

# INTERACTION

Your source for news on the IL Rte. 131 Green Bay Road Project



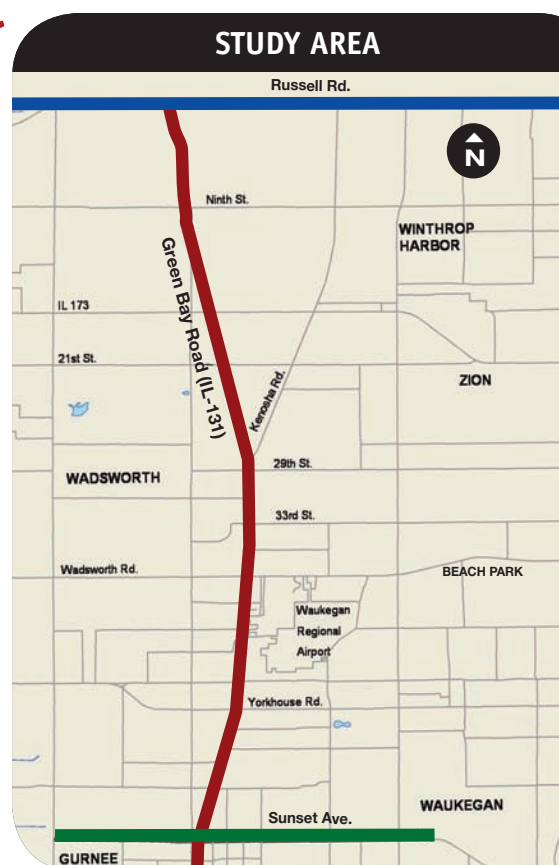
## IL 131

GREEN BAY ROAD PROJECT

## Illinois Department of Transportation Kicks-off Project

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has initiated a Phase I Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Study for Illinois Route 131 (IL Rte. 131)/Green Bay Road. The project will follow the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process and encourage extensive public involvement throughout the development process. The IL Rte. 131 Phase I project will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) and will include an analysis of the primarily two lane rural roadway, drainage, intersection deficiencies, and an examination of the impacts that proposed improvements will have on the communities and the environment.

The study area is located in Lake County extending approximately 7.5 miles from Russell Road to Sunset Avenue. The corridor is developed with a mix of residential, commercial, and agricultural uses, forest preserve, golf courses and the Waukegan Regional Airport. The study area includes six communities: Gurnee, Waukegan, Beach Park, Wadsworth, Zion, and Winthrop Harbor, which are experiencing rapid growth with much of the agricultural area zoned for residential or commercial development.



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This publication provides a format to keep you informed about new project developments.

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## Project to Follow Prescribed Phase I Process

The study process is expected to take 3 - 4 years to complete and will follow the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process. Extensive public involvement will be encouraged throughout the development process. There are a number of steps to complete the process which includes:

- Analyzing existing and future conditions
- Defining Purpose & Need
- Alternatives Analysis
- Assess Environmental Consequences
- Draft/Final Environmental Assessment

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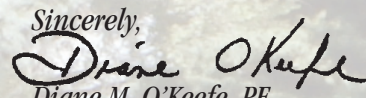




ILL Rte 131  
Green Bay Rd

## Message from IDOT

*I am pleased to announce that the Illinois Department of Transportation has initiated the IL Rte. 131 Project in Lake County. The study will include an analysis of the existing two lane rural roadway, an evaluation of drainage, intersection deficiencies, and an examination of the impacts that proposed improvements will have on the communities and the environment. A vital element of our study effort is a broad-based public involvement program. This program provides meaningful opportunities for all interested stakeholders and the public at large to participate in defining transportation issues and solutions for this project. We are looking forward to working with all communities, agencies, and interested parties to develop a comprehensive transportation system that fits into its surroundings and that will benefit the project stakeholders and the entire region.*

Sincerely,  
  
Diane M. O'Keefe, PE  
Deputy Director of Highways  
Region One Engineer

## Corridor Planning Group to be Formed to Provide Input

IDOT realizes that feedback from potentially affected communities is important to ensuring that IDOT proposals are consistent with community goals and objectives. To provide a forum for discussions of details about potential improvements and design of IL Rte. 131, IDOT is forming a Corridor Planning Group. The Corridor Planning Group will include elected officials from the county and six municipalities located along the 7.5 mile corridor. These include Lake County, and the municipalities of Gurnee, Waukegan, Beach Park, Wadsworth, Zion and Winthrop Harbor.

