



ILLINOIS I-270

Preliminary Engineering Study

From Riverview Drive in St. Louis, Missouri
to IL Route 157 in Madison County, Illinois

Public Involvement Summary Report

Prepared for



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Introduction

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), conducted a study of I-270 from the Riverview Drive interchange in St. Louis, Missouri to Illinois Route 157 in Madison County, Illinois. The purpose of the Illinois I-270 Preliminary Engineering Study is to improve safety, address geometric deficiencies, reduce congestion, and improve system operational efficiency within the I-270 corridor between Riverview Drive and IL 157. The project also has a secondary purpose to provide connectivity in support of economic development. This study is being processed as a Federally Approved Categorical Exclusion (formally referred to as a Categorical Exclusion II or CE II).

Project Background

This project includes the study of the I-270 corridor from Riverview Drive in St. Louis, Missouri, to IL Route 157 in Glen Carbon, Illinois, along with the existing interchanges with the intent to improve safety, increase traffic capacity, increase travel efficiency, eliminate bottlenecks, reduce freight-hour delays, and enhance access between the interstate and intersecting state and local routes. Specifically, these interchanges include IL Route 3, Old Alton Road/IL Route 203, IL Route 111, Interstate 255 (I-255)/IL Route 255, and IL Route 157 in Madison County, Illinois. The need for the comprehensive proposed improvements is due to the existing and projected future geometric, safety and capacity deficiencies. As the movement of people and freight in the corridor depends on the highway and local road network operating as a system, all parts of the roadway network must work together to meet the overall project purpose. Interstate 270 serves not only the immediate St. Louis metropolitan areas but is a major regional Midwest freight corridor. The following report summarizes the stakeholder engagement and public involvement program for the I-270 Preliminary Engineering Study.

I-270 Project Area

The project is located in the western portion of Madison County and includes areas within the city limits and unincorporated areas of Granite City, Pontoon Beach, Mitchell, and Glen Carbon. The study area for this project travels along I-270 from Riverview Drive in St. Louis, Missouri to IL Route 157 in Glen Carbon, Illinois. It includes the study of the I-270 corridor along with the interchanges at IL Route 3, Old Alton Road/IL Route 203, IL Route 111, Interstate 255 (I-255), and IL Route 157 in Madison County. The study limits along I-270 are approximately 10.9 miles in length.



Project Timeline



Stakeholder Involvement

As part of the public involvement process, elected officials and project stakeholders were identified and involved throughout Phase I of the I-270 Preliminary Engineering Study. As community leaders, it was imperative that these stakeholders could ask questions and provide their feedback to the project team. Elected officials were invited to project briefings during both rounds of outreach. Identified stakeholders were personally invited to the public meetings. Such stakeholders included regional civic leaders, business owners and residents directly impacted by any proposed changes. Additionally, the project team met with some stakeholders one-on-one between public meetings. IDOT received 28 letters in support of the project from project stakeholders and elected officials.

*See **Appendices A and B** for complete lists of elected officials and project stakeholders engaged throughout this project, respectively. See **Appendix C** for letters in support.*

Public Involvement

Round I – Briefings for Elected Officials

Project team members held initial briefings with local agencies on September 18, 2018 to inform local elected officials about the project. Briefings were held with representatives from Pontoon Beach, Glen Carbon, Granite City, Chouteau Township and Madison County. Local officials outside of these agencies were also invited to attend these briefings. Additionally, an invitation to the public meeting was mailed to elected officials in and around the project area.

See Appendix D for minutes from the Round I briefings for elected officials.

Round I – Public Meeting

Overview

The first public informational meeting for the Illinois I-270 Preliminary Engineering Study was held on Tuesday, September 18, 2018 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Southwestern Illinois College's (SWIC) Sam Wolf - Granite City Campus in Granite City, Illinois. Thirty-seven (37) people attended. Upon entering the meeting, attendees were given an informational handout and a comment form.

The public meeting press release, newsletter, elected official invitations, meeting handout and comment form can be found in Appendices E through I, respectively.

The meeting presented the overall project study area and general project information. Informational display boards and aerial maps were available for review. The public was invited to discuss the study with IDOT staff and the study team.

There were 12 Project Study Group members on hand to explain the project and answer attendees' questions. Among the 37 stakeholders, 16 completed comment forms.

See Appendix J for the meeting sign-in sheets.

The following is a breakdown of stakeholder attendance:

Stakeholder Type	No.
Resident	30
Madison County Official	1
Madison County Transit	4
Citizens' Climate Lobby	1
Millstone/Weber	1
Total	37

Feedback

Meeting attendees were encouraged to provide their feedback during the event by filling out a hard copy of the comment form, or by completing the online version of the comment form on the iPads provided. The public was given ten business days – until October 2, 2018 – to mail their comments forms. Sixteen (16) individuals completed the comment form either in writing or online.

