

Potential I-55 Improvements at Airport Road and at IL Route 126/Essington Road

First Public Informational Meeting

February 22, 2011



- The Villages of Romeoville and Bolingbrook and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) welcome you to the first Public Meeting for the Phase 1 study of potential I-55 improvements at Airport Road and IL Route 126/Essington Road.
- We thank you for attending today's meeting and we look forward to your continued participation throughout the development of this project.



Purpose of Meeting

- Introduce the study area
- Review past study efforts
- Present the project team and purpose
- Review the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process
- Obtain feedback
- Introduce opportunities for involvement



•We are here today because of you, a stakeholder engaged and interested in this project. A stakeholder is anyone who is affected by the project and has an interest in its outcome.

•The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the I-55 study area, review past studies related to improving access to I-55, introduce the project team, inform you about the Context Sensitive Solutions process, obtain your feedback on concerns related to I-55 access, and finally to invite you to become involved in study efforts.



- The study area extends along the I-55 corridor from the US Route 30 interchange to the Weber Road interchange. The study area includes portions of Romeoville, Bolingbrook, Plainfield and unincorporated Will County.



Prior Studies Of I-55

- In 1999, a feasibility study was prepared for IL 126 interchange
- In 2003, separate preliminary Access Justification Reports were prepared for Airport Road and IL 126
- In 2008, Romeoville and Bolingbrook were directed by FHWA to combine separate studies into one Phase I study
- In 2008, a feasibility study was prepared for Weber Road interchange improvements
- In 2010, a Phase I study for I-55 interchange improvements at Weber Road was begun by IDOT
- In 2010, the Phase I study of access improvements on I-55 within the study corridor between US Route 30 and Weber Road was begun



For about twelve years, studies have been ongoing to determine if additional access was needed to and from I-55 within the local area. In 1999, a feasibility study was undertaken by the Village of Bolingbrook to develop concept plans for a full access interchange on I-55 at IL Route 126. Both the Villages of Romeoville and Bolingbrook began separate Access Justification Reports in 2003 for a potential new interchange at Airport/Lockport Road and for a full access interchange at IL Route 126. In 2008, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) directed that the separate studies of the two interchange locations should be combined into one overall study. In the same time period, Will County and the two villages initiated a feasibility study to determine improvements needed at the I-55 interchange with Weber Road. In 2010, IDOT began a separate Phase I study for improvements at the Weber Road interchange and the Villages of Romeoville and Bolingbrook began a Phase I study of potential access improvements in the I-55 corridor between US Route 30 and Weber Road.



- The project team will be lead in a joint effort by the Villages of Romeoville and Bolingbrook.
- IDOT will provide agency leadership overseeing the conduct of the study.
- V3 Companies will be the lead engineering consultant for the project study.
- These four entities, along with the FHWA, will also form the Project Study Group (PSG). The PSG will provide technical guidance throughout the study process.



Study Area Concerns

- Improve safety on I-55 and at interchanges
- Relieve traffic congestion
- Improve regional mobility and access to I-55
- Promote economic development and job growth



Why is the study being conducted? Prior studies have identified a potential need for access improvements on I-55 that will improve safety, relieve traffic congestion, improve mobility within the surrounding regional area and promote economic development and job growth.

