

The Illinois Department of Transportation welcomes you to the public hearing concerning the improvement of IL 31 from IL 176 to IL 120. We thank you for attending today's hearing and look forward to your input.

# Public Hearing Purpose

- Provide Project Overview
- Present Preferred Alternative
- Answer Questions
- Gather Input
- Discuss Next Steps



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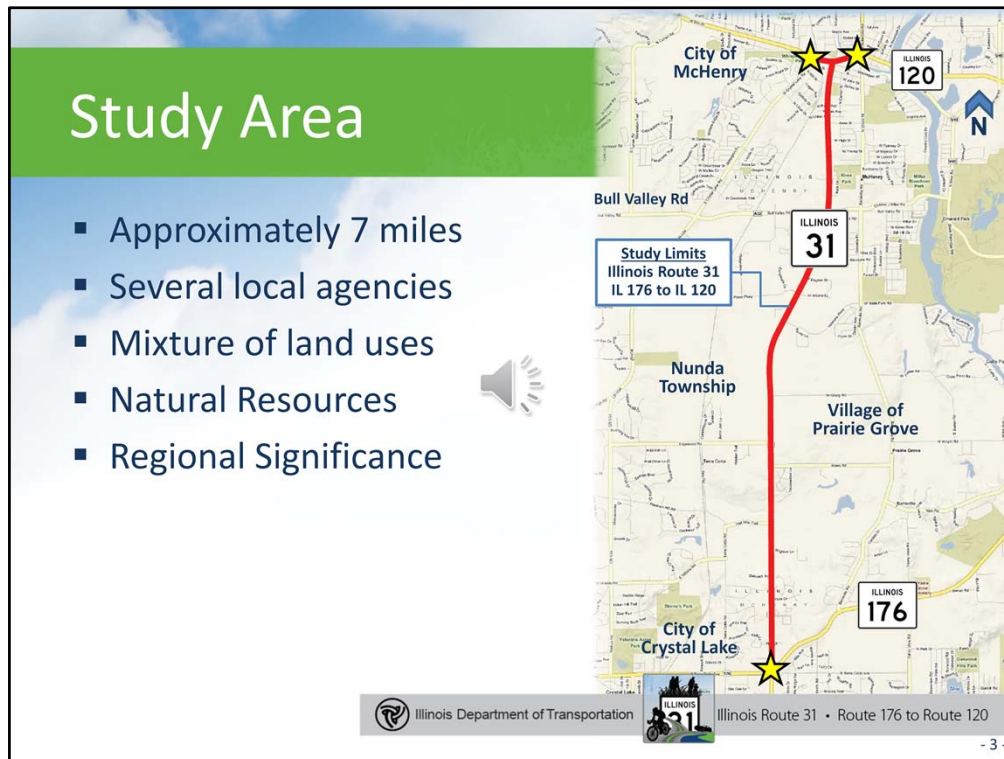
Illinois Route 31 • Route 176 to Route 120

- 2 -

The purpose of today's hearing is to:

- Provide a brief overview of the project
- Present the Preferred Alternative
- Answer any questions you may have about the study
- Gather your input
- And discuss the next steps to complete the study

Please note that larger scale versions of many of the graphics shown on the following slides are available for review in the exhibit rooms.

