

Traffic and Construction Noise

No substantial changes in traffic-generated noise levels are expected as a result of this proposed improvement. Trucks and machinery used for construction will produce noise that may affect some residents and residential area activities during the construction period. Impacts resulting from construction noise are likely to occur during daylight hours and be temporary. The construction documents will include noise specifications, and the contractor will need to comply with any local noise ordinances.



January 2017 - Newsletter



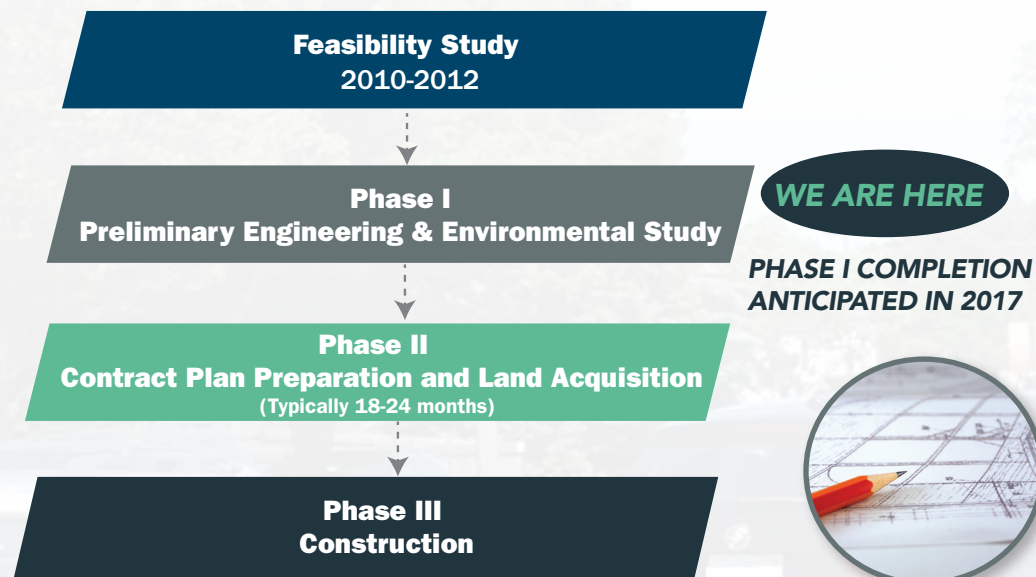
www.idot.illinois.gov/projects/55th-St-Wolf-Road

55th Street Wolf Road to Brainard Avenue



Thank you for your attendance at the public hearing held on Wednesday, August 24, 2016 for the Illinois Department of Transportation's (Department) proposed improvement of 55th Street from Wolf Road to Brainard Avenue in the Villages of Western Springs and La Grange, the City of Countryside, and unincorporated La Grange Highlands. Your comments have become part of the official public hearing record and will be included in the project report. A total of nineteen comments were received during the three week comment period that lasted through September 14, 2016. As many comments concerned similar issues, this newsletter has been prepared to address your concerns as well as provide you with an overview of topics. The materials presented at the public hearing are available on the project website at www.idot.illinois.gov/projects/55th-St-Wolf-Road

Next Steps



The Department is nearing completion of the Phase I study as we incorporate comments from the public hearing and refine the design and right-of-way requirements. Contract plan preparation and land acquisition (Phase II) and construction (Phase III) are not included in the Department's FY 2017-2022 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. However, the Department remains committed to funding 40 million dollars in highway improvements in this area, including engineering, land acquisition, construction, and construction engineering. Construction and preconstruction activities will continue to be prioritized for inclusion in future multi-year programs as projects are developed and readied for construction.

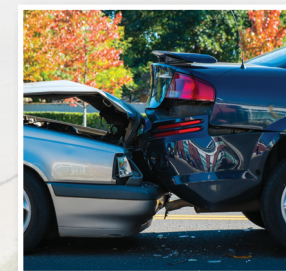
For more information about the public hearing, please visit the project website at www.idot.illinois.gov/projects/55th-St-Wolf-Road.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Scott Czaplicki, Project Manager, at (847) 705-4710 or Scott.Czaplicki@illinois.gov.



