

*During the January 18, 2023 Phase II Virtual Public Meeting Q&A session, several of the questions received pertained to the same (or similar) topic and were grouped together for response. This follow up document is being provided in order to ensure each question received at the January 18, 2023 Q&A session is addressed.*

*(Note: For any Q&A questions that were asked pertaining to a specific home or business parcel, the responses are not included below. In those instances, the project team will reach out to the individuals to respond to parcel specific questions if the contact information was provided)*

## **Noise**

Per Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) policy, the proposed new roadway design for the I-39 project required a noise study to determine whether noise abatement measures were necessary, beneficial, and cost-effective. The noise study includes developing and validating models of existing, future no-build, and future build scenarios with projected traffic volumes to determine how changes to the roadway alignment and profile will affect noise. Noise abatement measures, in this case noise walls, were then modeled for locations where noise impacts are predicted to determine whether nearby properties will benefit from a noise barrier and to assess cost-effectiveness.

Two noise studies have been completed for this project. The initial noise study, completed under Phase I, was approved by IDOT in 2019 and resulted in NO new noise walls warranted for the I-39 Reconstruction project. Due to design refinements, and updated noise standards, a second noise study was completed under Phase II and approved by IDOT in 2022. The recent noise study resulted in identifying two applicable noise walls for the project area. The Noise Wall located on the west side of the westbound US 20 ramp to southbound I-39 will be made of concrete and is proposed to be 1,650 feet long and an average 20 feet high. The Noise Wall located on the southeast side of I-39 between Perryville Road and Harrison Avenue will vary between 20 to 90 feet from adjacent property lines, be made of concrete, and is proposed to be 6,500 feet long and an average 13 feet high. Wall height will vary based on existing site factors (i.e., ground levels) in specific areas. The 'broken-face' pattern of each wall will help dissipate sound and create a more aesthetically pleasing appearance. Both noise walls are anticipated to be constructed in 2027. Any areas within project limits outside of the new noise wall limits identified above, did not meet the criteria for benefit and cost effectiveness per IDOT and FHWA policy.

Noise wall construction is scheduled to be included in the Mainline I-39 contract, which will follow the I-39/US20 System Interchange Contract, and the I-39/Harrison Ave DDI Contract.

A copy of the final Noise Report can be found on the project website under "Resources" - <https://idot.click/I39Rockford>

## **Traffic Maintenance During Construction**

The current plan for traffic during construction:

- for the I-39/US 20 System Interchange, includes maintaining at least one lane of traffic on all ramp movements, and 2 lanes of traffic in each direction on mainline I-39 and US 20

- for I-39 mainline, includes maintaining at least 2 lanes of traffic in each direction
- for the Harrison Avenue/US 20 interchange in 2024, includes maintaining traffic on two lanes in each direction on Harrison Avenue and at least one lane of traffic on all existing interchange ramps.
- for the Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) ramps in 2025, includes maintaining traffic on all existing interchange ramps or temporary ramps, where necessary.
- for Mall drive north of Harrison Road, included maintaining one lane in each direction
- for the South Frontage Road and South Mall Drive in Cherry Valley, the initial staging concept includes a temporary closure at the south leg of the South Mall Drive and South Frontage Road, with temporary access maintained via Perryville Road. However, options are currently being reviewed to reduce the proposed construction and staging impacts at this location.
- for the Kishwaukee River Bridge reconstruction in 2025-2026, this includes construction of one direction (i.e., eastbound or westbound) of Harrison Ave in each year, with both directions of traffic shifting to the opposite bridge.
- includes detour signs and changeable message boards to alert drivers to the official detour route.
- includes occasional nighttime work for any overhead bridge or signage work over active traffic lanes.
- Includes maintained access to all existing entrances during construction.

