



US ROUTE 41 at IL ROUTE 176 INTERCHANGE

VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF | LAKE COUNTY



Thank you for your attendance at the public hearing held on June 25, 2015 regarding the Village of Lake Bluff and Illinois Department of Transportation's proposed improvement of the US 41 at IL 176 interchange in Lake County. Any comments have become part of the official public hearing record and are attached for your reference. The proposed improvement will reconstruct the existing US 41 at IL 176 interchange and the intersection of IL 176 at IL 43 with additional through lanes, additional auxiliary lanes, improved geometrics, replacement of traffic signals, and improved drainage. Pump Station 37 for the US 41 underpass at IL 176 will be reconstructed and Pump Station 41 for the US 41 underpass at Canadian National Railroad will be improved.

We received comments from eight individuals from the public hearing. Five indicated general support for the project. No comments were received on the impacts to the Lake Bluff Golf Course, which is a protected resource under the USDOT Act of 1966. This newsletter has been prepared to address your concerns as well as provide you with an overview of other topics. Information about the project can be viewed on the Village website at www.lakebluff.org under the Community Development tab in the Department & Services section.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Chris Kersten at (847) 705-4633 or Chris.Kersten@illinois.gov.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

A comment was received requesting information on the timeline for improvements, bidding, project completion, and how it will be advertised for bid to contractors. As discussed at the public hearing, highway improvements are typically processed in three distinct phases. Preliminary engineering and environmental studies, known as Phase I, involve coordinating with the public, developing geometry and drainage plans, identifying environmental concerns, and determining right-of-way requirements. The Department is nearing completion of Phase I as we consider comments from the public hearing and refine the engineering studies and right-of-way requirements accordingly. After completion of Phase I, which is anticipated at the end of 2015, the Department can begin preparing contract plans and acquiring the necessary right-of-way (Phase II). Phase III represents the actual construction of the improvement.

The reconstruction of Pump Station 37 is included in the Department's FY 2016-2021 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. Our current engineering efforts are targeted to enable a contract letting in the early portion of our current multi-year program contingent upon plan readiness, land acquisition, and funding availability through our future annual legislative appropriations. The interchange improvements along US 41 and IL 176 are not included in the current multi-year program. However, these improvements will be included in our priorities for future funding consideration among similar improvement needs throughout the region. Project letting schedules are not known at this time.

For more information regarding construction lettings, visit the Department's website at www.idot.illinois.gov/doing-business/procurements/construction-services/construction-bulletins/transportation-bulletin/index

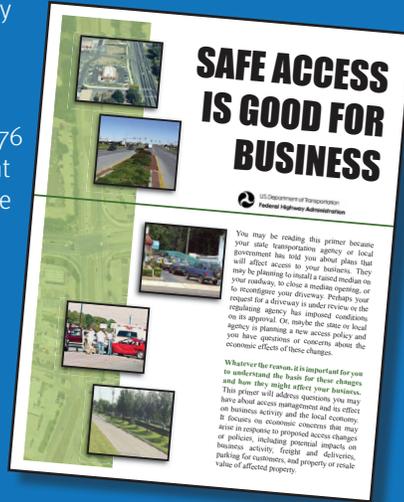
FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF ROUNDABOUTS

A comment was received that requested roundabouts still be considered in the design phase of this project. Roundabouts along IL 176 at the intersections with Shagbark Road and Skokie Valley Road were included in an alternative being presented at the September 2012 public meeting. While the public support for roundabouts was high at that meeting, subsequently, a considerable amount of additional analysis, consideration of comments, and interagency coordination occurred with respect to determination of the preferred alternative. Several coordination meetings occurred between the Village of Lake Bluff, Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois Commerce Commission, and the Federal Highway Administration concerning the proximity of the IL 176 at Skokie Valley Road intersection to the Union Pacific Railroad crossing. As a result of agency coordination, the traffic signals were selected as the preferred alternative at IL 176 at Skokie Valley and IL 176 at Shagbark Road based on being more conducive to managing traffic operations near the railroad crossing. It should be noted that the Department recognizes the safety and operational benefits of roundabouts, and is currently proposing the installation of roundabouts in Kane and McHenry Counties.