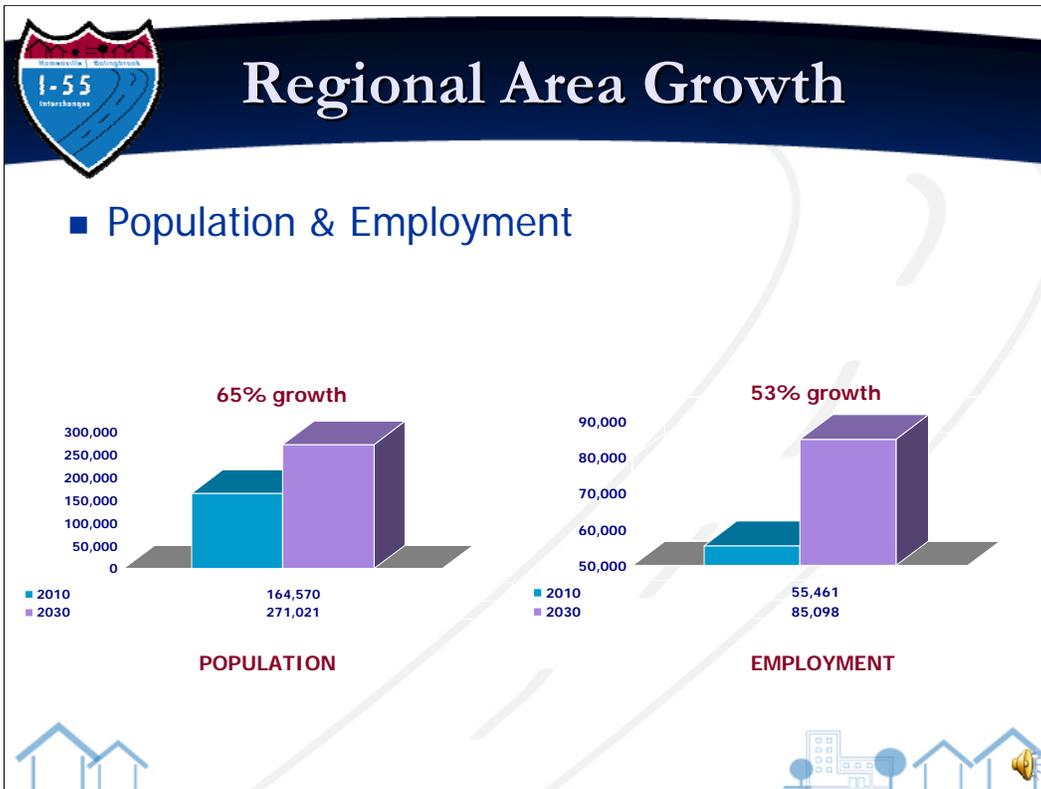


Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)

- Planning agency for seven-county northeastern Illinois area
- Integrates future planning for land use and transportation
- Review and approve transportation projects
- CMAP projects population, employment and traffic volumes for the study area from 2010 to 2040



In 2005, the Illinois General Assembly formed the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). CMAP provides planning for the seven-county northeastern Illinois region that integrates land use with transportation systems. CMAP is also responsible for reviewing and approving projects that use federal transportation money. Their responsibilities include projecting population, employment and traffic volumes for the study area for the year 2040.



CMAQ is projecting significant population and employment growth over the next thirty years in the three communities adjacent to the I-55 study area. As the bar graphs illustrate, population in Romeoville, Bolingbrook and Plainfield is projected to grow by an increase of 65% in the next thirty years. Employment is also projected to grow by an increase of 53% during the same time period. Considering the congestion and delay that is already experienced by motorists at the existing interchanges, the need for improved access will be a concern.



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 human environment.
- NEPA is the basis for the comprehensive study of the I-55 corridor. It enables the project team to make informed decisions. The project will include studies of the area's natural and community resources and traffic. The process will also include an active public involvement process.



Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

- Involves all stakeholders
- Fits into its surroundings
- Cost effective
- Multiple modes of transportation
- Preserves resources
- Maintains safety and mobility



- This project has been designated as one that will utilize 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.
- 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.



Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP)

- Provides guide for implementing stakeholder involvement
- Identifies stakeholders
- Defines responsibilities of study participants
- Describes opportunities for public involvement
- Provides schedule for public involvement activities



The CSS process requires the preparation of a Stakeholder Involvement Plan or SIP to provide a guide for implementing stakeholder involvement. The SIP identifies stakeholders in the study area, defines the responsibilities of study participants, describes opportunities for public involvement and provides a schedule for public involvement activities. The SIP will be continuously updated as the project moves forward through the Phase I study process. A copy of the SIP for the I-55 project will be posted on the project website and is available for review in the exhibit display area.