### **Traffic/Safety/Issues**

- Baxter Road at I-39 is outside of the limits and scope for this project. Baxter Road is not anticipated to be used as a detour route as part of this project; therefore, temporary signals will not be added to Baxter Road. At least two lanes will be maintained during daylight hours on I-39 to minimize delays and reduce the incentive for drivers to exit at Baxter Road instead of travelling through the work zone.
- Traffic projections can be found on the project website - <https://idot.click/I39Rockford> - under the “Resources Tab” in the Phase I Report. This project is designed to accommodate expected increases in future traffic on I-39.
- The I-39/I-90 Tollway Interchange Reconstruction project, immediately north of the project limits, was completed in 2009. This project and the I-39/US 20 corridor reconstruction project are part of the Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning (RMAP) Year 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan, which were coordinated to meet projected traffic demands.
- No projects are planned on I-39 from the I-88 interchange to the I-39/US 20 interchange while the corridor project is under construction.
  - Other area improvement projects tentatively forthcoming or in progress include:
    - US 20 resurfacing from Rock River to Alpine: 2022
    - Alpine road resurfacing from Harrison Road to Charles Street: 2022
    - Perryville Road Bridge Reconstruction: 2023
    - IL 2 patching from Byron to Rockford
    - Multiple US 20 resurfacing and shoulder widening projects in Stephenson, Jo Daviess, and Winnebago Counties
- Engine Braking Signage – The state cannot place Engine Braking signage on Freeways or Interstates or associated Ramps, except near weight stations.

### **Design Specifics**



- The project is approximately 4 miles from the north project limit to the south project limit.
- Drainage - Multiple detention ponds will be constructed within IDOT right-of-way (ROW) to reduce and slow the rate of offsite flow from the project limits. The scope of the project does not include studying flooding caused by offsite (outside the limits of the project) factors. Specially, land around the DDI is not anticipated to be vacated and will be utilized for detention ponds and ditches to help reduce the rate of rainwater flowing offsite.
- The following are the anticipated speed limits for various components of the project:
  - The DDI will be 35 miles per hour (mph) through to Harrison Avenue (US 20).
  - West of the DDI on Harrison Avenue (US 20) will be 45 mph.
  - East of the DDI to east of Mill Road will be 45 mph.
  - No change to existing speed limit along Linden Rd.
- Design improvements at the following locations will include:
  - Harrison Avenue is proposed to be three lanes in each direction from Mall Drive to Mill Road, with turn lanes at various locations near the intersections.
  - The proposed northbound I-39 to Harrison Avenue ramp will be a two-lane exit ramp
  - Mill Road, which is part of the Kishwaukee River Bridge reconstruction in 2025-2026, will include 500 feet of reconstruction south of Harrison Road, 1,000 feet of reconstruction north of Harrison Rd, widening and realignment of Mill Rd at the intersection, addition of turn lanes, and drainage improvements.
  - Traffic signals will be installed/replaced at Mall Drive, the southbound I-39 ramps, the northbound I-39 ramps, and Mill Road.

### **Bike Accommodations**

The new Shared Use Path north of Harrison Avenue is anticipated to open to the public in early 2025, providing a new bike and pedestrian access point across I-39. At that time and due to safety and constructability reasons, the Cherry Valley Path Tunnel under I-39 (next to Madigan Creek culvert) will close for construction of I-39 from 2025-2027 such that the new path can be “open cut” under I-39 during the mainline I-39 widening contract. An improved wider, safer, Cherry Valley Path tunnel is expected to open at the end of 2027. No other bicycle accommodations are anticipated.

It is noted that the new Perryville Bridge over I-39 will be constructed with wide 8’ shoulders to accommodate bicycle traffic over the bridge as needed.

### **Cost**

The overall cost of the Project is approximately \$200 million.

### **Construction**

Qualified Contractors for each I-39 construction contract are selected based off an open bid procedure.

### **Land Acquisition**



If your property will be impacted by land acquisition, you will be contacted by representatives from the Illinois Department of Transportation. No residential or commercial displacements are planned at this time. Property impacts may include temporary easements for use only during construction, or permanent partial land acquisition adjacent to State ROW.

### **Environmental Impacts**

The environmental analysis for the project can be found on the project website - <https://idot.click/I39Rockford> - under the "Resources Tab" in the Phase I Report.

### **Future Projects/Next Steps**

Design refinements will continue over the next few years, while construction for some components of the project is anticipated to begin in 2023. Overall construction of the project is anticipated to end in approximately 2027, however, the final date is subject to change. Please see the project website - <https://idot.click/I39Rockford> - for updates.