

Summary of Public Involvement US 6 Reconstruction in Morris Study Limits: Ashton Rd to IL 47 in Morris Reconstruction Limits: Lakewood Drive to IL 47 in Morris

ROUTE: FAU 5952 (US 6) **PROJECT LENGTH:** Approx. 2 miles.

D3 NO: D-93-067-20 **CONTRACT NO**: 66K87

COUNTY: Grundy

SECTION: (Q, G)ES

JOB NO: P-93-026-20

Public involvement was sought by posting exhibits to the project website at https://idot.illinois.gov/projects/us-6-ashton-road-to-il-47-morris/home#top. The virtual public engagement period was from November 1 through November 30, 2022. The purpose of the first public involvement was to provide information on the proposed improvements and alternatives, answer questions about the project, and receive public comments.

The public involvement was announced by advertisement in local newspapers, through a press release to local media, through the IDOT website and by letters to interested parties, local officials, public service providers, legislators, and property owners along the study length of US 6 from Ashton Rd to IL 47.

Feedback was requested from participants and comment sheets submitted by November 30, 2022, became part of the official meeting record. Additional comments received after the official comment period have been included in this summary.

A total of 30 comment sheets were received. All comment sheets were responded to in writing. A summary of comments and responses was posted to the project website and is attached.

The display materials included a video presentation providing an overview of project information as well as individual aerial exhibits depicting the preferred alternative as developed to date, the project purpose and need, a project location map, current and future traffic volumes, typical sections, level of service maps, information regarding the land acquisition process and other informational documents.

A summary of comments and responses is attached.



U.S. Route 6 from Ashton Road to Illinois Route 47 Study in Morris, IL Public Involvement November 2022 Comments/Phone Calls and Responses

Business and Residency Safety Motorized Accessibility Concerns

The following comments were received regarding safety and motorized accessibility and have been assembled below for disposition.

Comment received 11/4/22 from Jeffrey Brodbeck: Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers (Business owner along project route)

Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers has several healthcare facilities either located along the proposed project route or that use this route for access. Of utmost importance is maintaining easy, direct access to the hospital, which is located one block south of US 6, for patients, staff, ambulances, and other emergency vehicles. This access literally can mean life or death for patients being transported to the Emergency Department and for those in the building if Fire Department or Law Enforcement response is needed. Additionally, we request a high level of coordination if entrance closures will affect access to our off-site clinic spaces. In some cases, services can be relocated to another facility if necessary. Others, such as our Radiation Oncology office at 1600 US 6, however, provide services that are critical to our patients' lives and livelihoods, and we cannot provide those services in an alternate location.

Department response:

The project team recognizes the significance of maintaining easy and direct access to healthcare facilities along the project route. A Transportation Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared to perform an analysis of safety and mobility impacts of roadway users during this study. Moving road users efficiently through and around the project limits with minimum delay compared to baseline travel when no work zone is present will be the focus of the TMP. All entrance/side road closures if any will be coordinated with the property owners and affected jurisdiction. During construction, a plan that consists of a strategy to inform the affected road users, including the surrounding community of the expected impacts of the project, changing condition of the roadway and available travel options will be provided.

Comment received 11/22/22 from Diane Root (Business owner along project route)

I own the building at 410 Bedford Rd. and lent it to John Boyle as New Generation Tire and Auto. He will need access to his business with entry from Rt. 6.

Department response:

Thank you for your comment. The Department is further evaluating impacts to adjacent properties with various alternatives. As the project moves through the various Phases (preliminary engineering, plan preparation and construction), we will endeavor to minimize the impact to adjacent properties. We understand that access to US Route 6 is important to adjacent businesses. All entrance/side road closures if any will be coordinated with the property owners and affected jurisdiction. You will be notified of future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received 12/5/22 from Casey's Retail Corp on behalf of Erik Nikkel (Business owner along project route)

I just wanted to pass along more accurate contact information for discussion/contact moving forward. We are mainly concerned about maintaining access at this time.



