



CORRIDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #2 REPORT

Project Name: Plainfield Road Preliminary Engineering Services
County Line Road to East Avenue
Client Name: Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
(CCDOH)
Meeting Date: March 3, 2021, at 2 p.m.
Meeting Location: Zoom Virtual Conference Call
Section Number: 16-B3719-00-EG

The following report is assumed correct unless written notice to the contrary is received within 5 days of the issue date.

ATTENDEES (24):

CAC Members

Gail Paul, City of Countryside
John Fitzgerald, City of Countryside/Township of Lyons
Ryan Gillingham, Village of La Grange
Jodi Golm, La Grange Highlands Civic Association
Gary Stepina, La Grange Highlands Civic Association
Parin Schmidt, La Grange Highlands School District 106
Matt Russian, Pleasant Dale Park District
Steve Norvilas, Pleasantview Fire Protection District
David Preissig, Village of Burr Ridge
Ingrid Velkme, Village of Western Springs
Jim Tock, Village of Western Springs
Mike Fricano, West Central Municipal Conference
Nicole Nutter, Illinois Tollway
Holly Sauter, MWRD

Project Team

Tara Orbon, Cook County DOTH
Katie Bell, Cook County DOTH
Sanjay Joshi, Cook County DOTH
Adam James, Cook County DOTH
Noel Basquin, Cook County DOTH
Stephanie Abezetian, Knight E/A, Inc. (Knight)
Robert Mack, Knight E/A, Inc. (Knight)
Caitlin Bettisworth, Metro Strategies, Inc.
Lissa Sweeney, Metro Strategies, Inc.

SUBJECT: Meeting #2 with the Corridor Advisory Committee to provide study updates, present developed alternatives, and receive input

MEETING SUMMARY:

A virtual Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting for the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (CCDOH) Plainfield Road Corridor Phase I Study, between County Line Road and East Avenue, was held on March 03, 2021 through Zoom Meetings.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide a recap of CAC meeting #1, review the public survey results, present the potential improvement alternatives, preview the public information meeting, and receive feedback.

The following summarizes the presentations, questions, and comments discussed:

Goals for Today and Introductions

1. CCDOTH welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked them for participating, and reviewed the goals for the meeting.
2. The Project Team, including CCDOTH, Knight E/A, Inc., and Metro Strategies Inc. introduced themselves. CCDOTH then asked participants to introduce themselves via roll call.

Recap of CAC Meeting #1

Study Overview

3. Knight recapped that the Plainfield Road Corridor Study includes approximately 3.5 miles along Plainfield Road from County Line Road to East Avenue. The study's goals are to improve safety for all users, enhance connectivity and accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians, update the roadway and drainage infrastructure, and accommodate projected 2050 travel demands.
4. Knight shared the typical project timeline for CCDOTH projects. This project is currently in Phase I which is expected to last 24 to 36 months. Phase II is anticipated to last 18 to 24 months and Phase III is anticipated to last approximately 18 to 24 months. It was noted that Phase II and Phase III are not yet funded. The Phase I timeline presented shows that the existing conditions review, and scoping is complete, and the Project Team is now developing and refining alternatives through Fall 2021. Lastly, the team will work toward developing a preferred alternative design in Fall 2022.

CAC Role

5. Knight detailed the purpose and role of the Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC's role is to advise on project direction, needs, and details; provide guidance and support for issues within the respective areas of expertise; serve as a link to update the public and respective organizations of progress, scope, and schedule; and assist in the promotion of public information meetings to community members. The CAC will meet at four key times throughout the study.

Traffic and Crash Summary

6. Knight reviewed the corridor traffic summary including current conditions and 2050 projections. The highest Average Daily Traffic (ADT) occurs between County Line Road and Wolf Road, and the Project Team will evaluate the future capacity needs in the design of the preferred alternatives.
7. Knight presented the currently available crash data from 2013-2017. The crash results indicate that most crashes have occurred at the intersections of County Line Road and Plainfield Road and LaGrange Road and Plainfield Road. The roadway segment that experiences the highest number of crashes is between LaGrange Road and East

Avenue which includes areas where there is perpendicular parking adjacent to the road, such as between 8th Avenue and 9th Avenue, on the north side of Plainfield Road where parked vehicles back out onto the roadway. This is a safety concern that will be investigated and addressed in coordination with the Village of La Grange as part of the study.

