

I-55 Improvements at Airport Road/Lockport Street and at IL 126/Essington Road

Third Public Meeting
October 13, 2016



The Villages of Romeoville, Bolingbrook and Plainfield and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) welcome you to the third Public Meeting for the Phase 1 study of potential I-55 improvements at Airport Road/Lockport Street and IL 126/Essington Road. The purpose of this study is to improve access to I-55. We thank you for attending today's meeting and we look forward to your continued participation throughout the evaluation and selection of the preferred alternative for this project.



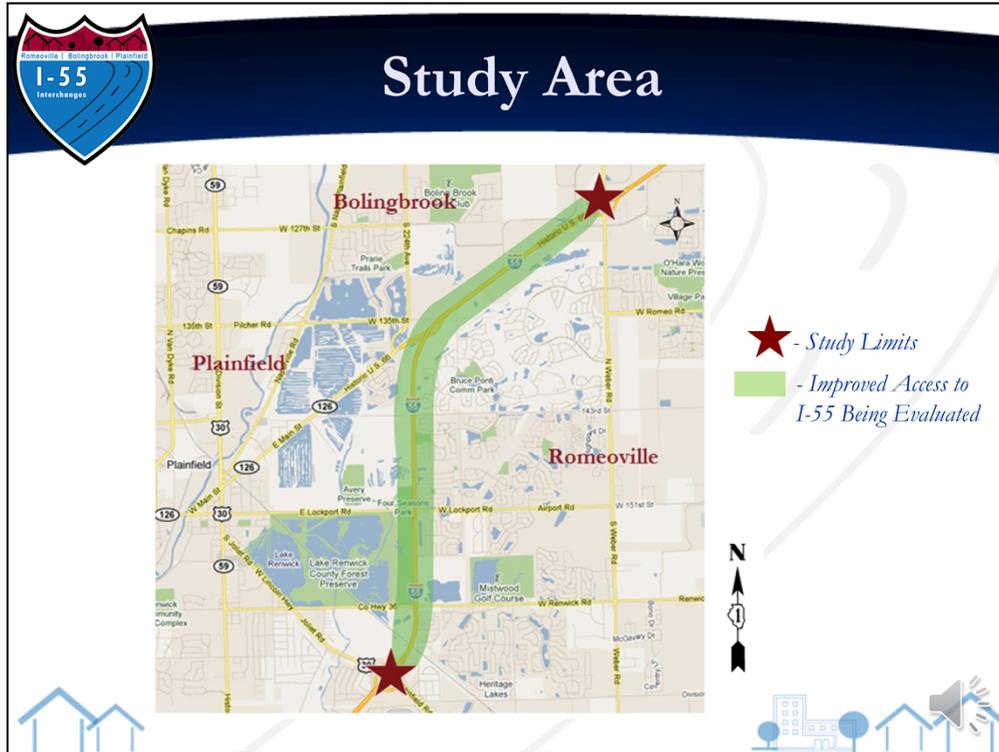
Meeting Goals

- Review the study corridor
- Introduce the study team
- Provide a recap of the study process
- Review the results of Round 1 and Round 2 screenings
- Introduce the five remaining alternatives
- Present Round 3 screening factors
- Obtain feedback



The goals of this meeting are to

- Review the study corridor,
- Introduce the participants in the study team,
- Provide a recap of the study process
- Update stakeholders on progress since the second public meeting by reviewing the results of Rounds 1 and 2 evaluation screenings,
- Introduce the five alternatives that remain under consideration
- Present the factors that will be used in the third round of screening
- And obtain your feedback on the remaining alternatives and the evaluation process



The study area extends along I-55 from the US Route 30 interchange to the Weber Road interchange. Within this six mile section of I-55, the only access to I-55 is a partial interchange at IL 126. The study area includes portions of Romeoville, Bolingbrook, Plainfield and unincorporated northwest Will County.