Project Study Group (PSG)

- Responsible for technical oversight
- Expedites project development process
- Identifying and resolving project development issues
- Promoting partnership with stakeholders
- Acquiring clearances and approvals from resource agencies



The Project Study Group or PSG consists of a multi-disciplinary team of representatives from IDOT, FHWA, Villages of Romeoville and Bolingbrook and the consultant team. The PSG has the primary responsibility for technical oversight of the project development process. Their responsibilities will include expediting the study process, identifying and resolving project development issues, promoting partnership with stakeholders and acquiring clearances and approvals from resource agencies. The ultimate decision on the preferred alternative will be made by IDOT and FHWA.

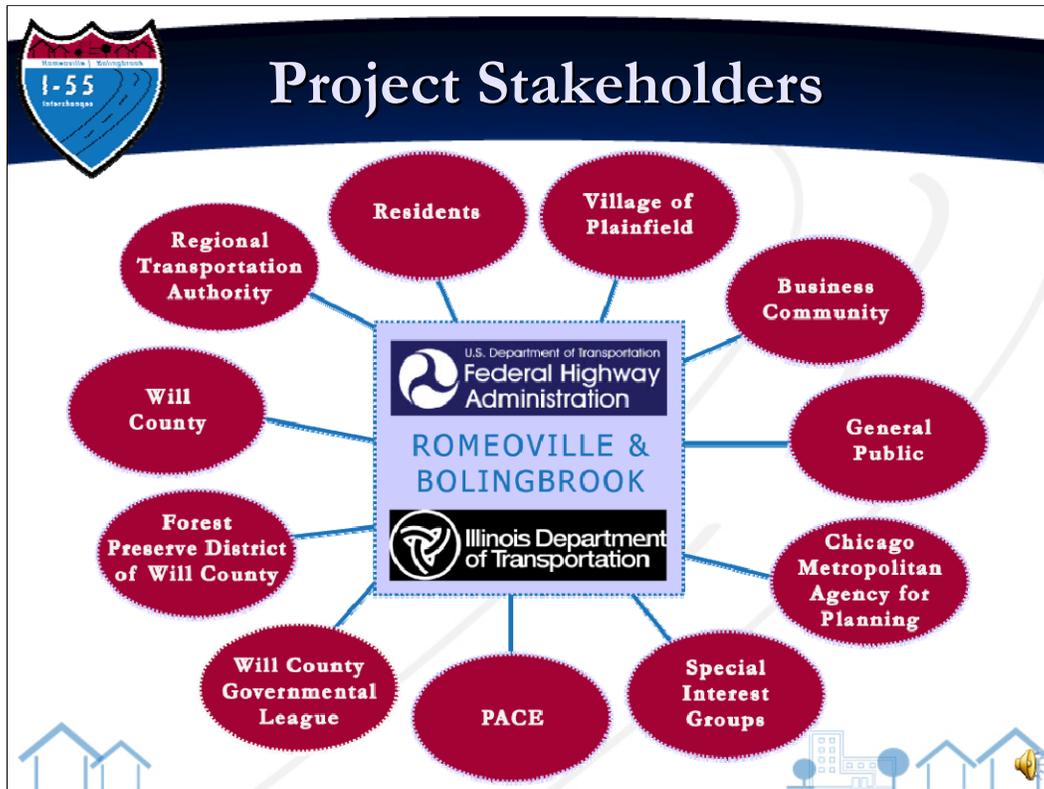


Community Advisory Group (CAG)

- Composed of volunteer stakeholders
- Active part of the decision making process
- Group will provide stakeholder insight
- Attend approximately six 2-hour workshops located near the project corridor



- A vital part of the CSS process is the Community Advisory Group or CAG.
- The CAG is a group of stakeholders who volunteer to be an active participant in the decision making process beyond the scheduled public meetings.
- The role of the group will be to provide detailed insight of community and stakeholder interests.
- The responsibilities of a CAG member are to participate in each of the expected 6 meetings and work to achieve general agreement among all interested parties and the public/community interests.
- The time commitment is expected to be two hours per meeting and the meetings will be held during the daytime near the project corridor
- Parties interested in volunteering for the CAG should visit the Community Advisory Group table to review additional information and sign up.

