



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: March 26, 2018

PROJECT: Interstate 80; Ridge Road to U.S. Route 30
Kendall, Grundy, and Will Counties
Project Coordination Meeting
Forest Preserve District of Will County

PARTICIPANTS: See attached Attendance Roster

Attendees introduced themselves to begin the meeting. IDOT began by providing an overview of the I-80 Long-Term Phase I Study. The scope of the I-80 Long-Term Study includes reconstruction of the interstate, the reconfiguration of several interchanges, realignment of the Des Plaines River bridge, and the addition and extension of auxiliary lanes along the corridor. These improvements are targeted towards improving safety along the corridor. Given funding availability and the fact that an I-80 add-lanes project is not included in CMAP's fiscally-constrained Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the addition of auxiliary lanes is the most that IDOT can do at the current time. The current auxiliary (3rd) lane from Center Street to Richards Street would be extended to Larkin Avenue on the west and to Briggs Street on the east with four lanes provided over the Des Plaines River (DPR) from Center Street to Chicago Street. An auxiliary lane is also proposed between I-55 and Houbolt Road in both directions. The proposed auxiliary lanes and interchange reconfigurations along I-80 will be designed to accommodate the addition of a future continuous through lane along the corridor.

The scope of the improvements was presented from west to east. Between Ridge Road and I-55, the interstate will be reconstructed with an open median, allowing the future third lane in each direction to be added in the median area. The I-55 interchange will be improved with a turbine ramp for the southbound to eastbound movement to address projected traffic. A two-lane ramp is proposed for the northbound to eastbound movement. The addition of the turbine ramp helps improve operations and weaving areas on both I-80 and I-55 by eliminating the low speed loop ramp with short weaving lengths at both ends of the ramp. These ramp improvements necessitate the auxiliary lane in the eastbound direction to Houbolt Road. A westbound auxiliary lane is also proposed between I-55 and Houbolt Road. Just east of I-55, the Rock Run Creek bridge would be improved. The Forest preserve District of Will County (FPDWC) has future plans for a trail along the creek. The bridge improvement would allow for an 18' wide shelf on the east side of the creek with a 9' vertical clearance, which was acceptable to the FPDWC for their future plans. IDOT said that this bridge is scheduled to be replaced in the IDOT 5 year plan. The Houbolt Road interchange would undergo some minor ramp and turning lane improvements

as part of this project, should the City of Joliet's diverging diamond interchange (DDI) project not be implemented. East of Houbolt Road, I-80 would remain as two lanes in each direction. At the Joliet Junction Trail (JJT), the mainline profile would be lowered approximately 5' feet to correct sideslope stability issues near the structure. The Larkin Avenue interchange would modify the westbound to northbound ramp from a free-flow condition to a traffic signal at the end of the ramp. This will allow for a controlled movement onto northbound Larkin and better access to the left turn lanes at McDonough Street. This ramp would also carry westbound to southbound traffic, hence eliminating the loop ramp in the northwest quadrant. This eliminates an existing weave area on westbound I-80 and southbound Larkin Avenue. East of Larkin, the mainline would be three lanes in each direction. The Center Street interchange would be simplified to a diamond type interchange with one loop ramp in the southwest quadrant to avoid the quarry/landfill area in the southeast quadrant. The new design provides all 8 movements between Center Street and I-80 improving on existing, which only provides 6 movements.

Four lanes in each direction are proposed over the DPR, which would be realigned to the north as part of the Refined North Alternative. This bridge has outlived its useful life and IDOT is spending millions in maintenance costs for the bridge. Tighter north and south alignments were considered, however, those alternatives had issues with design speed, superelevation on the DPR bridge, and maintenance of traffic conditions during construction. While the Refined North Alternative is being advanced as preferred, additional community outreach to the 28 potential residential relocations and the Ozinga plant will be performed by IDOT.

The Chicago Street interchange would be improved with a jughandle alternative as preferred. This includes a northbound to westbound ramp that traverses under I-80 and tees into Chicago Street from the east. This helps to address the large northbound to westbound movement that would have required a triple left turn lane. The Richards Street interchange will retain its current configuration with some minor ramp improvements. Removal of the Richards and/or Center Street interchanges was considered, however, that would only overburden the adjacent interchanges of Larkin Avenue and Chicago Street, and as such, was not carried forward.

