Next steps

After public comments are received and considered, a determination of the impacts is made. If, after completing the EA, it is evident there are no significant impacts associated with the project, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) will be prepared.

In addition to obtaining Design Approval, anticipated Summer 2013, contract plan preparation, construction cost estimates, and coordination for permits, utility relocation, and land acquisition will take place. There will also be on-going agency coordination and public outreach regarding the creation of community gateways, the building vibration monitoring program, and the finalization of the visual plan of the interchange and community green space opportunities.

We Want to Hear From You!

> Fill out a comment form
> Visit the Get Involved Section at www.circleinterchange.org to submit your comment via the project website
> You may also submit written comments to: Steve Schilke c/o Paul Schneider Illinois Department of Transportation Bureau of Programming 201 W. Center Court Schaumburg, IL 60196

Human Capital Investment

5,000 jobs will be supported with an infrastructure improvement of this size!

In collaboration with the Federal Highway Administration, the Department initiated a Highway Construction Career Training Program (HCCTP) in late 2009, in an effort to increase access to highway construction jobs for minorities, women and disavantaged individuals.

The goal of the program is to provide opportunities for further education and assistance to improve employability in Illinois’ highway construction industry. The program is administered by the Illinois Community College Board and implemented through 10 Community Colleges throughout the state.

Each Community College holds one to two training sessions per year in which individuals receive intensive training in highway construction-related skills, such as mathematics for the trades, job site readiness, carpentry, concrete flatwork, blueprint reading orientation, introduction to tools, lifttruck operation and OSHA 10 certification, etc.

Each Community College provides its graduates with assistance in obtaining placement in Illinois’ highway construction trade unions, apprenticeship programs and/or with the Department's highway construction contractors. For more information regarding the HCCTP please contact: Ronald R. Brown, HCCTP HCCTP Program Director, 227.785.8373 Ronald.knowlton@illinois.gov or Ted Brown, ICCB Director of Career Training Programs, 227.785.5003, ted.brown@illinois.gov.

Environmental Assessment (EA)

Released on June 12, 2013 for Public Comment

The Phase I Circle Interchange study, also referred to as a preliminary Engineering and Environmental Study, requires compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process. NEPA is a federal law that requires federally funded projects, such as the Circle Interchange, to evaluate a range of alternatives – including doing nothing, known as “No-Build” – and assess the impacts of those alternatives on the environment.

The results of the evaluation process, along with all of the findings from previous steps of the study, are reported in the Environmental Assessment (EA) report. The EA can be viewed at www.circleinterchange.org, local libraries located within the study area, and the Illinois Department of Transportation’s (Department) Schaumburg office. A complete listing of these locations can be found on the project website. Comments on the EA will be accepted through July 12, 2013.

After public comments are received and considered, a determination of the impacts is made. If, after completing the EA, it is evident there are no significant impacts associated with the project, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) will be prepared.
The project will start with reconstructing Dan Ryan & Kennedy expressways. They are constructible.

The final stage will include work along the I-290/Congress Parkway corridor; and, significant drainage improvements to accommodate some of the drainage issues currently experienced by the structure. Similar efforts were (pre-construction) monitoring will be performed for the environment as applicable for an urban environment and will be followed for the project. Pre-construction monitoring will occur as well as monitoring during the actual construction. Baseline monitoring program are:

- Obtain Building Information
- Perform Building Condition Surveys
- Install Monitors
- Incorporate Construction Monitoring Plan into Contract Documents
- Pre-construction Surveys
- Implement Construction Monitoring Plan

The preferred alternative includes changes in access to enhance safety. These include:

- Southbound traffic heading to Taylor Street will exit north of the Circle Interchange. Access to Taylor Street from southbound I-290 will be removed.
- Northbound traffic heading to Taylor Street will exit north of the Circle Interchange.
- Northbound traffic heading to one of the four downtown street ramps will exit I-90/94 south of the Circle Interchange and avoid mixing with traffic entering from I-290 and Congress. It will be physically separated from traffic in I-90/94 by a barrier wall.
- Access to the Morgan Street exit will only be available for traffic traveling from northbound I-90/94 to westbound I-290. The elimination of the weaving and merging in this area will enhance traffic flow and safety.

Safety Benefits
The preferred alternative includes changes in access to enhance safety. These include:

- Reduced emissions and improved air quality.
- Making the local street system pedestrian and bicycle friendly and enhancing the community were priorities.
- For the cross street bridges that will be reconstructed by the project, the Department will provide:
  - Bicycle lanes in accordance with the City’s master bike plan
  - Wide sidewalks (typically 50’) to improve pedestrian mobility.
  - Redesigned ramp entrances that are friendlier to pedestrians.

Aesthetics
Use of decorative/patterned form liners on the pedestrian walkway and bridge piers.

In the end, the preferred alternative greatly improves the safety, replaces aging and outdated bridges and infrastructure, and improves mobility through the interchange area.

The estimated construction cost is $420 million.