The study is lead in a joint effort by the Villages of Romeoville, Bolingbrook and Plainfield. V3 Companies is the lead engineering consultant for the study team. The Illinois Department of Transportation or IDOT and the Federal Highway Administration or FHWA form the Project Study Group (PSG) and provide agency leadership overseeing the conduct of the study. The PSG provides technical guidance throughout the study process. The ultimate decision on selecting a preferred alternative will be made by IDOT and the FHWA.

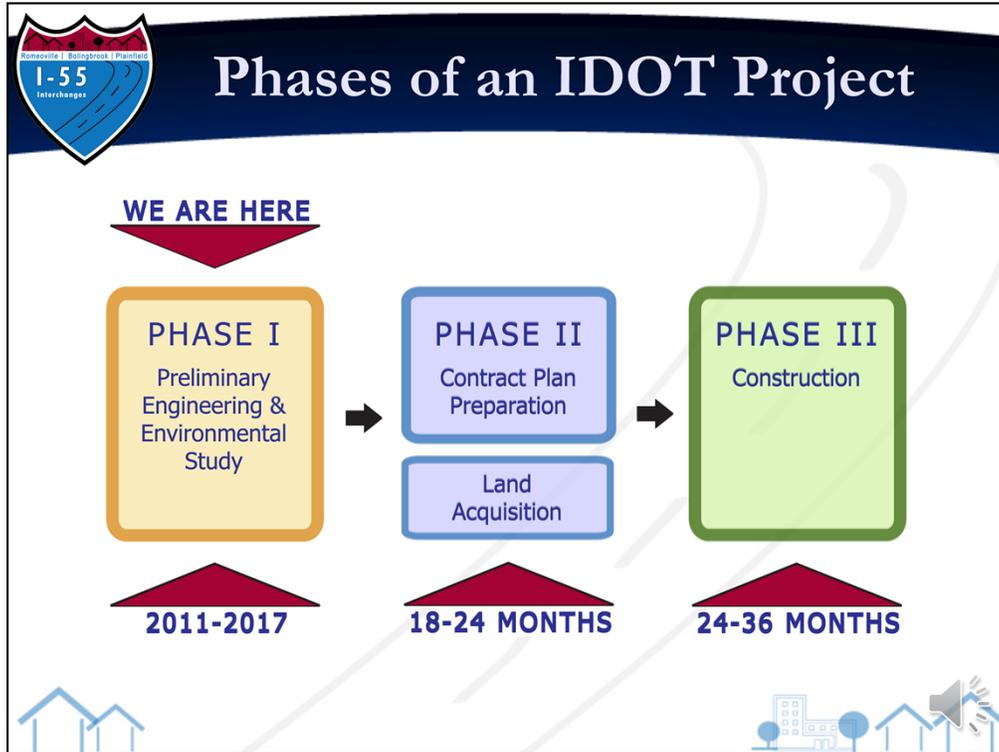


National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NEPA 1969 was established to foster and promote the general welfare, to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans



Congress established the Council on Environmental Quality as part of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). In enacting NEPA, Congress recognized that nearly all federal activities affect the environment in some way and mandated that before federal agencies make decisions, they must consider the effects of their actions on the quality of the environment. NEPA is the basis for the comprehensive study of the I-55 corridor. The project will include studies of the area's natural and community resources and travel needs. The study process will also include an active public involvement process. It is anticipated that the findings of the study process will be summarized in a design report and an environmental assessment report.



IDOT projects are conducted in three phases:

- Phase I is also referred to as Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Studies. Transportation needs are defined, alternatives developed and evaluated, and a preferred alternative selected. Phase I is projected to be completed by the end of 2017.
- After a preferred alternative is approved, Phase II will begin. During this phase, contract plans will be prepared and any land needed to build interchange improvements will be acquired. Phase II is expected to take 18 to 24 months.
- After funding for construction is secured, the Phase III construction of the project will begin.