The elected officials on the Corridor Planning Group are supported by Technical Advisory Groups, whose members are selected from transportation and land use planning agencies, economic development councils, forest preserve district, environmental conservation groups, and other civic groups. The task force members will have experience and knowledge of local issues related to transportation, environmental resources, and land use planning.

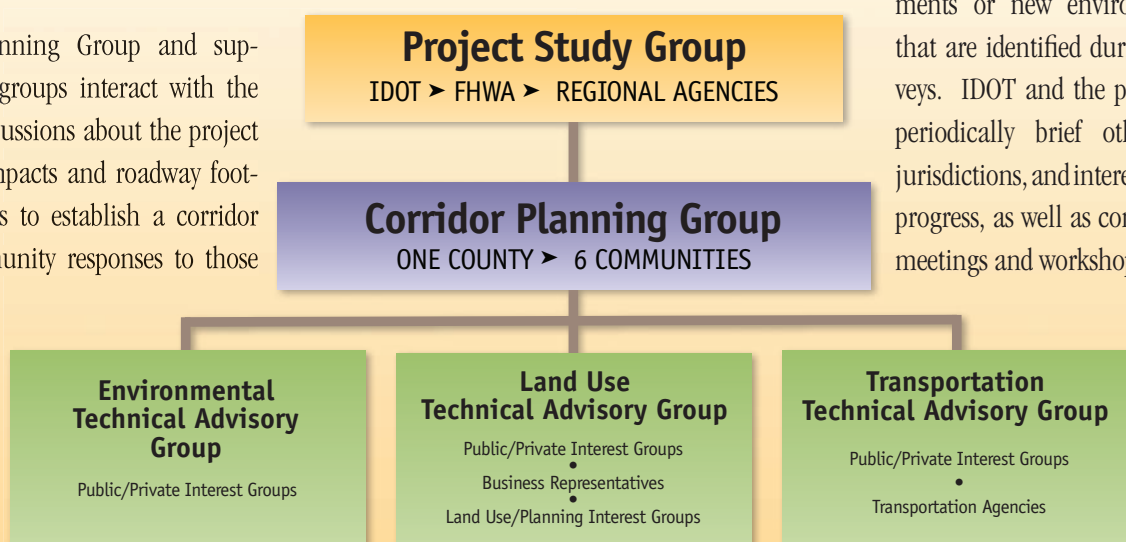
The Corridor Planning Group and supporting technical groups interact with the study team for discussions about the project needs, potential impacts and roadway footprint, opportunities to establish a corridor theme, and community responses to those proposed ideas.

The group also provides a framework for local government cooperation on land use and enhancements to the area. The technical groups may address project transportation issues, including crossroad design and adjacent property access, right-of-way width, accommodation of utilities, emergency vehicle access, non-motorized trails maintenance traffic, design standards; and environmental issues including preservation, storm water discharge, water quality, wetlands, home and business displacements, construction impacts, and secondary impacts stimulated by the project. Land use planning can be addressed by the technical groups by providing a framework for development of corridor land use and development plans.

When the group raises issues or has suggestions, IDOT and the project team will work hard to accommodate the request or reduce the impact.

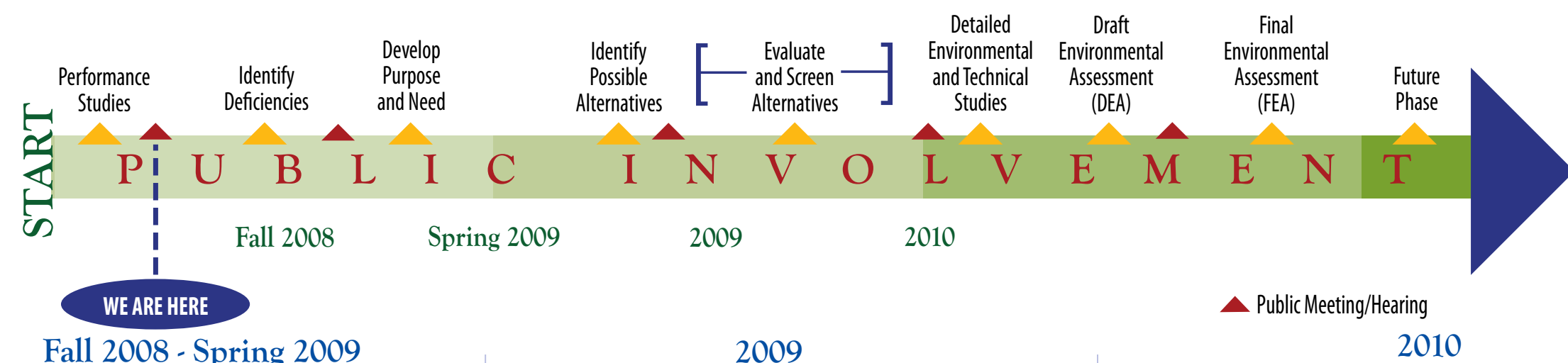
Often times this results in adjustments that eventually provide a good solution for all parties. These potential draft footprints may change based on public comments or new environmental conditions that are identified during the ongoing surveys. IDOT and the project team will also periodically brief other agencies, local jurisdictions, and interest groups on the study progress, as well as continue to hold public meetings and workshops.