The Briggs Street interchange would remain as a diamond type, with the eastbound ramps moved further north, to increase the spacing between these eastbound ramps intersection and the New Lenox Road intersection to the south. The Briggs Street bridge over I-80 would be reconstructed to a five-lane cross section based on the need for eastbound to northbound dual left turn lanes, even though Will County is proposing a three-lane cross section for Briggs both north and south of the interchange.

A portion of that project that was included in the previous Near-Term Phase I Study is currently in Phase II. This includes the rehabilitation of the mainline bridges at Chicago Street and the reconstruction of the mainline bridges over Gardner Street, Hickory Creek, Richards Street, and Rowell Avenue. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2019. This project will also include some rehabilitation work on the truss bridges over the Des Plaines River.

The Rock Run Greenway Trail along Houbolt Road was discussed next. As previously stated, IDOT's proposed improvements to this interchange would only occur if the DDI project is delayed or not implemented. IDOT's proposed improvements would only require the path to be

adjusted slightly at the north and south ramp intersections. The trail would be kept open during construction and maintained permanently along the west side of Houbolt Road. Given this level of involvement, a Temporary Occupancy will be the means of Section 4(f) processing for this resource. The FPDWC noted it is coordinating with the City of Joliet regarding their DDI project and its effects on the path in this area.

The JJT was discussed next. The interstate will be lowered in this area resulting in a 16'-3" vertical clearance over the trail. The existing three-span bridge would be replaced with a single-span bridge with wrap-around MSE wall abutments and slope walls. The result will be no flat areas in the vicinity of the underpass, discouraging the long-term passive use and occupancy of these areas. IDOT provided a table from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Illumination Engineering Society (IES), which indicates that for the proposed conditions of the underpass, lighting is not warranted. This would require a reflective surface for the walls of the underpass. The FPDWC stated that they feel that lighting should be provided since the current open median along I-80 will be closed under the proposed condition, resulting in a longer underpass. IDOT responded that this will have a much more open air feel given the proposed long single span and slope wall abutments. IDOT indicated that their Electrical Section is still reviewing the warrant and will respond back to the FPDWC with their final decision. If lighting is not warranted, IDOT will consider placing conduit beneath the bridge so that the FPDWC could add lighting or security cameras at a later date. Graffiti is also a concern, and IDOT noted that addressing graffiti issues would be the responsibility of the FPDWC. IDOT asked if there were any good detours that can be used for the trail during construction. The FPDWC responded that there were not, but they would be amenable to a closure of 1 to 2 weeks during the period of heaviest construction. They requested that advanced notification of the closure be provided so that they could get the word out to their patrons. They also requested that construction access be from I-80 and not by driving construction vehicles along the trail to access the site. The existing trail is asphalt. Permanent easements are also proposed at this location from the FPDWC since IDOT currently only has ROW along the immediate area of the two existing I-80 bridges over the trail. Given that the construction in this vicinity will last longer than 6 months, a *de minimis* 4(f) Evaluation will be processed for this resource.

IDOT asked if the FPDWC is proposing any trails along Midland Avenue as it crosses beneath I-80. The FPDWC responded that it is only an on-road route connecting to the I&M Trail, that is proposed along Midland and no off-road trails are being considered.

IDOT stated that they recently received concurrence on the preferred alternative from several environmental agencies as part of the NEPA/404 Merger process and they are currently preparing an Environmental Assessment for release later this summer with a signed FONSI targeted for fall of this year. Design Approval is anticipated in early 2019. IDOT noted that they are still working to identify funding for the I-80 at US 30 interchange for which plans are already complete. The Public Hearing is anticipated to be held in late summer this year.

The foregoing is the writer's understanding of the matters discussed and the conclusions reached in summary form. This will become part of the project record and is the basis upon which we will proceed. Concurrence is presumed unless the writer receives notice of additions or corrections.

By: Jarrod Cebulski

cc: Participants (via e-mail)



MEETING ATTENDANCE RECORD

PROJECT: I-80, RIDGE TO US 30

DATE: 3/26/18

TIME: 1:00 PM

PURPOSE: FPDWC COORDINATION

LOCATION: FPDWC

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