Phase I of this project is fully funded with federal and local funding. This improvement is not currently included in the Department's FY 2017-2022 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. However, this project will be included in IDOT's priorities for future funding consideration among similar improvement needs throughout the region.



Context Sensitive Solutions

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that:

- Involves stakeholders into the project development process
- Reflects the project surroundings – its “context”
- Addresses all aspects of a project:
 - Community and the Environment
 - Safety and mobility
 - Design of Interchange Alternatives

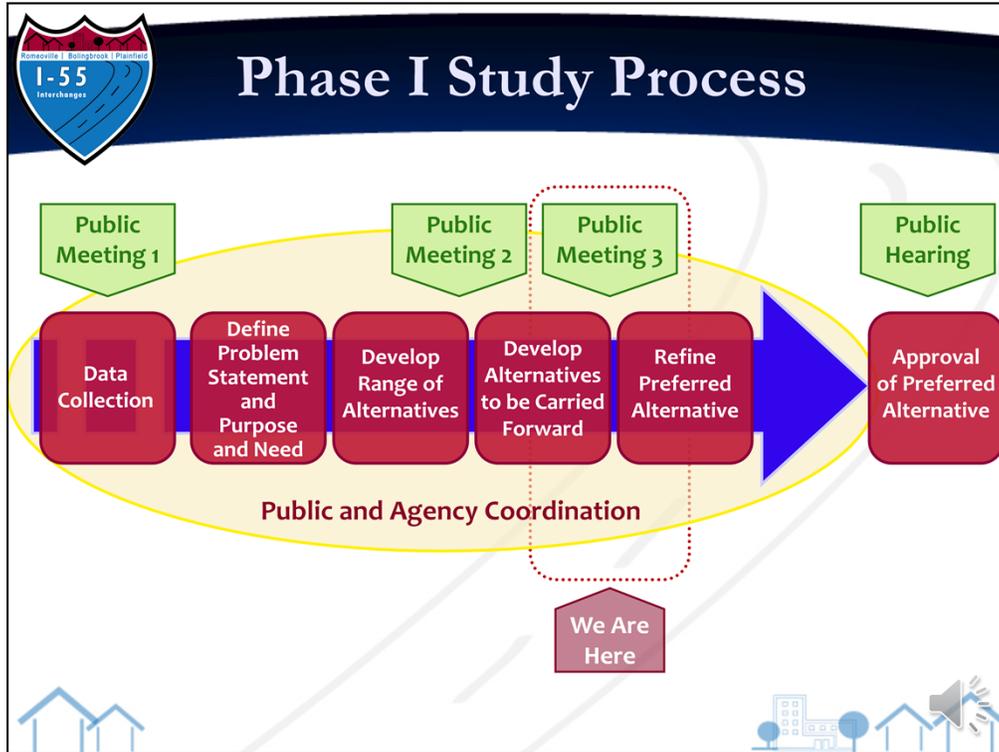


Summary of Public Involvement to Date:

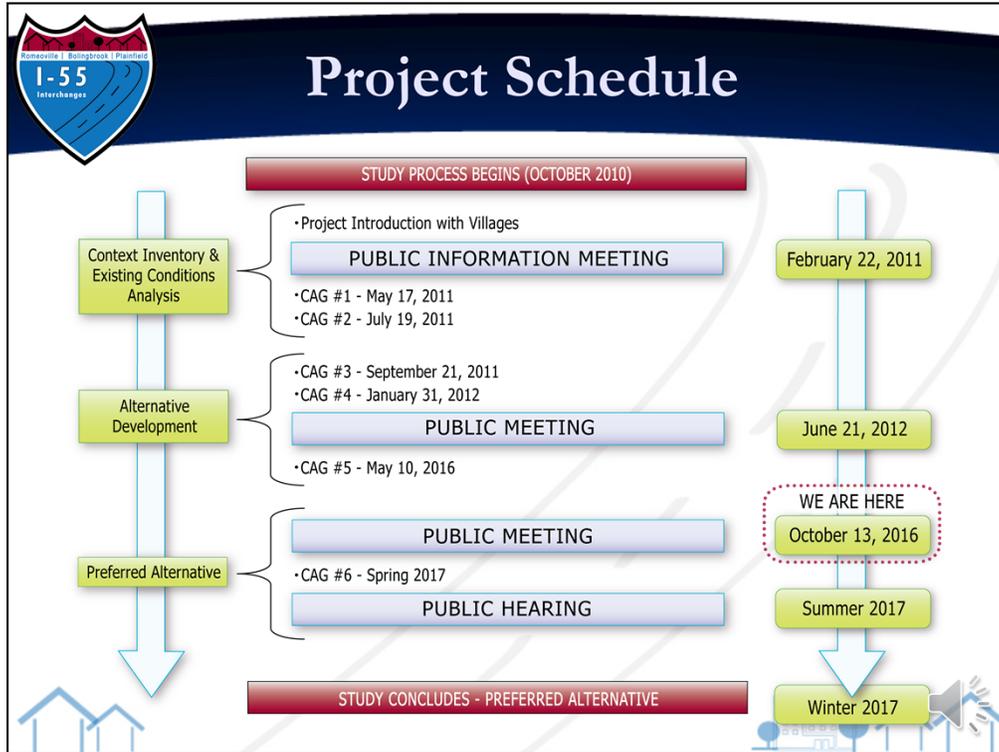
- Five Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meetings
- Two Public Meetings

In order to ensure a comprehensive approach for public involvement and to engage stakeholders, the project team will follow the principals of Context Sensitive Solutions or CSS on this project.

CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves engagement of as many stakeholders as possible to develop a project that fits its surroundings or context. Consideration will be given to addressing all modes of transportation and striving to preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources while maintaining and enhancing safety and mobility. CSS provides the opportunity for input be provided by stakeholders. To date, there has been five Community Advisory Group or CAG meetings and two previous public meetings. For further information on the CSS process, see the Stakeholder Involvement Plan on the project website listed in the brochure.



We are approaching the end of the Phase I process. This stage of the project consists of refining and evaluating the alternatives remaining after two rounds of evaluation using specific screening factors. At this third public meeting, the results of screenings will be reviewed and the five remaining alternatives will be presented. Your input on those alternatives is being sought. Following this meeting, a preferred alternative will be identified and developed in more detail. All related engineering and environmental documentation will be prepared to provide a full description of the preferred alternative and its impact on the environment and community. Prior to finalizing the study process, a public hearing will be held to present the preferred alternative and summarize the findings of the study.



This is the current project schedule. The second public meeting was held on June 21, 2012. Since that meeting, there was a CAG meeting held on May 10, 2016.

At this public meeting, you will have the chance to review the five remaining alternatives. After this meeting, there will be one additional CAG meeting to review the Preferred Alternative that will be presented at the Public Hearing.



Purpose & Need Statement

The purpose of the proposed action is to **provide improved access to I-55.**

Please visit www.airportand126study.com for the full report.



Based on a projected 2040 population growth of 79 percent and employment growth of 53 percent in the three communities and an evaluation of future traffic operations, it has been determined that there will not be an acceptable level service for access to and from I-55 at both IL 126 and Weber Road interchanges. The Purpose and Need Statement was developed in collaboration with the CAG and the PSG.

The purpose of the project is to provide improved access to I-55. Enhancement of regional and local connectivity between the three communities and throughout the northwest Will County area will be a secondary benefit of the project that will accommodate projected growth.