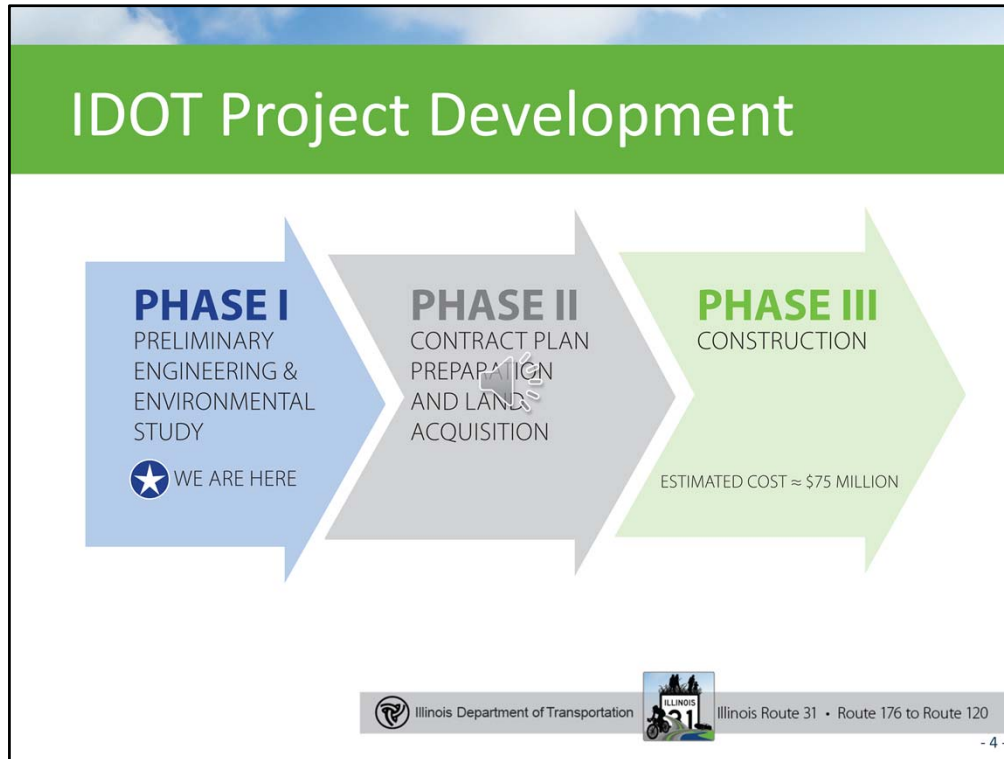


The study area extends approximately 7 miles along IL 31 from IL 176 to IL 120 through the City of Crystal Lake, Village of Prairie Grove and the City of McHenry as well unincorporated McHenry County.

There is a mixture of land uses. Residences are spread throughout the corridor. Commercial areas are found primarily towards the north and south. Agricultural land is mostly in the middle.

Natural resources include trees, creeks, wetlands, and floodplains.

IL 31 is a major north-south Strategic Regional Arterial, also known as an SRA. SRA's are routes which supplement the expressway system in handling a significant portion of long distance, high volume automobile and commercial vehicle traffic in the region.



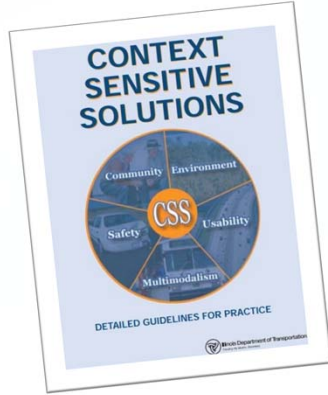
IDOT projects are developed in three phases.

Phase I is the preliminary engineering and environmental study. Through extensive stakeholder involvement and technical analysis, transportation needs are defined, alternatives developed and evaluated, and a preferred alternative selected. Phase II includes contract plan preparation and land acquisition. Phase III is construction.


Phase II (land acquisition) and Phase III construction are not currently included in IDOT's current multi-year program, but will be considered when prioritizing for future programs.

## Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

- Collaborative approach to engaging stakeholders
- Fits into its surroundings
- Flexible and creative approach to planning and design to provide cost effective solution
- Community Advisory Group (CAG)



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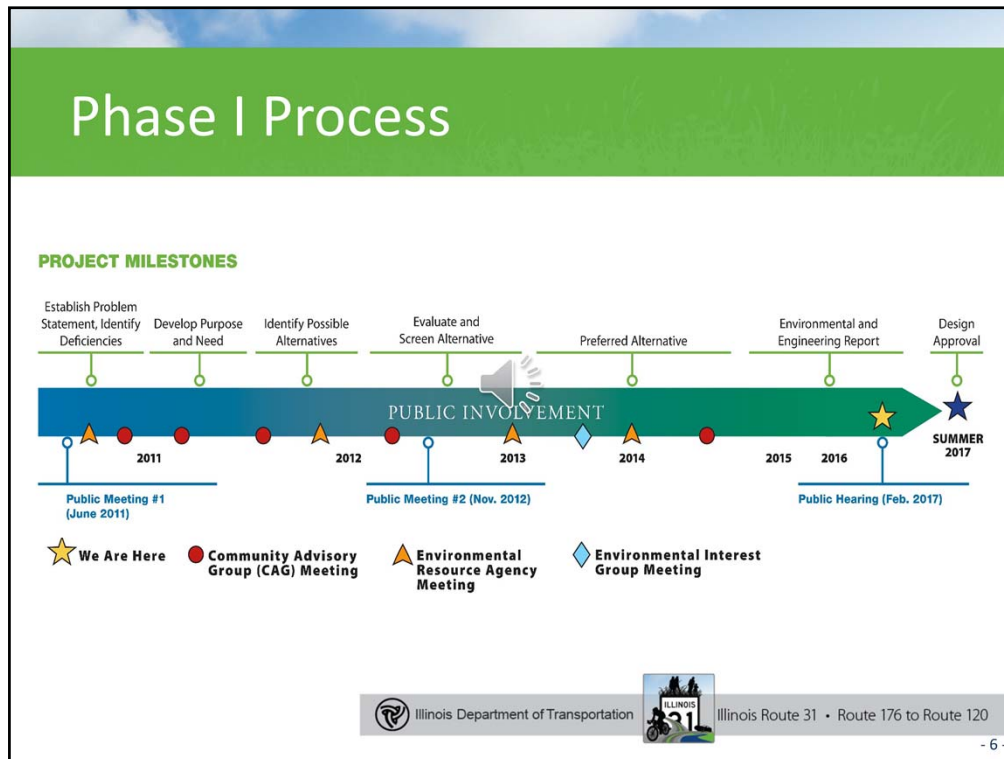


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- 5 -

This project is using the principals of Context Sensitive Solutions as part of a robust public involvement process. Context Sensitive Solutions or CSS is a collaborative approach to engaging as many stakeholders as possible; developing a project that will best fit into its surroundings; and using a flexible and creative approach in planning and design to provide cost effective solutions.