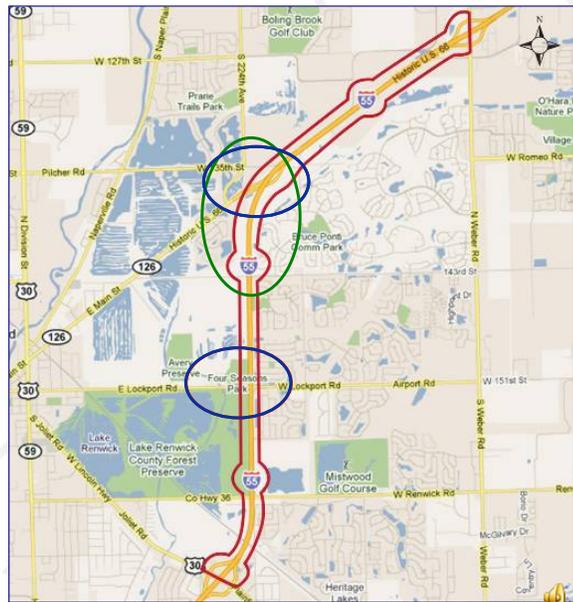


- The project stakeholders are a large and varied group. A stakeholder is anyone who is affected by the project and has a stake in its outcome.
- Public involvement activities will include outreach to residents, and owners of adjacent and nearby properties, users of I-55, Weber Road, IL 126, Airport Road and the surrounding roadway network, local businesses, elected officials, local agencies such as the Villages of Crest Hill and Plainfield or Will County and the general public
- The Villages of Romeoville and Bolingbrook will lead the study in conjunction with IDOT and the FHWA.
- A consultant team lead by V3 Companies will perform engineering studies and coordinate stakeholder outreach efforts.

