



The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held the fifth series of Public Information Meetings (PIM#5) on July 19, 21, 26, 27, and 28, 2011. This document addresses the frequently asked general questions received from the public following the meetings. The responses pertaining to the specific twelve interest areas as identified on the PIM#5 comment form and exhibits is also included.

## **Summary of general comments received after PIM#5 and project team responses:**

### **1. The new routes should be chosen where they affect the fewest number of houses, businesses and property to minimize the project cost.**

Response: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that impacts to both the human and natural environment be assessed for proposed Federal projects. This requirement necessitates that potential impacts to homes, businesses, and properties be assessed, in addition to other resources. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), through NEPA, require these resources be studied to determine the relative impacts of proposed alternatives

Impacts to resources are avoided when feasible. When impacts cannot be avoided, they must be minimized and mitigated. The goal is not to avoid any one resource, but to minimize and balance the impacts to the community and environment. The preferred alternative is typically the alternative that results in the least environmental and community impacts among the alternatives considered.

### **2. Widen around existing US 51 while minimizing the impacts in order to keep costs low.**

In maintaining connectivity and continuity as identified in the Purpose and Need Statement, it would not be possible to develop a free-flow condition (limited access, no mainline stop signs or signals) through the larger towns in the study area. Alternatives through the towns that maintained free flow conditions were studied during the alternatives analysis but eliminated due to the high number of business displacements.

### **3. The roadway will not “fit” within the physical location as indicated.**

At this time, detailed geometric analysis is being completed to assure that the proposed alignments can be accommodated and to determine the right-of-way limits required for each alternative. This analysis will include the determination of needed slopes, retaining walls, grading, and other design items.

### **4. Many of the farm fields are proposed to be divided. Why isn't farm access identified like the side street access?**

Preliminary design information is used to identify access issues and farm impacts. This design information is currently being refined. Access changes to agricultural properties will be identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will be available for public review in 2013. Proposed agricultural access will also be presented for public review

at a Public Information Meeting (PIM) to be held in 2013. Public input from the DEIS review and PIM may be used to refine the proposed access in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

A period of time will pass between the completion of the EIS and the completion of roadway design plans. Land owners, land uses, and access needs may change over time and may need to be revised during the design phase of the project, after the completion of the EIS.

## **5. How can I get a copy of the maps you are using at the meetings?**

Click the Information tab, then the Documents tab on the project website to review exhibits shown at the public meetings.

### **Summary of public comments pertaining to specific interest areas as defined on the PIM#5 comment form and project team responses:**

**Interest Area 1:** Proposed US Route 51 at Yard Rd/Greenview Road (Centralia) - Need to maintain access to US 51 via frontage road or only need access to Old US 51?

Public comments received indicate that providing direct access to Greenview Church Road/Yard Road is not necessary as long as an alternative method of access is provided. Public input for a frontage road proposed from the Monsanto Plant north toward Greenview Church Road was not favored according to the majority of comments received. An intersection improvement of Walden Road and CR 100 northeast of the proposed interchange is proposed to provide improved access to the Greenview Golf Club, the industrial park, Greenview Christian Church, and residences east and south of US 51.

**Interest Area 2:** Proposed US Route 51 at 4th Street (Centralia) - US 51 bridge grade separation over 4th Street or does 4th Street need access to US 51?

4th Street carries local traffic, whereas IL 161 carries a mixture of local and non-local traffic; therefore, US 51 is proposed to be carried over 4th Street on an overpass bridge to maintain local traffic and emergency vehicle access on 4<sup>th</sup> Street. No US 51 access is proposed at 4<sup>th</sup> Street. IL 161 is an arterial street designed to carry higher traffic volumes and to connect to roadway facilities designed to carry traffic for longer distances, such as US 51. Direct access to US 51 will be provided at IL 161 and not 4th Street. This direct access will be provided by an interchange.

**Interest Area 3:** Proposed US Route 51 at College Road/Jolliff Bridge Road (Centralia) - At-grade intersection at College Road or bridge grade separation over College Road?

Very few public comments were received for Interest Area 3. To maintain the local use of College Road, US 51 will be carried over College Road on an overpass bridge. No direct access to US 51 will be provided at College Road.

**Interest Area 4:** Proposed US Route 51 at Jolliff Bridge Road and Felton Road/CR 1050 - Re-align roadways to go around US 51 or provide north/south connection across US 51?

Very few public comments were received for Interest Area 4. A traffic count will be performed to determine the travel needs of the intersection.

**Interest Area 5:** Proposed US Route 51 at Red Stripe Road - CSALT1 (Sandoval) - Is an intersection needed at Red Stripe Road?

Very few public comments were received for Interest Area 5. Red Stripe Road is currently not a through route to the west, beyond the water treatment facility. US 51 will be carried over Red Stripe Road via an overpass bridge to maintain access to the water treatment facility. No US 51 access from Red Stripe Road will be provided.

**Interest Area 6:** Proposed US Route 51 at Pope Road and Range Road - CSALT1 (Sandoval) - Is an intersection needed at Pope Road and Range Road?

Public comments received for this interest area indicated that the Pope Road and Range Road intersection is used by a larger percentage of trucks, and the intersection needs to be maintained. A traffic count will be performed to determine the travel needs of the intersection. The US 51 alignment and side road connectivity will be re-evaluated.

**Interest Area 7:** Proposed US Route 51 at Lincoln Street (Patoka) - Lincoln Street access to be maintained as right-in/right-out or cul-de-sac?

Due to the low traffic volume using Lincoln Street, the intersection will proceed as a cul-de-sac as proposed. Clinton Avenue directly south of Lincoln Street will remain a full access to US 51. Similarly, traffic can access US 51 from Oak Road, which is north of Lincoln Street.

**Interest Area 8:** Proposed US Route 51 at Historic National Road (Vandalia) - Grade separation and single quadrant access or full interchange? Or no access at all?

Historic National Road, while not a high volume road, is an un-marked state route. US 51 access from the Historic National Road will be provided via a single quadrant access. As development and traffic increases over time, the access can be upgraded.

**Interest Area 9:** Proposed US Route 51 at IL 185 (V Alt 1 - West Bypass, Vandalia) - Grade separation and two quadrant access or full interchange? Or no access at all?

IL 185 is a state route. IL 185 and US 51 will be grade separated, either by an interchange or by overpass bridge. Access needs between US 51 and IL 185 will be evaluated to meet the traffic demands while minimizing impacts to properties.

**Interest Area 10:** Proposed US Route 51 at IL 185 (V Alts 2 and 3, Vandalia) - Grade separation and single quadrant access or full interchange? Or no access at all?

IL 185 is a state route. IL 185 and US 51 will be grade separated, either by an interchange or by overpass bridge. Access needs between US 51 and IL 185 will be evaluated to meet the traffic demands while minimizing impacts to properties.

**Interest Area 11:** US Route 51 west of Vandalia Correctional Center (Vandalia) - Widening to west impacts all businesses and residences west of existing US 51.

Public comments received indicate opposition to the impacts of businesses and residences by widening to the west within Interest Area 11.

**Interest Area 12:** US Route 51 at CH 14 (Oconee) - Access at Oconee

Public comments regarding Oconee access were nearly split, with a slight majority favoring the change in access. The public also requested that CR 500N Road connect on both sides of the US 51 intersection. The need for CR 500N to connect on the east of US 51 will be further evaluated.