A Community Advisory Group (CAG) consisting of local residents, business owners, representatives from municipal and county government, and environmental and bicycle advocacy organizations was formed to help accomplish these goals.



The Phase I process follows the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA. The NEPA process allows transportation officials to make project decisions that balance engineering and transportation needs with social, economic, and natural environmental factors.

Public involvement activities, such as public and CAG meetings, have been integrated with the engineering design and environmental analysis at project milestones.

An Environmental Assessment has been prepared to evaluate the project's impacts.

## Purpose and Need

- Improve Safety
- Address Roadway Capacity and Mobility
- Correct Roadway Deficiencies
- Encourage Multi-modal Transportation



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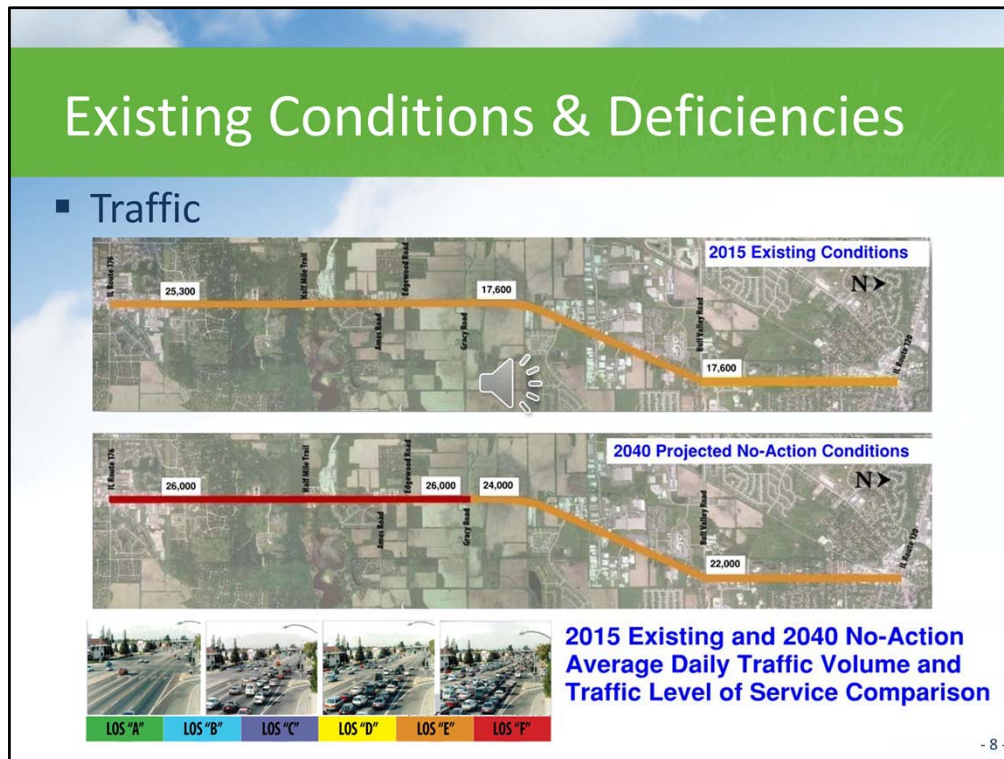
- 7 -

The Purpose and Need outlines the basis for the project and serves as the foundation for the alternatives analysis.

The identified needs for this project include:

- Improve Safety
- Address roadway capacity and mobility
- Correct existing geometric deficiencies
- Encourage multi-modal transportation





“Level of Service” is used to measure traffic delay. The Level of Service scale is similar to the academic scale. It ranges from an A, which relates traffic conditions experiencing little to no delay, to an F, during which the driver experiences the highest levels of delay.




This map indicates existing Average Daily Traffic (or ADT) volumes. IL 31 currently carries approximately 17,600 to 25,300 vehicles per day. The current level of service for the corridor is an “E”. IL 31 currently requires an additional through lane in each direction.

The projected 2040 ADT ranges from 22,000 to 26,000 vehicles per day. Without improvements, the corridor is expected to operate at a Level of Service “F” within the south study area to a Level of Service “E” in the north.




## Existing Conditions & Deficiencies

- Crashes (2006-2014)
  - » 1,931 Total Crashes
  - » 25% were Injury Crashes
    - 6 Fatalities (3 head-on)
    - 693 Total Injuries
  - » Rear End Collisions (53%)
  - » Identified on Illinois “Five Percent Report” which identifies the top 5% of highway locations with the most pressing safety needs.



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- 9 -

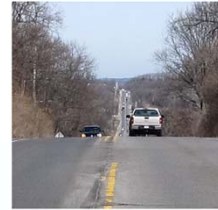
There were 1,931 reported crashes between 2006 and 2014. 25 percent were injury crashes, resulting in 6 fatalities and 693 total injuries. The most common crash resulting in fatalities on IL 31 are head-on collisions. IL 31 currently lacks a median to separate opposing traffic.

The majority of crashes (over 53%) were rear-end collisions, which are generally attributed to congestion and inadequate or non-existent turn lanes.