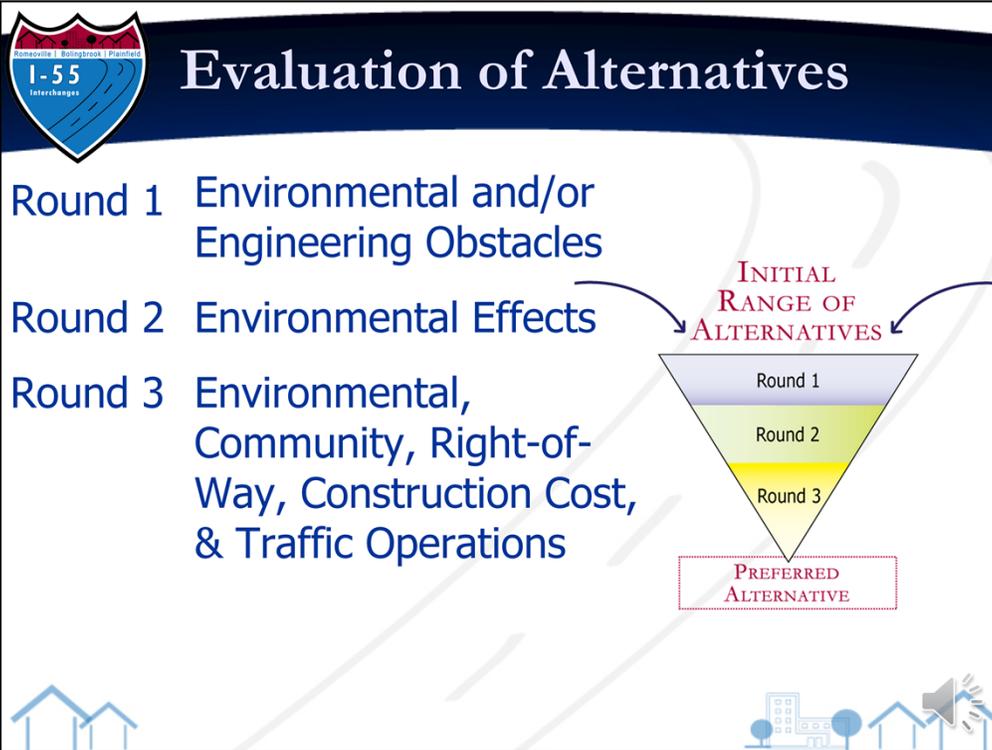
Alternative Development

- Prior Feasibility Studies
- CAG Member Input
- Village Input
- IDOT/FHWA Input

Some of the alternatives were merged due to similarities and some were modified to satisfy design requirements.



Many sources were used to create the initial range of alternatives. They included alternatives from prior feasibility studies, input from CAG members, Village input and IDOT/FHWA input. Some of the alternatives were merged due to similarities and some were modified to satisfy engineering design requirements.



To reach a preferred alternative, each of the alternatives will be subject to three rounds of screening evaluation. The first round of evaluation was performed considering an environmental and engineering obstacle analysis related to the land and water reserve. The second round of evaluation was performed on alternatives that passed Round 1 considering factors related to the natural environment and impacts to land uses. The third round of evaluation will consider a wider range of environmental effects, more detailed community impacts, the area of right-of-way to be acquired, estimated construction costs and benefits to traffic operations at existing and proposed interchanges and on I-55.



Round 1 screening was performed on each of the 27 original alternatives for Environmental and/or Engineering Obstacles.

This image shows the location and boundaries of the Lake Renwick East Land and Water Reserve. The Reserve abuts the west side of the I-55 right of way south of the Plainfield Township offices and is afforded additional protections under the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act. The Act was intended to promote preservation of High quality natural areas that are to be maintained in their natural condition without impairment, disturbance or artificial development. Alternatives that impacted the Land and Water Reserve were eliminated from further consideration.

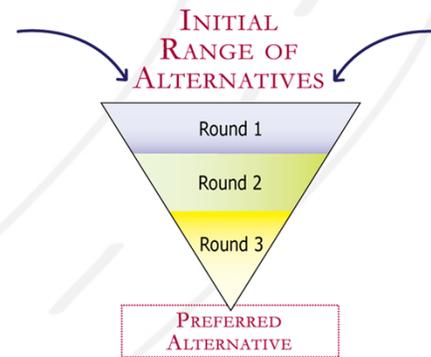
The first round of screening eliminated 13 alternatives. These alternative were mainly interchange configurations at Airport Road that impacted the Reserve.