City Street/Community Benefits
- Reduced emissions and improved air quality.
- Making the local street system pedestrian and bicycle friendly and enhancing the community were priorities.
- For the cross street bridges that will be reconstructed by the project, the Department will provide:
  - Bicycle lanes in accordance with the City’s master bike plan
  - Wide sidewalks (typically 50’) to improve pedestrian mobility.
  - Redesigned ramp entrances that are friendlier to pedestrians.

The overall project incorporates significant drainage improvements including new storm sewer pipes and an underground stormwater detention facility to accommodate some of the drainage issues experienced at the interchange.

Over 5,000 local jobs will be supported with an infrastructure investment of this size, while benefiting the people living and working in the region, getting them to and from their destinations more quickly and efficiently.

Traffic Benefits
- Reduce bottlenecks on I-90/94 by going from 3 to 4 lanes in each direction through the Circle Interchange.
- Double the number of lanes on the two most congested ramps:
  - Northbound I-90/94 to eastbound I-290
  - Eastbound I-290 to northbound I-90/94

These lane additions, coupled with smoother curves and flatter profiles on all the ramps, will enhance mobility of vehicles and freight through the interchange.

The Preferred Alternative 7.1.0 includes the complete reconstruction of the Circle Interchange and includes features that collectively improve the safety and mobility; improve the bridges, roadway and drainage system; and minimizes environmental impacts while enhancing the community connectivity on the local street network surrounding the interchange.

Building Vibration Conference Held
Based on concerns raised by stakeholders, the Department conducted a Building Vibration Workshop on May 17, 2013. The purpose of the workshop was to con-

LAND ACQUISITION
Construction of the proposed improvements for the Circle Interchange will require land acquisition at some locations.

Approximately 0.1 acres of fee simple acquisition is required between Quincy and Jackson on the west side of the expressway.

Several temporary easements for construction are proposed throughout the project, totaling approximately 0.2 acres from 6 parcels.

The Land Acquisition process will follow the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, as amended, and the Department’s Land Acquisi-

tion Procedure Manual.

Funding & Construction
Reconstruction of the Circle Interchange will be a major undertaking and will take approximately 4 years to construct. The project is included in the Department’s FY 2014-2015 proposed Multi-

Modal Transportation Improvement Program of an estimated cost of $127.5 million (which includes bridge rehabilitation, interchange construction, engineering for contract plans and construc-

tion). Of that, $36.5 million is included in FY 2014 for bridge rehabilitation, interchange recon-

struction, engineering for contract plans and construction to start later this year.

The proposed construction sequencing will generally include three stages:

STAGE 1
The project will start with reconstructing east road bridges to make room for the improvements on the expressway below;

STAGE 2
The second stage will include work along the Congress Parkway corridor and;

STAGE 3
The final stage will include work along the Dan Ryan & Kennedy expressways.

Throughout construction, efforts will be made to minimize travel disruptions.

The result is that a noise wall can be installed if the benefited receptors vote to include one in the project. Currently, the Department is soliciting viewpoints from the benefited receptors as to the desire to install a noise wall as part of this project.

The deadline for returning “viewpoint form” has been extended to July 12, 2013.

Noise Study Conducted
A major concern expressed as the last Public Hearing was increased noise levels. As part of the Circle Interchange Study, the Department investigated the impact of traffic noise on the areas adjacent to the project. The study was conducted as a requirement of the NEPA process. The purpose of the noise study was to assess the potential impacts and identify feasible and reasonable noise abatement measures for the Circle Interchange Study.

The evaluation process included noise monitoring, Traffic Noise Model (TNM) for 2040 conditions and determine impacts and assess potential mitigation.

Evaluation Process

- Noise Monitoring
- Traffic Noise Model (TNM) for 2040 conditions
- Determine impacts and assess potential mitigation

For noise barriers to be considered, they must be both feasible and reasonable, meaning:
- They are constructible
- Achieve at least an 8 dBA reduction for at least one benefited receptor, and
- Be economically reasonable

Based on the noise studies, noise walls were found to be feasible and reasonable at six locations and have the potential to be implemented into the project. They are at:
- 770 Lofis
- St. Patrick’s School and Playground
- Green Street Lofis
- Residential multi-unit between Racine and Loomis, north side of I-290
- Outdoor tennis courts at UIC
- Outdoor Courtyard (Sangamon Street)

The overall project incorporates significant drainage improvements including new storm sewer pipes and an underground stormwater detention facility to accommodate some of the drainage issues experienced at the interchange.

In addition, the reconstruction of the exit ramp infrastructure will greatly improve transit mobility, which will move people and freight more safely and efficiently through the region.

Aesthetics
- Use of decorative/patterned form liners on the pedestrian walkway and bridge piers.
- Uplighting on select bridge piers.

In the end, the preferred alternative greatly improves the safety, replaces aging and outdated bridges and infrastructure, and improves mobility through the interchange area.

DID YOU KNOW?
The improvement will create a safer environment for the motoring public by reducing the predicted number of severe crashes by up to 25%.

www.circleinterchange.org