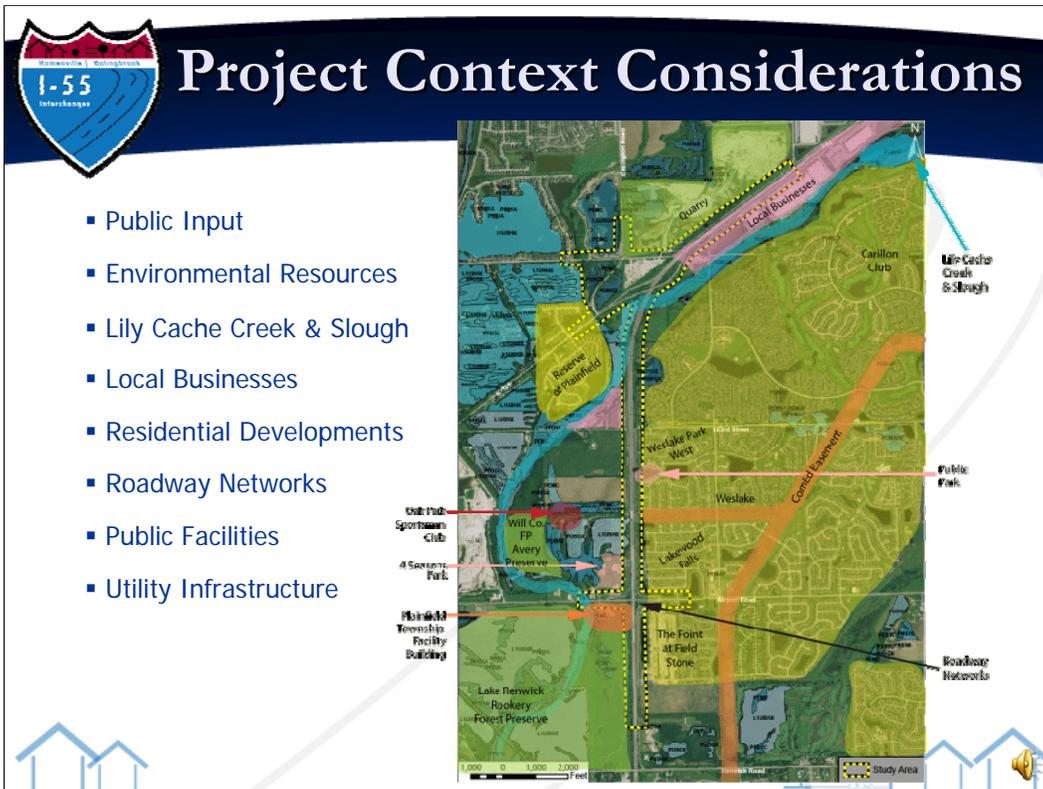


Summary of Design Options from Feasibility Study

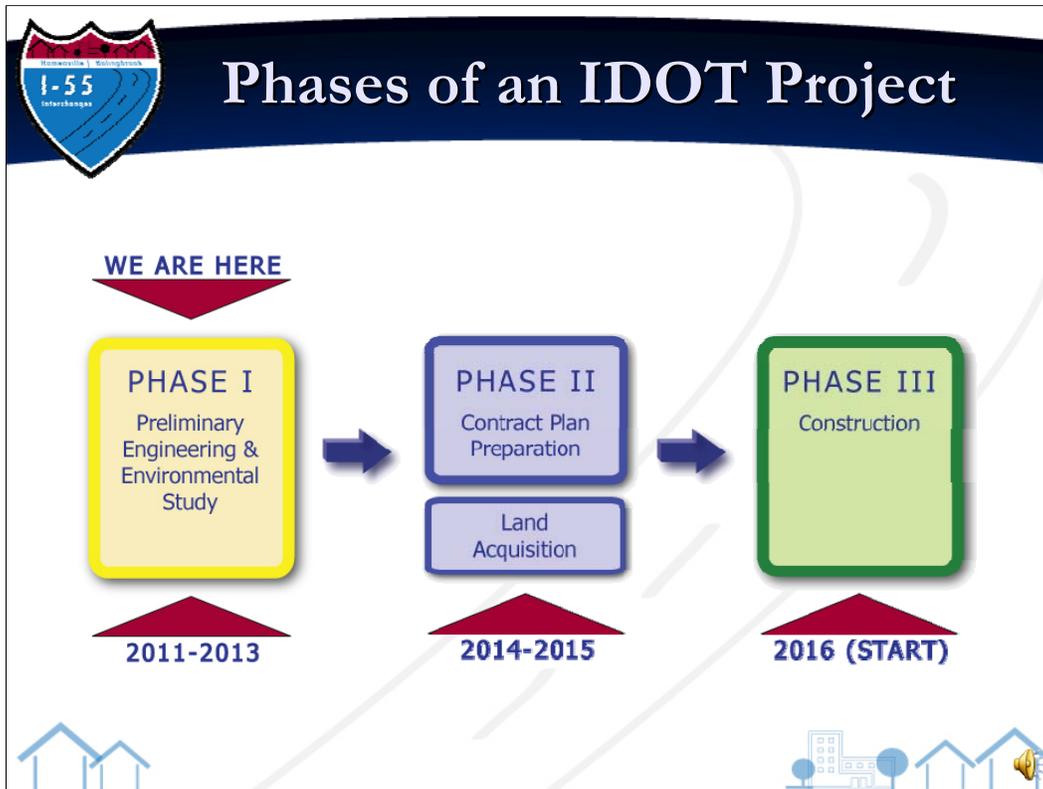
- New Interchange at Airport Road
- Full Access Interchange at IL 126
- Full Access Interchange at 143rd Street
- Interchanges at Airport and IL 126 with or without connecting frontage roads
- Other alternatives (including No Build)