Round 2 Screening

Round 2 Screening: Environmental Effects

- 3 additional alternatives were developed
- 17 alternatives plus the no-build were evaluated



14 alternatives remained after the Round 1 screening and were moved into the second round of screening. 3 additional alternatives were developed prior to the Round 2 screening with input from the Project Study Group and evaluated against the Round 1 screening. Therefore, 17 alternatives were evaluated as part of Round 2 screening in addition to the option of building no improvements.



Round 2 Screening Factors

Environmental Effects Screening

- Avoid or minimize impacts to Waters of the US (wetlands and open water)
- Avoid bisecting wetland areas
- Minimize impacts to parks and recreational areas, known as Section 4(f) properties
- Minimize residential and business displacements
- Eliminated 12 alternatives



The 17 remaining alternatives were screened for environmental and land use effects. For an alternative to remain under consideration after Round 2 screening, alternatives were to avoid or minimize impacts to Waters of the US (meaning wetlands and open water), avoid bisecting land designated as wetland areas, minimize impacts to publicly owned parks and recreational areas (classified as Section 4(f) properties) and minimize residential and business displacements. Round 2 screening eliminated 12 alternatives, mostly with proposed improvements at Kings Road, IL 126, and 143rd Street.



Alternatives to be Carried Forward

Five interchange alternatives remain under consideration consisting of two interchanges at Airport Road/Lockport Street and three interchanges at IL 126

- Alternative 5 – Airport Road Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI)
- Alternative 30 – Airport Road Dog Bone
- Alternative 16 – IL 126 Full Access
- Alternative 28 – IL 126 Diamond
- Alternative 29 – IL 126 Flyover



After Round 2 screening, there are two possible locations for interchange improvements at Airport Road/Lockport Street and three possible locations at IL 126 that remain under consideration:

- Alternative 5 is a Single Point Urban Interchange at Airport Road/Lockport Street
- Alternative 30 is a Dog Bone Interchange at Airport Road/Lockport Street
- Alternative 16 is a Full Access Interchange at IL 126
- Alternative 28 is a Diamond Interchange at IL 126
- Alternative 29 is a Flyover Interchange at IL 126

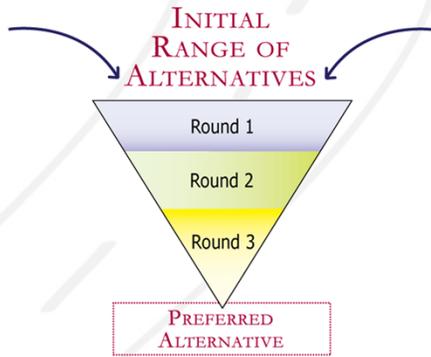
Based on projected traffic growth, the preferred alternative may include a single interchange improvement at either location or interchange improvements at both locations.



Round 3 Screening Evaluation Factors

Round 3 Screening:
Environment, Community,
Construction Cost, & Traffic
Operations

- Natural Environment
- Human Environment
- Right of Way (ROW)
- Construction Cost
- Traffic Operations



The diagram illustrates a funnel-shaped screening process. At the top, a wide opening is labeled 'INITIAL RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES'. Two arrows point from this text to the top of the funnel. The funnel narrows through three stages: 'Round 1' (top section), 'Round 2' (middle section), and 'Round 3' (bottom section). At the narrowest point of the funnel, a red-bordered box contains the text 'PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE'.

The five remaining interchange alternatives will be evaluated during the Round 3 screening process considering their effects on the:

- Natural Environment, including waters of the US, threatened and endangered species, and public parks
- Human Environment, including residential and business impacts
- Total Area of Land to be Acquired to Provide Right of Way for an Interchange,
- Estimated Construction Cost &
- Traffic Operations

The results of the Round 3 Screening will determine the Preferred Alternative.