## Project Working Groups Organizational Structure





# Project Schedule



The first step of the Phase I Study is analyzing the existing and future conditions, and defining the Purpose and Need for improvements.

The tasks include collecting information on current population, employment and traffic conditions; developing a geographic information system to organize and display the data; forecasting future population and employment growth in the area; predicting future travel demand, and evaluating the performance of the transportation system under future conditions. With this information, IDOT and stakeholders will identify transportation deficiencies, and can begin the planning process for developing solutions to address these deficiencies. Upon completion of the needs assessment for the study area, deficiencies will be established, and the study then proceeds with developing the specific purpose of improvements and the needs that will be addressed.

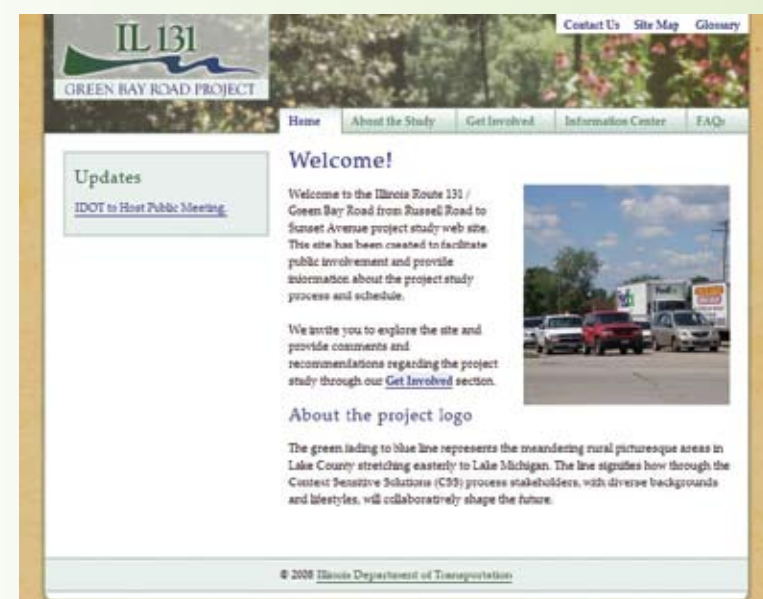
The next steps in the study process is a screening step that begins with identification of a wide range of possible solutions, and ends with the selection of an alternative for further detailed evaluation. Possible solutions will be evaluated by looking at preliminary alternatives that meet the purpose and need. A wide range of alternatives will be identified and evaluated against the needs that are found. The process of evaluating and selecting possible solutions to identify needs will follow the federally mandated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and under the provisions of the NEPA, “reasonable alternatives,” including a “no action” alternative, will be objectively examined during this process. Public involvement activity and context sensitivity will continue to be applied through this part of the study.

The further detailed evaluation of an alternative includes evaluation of the affect of any possible alternative on the environment. These findings in addition to the findings from previous steps are reported in the Environmental Assessment document. The last step in this process also includes further detailed evaluation of the technical factors associated with the alternative and the preferred alternative will be chosen.

## Project Funding

This project is not currently funded for design or construction in the Department’s Fiscal Year 2009-2014 Proposed Highway Improvement Program, however, it will be considered for inclusion in future programs as funding becomes available.