Department response:

Thank you for alerting us to your updated information. Your contact information will be updated for further notifications.

In response to your comment regarding accessibility, a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared during the project study. An analysis of safety and mobility impacts of road users will be performed during this study. Maintaining access at all times will be the focus of the TMP. During construction, a plan that consists of a strategy to inform the affected road users, including the surrounding community of the expected impacts of the project, changing condition of the roadway and available travel options will be provided.

Specific Concerns Regarding Proposed Alternatives or Improvements

The following comments were received regarding specific proposed alternatives and improvements and have been assembled below for disposition.

Comment received 11/10/22 from Rosemary Grossi (Property owner along project route)

I have two properties on Bedford Rd between 47 and Lisbon Rd. One is our 37-year-old sign business, the other a commercial rental. I do believe that this project is certainly needed, it took me 10 minutes to turn west out of my parking lot at 5pm just two nights ago. I will share a few thoughts about the project.

I believe the original concept of straightening Lisbon Rd and 6 is still the best. I have seen roundabouts utilized in smaller traffic areas, such as subdivisions with good results but considering the semi traffic we have at the corner along the school buses it would be a nightmare. I was on Lisbon Rd. the other day facing south and wanting to turn east, a semi was turning north on Lisbon off 6 and I had to back my truck up 20" so the semi could make the turn. Also, if you take a closer look at that corner, semi's continually have to come up over the curb by 30" or so to make that turn.

As far as bicycles I talked with my daughter who rides every day in NY City, she indicated any time you can separate bikes from traffic is a good idea. Also, as it was presented last year, Chicago is putting up 25 miles of concrete curb bike path protection. A multi-use separate path would be the best.

I think the corner of 6 and 47 is your greatest challenge, I'm not sure which configuration you presented is best, but I do know you need to curtail people trying to cut across from Jewel to Walgreens and vice versa.

When IDOT widened 47 back in 79 all of the entrances from 47 into the businesses were put in at such a terrible angle a lot of cars would bottom out trying to pull in. A lot of them are still like it today. Also, when Lisbon Rd and 6 were last updated the corner going north is much too tight for semi-trucks. I guess what I am saying is, it may look good on paper, but if you were to put some engineers in a few semi-trucks and try and make the proposed changed you might get a better sense of what is needed.

One more thought – we had been told over the last 15 years that the Rt 6 project was engineered and waiting on funding. I believe as Morris expanded west, they allowed setbacks, so I'm wondering why the \$2,000,000 dollar price tag for (P.E.) from Ashton Rd?

I thought the presentation was well done and informational.



Department response:

As part of the Phase I study, we consider multiple alternatives at the beginning of the process. The Department is actively examining these alternatives in further detail to develop a preferred alternative.

In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development.

As a part of the Phase I project, we are studying the need for a right turn lane from US Route 6 to Ashton Road. In addition, we are reconstructing the intersection to meet current Department standards. This project is going through the formal process to maintain eligibility for Federal funding. At this time, only the section from Lakewood Drive to Illinois Route 47 is funded for Phase II design and Phase III construction.

In regard to the previous study done on US 6. This study was done in 1999 more than 20 years ago. Policy of design and traffic characteristics have changed warranting a new PE study.

We will be updating stakeholders on the progress of the study as we move through the process. We will contact you regarding future public involvement opportunities. We hope this additional information was helpful in understanding the process of the project.

Comment received 11/19/22 from Larry and Ruth Ann Cooper (Homeowner along project route)

Regarding your specific comments:

We own the garage and property of 505 Bedford Rd, Morris IL. We also own the property behind it, with our home at 302 Waverly St.

