

# INTERSTATE 55 RECONSTRUCTION DESIGN STUDY & ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #1 FALL 2011

## NEW STUDY LOOKS AT IMPROVING I-55 AROUND SPRINGFIELD

If you have driven I-55 around Springfield during rush hour, then you have probably experienced frustrating delays and congestion. To address these traffic flow issues, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is conducting its new Interstate 55 (I-55) Reconstruction Study. This three-year study is looking at ways to relieve traffic congestion and improve public safety along I-55, from south of the Sixth Street interchange to north of the Sherman interchange.



IDOT will investigate ways to modernize I-55 so that it meets current design standards and accommodates future traffic. Its study team will evaluate the highway's capacity as well as that of its interchanges and then determine whether additional traffic lanes, interchange improvements and other enhancements are needed. As part of this process, the team will employ a planning method known as Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS), which helps generate cost-effective transportation solutions that respond to local needs and interests. Stakeholder and public involvement are critical to CSS since the insights gained aid in the development of alternatives that preserve and enhance the community's scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources while furthering public safety and mobility.

At the project's conclusion, the study team will recommend a preferred alternative that best balances costs and impacts with the needs of the community. IDOT will submit the study's findings to the Federal Highway Administration for final review and approval.

## STUDY ACTIVITIES & TIMELINE

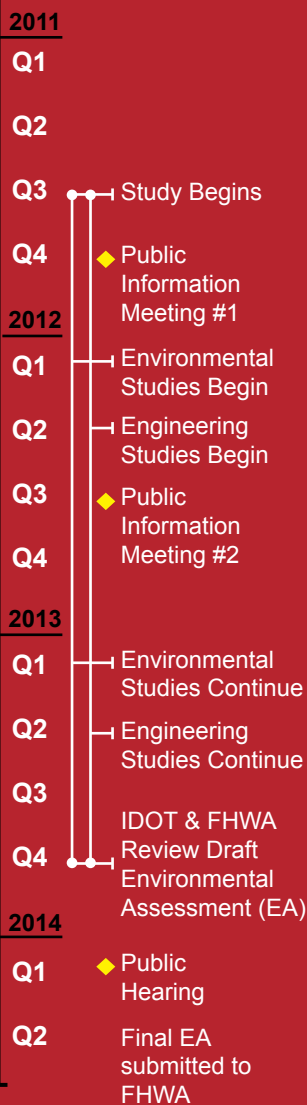
As an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Design Study, the new I-55 project has to follow federal guidelines under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). To comply with NEPA regulations, the study team will clarify the need for the project; examine ways to improve the interstate; develop possible improvements/ alternatives; and solicit input from local stakeholders and citizens. The team will also prepare an environmental document that evaluates the environmental consequences of proposed improvements. The final result will be a recommendation that improves public safety and mobility; enhances the surrounding community; and is eligible for federal funding.

The accompanying timeline shows study milestones, which are subject to change over the three-year planning period.

RECONSTRUCTION  
DESIGN STUDY & ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
SPRINGFIELD • SANGAMON COUNTY



### STUDY TIMELINE



"Q" refers to the quarter of the year in which the activity is scheduled to take place

FHWA refers to the Federal Highway Administration



**Illinois Department  
of Transportation**

Region 4, District 6  
126 East Ash  
Springfield, IL 62704

I-55 RECONSTRUCTION

## PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING - NOVEMBER 29

From 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 29, 2011 in the Ruby Conference Room of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, community members will be able to meet with representatives of IDOT and its engineering consultant, Hanson Professional Services, Inc., to learn about the study's activities. Although there will be no formal presentation, information on the project's background, traffic studies, public safety data and environmental efforts will be available. In addition, IDOT will be seeking direct input from the public to aid it in understanding the community's concerns and transportation needs. Meeting attendees will be asked to complete comment forms and, if interested, join the study's advisory committee. This group will advise IDOT throughout the study process on the community's views, issues and values.

Come anytime during the two-hour period. All are welcome and the meeting will be accessible to persons with a disability.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**Visit:** [www.i55springfield.com](http://www.i55springfield.com)

**Email:** [contact@i55springfield.com](mailto:contact@i55springfield.com)

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