## Communities Learn About the Project on a New Website



Get involved, find out more information, sign up for mailing lists and write your comments to us at [www.IL131Project.com](http://www.IL131Project.com)

The IL Rte. 131 Project kicks off with the public involvement program at the forefront of the project. The website is an important element of the public involvement program. The website is designed to communicate and share information about the project and process as it becomes available. More importantly, it offers the public an opportunity to comment on the project throughout the project process through a comment page on the website.

The public has the opportunity to learn facts about the project by viewing the website. The website will be maintained throughout the project duration and will include project information, frequently asked questions with answers, meeting information, project publications and reports, mailing list sign up and comment forms. This is another tool that the county, municipalities and special interest groups can use to stay involved.

## Taking a Look Ahead

IDOT welcomes input from the public at upcoming public informational meetings and stakeholder meetings. IDOT requests you submit your comments from the October 29, 2008 public meeting by November 13, 2008. This input will be used along with other data collected to identify deficiencies.

With deficiencies established, the study will proceed to identifying the specific purpose of the improvements and the needs to be addressed.

An important factor for selecting the best alternative is the ability for a solution to address the purpose and need for improvements. Therefore, it is important to have a defined purpose and a good understanding of those needs as we identify possible alternatives.

### A Purpose and Need:

- Defines why the study is being done and what problems will be addressed.
- Begins with statements of problems that the project should resolve.
- Starting point for evaluation of transportation solution alternatives.



## IL Rte. 131 Accommodates a Significant Portion of Long-distance, High Volume Automobile and Commercial Vehicle Traffic in the Region

In the past, transportation system plans for Northeastern Illinois focused on major expressway and fixed rail transit facilities. State and federal agencies planned and coordinated highways while counties and municipalities handled local roads. In the early 1990’s the 2010 Transportation System Plan recognized the need for a comprehensive network of routes one step below the expressway system to relieve congestion and facilitate long-distance regional traffic. In doing so, the plan established the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) System. IL Rte. 131 is a designated SRA Route and is intended to supplement the existing and proposed expressway facilities by accommodating a significant portion of long-distance, high-volume automobile and commercial vehicle traffic in the region. Although some research and guidelines have been identified in the past through the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) Corridor Study, the study represented pre-phase one planning and did not include detailed engineering or an environmental assessment.

## What Is Context Sensitive Solutions?

*Context is defined as all elements related to the people and place where a project is located. This includes elements such as the environment, historic resources, community values, traditions and expectations.*

The IL Rte. 131 Study is designated as a Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) project using the principles of the Illinois Department of Transportation CSS Policy. Public involvement is strongly encouraged throughout the Phase I study and will continue to proactively seek stakeholder involvement and IDOT partnerships early and often in development of a consensus solution. Consensus is defined as a majority of the stakeholders in agreement, with the minority agreeing that their input was duly considered. However, IDOT is responsible for final project decisions. CSS is a collaborative approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a facility that fits into its surroundings and preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources while maintaining safety and mobility. The purpose of CSS is to gather and duly consider input on the project from all stakeholders. Plans are underway to provide several opportunities for public input about the corridor needs including corridor and technical advisory groups, public information meetings, community meetings and a website.

Per IDOT’s CSS procedures, a stakeholder is anyone who could be affected by the project and has a stake in its outcome.

Stakeholders are identified as all residents of the study area and those interested parties that help IDOT understand their needs for, and concerns about, our transportation system. IDOT can then take this input, along with all of its other work and analysis, and use it to make planning and design decisions. In fact, the green fading to blue line in the project logo represents the meandering rural picturesque areas in Lake County stretching easterly to Lake Michigan. It also signifies stakeholders with diverse interests, backgrounds and lifestyles, who will collaboratively shape Lake County’s future.