For the last several years, most of the study limits have been identified on the Illinois Five Percent Report which identifies the top 5% of highway locations with the most pressing safety needs.

## Other Noted Deficiencies

- Lack of Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations
- Drainage Issues
- Sight Lines for Vehicles Travelling over Hills
- Sight Lines at Intersections



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- 10 -


Other noted deficiencies included the lack of any bicycle accommodations and inconsistent sidewalk. There are several locations within the project limits that experience flooding during heavy storm events. Existing hills block drivers view of the roadway ahead. Likewise, existing buildings in the downtown McHenry create intersection sight distance problems.

## Since Public Meeting #2

- Community Advisory Group Meeting #5
- Agency Coordination
- Selected & Refined Preferred Alternative
- Detailed Analysis
  - » Geometry and Intersection Design
  - » Drainage and Water Quality
  - » Noise and Environment
- Environmental Assessment (EA)



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- 11 -

Since the last public meeting in November 2012, the Preferred Alternative was selected, considering public input received. It was then presented to the CAG as well as to local agencies for input and refinements; and received concurrence from the environmental resources agencies in December 2014.

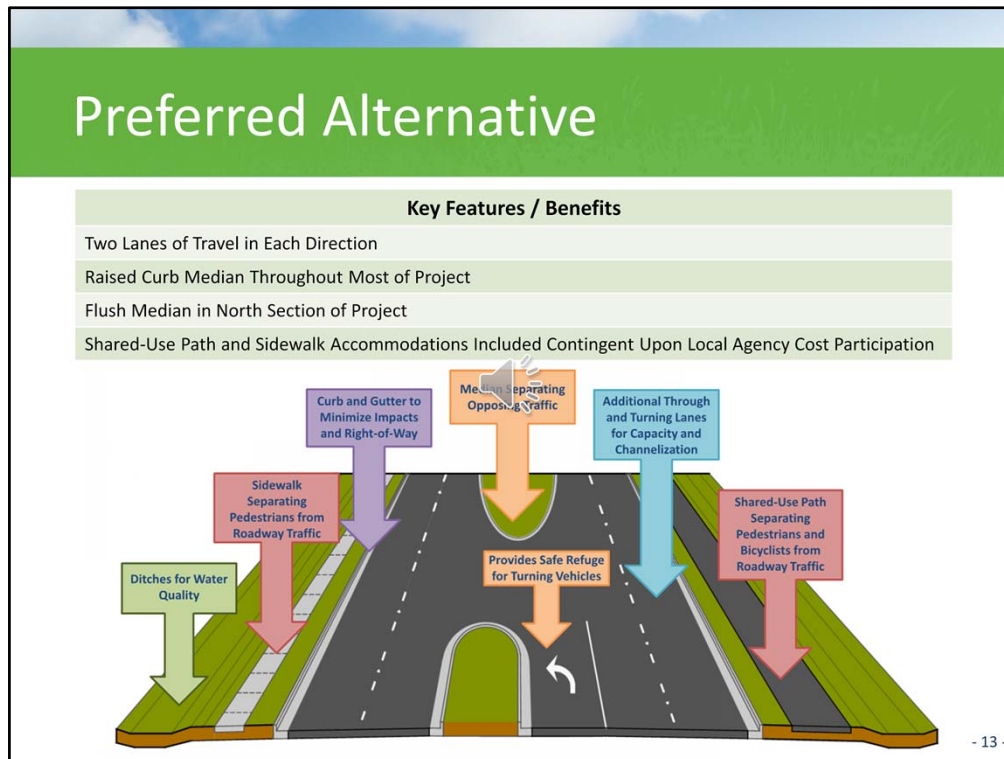
Since then, a detailed analysis of the proposed geometry, intersection design, drainage and water quality, noise and other environmental impacts was conducted.

This analysis is documented in the Environmental Assessment, which was recently approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

