



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Illinois Division

3250 Executive Park Dr.
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 492-4640
www.fhwa.dot.gov/ildiv/index.htm

November 29, 2010

In Reply Refer To:
HPER-IL

Ms. Kathy Chernich
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
111 North Canal Street, Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606-7206

**Subject: Cooperating Agency Request, Interstate 80 Environmental Assessment from
Ridge Road to U.S. Route 30
Kendall, Grundy and Will Counties, Illinois**

Dear Ms. Chernich:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), has initiated an Environmental Assessment (EA) for improvements to the Interstate 80 (I-80) corridor between Ridge Road and U.S. Route 30 in Kendall, Grundy, and Will Counties, Illinois. The proposed project will evaluate long term reconstruction, safety, and capacity needs along the corridor.

The I-80 is a major east-west transportation route facilitating the movement of people and goods nationally, regionally, and locally. Regional growth and increased vehicular travel demands within the project corridor are creating potential safety and operational deficiencies along the roadway and at its interchanges with Interstates, arterial roadways, and collector streets. The facility deficiencies, including the insufficient capacity of the roadway and some interchanges to handle the increased travel demand, create traffic congestion and safety issues resulting in decreased mobility and accessibility. The I-80, a State designated truck route, also experiences heavy truck traffic volumes that contribute to traffic congestion and deteriorate the conditions of the roadway and bridges within the I-80 corridor.

The study area boundary encompasses approximately 16 miles along I-80 (see enclosed figure). The project study area is both culturally and economically diverse, and consists of a mixture of land uses including agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial with rural, suburban, and urban characteristics. The existing roadway crosses four waterways, including the Des Plaines River, and includes eight interchanges. It is anticipated the proposed improvements will be accommodated principally within the existing right-of-way.

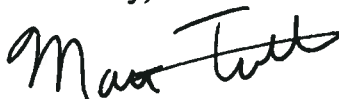


However, the project area could potentially be modified through the Context Sensitive Solution stakeholder involvement process and engineering analyses. The EA will address potential socioeconomic issues, displacements, and environmental impacts. A Stakeholder Involvement Plan has been developed and will be implemented to engage residents, business owners, and other project stakeholders interested in working with the project team to develop, build, and maintain cost-effective transportation improvements.

In accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations 1501.6 of the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, FHWA is required to invite agencies with jurisdiction by law or with special expertise with respect to environmental issues to be cooperating agencies. The FHWA hereby requests your agency to become a *cooperating agency* in the development of the EA for the I-80 improvements project. Please respond in writing to our office at the above listed address with an acceptance or denial of this invitation on or before December 30, 2010.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss in more detail the project or our agencies' respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this EA, please contact me at (217) 492-4625 or by e-mail at (Matt.Fuller@dot.gov).

Sincerely,

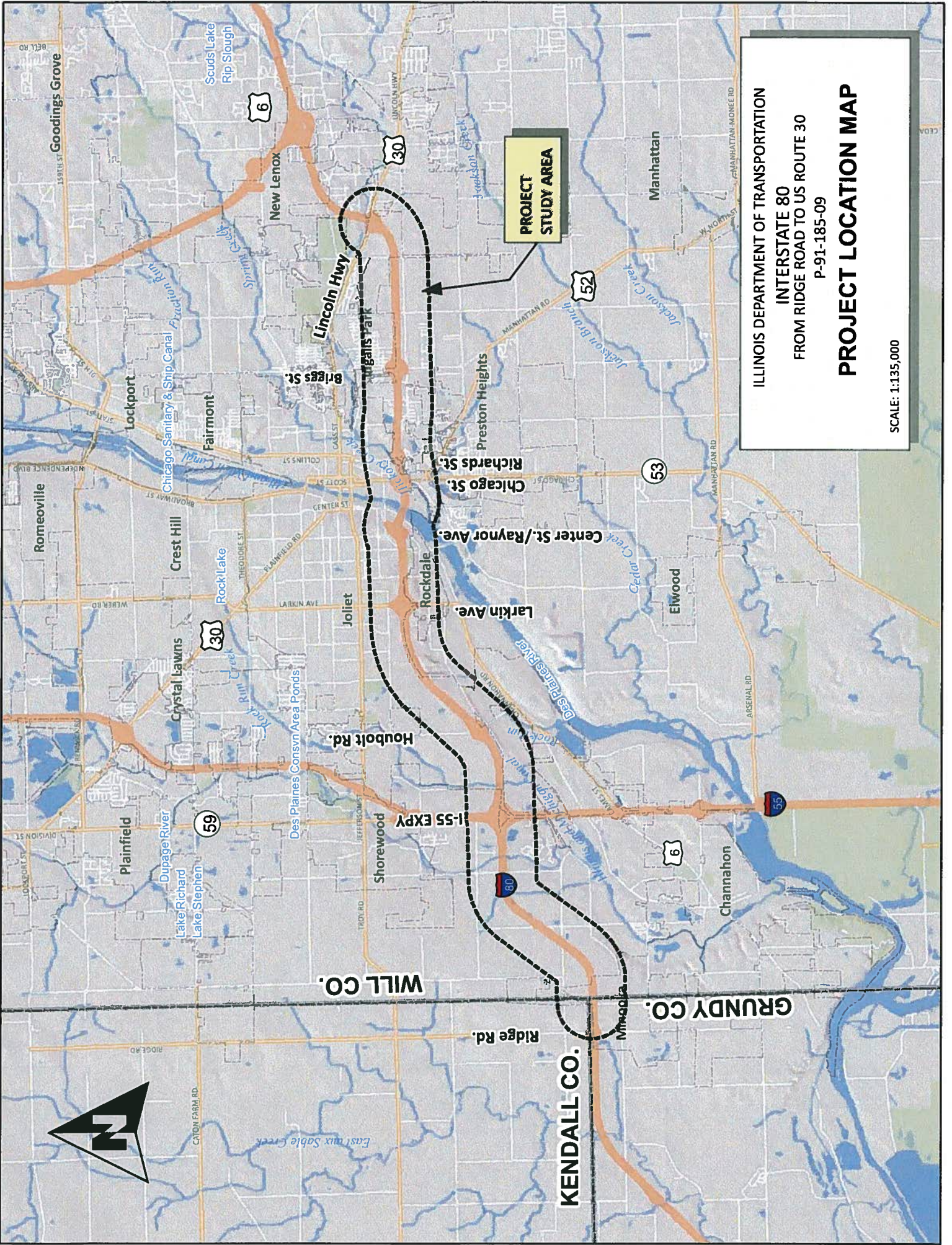


Matt Fuller
Environmental Programs Engineer

For: Norman R. Stoner, P.E.
Division Administrator

Enclosure

OTHER RECIPIENTS : MS. JANICE ENGEL
MS. ANNE HAAKER
MR. STEVE HAMER
MR. DAN HEACOCK
MS. TERRY SAVKO
MR. SCOTT STRIFFLER
MR. KENNETH WESTLAKE



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 INTERSTATE 80
 FROM RIDGE ROAD TO US ROUTE 30
 P-91-185-09

PROJECT LOCATION MAP

SCALE: 1:135,000

PROJECT STUDY AREA

WILL CO.

GRUNDY CO.

KENDALL CO.