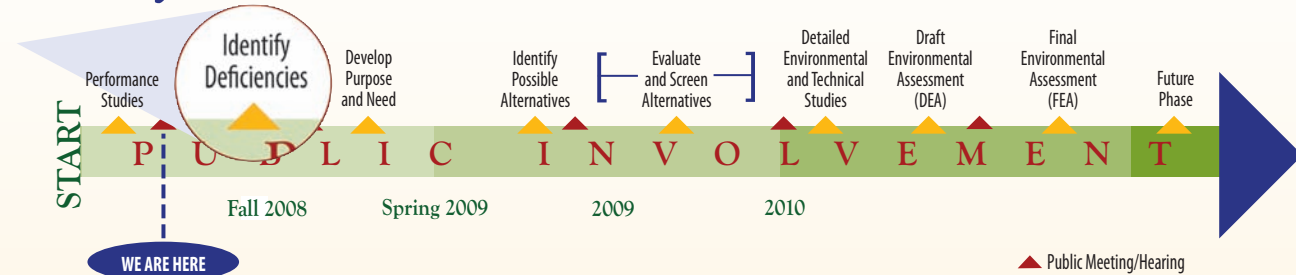




## Communities Curious About the Next Steps

The study team is at the beginning of the Phase I Study Process and includes a series of steps used to determine if there is a need for improvement and leads to the ultimate development of the Purpose & Need Statement. During the upcoming months, the focus is to define existing and future transportation needs in the study area. Several tasks need to be completed before any consideration is given to defining solutions.

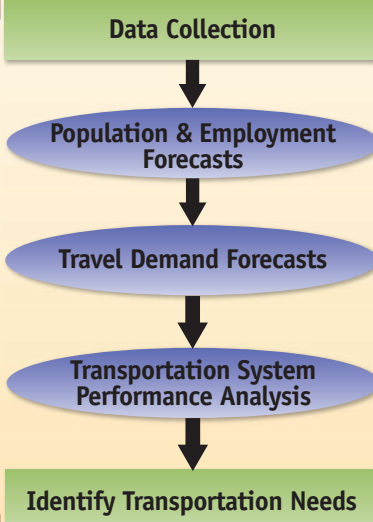
### Project Schedule



#### These tasks include:

- Meeting with community leaders and collecting transportation plans and capital improvement programs from local, regional and state agencies. It also will be necessary to learn what projects agencies have planned for the future.
- Verifying the existing transportation network.
- Conducting traffic counts to determine travel patterns.
- Collecting available traffic and crash data and information on public transit, pedestrian, bike, and equestrian travel. Population and employment data will be collected, as well as community comprehensive land use plans, zoning ordinances, and other significant development proposals.
- Collect geographic data, including legislative districts and community boundaries, identify the transportation network and environmental issues.
- Future travel demand forecasts will use 2030 population and employment projections. The travel demand forecast will help identify where traffic congestion may happen in the future as well as predict how today's travel patterns will change.
- The transportation system performance studies will result in data needed to understand existing and future transportation conditions. Based on the 2030 population, employment, and travel forecasts, the project team will have an understanding of travel demands and transportation system performance in the study area if no major improvements are implemented.

#### Public Involvement



# GET INVOLVED!

## Public Involvement Is Key

Public Involvement is an interactive process that provides information to the public so they may make informed decisions and offer important input into the solutions that address the community's concerns. A public involvement program has been designed to encourage your participation throughout the study.

Newsletters, workshops and public meetings will coincide with key project milestones throughout the duration of the project. If you cannot attend an outreach event, up-to-date information is available at: [www.IL131Project.com](http://www.IL131Project.com).

#### Public Involvement Opportunities Include:

- Newsletters
- Website: [www.IL131Project.com](http://www.IL131Project.com)
- Sign up for mailing list
- Small group meetings
- Invite us to speak at your event!
- Public Meetings: First meeting October 29, 2008



## About IDOT

### Illinois Department of Transportation

Illinois contains over 138,000 miles of highways, streets and roads. This system is owned and operated by four levels of government: state, county, township, and municipal. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is responsible for the stated owned and operated portion of the vast system. The following is a listing of some of IDOT's major responsibilities:

- Overseeing construction, operation and maintenance of 17,000 miles of highways
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive public transportation program
- Development and administration of airport improvement programs
- Administration of state assistance for rail lines and new facilities
- Advancement of transportation safety

### District One

There are several principle divisions within IDOT. The Division of Highways (DOH) is responsible for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the state highway system as well as the administration of the program for Local Roads and Streets. Nine geographical districts exist within the DOH. Each district is responsible for the divisional operation within its assigned area. District One encompasses six counties in northeastern Illinois including the counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will.

The state highway system in District One consists of 3,006 miles of highways and 1,769 bridges, supporting more than 100 million miles of travel daily. Approximately \$2.8 billion will be provided during the Fiscal Years 2009-2014 for improvements to state highways in District One.