Our concerns are:

- Alternative 1: This appears to not fix the bottleneck of heavy emergency traffic enough. We are concerned about the amount of parking and use we will lose in front of the garage. We still use the front and 3 overhead doors for our own use. We have considered renting the building as a place for a business, and we are concerned there won't be sufficient room to back out and use the driveway/parking access to Route 6 to make it usable. Also, Route 80 closes due to accidents or roadwork between the Seneca and Morris exits at least a couple times a year. All that traffic comes through this intersection. It gets backed up. Alternative 1 would not seem to be sufficient in keeping traffic moving. Large trucks, such as semis and grain trucks rely on this intersection and have trouble in the westbound lane turning north onto Lisbon St.
- Alternative 2: We have talked to a number of people in the community. All have said Alternative 2 makes the most sense and is the best improvement. We definitely agree.
- Alternative 3: Everyone, including us, says it is ridiculous. This community is not used to roundabouts. The
 intersection's heavy traffic along with emergency vehicles going to the hospital from all directions sounds
 extremely confusing, and a hazard. The community will be upset. It looks like our garage will have no access
 with a round-about.

Department response:

Thank you for your feedback on the design alternatives under consideration. As a part of the Phase I study, we consider various alternatives at the beginning of the process. The Department is actively examining these alternatives in further detail to develop a preferred alternative. We will take into account your feedback when making the decision on the preferred alternative. We hope this additional information was helpful in understanding the design process of the project.



Comment received 11/22/22 from Steve Matteson (Property owner along project route)

I own 221 Bedford Rd. The Ace hardware store. Please let me know how much of the north side of this lot will be needed for these improvements.

Department response:

At the end of our study, if it is determined that the improvement will impact your property, someone in the department will contact you to discuss the next step. Attached for your reference is the department land acquisition process.

Comment received 12/5/22 from Scott Bibly (Interested party)

I work for a local road builder, and work on plenty of IDOT and county road construction projects for the past 20 years. Route 6 and Lisbon alternative 2 and Route 47 alternative are the best choices for this area. I have lived in Morris since 2005 and by the way people drive in this town the other 2 alternatives for both are not practical. Furthermore, the bike path should extend to Ashton Rd. because it would get us an easier way to ride our bikes to the businesses and such forth. And also, Ashton Road is not nearly wide enough at Route 6. With the fire station on it the right-hand turns are really tight to impossible from Route 6 on to Ashton Rd. So, a right turn lane or the widening of that intersection would be practical.

Department response:

As part of the Phase I study, we consider various improvement alternatives. The Department is actively examining these alternatives in further detail to develop a preferred alternative. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop bicycle accommodations for the length of the project. At this time, only the section from Lakewood Drive to Illinois Route 47 is funded for Phase II design and Phase III construction. Your input together with various policy and funding availability will be considered in determining the preferred bicycle accommodation option.

As a part of the Phase I study, we are studying the need for a right turn lane from US Route 6 to Ashton Road to meet current Department standards.

Comment received 12/27/22 from Suzy Brown (Business owner along project route)

- 1. Straighten out the Lisbon 6 interchange. Terrible jams and truck traffic.
- 2. Prefer a light added at Locust.

Department response:

Thank you for your feedback. As part of the Phase I study, we consider various improvement alternatives at the beginning of the process. The Department is actively examining these alternatives in further detail to develop a preferred alternative. Additionally, the study will consider the need for additional traffic signal at various routes within the project limits not precluding Locust Street to meet further traffic demand for the corridor.

We will consider your feedback when making the decision for the preferred alternative. We hope this additional information was helpful in understanding the design process of the project.



Comment received from Stephanie Haas (Homeowner along project route)

As a resident of the Rockwell Estates subdivision. I am constantly driving Route 6 to commute to work, shuttle kids to school, and shop locally. There are two improvements that would increase safety and decrease traffic backups. My first recommendation is a dedicated right turn lane on eastbound Route 6 turning south onto Union Street. As it is now, while traveling eastbound, I turn north on Park Blvd and left in front of Shabbona School in order to avoid traffic. This route goes through a residential area. As a parent, I am an experienced driver, but high school students driving to school are not. My second suggestion is a dedicated (and lengthy) right turn lane on westbound Route 6, turning north onto Ashton Road. This would help keep faster traffic moving, while residents of Rockwell and Deer Ridge can turn slowly and safely.