Safety, Congestion, Capacity, and Turn Lanes

The Joliet Road Feasibility Study (2012) was prepared by the Department to evaluate traffic patterns resulting from the closure of Joliet Road between East Avenue and 55th Street, identify short-term and long-term traffic needs, and mitigate the impacts from the closure. The study recommended improvements along 55th Street including the addition of a flush median, adding or lengthening turn lanes, and traffic signal



improvements. **Throughout most of the project limits, left turning vehicles must stop in the through lane to wait to turn. This condition impedes traffic flow and results in rear-end and turning collisions, which are the predominant crash types within the project limits (74%).** As a result, a flush median is proposed to improve safety by separating the opposing through lanes of traffic and providing left-turning vehicles a refuge while waiting for a gap in traffic. **Studies have shown that the installation of a flush median can decrease crashes by up to 55%.**

Roadway Widening and Pavement

The proposed roadway widening is generally the same on the north and south sides of 55th Street (approximately 5 feet each side). The amount of widening has been minimized by reducing lane widths throughout the project limits. Between Laurel Avenue and Wolf Road the median width was reduced from eleven to four feet. In addition, the width of the proposed shared-use path was reduced from ten to eight feet. Side slopes have also been adjusted such that easements and proposed right-of-way are reduced or eliminated.

Reconstruction of the existing roadway pavement is not included in the scope of the proposed improvements due to cost limitations. The Department performs a pavement condition rating survey every two years on state highways. The latest available result from 2014 indicates the pavement is in fair condition. Milling and resurfacing is included in the project which will extend the pavement life. The elevation of the roadway is not proposed to change.





Speed Limit

Speed limits on Illinois state roadways are established by the Illinois Vehicle Code and the Department's 'Policy on Establishing and Posting Speed Limits on the State Highway System'. A link to the policy is available on the project website. The Department evaluated the speeds along 55th Street in November 2015 and confirmed the posted speed limit should be 35 mph from County Line Road to East Avenue. The Department will update signs to reflect the 35 mph speed limit. Speed enforcement is local agency responsibility.



SIDEWALK and SHARED-USE PATH



The project was developed in accordance with Department's Complete Streets policy. *The proposed improvement includes a sidewalk on the south side of 55th Street, a shared-use path on the north side of 55th Street, high visibility crosswalks, and pedestrian signals.* These accommodations are

consistent with recommendations by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. Handicap-accessible ramps for sidewalk and shared-use paths will be provided. Sidewalks and shared-use paths will be constructed if the local municipalities provide 20% construction cost, and accept long-term responsibility for the administration, control, and maintenance of the facilities. The sidewalk and path are generally offset as far from the roadway as possible to increase user comfort and safety while minimizing impacts to adjacent properties. A pedestrian connection between Calle View Drive and the proposed shared-use path has been added.

Traffic Signals and Emergency Vehicle Pre-Emption Devices

Traffic signal replacement is proposed at the intersections of 55th Street at Wolf Road, Laurel Avenue, Willow Springs Road, and Brainard Avenue.

These traffic signals are part of an interconnected system between Wolf Road and Joliet Road. The existing pedestrian crossing times at Laurel Avenue were evaluated by the Department, and found to be adequate. The existing emergency vehicle pre-emption (EVP) devices on the traffic signals at Wolf Road, Willow Springs Road, and Brainard Avenue are owned and maintained by the Pleasantview Fire Protection District (District) and are proposed to be replaced. The District has expressed interest in installing EVP devices at the 55th Street and Laurel Avenue intersection.

Stormwater and Drainage Facilities



As part of the planning and coordination process, measures were implemented to address storm water runoff. The proposed drainage system will incorporate storm water detention along with minor improvements to reduce local drainage concerns. As the Department is not a flood control agency, the scope of proposed drainage improvements is limited to that of a roadway project. However, the Department has been coordinating with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) who is studying the watershed to identify ways to provide flood relief. Although the drainage systems in the project area are diverse and complex, this coordination will result in a roadway drainage system that can be designed to be compatible with future improvements proposed as part of a regional plan being developed by MWRD.

Commercial Parking

Multiple commercial properties along 55th Street have asphalt paving within state right-of-way that is used for parking or provides access to parking. Roadway improvement projects present the Department with the best opportunity to identify and address encroachments. Therefore, these paved encroachment areas are planned to be replaced with a grassed parkway. Property owners who are interested in continuing to use these areas should contact the project manager as noted on the back of the newsletter.

Roadway Lighting

The design, construction, and maintenance of roadway lighting is a local agency responsibility. In coordination during the study, the local agencies declined to upgrade roadway lighting within the project limits. As a result, new roadway lighting is not currently included in this project.

Tree Replacement

Trees that are removed will be replaced according to Department Policy D&E-18 (Preservation and Replacement of Trees). All trees and other plants removed for construction will be replaced on a 1:1 nursery stock basis at a minimum where feasible. Forested areas or dense stands of trees may be replaced with seedling trees on a 3:1 basis where appropriate. A link to the policy is available on the project website.