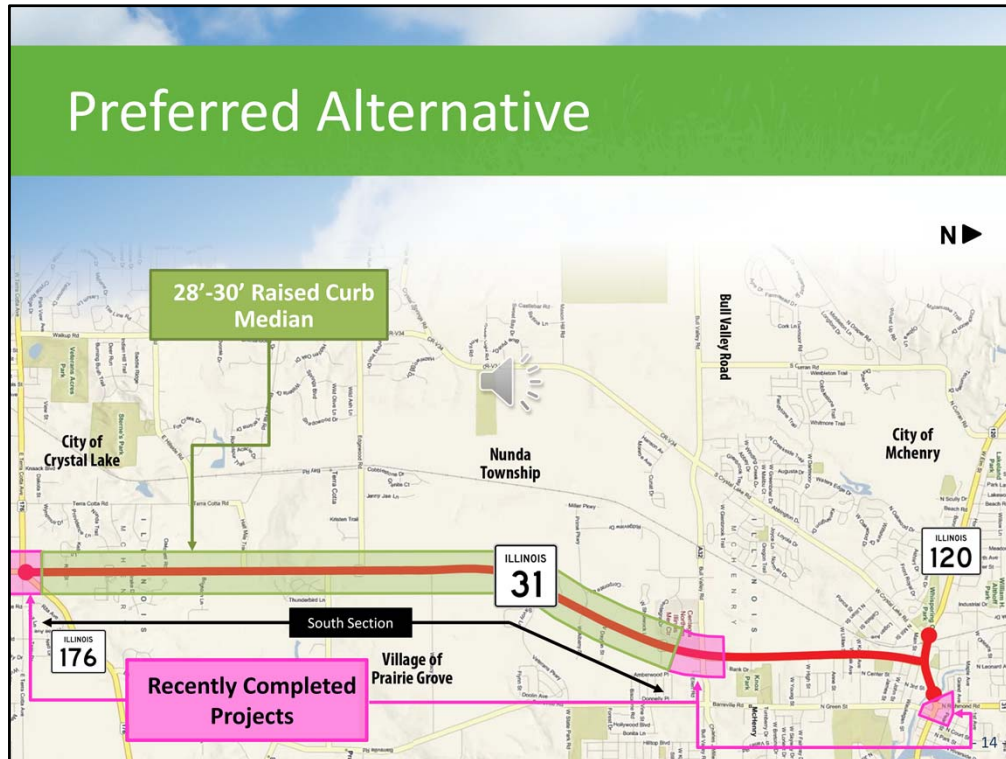


Throughout the study, coordination with the Community Advisory Group, Environmental Resource Agencies and Local municipalities has taken place.

Input from this coordination contributed to the development of the Preferred Alternative.



To address the identified deficiencies, the recommended improvements for IL 31 include two proposed through lanes in each direction. To enhance safety, opposing lanes are separated by a median. The type and width of the median varies, depending on the location and context of the surrounding community. Shared-use path and sidewalk accommodations are proposed throughout most of the project limits, but require cost participation and maintenance from local agencies.



The preferred alternative can be divided into three sections and has been designed to complement recent IL 31 intersection improvements at IL 176 in Crystal Lake, Bull Valley/Charles Miller Road in McHenry and IL 120 (Richmond Road) near Downtown McHenry.

The South Section is located between IL 176 and Bull Valley Road




## Preferred Alternative

### South Section ( IL 176 to Bull Valley/Miller Road)

**28'- 30' Raised Median**  
IL 176 to Bull Valley/Miller Road

**Key Features / Benefits**

- Two through lanes in each direction
- Raised curb median for safety
- Wider median accommodates dual left turn lanes
- U-turns at median breaks
- Sidewalk and shared-use path

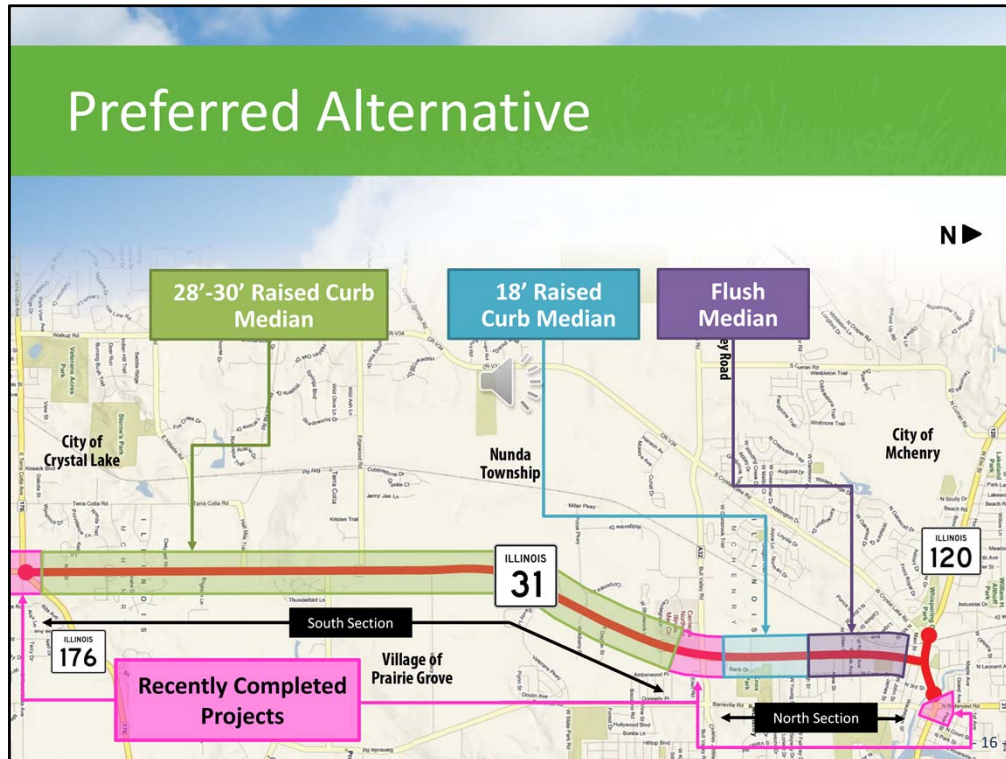


SPEED LIMIT 45

- 15 -

and includes...