Department response:

As a part of the Phase I project, we are studying the need for right turn lanes from US Route 6 to both Union Street and Ashton Road. In addition, we are studying the intersections within the project limits to ensure that they meet current Department standards. Our top priority is to provide a safe and efficient transportation facility for all roadway users. The project team is studying areas of concern that warrant signalized crossing accommodations. At this time, only the section from Lakewood Drive to Illinois Route 47 is funded for Phase II design and Phase III construction.

Safety and Non-motorized Accessibility Concerns

The following comments were received regarding safety and non-motorized accessibility and have been assembled below for disposition.

Audio file received from Kindall Carmouche – Disability Resource Center (Interested party)

Hi, my name is Kindall Carmouche and I am calling in regards to an email for public participation for your study improvements to Rt 6. from Bedford Park to Ashton Avenue to IL 47 in Morris. I got the email, and I am very excited to let you know I do have feedback from the community. I will email some forms for public comments, and you should be receiving these shortly. We would love to be continued to be updated on the project and if there is any way for the students to participate and share how these improvements will help them in their community in order to navigate and use transportation safely. If you have any questions or concerns, definitely feel free to give me a call back.

Comment received from Rebecca West (Homeowner along project route)

Route 6 is dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists without a sidewalk. I work at a business along the route that has special needs students. Some with wheelchair. Safe passage to other businesses is important to the goal of our program.

Department response:



Comment received from Stacey Dalton (Use route to commute)

I am an aide in a special needs transition program. Without this sidewalk our students will not be able to safely walk to stores, restaurants, parks, and other places in our community. We have many wheelchairs that cannot be pushed through the grass. The traffic on Rt.6 is busy and fast and a sidewalk would help ensure the safety of our students and their ability to travel to places in our community.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding the sidewalk within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Sabrina Warriner (Use route to commute)

As a student with special needs, I need to be able to safely access my community. It is not safe for me to walk along Rt.6 to get to local business that are near my school which is located at Lakewood Commons. There are no crossing lights that allow me to cross from one side of the road to the other.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Francesca Saveas (Use route to commute)

As a student with special needs, I need to be able to safely access my community. It is not safe for me to walk along Rt.6 to get to local business that are near my school which is located at Lakewood Commons. There are no crossing lights that allow me to cross from one side of the road to the other.

Department response:



Comment received from Hannah Jena Bensa (Use route to commute)

As a student with special needs, I need to be able to safely access my community. It is not safe for me to walk along Rt.6 to get to local business that are near my school which is located at Lakewood Commons. There are no crossing lights that allow me to cross from one side of the road to the other.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Patrick Callahan (Use route to commute)

I am in a power wheelchair. I need to use a sidewalk. I need handicapped access. I live in Deer Ridge.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Joshua Karanjia (Use route to commute)

As a student with special needs, I need to be able to safely access my community. It is not safe for me to walk along Rt.6 to get to local business that are near my school which is located at Lakewood Commons. There are no crossing lights that allow me to cross from one side of the road to the other.

Department response:



Comment received from Matt Morris (Interested party)

As a student with special needs, I need to be able to safely access my community. It is not safe for me to walk along Rt.6 to get to local business that are near my school which is located at Lakewood Commons. There are no crossing lights that allow me to cross from one side of the road to the other.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Desi Pena (Use route to commute)

As a student with special needs, I need to be able to safely access my community. It is not safe for me to walk along Rt.6 to get to local business that are near my school which is located at Lakewood Commons. There are no crossing lights that allow me to cross from one side of the road to the other.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Logan VanDyke (Use route to commute)

As a student with special needs, I need to be able to safely access my community. It is not safe for me to walk along Rt.6 to get to local business that are near my school which is located at Lakewood Commons. There are no crossing lights that allow me to cross from one side of the road to the other.

