch) has not been secured, the project remains a priority for IDOT; and IDOT will continue to move forward with the plan preparation and land acquisition for this section. When funding becomes available, IDOT will be ready to proceed with construction.

All that has been accomplished to date is due, in part, to the collaborative effort of several groups, which include: volunteers from the community who were members of the Community Advisory Group, members from the community who participated in the Public Involvement Meetings, Collinsville's elected officials, and IDOT. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of those who played a role in making the IL Route 159 improvement a reality.

Sincerely,  
**Omer Osman, P.E.**  
Acting Deputy Director  
Division of Highways  
Region Five Engineer, D8

## CENTRAL SEGMENT UPDATE

**(From East Church Street  
to East Johnson Street)**

Due to the realignment of IL Route 159 through the Uptown area, the central segment will be the most complex portion of the overall project. The system of turns leading IL Route 159 commuters around the former UMB Bank location (relocated to Collinsville Crossing), which has been a part of the Uptown area for decades, will be only a memory once this section is complete. This section also includes some streetscape work, which will complement the style which already exists along Main Street. The new streetscape work will include decorative tree grates, light poles, benches, and trash receptacles. Three new public parking lots are another welcomed addition to the Uptown area.

Building demolition, waterline, and storm sewer construction are complete. Traffic now passes through the former UMB Bank location on the new roadway alignment. This section is in the final stage of pavement construction and is 90 percent complete.



*Waterline Construction at Johnson Street, Looking North*

# MAYOR SATISFIED WITH IDOT'S COMMUNICATION

With construction well underway, the Project Study Team (PST) spoke with Mayor John Miller to get a better feel of how the community is being affected by the construction of the Illinois Route 159 project.

The PST's questions (*in italics*) and Mayor Miller's responses are below:

*What have been the most significant challenges, if any, you have experienced with the ongoing construction along IL Route 159 through Collinsville?*

Well, there have been two actually. Number one is the traffic situation, especially on the South Segment. The traffic coming up the hill has been extremely backlogged.

I guess the next would be the businesses in the Central Segment that are open; but, because of the nature of the construction and where it's located, it is hard for the patrons to get to the businesses. I can say that IDOT, Baxmeyer, and the City all pitched in together to try and let the public know that they are still open and help them get through this the best they can. They all realize it is going to be great when it is done.

*Has IDOT communicated the information about the IL Route 159 project in an efficient manner?*

I think IDOT has been up front on this project, much more than with any other project we have been involved with, with the open meetings they had and the Community Advisory Groups (CAG). I would highly recommend that for other projects that IDOT is going to do because it gets everyone on board. It shows all the pitfalls that are going to happen, and it gives the public a little bit more of a heads up. Along with the stakeholders, they (the public) understand up front what is going to happen and can have their say. I think IDOT has worked with us quite well.

*What long term benefits do you expect to occur as a result of the IL Route 159 project?*

It will allow more traffic to come this way and – hopefully - stop off in the City. We will have some nice beautification and green space areas at the junctures between Main and Clay, where the new realigned intersection is. We had a major upgrade on the streetscape program to the Uptown area, and this will add beauty to that. As far as long term, it will help traffic flow through the area, since a couple of bottlenecks should be taken care of. I think the plan that they were looking at of rerouting IL 159 around the City would have been more detrimental than what this is. The public may not realize all of those things that the highway and those travelers bring to a community. Sometimes you cannot see the big picture until the overall picture is complete.



**Central Segment - Construction at the Intersection of IL159 and Main Street**

# LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

Anyone who has driven IL Route 159 through the Collinsville Uptown and surrounding area is already aware of a lot of changes. Many familiar buildings - such as the UMB Bank, Bert's Chuck Wagon, and Papa John's- have been relocated to make way for the IL Route 159 improvements. The building removals were one of the first signs that the IL Route 159 project was underway.

You may have heard, or read, that the section of roadway from Johnson Street north to Kinloch Avenue, known as the "North Section", has not received funding for construction. While this is true at this time, IDOT is committed to completing all three sections of the IL Route 159 project. Although funds to construct the North Section of the IL Route 159 improvement are not available at this time, IDOT has received funding to acquire the remaining parcels for this project. The land acquisition funding will insure that the necessary right-of-way will be in place when construction dollars become available.

As of this date, nearly 90% of the parcels for the entire project have been acquired. Negotiations are underway with the property owners for the few remaining parcels, all of which are located in the North Section.

If you have questions regarding land acquisition for this project, please contact Mr. Chuck Keeney, IDOT, at 618-346-3135.



**New UMB Bank at Collinsville Crossing**

## NORTH SEGMENT PLANS UPDATE

The preparation of the final design and construction bid documents for the North Section (north of E. Johnson Street to Kinloch Avenue) is continuing. While the land acquisition process continues for the North Section, construction funding for the North Section is not included in the Governor's FY 2012-2017 Proposed Highway Improvement Program.



**Central Segment - Curb & Gutter Construction**



# TRADITION LIVES ON AT BERT'S CHUCK WAGON

The remnants of the old Bert's Chuck Wagon building have been hauled away to make way for the new roadway alignment, but the tradition lives on at Bert's new location down the street.

In a previous newsletter, the Project Study Team (PST) interviewed Roger Conner, the owner of Bert's Chuck Wagon, before the move took place. Now relocated to 101 East Main Street, the PST made another visit to Mr. Conner to get his thoughts on his new location.

The PST's questions (*in italics*) and Mr. Conner's responses are below:

*What features from your old location did you incorporate into the new location to keep the spirit of Bert's Chuck Wagon alive?*

We brought our old booths, the yellow booths, and the painting that was in front of the old building - which we had trimmed down. That is kind of the old incorporation.

*How do you like your new location?*

It is very nice. My kitchen area in the back is actually as big as my entire building at the old location. We doubled our seating and will eventually use the balcony for seating as well.

*What comments have the Bert's Chuck Wagon customers shared about the new location?*

A lot of them miss the old place, the tradition of it since we had been there for 45 years. But, the new place is so nice. It is a much more relaxed atmosphere. People can come in and hang out and talk. We have professional people working on their laptops, construction people laying out blueprints, so it's just space that I never had before.

*Do you have any comments to share about the overall experience of being relocated for a roadway project?*

IDOT treated me very fairly. They worked with me in every aspect of it. Any questions I had, they answered. So, mine was a very painless transition. This has been a very positive move for me.

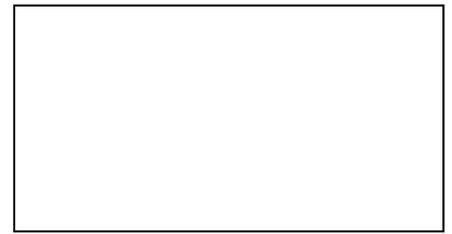


***New Bert's Chuck Wagon located at 101 East Main Street***



# Illinois Department of Transportation

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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

*Illinois Route 159 Project Team  
c/o Volkert, Inc.  
103 Lanter Court  
Collinsville, IL 62234*

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

[www.dot.il.gov/ilroute159](http://www.dot.il.gov/ilroute159)