- Two Through Lanes in Each Direction
- Curb and gutter along the edge of roadway
- Wider raised curb median for safety and to accommodate Dual Left Turn Lanes for existing and future developments
- Median Breaks for U-turns
- Sidewalk and Shared-Use Path



The North Section is located between Bull Valley Road and IL 120

## Preferred Alternative

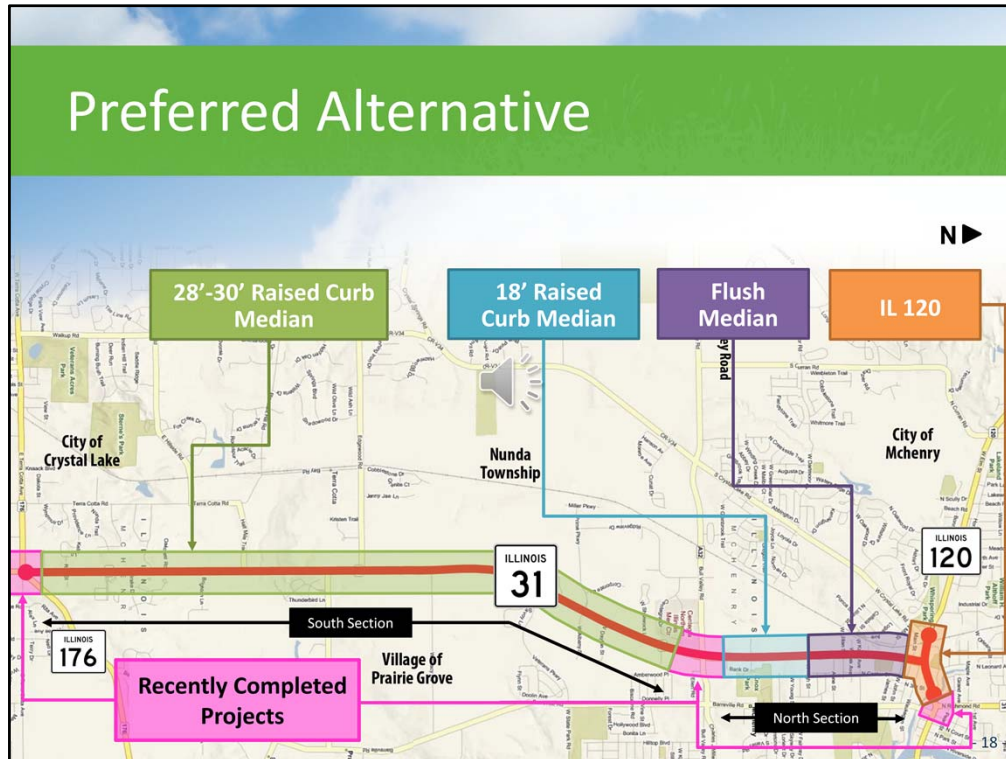
### North Section (Bull Valley/Miller Road to John Street)




18' Raised Median Bull Valley/Miller Road to High Street	Five Lane - Flush Median High Street to John Street
Key Features / Benefits	Key Features / Benefits
Two through lanes in each direction	Two through lanes in each direction
Raised curb median for safety	Flush median with left turn lanes
Narrower median for single left turn lanes	Sidewalk and shared-use path
U-turns at median breaks	
Sidewalk and shared-use path	

- 17 -

...and is similar to the South Section except for the median. An 18' raised curb median is proposed between Bull Valley Road and High Street in already developed areas that are not expected to require dual left turn lanes, and a flush median between High Street and John Street to preserve existing access to businesses where U-turns are not feasible.




Lastly, the IL 120 intersection at the north end of the project.

## Preferred Alternative

### IL 120 Intersection

IL 120 Intersection
Key Features / Benefits
Narrower lanes on IL 31 and IL 120
Provides minimum impact to properties; Two commercial buildings displaced
Dual left turn lanes on east leg IL 120
Raised curb median on IL 120
Waukegan Road cul-de-sac
Eliminates on-street parking on IL 31 and IL 120
Sidewalk on IL 31 and IL 120
U-turns along IL 120



- 19 -

This intersection includes...

- Narrower lanes on IL 31 and IL 120 to minimize building impacts; Two commercial buildings will be displaced
- Dual left turn lane on the east leg of IL 120
- Raised curb median along IL 120 to separate from opposing traffic
- Waukegan Road will be converted to a Cul-de-sac, due to its proximity to the IL 120 intersection
- On street parking on IL 31 and IL 120 would be eliminated. Suitable parking is available on adjacent parking lots and side streets.
- Sidewalk is included along both sides of the roadways, but bicycle facilities are not
- U-Turns feasible along IL 120




More detailed information on these improvements is available in the exhibit room.

# Preferred Alternative


## Design Considerations

### National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Avoid
- Minimize
- Mitigate



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- 20 -

The National Environmental Policy Act project development process is a balanced approach to decision making that takes into account potential impacts on the human and natural environment. The NEPA process requires avoiding environmental resources as practicable; minimizing impacts if avoidance isn't feasible; and lastly mitigating impacts as necessary.




