Community Advisory Group (CAG)
Meeting #1
August 8, 2012
Orientation
Tonight’s Meeting Agenda

• Orientation
• Overview of the Alton-Godfrey Transportation Study
• Overview of Public Involvement and the CAG
• Context Audit Survey
• Questions and Answers / General Discussion / Upcoming Activities
• Action Items / Next CAG Meeting
Introductions

• Project Study Group (PSG)
  – Illinois Department of Transportation
  – Piasa Collaborative JV Team
    • AMEC Environment & Infrastructure, Inc.
    • Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates, Inc.
    • Horner & Shifrin, Inc.

• CAG members
  – Please refer to roster in your binder
Project Binder

• Agenda
• Roster
• Reference Material
• Study Maps
• Context Audit Form
• Notes
Overview of the Alton-Godfrey Transportation Study
Identify options that could improve transportation mobility and safety between IL Route 255 and IL Route 3 / IL Route 111 (Homer Adams Parkway)
What is the Study Area?
Key Activities of the Alton-Godfrey Transportation Study

• Conduct public involvement
  – Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

• Study and understand the effects of the opening of the new IL Route 255
  – Changes in travel patterns
  – Changes in land development
  – Traffic growth

• Analyze historical crash records and determine reasons for crashes

• Develop project Purpose and Need

• Investigate possible alternatives that address needs or problems
Overview of IDOT Process

• Phase One – Location and Environmental Study
  – Compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for federally funded projects
  – Develop and conduct public involvement program
  – Develop Problem Statement
  – Develop and evaluate alternatives
  – Determine environmental, social and economic impacts as a result of alternatives
  – Document findings
  – Eliminate or minimize impacts
  – Coordinate with federal and state agencies
Overview of IDOT Process

• Phase Two – Design phase
  – Preparation of project plans and specifications
  – Negotiation and acquisition of rights-of-way
  – Bidding and letting of contract(s) for construction

• Phase Three – Construction phase
  – Construction
Alton-Godfrey Transportation Study
Project Timeline

Location and Environmental Study (Phase I)
- Engage stakeholders
- Develop Purpose & Need and identify study corridors
- Hold public meetings
- Refine and eliminate corridors
- Hold public meeting
- Conduct environmental studies
- Prepare Draft Environmental Document
- Select preferred alternative
- Hold public hearing
- Draft Environmental Document approval by FHWA

Design (Phase II)

Construction (Phase III)
(Funded in Current Multi-year Program)

Major Phase I Milestones

We are here

(Funded)

(Funded)
What is NEPA?

- National Environmental Policy Act (1969)
- Requires consideration of human, natural and cultural environment for actions that use federal funds, or on federal land
- A decision-making framework that is:
  - Multi-disciplinary
  - Transparent
  - Process-driven
- Has varying levels of analysis:
  - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
  - Environmental Assessment (EA)
  - Categorical Exclusion (CE)
The EIS Timeline  
(Phase One of the process)

• IDOT:
  – Initiates a project with FHWA
  – With FHWA, begins coordination with agencies
  – Develops and conducts public involvement / CSS
  – Develops project Purpose and Need
  – Develops alternatives to be carried forward
  – Prepares Draft EIS and holds Public Hearing
  – Identifies a Preferred Alternative
  – Prepares Final EIS and a Record of Decision (ROD)
Study Area Issues

• Natural Environment
  – Streams (Coal Branch Creek, Rock Creek)
  – Wetlands
  – Forested land
  – Sensitive habitats (associated with stream corridors or forested areas)

• Cultural Environment
  – Historic properties
  – Potential archaeological resources
Study Area Issues

• Human Environment
  – Residences
  – Businesses
  – Institutions
  – Noise
  – Traffic
    • Volume
    • Safety
Overview of Public Involvement/CSS and the CAG
Public Involvement for the Alton-Godfrey Transportation Study

- Inclusive and responsive program
- Intended to get input early and continuously, and engage the community in a give and take of information
- Will be conducted using IDOT’s Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process
- IDOT’s goal is to understand stakeholder needs for, and concerns about, transportation and mobility in the Alton-Godfrey area
What is CSS?