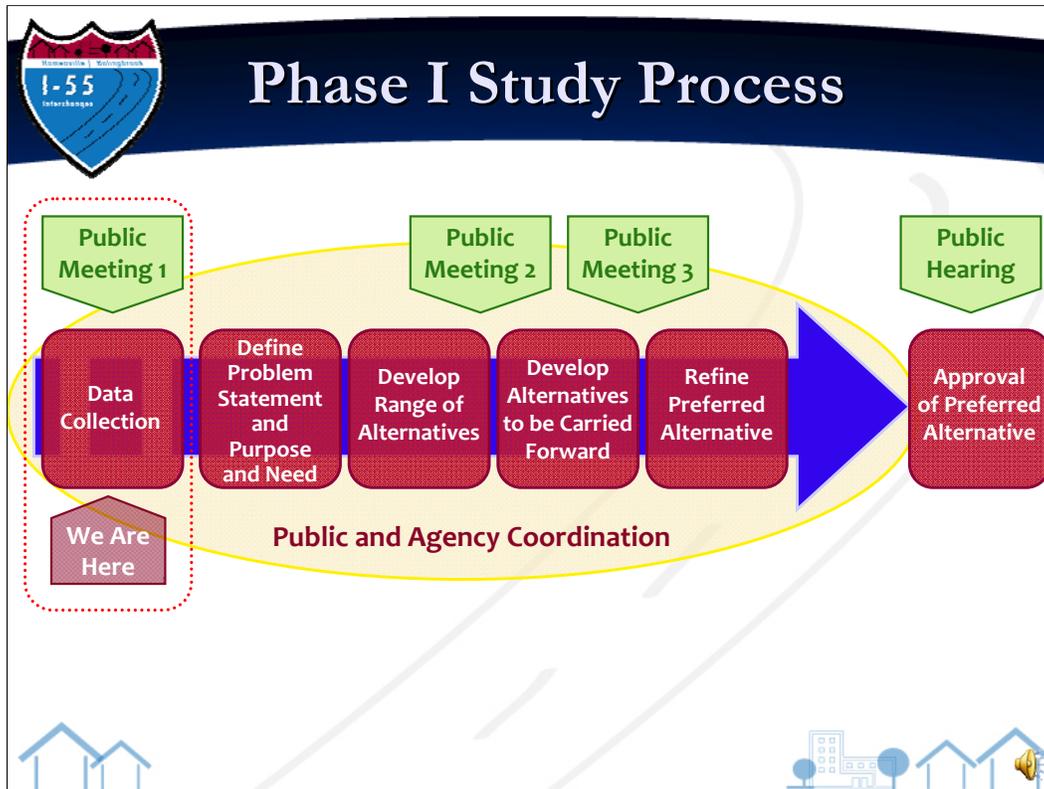
- Some of the options that will be explored during this Phase 1 study include improvements of existing interchanges or the addition of new interchanges.
- Prior studies have considered potential locations for a new interchange at Airport Road and a full access interchanges at IL 126 and 143rd Street . Alternatives have also been developed that include a combination interchange that would connect Airport Road and IL Route 126 with frontage roads.
- Through the public involvement program, other interchange locations and interchange alternatives may be suggested for consideration. The study may also consider that no additional interchange locations are needed (the “No Build” alternative) beyond the improvements that are already being evaluated at the I-55 interchange with Weber Road.



There are many factors that will affect the design of the interchanges and be considered throughout the study process. Some of these factors include public input, environmental resources such as the forest preserves, wetlands or Lily Cache Creek & Slough, local businesses, residential developments, the surrounding roadway networks, public facilities and utility infrastructure.