## Preferred Alternative

### Environmental Considerations

- Neighborhoods
- Businesses and residences
- Wetlands and waterways
- T&E
- Cultural/historic
- Trees
- Traffic noise
- Public lands





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- 21 -

Some of the social, economic, human, and environmental resources considered include:

- Neighborhoods
- Businesses and residences
- Wetlands, waterways, and floodplains
- Threatened & Endangered species
- Cultural/historic resources
- Trees
- Traffic noise
- Public lands

Alternatives that had greater impacts on these resources were eliminated from further consideration. The Preferred Alternative balances the needs for the improvement while minimizing impacts.

## Preferred Alternative

### Environmental Impacts

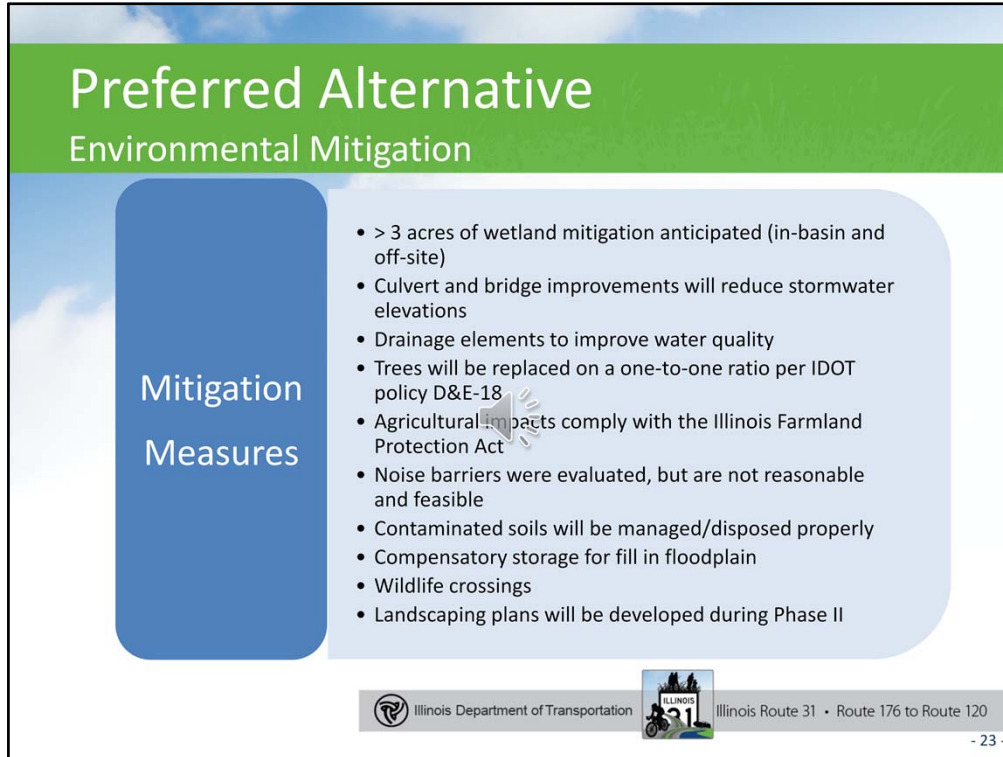
<b>Natural Environment Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1.53 Acres of Wetlands</li><li>• 9.88 Acres of Floodplains; No Floodways</li><li>• 0.65 Acres of Streams (Waters of U.S.); 7 stream crossings</li><li>• 84 Oak and 17 Hickory Trees</li></ul>
<b>Human Environment Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 19.45 Acres of Agricultural Lands</li><li>• 22 locations with Identified Noise Impacts</li><li>• 82 sites with Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs)</li></ul>
<b>Resources Not Impacted</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Threatened &amp; Endangered Species</li><li>• Parklands &amp; Public Facilities</li><li>• Cultural or Historic Resources</li><li>• Cemeteries</li></ul>

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- 22 -

Some resources could be avoided; however the ones that could not were minimized. The Environmental Assessment details the natural and human environment impacts associated with this project. The impacts are also summarized in the brochure and in the exhibit room.



The slide features a green header with the text "Preferred Alternative" and "Environmental Mitigation". On the left, a blue rounded rectangle contains the text "Mitigation Measures". To the right of this rectangle is a light blue rounded rectangle containing a bulleted list of mitigation measures. At the bottom of the slide, there is a footer area with the Illinois Department of Transportation logo, a small graphic of a road sign for IL 31, and the text "Illinois Route 31 • Route 176 to Route 120". The slide number "- 23 -" is located in the bottom right corner of the footer area.

## Preferred Alternative

### Environmental Mitigation

#### Mitigation Measures

- > 3 acres of wetland mitigation anticipated (in-basin and off-site)
- Culvert and bridge improvements will reduce stormwater elevations
- Drainage elements to improve water quality
- Trees will be replaced on a one-to-one ratio per IDOT policy D&E-18
- Agricultural impacts comply with the Illinois Farmland Protection Act
- Noise barriers were evaluated, but are not reasonable and feasible
- Contaminated soils will be managed/disposed properly
- Compensatory storage for fill in floodplain
- Wildlife crossings
- Landscaping plans will be developed during Phase II

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- 23 -

For the Natural and Human Environment Impacts identified on the previous slide, various mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposed design or are planned to be completed during Phase II for this project. For those resources where impacts were unavoidable, mitigation is being proposed.