CAC #1 Discussion

8. Knight provided a recap of issues identified and discussed at CAC #1. These included the following:
 - a. Bicycle and pedestrian issues: Clarifications requested regarding sidewalk and multi-use path, coordination with Illinois Tollway regarding accommodating a sidewalk and multi-use path as part of the I-294 reconstruction project, and safety concerns and connectivity near parks and schools
 - b. Traffic and roadway issues: Left turns contributing to the traffic delays at the intersection of County Line Road and Plainfield Road, a center turn lane may be useful between Shady Lane and Hillcrest Drive, and a request for coordination between Illinois Tollway, IDOT, and CCDOTH projects
 - c. Drainage issues: Concerns regarding increased flow to Flagg Creek, flooding issue identified at Peck Ave and Plainfield Road, clarifications regarding improvements to Willow Springs Road
 - d. Important locations/areas to improve safety: Request to discuss any parking changes with impacted communities

Public Survey Results

9. Metro Strategies reviewed the results from the public survey, which was completed online between Sept. 8 – Sept. 29, 2020. A total of 343 participants viewed the survey, and 230 completed the welcome questionnaire. The greatest number of respondents live in the Village of La Grange, followed by the Village of Western Springs and the Village of Indian Head Park. The top priority focus areas identified by participants were the following: pedestrian/bike concerns (31%), traffic/roadway concerns (30%) and general safety (27%). Participants also provided 162 comments on the interactive map. Pedestrian/bike issues were nearly 50% of the total pins, followed by traffic/roadway at 27%. The locations of these issues were consistent with the comments heard during the first CAC meeting.

Potential Alternatives

10. Knight presented the potential alternatives, highlighting the alternatives development process, existing typical sections, alternatives' typical sections and pros/cons of the alternatives. The alternatives development process began with existing conditions collection, which included environmental studies, wetland studies, geotechnical studies, special waste assessments; traffic and crash data collection and analysis; existing drainage conditions analysis; CAC#1 input; and the public survey. A Draft Purpose and Need statement was then developed in coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in accordance

with NEPA guidelines. The review, analysis and stakeholder input were used to develop the various alternatives.

11. Knight reviewed the existing typical sections throughout the corridor, which include the following:
 - a. *County Line Road to Shady Lane* - Plainfield Road is a five-lane section (two through lanes in each direction and a center left turn lane) with curb and gutter and sidewalk present at isolated locations.
 - b. *Shady Lane to Willow Springs Road* - Plainfield Road generally consists of a three-lane section (one through lane in each direction and a center left turn lane) with intermittent sidewalk, curb and gutter, and guardrail.
 - c. *Willow Springs Road to East Avenue* - Plainfield Road is a two-lane section (one through lane in each direction) through this area. Most of the route is a rural cross section with shoulder and ditches. Curb and gutter is inconsistently present along Plainfield Road west of Willow Springs Road. East of Willow Springs Road, curb and gutter is only found near the major intersections except for East Avenue. Existing sidewalk and guardrail are also intermittently present within this segment of Plainfield Road.
12. Knight presented the 5 proposed alternatives evaluated by the project team – Alternatives 1, 2, 3A, 3B and 4. Alternatives 1 and 4 are not recommended for further investigation. However, Alternative 1 will be incorporated into Alternatives 2, 3A, and 3B which are being recommended for further investigation.
 - a. *Alternative 1* - Alternative 1 leaves the existing corridor lane configurations as-is but includes various signalized intersection improvements along the corridor where the traffic analysis has identified existing and future capacity deficiencies with poor traffic operations. Typical types of improvements that could be included are signal optimization and the addition of right and left turn lanes. The intersection improvements would also accommodate larger design vehicles to allow for the safer travel of trucks. The pros/cons were also reviewed. As noted above, this alternative is not recommended for further investigation.
 - b. *Alternative 2* - Alternative 2 includes the recommended intersection improvements in Alternative 1 and reconstructs Plainfield Road between these signalized intersections. The recommended typical section is a 3-lane section with sidewalk and a shared use path throughout the corridor. The existing 5-lane section near County Line Road would remain. Additionally, a closed drainage system is anticipated to be introduced throughout the corridor. Additional design details will be considered after the preferred alternative is selected to minimize impacts to adjacent properties, sensitive areas, trees, parking, drainage, etc. The pros/cons were also reviewed. As noted above, this alternative will continue to be investigated further by the project team.
 - c. *Alternative 3A* - Alternative 3 includes the recommended intersection improvements in Alternative 1 and reconstructs Plainfield Road between these signalized intersections. A 5-lane road would be provided from County Line Road and Wolf Road. The typical section through this segment would provide two through lanes in each direction and a flush median/Two Way Left Turn Lane. The remainder of the corridor would consist of a 3-lane section. A shared use path