Of the five remaining alternatives two are located at Airport Road/Lockport Street. The layout of the Airport Road alternatives can be viewed in the main meeting room. Alternative 5 is a Single Point Urban Interchange. It will provide access to and from I-55 in the northbound and southbound directions.

Preliminary screening has found that this alternative will have minimal impacts on wetland areas but will require modifications to parking and driveway access at Four Seasons Park with no adverse effect on recreational activities. This alternative does not displace residential homes or businesses and will serve future traffic demand with an acceptable level of service.



The second alternative located at Airport Road/Lockport Street is Alternative 30, the Dog Bone Interchange. It will provide access to and from I-55 in the northbound and southbound directions.

Preliminary screening has found that this alternative will have minimal impacts on wetland areas but will require modifications to parking and driveway access at Four Seasons Park with no adverse effect on recreational activities. This alternative does not displace residential homes or businesses and will serve future traffic demand with an acceptable level of service.



Three remaining interchange alternatives are located at IL 126. The layout of these alternatives can be viewed in the main meeting room.

Alternative 16 proposes a Full Access Interchange which will maintain existing ramp access to and from the north on I-55 and add new ramps providing access from the intersection of IL 126 and Essington Road to the south on I-55. Preliminary screening has found this alternative will have impacts on wetland areas. Residential and businesses will not be displaced. Alternative 16 will serve future traffic demand with an acceptable level of service.



Alternative 28 proposes a Diamond Interchange at IL 126. This alternative will realign ramps to and from the north on I-55 and provide new ramp access to and from the south on I-55. Preliminary screening has found that this alternative will have impacts on wetland areas. Residential and business properties will not be displaced and this alternative will serve future traffic demand with an acceptable level of service.



Alternative 29 proposes a flyover interchange at IL 126. This alternative will realign ramps to and from the north on I-55 and provide new ramp access to and from the south on I-55. Preliminary screening has found that this alternative will have impacts on wetland areas. Residential and business properties will not be displaced and this alternative will serve future traffic demand with an acceptable level of service.



Next Steps

- Receive Input from Public Meeting
- Complete Round 3 Screening
- Prepare Design Reports and Environmental Assessment
- CAG #6 – Early 2017
- Public Hearing – Summer 2017
- Design Approval – Late 2017



After receiving input from this public meeting, the study team will evaluate the remaining alternatives using the Round 3 screening factors and recommend a preferred alternative.

A design report and environmental assessment will be prepared for the preferred alternative and reviewed by environmental regulatory agencies, the three villages and the Project Study Group.

A summary of the recommended preferred alternative and report findings will be presented at a sixth CAG meeting in early 2017 and input received will be considered in finalizing the study process.

Following the CAG meeting, the recommended preferred alternative will be presented at a public hearing in the summer of 2017. Based on any further feedback received at the public hearing, reports will be finalized and design approval will be requested from IDOT and the FHWA in late 2017.



Ways to Contribute Feedback

- Discuss your questions with study team members
- Submit written comment forms
- Review website at www.airportand126study.com
- Comments received by October 27, 2016 will become part of the public meeting record



We are looking for your input. Let us know what you think. Please discuss your questions or comments with study team members. There is a comment form for submitting written comments. You can fill out the comment form and submit it here today or take them home with you and mail it in later.

A website has been established for this project. By viewing the website, any stakeholder will have the opportunity to review study progress, review meeting minutes, reports and other documents prepared as part of the study and be informed of public involvement activities. The website address is listed on the cover of the project brochure. Any comments resulting from this meeting that are submitted by October 27, 2016 will become part of the record for public involvement activities.

Thank You

Please visit the exhibit room and meet
with the study team members

Romeoville | Bolingbrook | Plainfield
I-55
Interchanges

Thank you for attending today's public meeting. We look forward to seeing you at the future public hearing as well. Please view the display exhibits and meet with the study team members who are available to discuss the project as well as answer any of your questions.