- IDOT projects are conducted in three phases.
- Phase I is also referred to as Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Studies. Through extensive stakeholder involvement and technical analysis, transportation needs will be defined, alternatives developed and evaluated, and a preferred alternative will be selected. A range of factors to be considered in the decision making process will include: stakeholder input, engineering design, construction cost and environmental considerations. Phase 1 is expected to take 24 to 36 months.
- After a preferred alternative is approved, Phase II (or Contract Plan Preparation) and Land Acquisition would begin. During this phase, detailed construction plans would be developed and any necessary land would be acquired for the project. Phase II is expected to take 24 months.
- After funding for construction is secured, the Phase III construction of the project will begin. Phase III is expected to take 24 to 36 months depending upon the preferred alternative.
- Phase I of this project is fully funded with federal and local funding. However, Phases II and III are not currently included in IDOT's Fiscal Year 2011 to 2016 Proposed Improvement Program but will be considered when prioritizing for future programs.



- We are currently in the early stages of the Phase I process.
- This stage of the project consists of defining the problem statement, the project’s purpose and need and analyzing current and future conditions. Project purpose and need discussions will be developed based on an understanding of known traffic safety issues, congestion or operational problems, traffic forecasts and their anticipated effects on future traffic conditions and the need to add or modify access to I-55. This will help set the stage for meaningful discussions about potential solutions. Your input during today’s first public meeting will be useful in defining the project purpose and need statement.
- At the second public meeting, the project purpose and need will be presented. A range of alternatives that will address the purpose and need will also be introduced. During that meeting, your input on those alternatives will be sought. These alternatives will be evaluated based on the impacts and costs of each, keeping in mind all input received. Your input is vital and will lead to the elimination of some alternatives that are deemed to be no longer viable or feasible.
- The remaining alternatives will then be further developed and refined. Those alternatives will then be presented at a third public meeting and general agreement will be sought on a preferred alternative.
- A draft Design Report and Environmental Assessment with all related engineering and environmental documentation will then be prepared for the preferred alternative.
- A public hearing will then be held to present the preferred alternative and the findings of the Design Report and Environmental Assessment.



Land Acquisition

- Fee Simple (Property purchase)
- Permanent Easement (Permanent use of the property acquired by IDOT)
- Temporary Easement (Short term use of the property acquired by IDOT)



• Though we do not yet know the complete extent of the project, now is a good time to start a discussion about land acquisition. It is possible that this project may not be able to be constructed completely within the existing right-of-way and therefore some land may need to be acquired.

• There are three main types of land acquisition.

• The most utilized and familiar form used by IDOT is fee simple. This is defined as acquisition of all rights and interest in a piece of land. Most simply put, IDOT will purchase the land and transfer the title to the State.

• Another option is a permanent easement. A permanent easement is when IDOT acquires use of the property to construct or maintain facilities such as underground drainage pipes, but ownership is retained by the original property owner

• The last option is a temporary easement. With a temporary easement, IDOT acquires use of the property for a limited time to construct minor improvements, but ownership remains with the original property owner.



Ways to Contribute Feedback

- Join the Community Advisory Group
- Complete the Community Context Audit
- Submit written comment forms
- Review website at www.airportand126study.com
- Comments received by March 8, 2011 will become part of the public meeting record



•We are looking for your input. Nobody knows the area like you do. You drive on I-55 and use the existing interchanges everyday. You may have to deal with congestion. Though you may be impacted during the construction of this improvement, you will gain the benefits of the final improvement. Let us know what you think.

•Read the information about the Community Advisory Group and consider joining.

•Included in the project brochure that you received today, there is a form for submitting written comments and the community context survey. You can fill out the comment form and survey and submit them here today or take them home with you and mail them in later.

•A website is being established for this project. 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 March 8, 2011 will become part of the record for this public meeting.



- Thank you for attending today's public meeting. We look forward to seeing you at future public meetings 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.