and sidewalk would be proposed continuously along the corridor. Alternative 3A would also introduce a closed drainage system for the entire corridor by providing a curb and gutter along the corridor. The pros/cons were also reviewed. As noted above, this alternative will continue to be investigated further by the project team.

- d. *Alternative 3B* - The next segment that a 5-lane section was analyzed is located between 55th Street and Brainard Avenue and referenced as Alternative 3B. The proposed typical section between Brainard Ave and 55th Street would provide an additional right turn lane along and a flush median. A 3-lane section would be provided for the remainder of the corridor. The shared use path and sidewalk would be proposed continuously throughout the corridor. A curb and gutter would be provided to introduce a closed drainage system. The pros/cons were also reviewed. As noted above, this alternative will continue to be investigated further by the project team.
 - e. *Alternative 4* - The proposed typical section for Alternative 4 would include a 5-lane section, shared use path, and sidewalk between County Line Road and East Avenue. Alternative 4 would also include intersection improvements as suggested in all alternatives. The 5-lane section is not warranted through many segments of the corridor resulting in unnecessary impacts to adjacent ROW and environmental resources. The pros/cons were also reviewed. As noted above, this alternative is not recommended for further investigation.
13. **CAC members asked questions regarding the study process and the alternatives.**
- a. ***The Village of La Grange inquired as to how the closed drainage system impacts would be incorporated into the study. The Project Team responded that once a preferred alternative is selected, a comprehensive drainage plan will be prepared in accordance with the MWRD Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO). The team is in contact with MWRD regarding other issues and studies in the area.***
 - b. ***CCDOTH asked the Project Team to explain why they are evaluating Alternative 4 (a 5-lane roadway section throughout the entire project limits) if the public has already opposed this. The Project Team clarified that the 2050 traffic projections border the threshold that warrants a 5-lane section according to IDOT design standards. The Project Team is coordinating with IDOT and FHWA to prepare a Project Development Report, in which quantitative and qualitative evidence will demonstrate that the operational benefits of a 5-lane section do not justify the impacts to the environment and adjacent properties.***

MWRD Update

- 14. MWRD provided an update regarding ongoing studies in the area. There are three studies – located near Peck Avenue along Willow Springs Road, Bob-o-Link area in the City of Countryside, and the Kensington/Madison Triangle. MWRD received authority to hire American Surveying and Engineering, P.C. (ASE) and Knight to work on these drainage areas, reviewing what properties are affected, what areas are available for use,

and how both green and gray infrastructure can be used. There have been meetings with a few stakeholder groups thus far.

- a. ***The Village of Western Springs shared that the Ridgeland Subdivision has flooding issues which they believe are attributed to off-site flows south of Plainfield Road. They asked if the project team could look into this flooding condition and determine if it is possible to provide relief as part of the project study. The Village agreed to send the project team the analyses they have done to date to facilitate further coordination with CCDOTH and MWRD.***

Public Information Meeting & Next Steps

15. Metro Strategies provided a preview of the upcoming public information meeting, planned for April 14, 2021. It will be held virtually to accommodate current COVID-19 guidance on physical distancing and materials will be posted online one week before the live virtual meeting is held. The meeting will include a study overview, existing conditions review, survey results, alternatives development, and a Q&A from the public. There will be a call-in number for those who cannot or do not wish to join virtually. The Project Team would also be interested in leaving materials at community locations to accommodate those without access to technology and will be reaching out to CAC members separately to potentially hold materials at their village or city halls. Following the public information meeting, the Project Team will be refining alternatives in preparation for selecting the preferred alternative. The third CAC meeting will be held this fall to present and receive feedback on the refined alternatives.
16. CCDOTH concluded the meeting, emphasized the importance of the public information meeting, and requested help in promoting it. For any additional questions or comments please reach out to the Project Team via info@ImprovePlainfieldRoad.org