Topics frequently mentioned in the additional comments included:

- Traffic concerns (5)
- Noise concerns (5)
- Drainage concerns (4)
- Safety concerns (4)
- Comments welcoming lane expansion (4).



Three comments did not fall into a frequently mentioned category.

See Appendix K for categorized comments submitted during the September 18 public meeting. The individual verbatim comments are in Appendix L. Appendix M includes IDOT's responses to questions and comments submitted at the September 18 public meeting.

Local Agency Coordination Meeting

A coordination meeting was held with the Madison County officials during the week of September 30, 2019 to update them on the current status of the project.

See Appendix N for the minutes of this meeting.

Round II – Virtual Briefing for Elected Officials

A briefing for elected officials representing the project area occurred on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., ahead of the second public meeting. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this briefing was hosted virtually via Zoom. Elected officials were invited to attend the virtual briefing via email invitation. Follow-up emails were also sent.

See Appendix O for email invitation to October 20 Virtual Briefing for Elected Officials.

Overview

During the virtual briefing, participants listened to a presentation from the six members of the project team about the Proposed Improvement and participated in a live Question and Answer (Q&A) session. Twelve (12) elected officials participated in the virtual briefing.

See Appendix P for list of attendees at the October 20 Virtual Briefing for Elected Officials.

Feedback

Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit their feedback and comments during the virtual briefing by submitting comments and questions through the Zoom platform. Elected officials could also directly email IDOT District Eight Studies and Plans Engineer, Tiffany Brase, with their question or comment. Three comments were submitted during the virtual briefing.

Topics mentioned in comments include:

- Design Plans (1)
- Project Timeline (1)
- Traffic Concern (1)

See Appendix Q for verbatim, categorized comments submitted at October 20 Virtual Briefing for Elected Officials.

Round II – Public Meeting

The second public informational meeting for the I-270 Preliminary Engineering Study occurred on Tuesday, October 27, 2020 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this meeting was hosted virtually via Zoom. Participants registered for the public meeting online and could join by phone, computer or tablet. A website page (<https://projectmeetingonline.com/I-270-PublicMeeting/>) was created with the registration information, exhibit documents, instructions about providing comments, the public meeting recording, the Q&A transcription and additional resources.



Outreach

To promote the virtual public meeting, newsletters were sent to the residents and businesses owners in the potential right-of-way and in the general project area, yard signs were set up in the project area and emails were sent to the project stakeholders.

See Appendices R through U for October 27 public meeting outreach materials: press release, newsletter yard signs, email invitation to stakeholders.

Overview

During the virtual public meeting, participants listened to a presentation from the six members of the project team about the Proposed Improvement and participated in a live Q&A session. The presentation and transcription of the Q&A session were posted to the project website page after the public meeting. Eighty-eight (88) community members participated in the virtual public meeting.

*See **Appendix V** for virtual public meeting attendance list and **Appendix W** for virtual public meeting presentation slides.*

Feedback

Meeting attendees were encouraged to provide their feedback and comments during the event by submitting comments and questions through the Zoom platform. Additionally, participants were directed to the project website to complete an online form or download a printable form. The public could also directly email IDOT District Eight Studies and Plans Engineer, Tiffany Brase, with their question or comment. The public was given 10 business days – until November 10, 2020 – to email or mail their comment forms. Twenty-seven (27) comments were submitted during the virtual public meeting and 20 comments were submitted via email.

*See **Appendix X** for October 27 public comment form.*

Topics frequently mentioned in comments include:

- Design Plan (12)
- Property Impact (9)
- Traffic Concerns (8)
- Project Timeline (6)
- Environmental Concern (5)

*Categorized comments submitted during the October 27 public meeting can be found in **Appendix Y**. **Appendix Z** includes IDOT's responses to questions provided during the virtual meeting. The verbatim, categorized comments submitted during the public comment period can be found in **Appendix AA**. Verbatim comments and IDOT's emailed responses to these comments are in **Appendix BB**.*

Conclusion

The I-270 Preliminary Engineering Plan began the process for addressing needed improvements along I-270 from Riverview Drive in St. Louis to Illinois 157 in Madison County. Now that this phase is complete, IDOT will begin final design and construction.

IDOT has \$200 million in funding available to begin implementing improvements. The only improvements that are currently unfunded are the section of I-270 from just west of IL 203/Old Alton Road to I-255/IL 255, including the ultimate improvement to IL 111 interchange.