BARRIER MEDIANS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

A comment was received from a property owner objecting to the barrier median along IL 176 which would require right-in, right-out only access at the driveway. Barrier medians are proposed along IL 176 and IL 43 to provide access management which prevent motorist from crossing the median to access adjacent properties at numerous locations which reduces traffic conflict points and result in a safer roadway. Provision have been made in the proposed plan for U-turns by widening out the receiving throats of the roadway at intersection. The Federal Highway Administration's "Safe Access is Good for Business" publication indicates that access management does not hurt and can actually help businesses by providing safer access and better traffic flow.



EXTENSION OF THE BIKE PATH ON IL 43

A comment was received that requested the proposed bike path along IL 43 be extended to the railway station north of the project limit. The Lake Forest bike path on the west side of IL 43 south of IL 176 will be reconstructed to provide continuity for bicyclists to the south. A new bike path will be constructed on the west side of IL 43 north of IL 176 to meet the requirements of State legislation, commonly known as Complete Streets, to provide non-motorized facilities along with projects that improve roadways. There is no known railway station or other transportation related facility on IL 43 north of IL 176 that would be considered a major generator for bicycle traffic. Therefore, the bike path will terminate at the first street north of the north project limits. Extending the bike path further to the north would be considered with a future corridor roadway project along IL 43

TRAFFIC NOISE ABATEMENT WALLS

Property owners and tenants who would "benefit" from a noise barrier were notified via mail before the public hearing, and were asked to vote if they were in favor or against the installation of a noise abatement wall. A "benefit" is a noticeable reduction of noise, quantified as a reduction of five decibels or greater, for a location where a noise abatement wall meets a cost/benefit threshold and is possible to construct.

These requirements were met along the west and east sides of US 41 between Basil Road and Quassey Avenue. Seventy-nine percent of the benefitted receptors along the west side of US 41 voted in favor of noise abatement walls. As a result, the noise abatement wall for the west side of US 41 will be carried forward in the proposed plans for further evaluation and analysis in the contract plan preparation phase (Phase II) of the project.

Because the property characteristics were different on the east side of US 41 (a mobile home community to the north and a motel to the south), the traffic noise analysis for the east wall considered multiple options for the length of the wall. One option addressed noise abatement for the mobile home community and a second option addressed noise abatement for both the mobile home community and the motel. Fifty-eight percent of the benefitted receptors along the mobile home community voted in favor of noise abatement walls. One-hundred percent of benefitted receptor along the motel voted against the noise abatement wall. As a result, the noise abatement wall for the mobile home community will be carried forward in the proposed plans for further evaluation and analysis in Phase II. The noise abatement wall for the motel will not be considered.

An exhibit of the proposed noise abatement wall is included in this newsletter. For additional information regarding traffic noise, regulations and policy, noise analyses, or noise abatement, we encourage you to access the Department's website www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/environment, under the Community tab.

REMOVAL OF THE FRONTAGE ROAD

A comment was received objecting to the loss of direct property access to and from US 41 via the frontage road that is being removed on the east side of US 41 north of the interchange. The existing frontage road on the east side of US 41 north of W. Washington Avenue is proposed to be removed to provide an acceleration lane from W. Washington Avenue to northbound US 41. Property access will be maintained by a proposed access road on the east side of those properties currently served by the frontage road. The existing multiple access points between the frontage road and northbound US 41 is one of the major safety issues identified for this project. These multiple access points violate driver expectancy along a route like US 41 and do not provide any acceleration distance before merging into high speed traffic. The proposed acceleration lanes from the interchange connector roadways to both northbound and southbound US 41 improve safety and meet current design standards.



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SEPTEMBER 2015



VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF



**US 41 AT IL ROUTE 176
PROPOSED NOISE ABATEMENT WALLS**