• CSS = Context Sensitive Solutions
  – Context: all elements related to people and place

• A formalized, collaborative, and adaptable approach to public involvement
  – Considers project engineering needs, IDOT requirements, and community values
  – Involves engineering, planning, and environmental disciplines
  – Addresses safety and mobility
  – Preserves and enhances area’s characteristics – “quality of life”

• Input heard from stakeholders early and often
  – A diversity of community voices
  – IDOT is final decision maker

• Result: project that fits into its surroundings (context)
Examples of Context

**Example of Rural Context**
- Connects farmers to highway system
- ADT = 7,700
- Farm and rural agricultural land use
- Rolling topography
- Heavy agricultural truck volumes
- Sidewalks are discontinuous
- Shared lane with cyclists
- One mile east to rural community
- Wetland and habitat

**Example of Urban Context**
- Mature street territory
- Retail commercial
- ADT = 31,000
- Transit frequency every 15 min
- Bike lane
- Moderate bike traffic
- 1940s-style architecture
Examples of CSS

Before

After
Examples of CSS

Before

After
Opportunities for Public Input during the Study

• Include the following:
  – Public informational meetings
  – Stakeholder / small group meetings
  – CAG meetings
  – Project website
Stakeholder Meetings – since January

• Purpose: introduce study and provide background information
• 24 meetings held since late January
• General comments/discussion included:
  – Area growth will continue with corresponding increases in traffic
  – Opening of IL Route 255 is a priority
  – Proposed Transit Center could be beneficial to area but lead to increased traffic volumes
  – Concerns about conditions and access at specific intersections and roadways
  – Concerns about safety at railroad crossings
  – Minimize effects to residences
  – Information provided to the team about municipal and business growth plans and employment
Public Meeting – May 3, 2012

- **Purpose:** Introduce study to public, gather comments, solicit CAG volunteers
- **Information presented:** study area features, traffic/crash data, NEPA & CSS process overview
- **85 attendees**
- **15 written comments received**
  - General agreement that some transportation improvements are needed in the area
  - Suggestions such as retiming signals, adding turn lanes, or improving specific intersections or roadways
  - Several comments referred to IL 255 construction; differing or opposing opinions on impacts to local roadways when it opens
  - Some stated concern about state’s fiscal condition or that they believed the study is not needed at this time
Purpose of a CAG

• Provide input to the Project Study Group (PSG)
  – Problem Statement
  – Identify transportation issues important to the community
  – Provide feedback on alternatives
CAG Roles

• Liaison between IDOT and community
  – Representative of varied interests in the study area
  – Share community’s opinions, values, and concerns about area’s transportation with the PSG
  – Generate interest in the study
  – Help ensure community values and context are considered, not just personal points of view
CAG Responsibilities

- Attend and participate in CAG meetings
- Communicate openly and honestly
- Respect opinions of other CAG members
- Endorse the CSS process
- Represent one’s organization and community interest
- CAG process is not a vote
  - Strive for consensus on decisions
  - IDOT is final decision maker
Future CAG Meetings / Activities

• Context Audit (tonight)
• Develop Problem Statement
• Input on Purpose and Need
• Identify alternatives
• Refine alternatives
  – Potential alignment corridors
  – Improvements to existing roadways
  – Preferred alternative

• Future meetings will depend on outcome
How will CAG Input be Used?

• Sounding board to project team
• Evaluate input in conjunction with engineering, safety criteria, environmental aspects, and state/federal policy
• Reflect community transportation needs
IDOT CSS Successes

- IL Rt. 3 / Waterloo
  - Vandebrook Drive
  - Median type
  - Shared-use path
  - Shoulder for farm equipment
  - Avoided old train depot
IDOT CSS Successes

• IL Rt. 159 / Collinsville
  – Alignment shift to minimize impacts
  – Tree wells
  – Greenspace
  – Off-street parking
IDOT CSS Successes

• I-74 / Peoria
Context Audit
Purpose of the Context Audit

• Identify various characteristics that define the study area
• Will aid in defining the transportation problem(s) to be addressed and the Purpose and Need
• Designed to consider:
  – Area’s history and heritage
  – Environmental conditions
  – Community goals
  – Tie community values into transportation improvements
Context Audit Instructions

• Fill in your contact information

• Questions 1-17:
  – Provide answers based on your unique experience in the area

• Questions 18-19:
  – Indicate the importance to you of the features listed
  – Please limit “Most Important” to no more than 3

• Provide any additional comments or concerns

• Ask if you have a question!
Questions / Discussion
Action Items / Next CAG Meeting
Next CAG Meeting

• In about one month
• Context Audit Summary
• Stakeholder Involvement Plan questions
• Define Problem Statement

• Comments before next meeting: contact Karen Geldert, 618-346-3157
Future CAG Activities

• Future meetings will depend on outcome
• Public involvement continues through construction
• Sharing of information throughout the study and construction
Thanks for your participation in the Alton-Godfrey Transportation Study