Department response:



Comment received from Sydney Cannon (Use route to commute)

We would like this sidewalk for my safety so my friends can travel in their wheelchairs so we can walk to places in our community and practice life skills.

Department response:

The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Nathan W. (Use route to commute)

For my safety to access stores.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Madelynn Panti (Use route to commute)

So, I can travel with my wheelchair for my safety.

Department response:



Comment received from Alyssa Price (Use route to commute)

So I can travel with my wheelchair for my safety.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Megan Arnold (Use route to commute)

For my safety. To be able to go to stores so I won't fall walking on uneven surfaces.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Jennie Manietta (Use route to commute)

For my safety to be able to go to stores.

Department response:



Comment received from Jana Connor (Use route to commute)

For the safety of students. Easy access to stores.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Comment received from Zachary Constanzo (Use route to commute)

Rt.6 is hard to travel due to the lack of sidewalks, a turn lane and additional stop lights. More businesses would be accessible to myself and my classmates if a sidewalk was installed from Lakewood Drive to Rt.47 with no gaps.

Department response:

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding safety access within the project limits. The project team recognizes the importance of safety and accessibility along the project route. In accordance with the Department's Complete Streets Policy, we intend to develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for the length of the project, however for off-street facilities to be considered the local jurisdiction must accept maintenance responsibility. We will be further coordinating this issue with the City of Morris as a part of the project development. We will notify you of any future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

General Comments or Documentation of Verbal Communications

Below are general inquiries and record of comments gathered verbally.

Conversation Record received from Don Matteson on 11/28/2022

Mr. Matteson received the letter for 324 Beford Rd. He stated that he and his wife Janet are the owners. He was interested in what is going on with the project. I told him that we don't have proposed right of way yet and that we will have a second meeting in-person when we have more details. I explained that he could view information on the website and asked him to send in comments now on the comment sheet provided. He indicated that he would likely wait for the next meeting to make any comments. He also noted that the property there is in a TIF district and would eventually change to commercial.

Comment received 12/5/22 from Michael Severson (Business owner along project route)

Hello. Yes, do it all you have survey it over 5 times in the past years. You should have done it 5 years ago. Quit spending money, you are doing nothing. Get it done!!

Draft Response:

Thank you for your feedback. The Illinois Department of Transportation develops and implements projects using a three-phase process. This project is going through the formal process to maintain eligibility for Federal funding. Please continue to visit the project website throughout the project study period to learn more information as it is released and learn more about future public involvement opportunities.



Comment received 12/5/22 from Josh Riley

Due to the citizens of Illinois, and anyone else who uses that roadway, a favor. Do NOT hire D Construction and waste more of our taxpayer money to the worst construction company around. The contracts they get clearly have some money going into certain pockets, how clean are yours?

Department response:

Thank you for your feedback. You will be notified of future public involvement opportunities as they become available.

Callback Requested from Illinois Department of Transportation

Below are callback requests submitted by interest parties.

Comment received from Justin Ritz (Interested party)

Jacob, this is Justin Ritz from the Morris Radio Station. I am a news director and was wondering if I could interview you or if you could direct me to a person to interview about the study improvements on US Route 6 from Ashton Rd to Route 47 in Morris. I would like to interview someone to let our listeners know what is going on. I don't know if you are the person to interview or someone else.

Notes:

Mr. Dave Alexander D3. Studies and Plans Engineer called back Mr. Ritz on November 29, 2022 and an interview with Morris Radio Station was held on November 30,2022 at 3:30 PM. Present at the Radio recording were Mr. Ritz of Morris Radio Station, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Ken Banga and Mr. Jacob Oyier all of IDOT D3.

Comment received 12/5/22 from Nate Cote (Interested party)

I have a question about the construction that will take place in front of our Jimmy Johns in Morris Illinois. If you could give me a call at your convenience, I would appreciate it.