### District One Fiscal Year 2009-2014 Anticipated Accomplishments:

- 51 miles of interstate maintenance
- 1,036 miles of non-interstate maintenance
- 46 interstate bridges
- 162 non-interstate bridges
- 4 new bridges
- 82 minor structure repairs
- 36 miles of highway congestion mitigation
- 1 highway expansion location
- 82 traffic safety improvement locations

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Will safety be addressed in this study?

One of IDOT's primary concerns is providing safe, accessible transportation therefore; safety will be evaluated and addressed in this study.

### How do you know what is needed – and who needs it?

There will be a number of factors involved in determining need. These factors could include, but are not limited to: Mobility, Accessibility, System Connectivity, Safety, and support for Economic Development. IDOT is seeking input from home owners, business owners, community officials, and commuters at the Public Meetings and Study Groups who have first hand knowledge of needs of the roadway.

### What constitutes a Stakeholder?

Stakeholders for a project include any person or organization which has a direct stake in the project being considered. This can be anything from a small group of residents and businesses affected by the redesign of a rural intersection to thousands of individuals when a major roadway or transit extension is being built. Stakeholders can include residents and landowners near a project, advocates for policy, community and historic interests, elected officials, government agencies, and many others.

### Will any homes or businesses be displaced?

Since a full range of alternatives have not been identified or analyzed, it is impossible to say, however, through the NEPA and CSS process, IDOT will strive to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts and ensure responsible planning in the area of increasing population growth and traffic congestion.

### What happens to the comments I submit to the project team?

Ideas and recommendations from the public are vital to our efforts. The project team records your comments, which may be submitted via the website, at public meetings, or via letters. All the feedback we receive from the public, along with technical analysis, will be considered throughout the project. Both will be especially valuable at key milestones, such as shaping the project's "Purpose and Need" statement. Feedback will also be instrumental as we develop and evaluate project alternatives.

### Is the Waukegan Airport Authority's runway expansion study part of this study?

No. The Waukegan Airport Authority and the IL Rte. 131 study are two separate studies led by different agencies. The Waukegan Airport Authority is conducting an Environmental Assessment for a possible future runway expansion, whereas, this study is evaluating the roadway needs along a 7.5 mile section of IL Rte. 131. The Waukegan Airport Authority is a stakeholder in this study and IDOT intends to coordinate with their project plans throughout this study.

# IDOT Schedules First Public Meeting for October

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has initiated a Phase I Study for IL Rte. 131. This study will take an in depth look at current and future transportation needs along IL Rte. 131 in Lake County. The study extends approximately 7.5 miles from Russell Road to Sunset Avenue.

IDOT will present information regarding the study schedule and process, study area characteristics, public involvement opportunities, and basic information regarding the current conditions along the corridor.

The public will have the opportunity to comment on the current and future needs and conditions along the corridor.

This meeting will be an open house format and allow the public the opportunity to watch a PowerPoint presentation, review exhibits, provide comments, and meet with IDOT and study team representatives on a one-on-one basis.

\*This meeting will be accessible to handicapped individuals. Anyone needing special assistance should contact Marty Morse at (847) 705-4107. Persons planning to attend who will need a sign language interpreter or other similar accommodations should notify the Department's TTY/TTD number (800) 526-0844/or 711; TTY Users (Spanish) (800) 501-0864/or 711; and for Telebraille dial (877) 526-6670 at least five days prior to the meeting.

## The public open house will be held:

**Wednesday, October 29, 2008**

**4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.**

Beach Park Middle School

Multi-Purpose Room

40667 North Green Bay Road

Beach Park, IL 60099



## Get Involved!

Check our website for project updates, sign-up for the mailing list, and to send comments to us. Go to [www.IL131Project.com](http://www.IL131Project.com) or contact us at the Illinois Department of Transportation Division of Highways – District One, 201 W. Center Court, Schaumburg, IL 60196. **Telephone:** Marty Morse at (847) 705-4107 Fax: (847) 705-4159.



Illinois Department  
of Transportation

Secretary, Milton R. Sees



This newsletter is printed using soy based inks on recycled paper.

GREEN BAY ROAD PROJECT  
**IL 131**

**You're  
Invited to a  
Public Meeting!**  
Wednesday,  
October 29, 2008  
(see back for details)

IL Rte. 131 Project  
Illinois Department of Transportation  
Division of Highways – District One  
201 W. Center Court  
Schaumburg, IL 60196



Illinois Department  
of Transportation