## Preferred Alternative

### Drainage and Water Quality

- Retention and Regional Detention Basins
- Oversized Detention Sewers
- New Bridge
- Culvert Replacements
- Widened Ditches
- Stream Meandering
- Compensatory Storage



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- 24 -



The preferred alternative includes proposed drainage improvements that reduce flooding and improve water quality such as:

- Retention and regional stormwater detention basins
- Oversized detention sewers
- A new bridge near Lillian/Grove Avenue
- Larger culverts
- Widened ditches and stream meandering
- Compensatory flood water storage


## Preferred Alternative

### Traffic Noise Analysis

- 42 Locations Measured
- Projected Noise Levels for Year 2040 Analyzed
- Noise abatement not warranted



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- 25 -

Existing traffic noise levels were measured at over 40 locations throughout the project area. Projected noise levels based on year 2040 traffic were analyzed using the FHWA Traffic Noise Model software which concluded that traffic noise abatement walls are not warranted.

# Land Acquisition


- Fee Simple (Proposed Right-of-Way)
  - » 61.2 Acres
- Permanent Easement
  - » 0 Acres
- Temporary Easement
  - » 9.6 Acres
- Displacements
  - » 3 Buildings
    - 1 Residential & 2 Commercial




```

graph TD
    A[Determine Ownership] --> B[Prepare Plat of Survey]
    B --> C[Prepare Independent Appraisal]
    C --> D[Negotiations with Property Owners]
    D --> E[Court Proceedings if Necessary]
            
```

Talk to IDOT Representative at today's hearing





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- 26 -

There are three types of land acquisition that typically are utilized:


- Fee simple (Proposed Right-of-way): Involves the acquisition of all rights and interest of all or a portion of a property. There are 61.2 Acres of ROW required for the project.
- Permanent easement: Ownership is retained by the property owner, but IDOT is granted permanent use to construct and maintain facilities. There is no permanent easement required for this project.
- Temporary easement: Typically used for grading or driveway construction. Ownership is retained by the property owner and the easement is vacated/expires once construction is complete. There are 9.6 Acres of TE required for the project.


IDOT works with landowners throughout the land acquisition process. When a building is acquired, relocation assistance is provided. There are 3 displacements for this project, 1 residential and 2 commercial.



Land Acquisition representatives are available today to answer any questions you may have. We encourage you to talk with them as you view the project exhibits.



## Phase I - Next Steps

- Evaluate public comments
- Refine design, as needed
- Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
- Complete Phase I Study 



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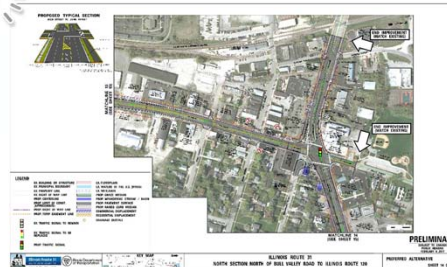
- 27 -

After this hearing, comments will be evaluated and design revised, as necessary, based on public input.

Based on the anticipated impacts outlined in the Environmental Assessment, a 'Finding of No Significant Impact' (FONSI) is expected for this project. Once this is determined, the study documents will be finalized and the Phase I process will be complete.

## After Presentation

- Review the Exhibits and Reports in Next Room
- Discuss with Project Team
- Provide Input on the Preferred Alternative and Environmental Assessment



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- 28 -

After this presentation, we encourage you to review the exhibits on display in the adjacent room which have more detailed information about the project. Project team members will be present to discuss the project and answer questions. We look forward to talking with you and your valuable input on the Preferred Alternative and Environmental Assessment.

The EA is available for viewing at the Prairie Grove Village Hall, McHenry Library, IDOT District 1 office, or on the project website. A copy is also on hand at today's meeting.

## After Presentation

- Provide Comments
  - Verbal - Court Reporter
  - Public Forum at 6:00 p.m.
  - Written - Submit today, mail or e-mail

Please submit your comments by **March 10, 2017** to become part of the official public hearing record.

Project Website - [www.idot.illinois.gov/projects/il31](http://www.idot.illinois.gov/projects/il31)



The sign is green with a white border. At the top, it says 'ILLINOIS 31' in white. Below that, the word 'Comments' is written in large white letters. At the bottom, there is a yellow section with the words 'EXIT' and 'ONLY' in black, separated by a black arrow pointing up and to the right.



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- 29 -

Comments can be given today to the court reporter located in the Exhibit Room, or during the public forum at 6:00 pm.

To participate in the public forum

1. Fill out index card – available at sign in table – and give to team member
2. Follow signs to the public forum room
3. Additional information will be provided at 6 pm

Written comments on the preferred alternative and EA can be submitted today in the Exhibit Room, mailed later, or submitted on the project website.

Comments received by **March 10, 2017** will become part of the official public hearing record.



Thank you for attending today's hearing and we look forward to obtaining your feedback.