

# Wolf Road Reconstruction Phase I Study Fall 2022 Newsletter

## Study Overview

The Village of Indian Head Park, in conjunction with the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH), initiated a Preliminary Engineering and Environmental (Phase I) Study for 2.3 miles of Wolf Road from 79<sup>th</sup> Street to Plainfield Road. Wolf Road is a two-lane roadway under Cook County DOTH jurisdiction that primarily falls within the Villages of Indian Head Park and Burr Ridge. The City of Countryside and Village of Willow Springs are also located near the corridor.

### Study Goals:



**Accommodate the projected year 2050 travel demands** and improve operational efficiency along the corridor.



**Enhance connectivity and accommodations** for pedestrians and bicyclists.



**Safety improvements** for all users.



**Reconstruct and make updates** to the roadway, structures, intersections, and drainage infrastructure following current design standards.

The existing Wolf Road corridor does not meet the future needs of the communities it serves. If nothing is done to the Wolf Road corridor, the pavement surface, structure conditions, safety, and traffic operations will continue to deteriorate over time. There will also continue to be a lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to access local businesses, schools, parks, and other destinations along and adjacent to the corridor.



## Project Contacts

- Village of Indian Head Park
  - John DuRocher, Village Administrator
  - [jdurocher@indianheadpark-il.gov](mailto:jdurocher@indianheadpark-il.gov)
- Strand Associates, Inc.<sup>®</sup>
  - Matt Gazdzik, P.E., Project Engineer
  - [Wolf.Road.Study@strand.com](mailto:Wolf.Road.Study@strand.com)

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### Project History

The Village of Indian Head Park has had the objective of providing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along Wolf Road since the Village's Plan Commission approved the Wolf Road Pathway Study in the 1990's. Recently, the following steps have been taken to further this objective:

- **January 2019** - The Village's Board of Trustees began discussing their 2019 to 2020 goals at each of the monthly Board of Trustees meetings, including improving pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along major roads within the Village.
- **February 2019** - The Village's Board of Trustees approved the start of a Feasibility Study to evaluate adding shared-use path and sidewalk along Wolf Road between 72nd Street and Plainfield Road. The Feasibility Study was primarily funded through an Invest in Cook grant provided by Cook County DOTD. The Feasibility Study led to the creation of the Village's Master Sidewalk Plan.
- **July 2019** - The Village's Planning and Zoning Committee endorsed the Master Sidewalk Plan. The Village's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adopt the Master Sidewalk Plan.
- **August 2019** - The Village's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village and Cook County DOTD for a Phase I Study along Wolf Road between 72nd Street and Plainfield Road, including a sidewalk and shared-use path along Wolf Road.
- **January 2020** - The Village's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to amend the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village and Cook County DOTD for the Wolf Road Phase I Study. This amendment revised the limits of the Phase I Study to be between 79th Street and Plainfield Road, including a sidewalk and shared-use path.
- **September 2021** - The Village's Economic Development Committee discussed how sidewalk along Wolf Road would be beneficial for economic development.
- **Late 2021** - The results of a Village-wide community survey were published. Of the more than 260 respondents, approximately 72% supported bicycle infrastructure and sidewalks along Wolf Road.

### Initial Public Involvement Summary

Thank you to everyone who showed interest and/or participated in Wolf Road Reconstruction Phase I Study's initial public involvement events in April 2022. The Phase I Study Team, including the Village of Indian Head Park and the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways, appreciates the level of public engagement that the initial public involvement events garnered. The open house Public Information Meeting #1 was held at the Village of Indian Head Park's Village Hall on April 7, 2022, from 5 P.M. to 8 P.M. A Town Hall Meeting in the format of a question-and-answer session was also held at the Lyonsville Church on April 26, 2022, from 6 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. The open public comment period was available from April 7, 2022, through May 12, 2022. A summary of the comments received as well as responses are included in this newsletter.

### Initial Public Involvement Highlights

- 257 individuals, businesses, and organizations were personally invited to Public Information Meeting #1
- 102 individuals, businesses, and organizations attended Public Information Meeting #1
- 170 individuals, businesses, and organizations attended the Town Hall Meeting
- 332 comments were submitted on physical comment forms, through an electronic comment form, or to the [Wolf.Road.Study@strand.com](mailto:Wolf.Road.Study@strand.com) email address
- 3 petitions were submitted:
  - *Petition to Oppose Expansion of Wolf Road in Indian Head Park, Illinois* (744 signatures)
  - *Petition for Increased Safety Along Wolf Road and No to 5 Lanes* (11 signatures)
  - *Petition for Increased Safety Along Wolf Road* (9 signatures)

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### Comment Summaries and Responses

The 332 comments that were submitted during the open public comment period were filtered into 26 “comment categories”, which created a manageable way for comments to be summarized and responded to. Individual comments often discussed multiple items and were included in the count of all comment categories that were applicable to it.

The Phase I Study Team’s responses to comments received in the 26 comment categories are provided below. The number of comments and percentage of overall comments that discussed each item are noted for each comment category.

Comments that made requests for more information regarding specific elements of the project not addressed as part of this newsletter were responded to on an individual basis in response letters.

Number	Comment Category	Number of Comments	Percentage of Comments
1	Preliminary Alternative 1 (5 Lane Typical Section) Concerns	114	34%
2	Safety (Pedestrian and/or Vehicle) Concerns	101	30%
3	Positive Comments About Sidewalk	95	29%
4	Landscaping, Vegetation, and/or Wildlife Concerns	82	25%
5	General Opposition to Project (“Do Nothing”)	78	23%
6	Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section) Concerns	63	19%
7	Truck Traffic Concerns	59	18%
8	Property Value Concerns	54	16%
9	Positive Comments About Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section)	46	14%
10	Drainage Concerns	44	13%
11	Shared-Use Path Concerns	38	11%
12	Positive Comments About a Shared-Use Path	28	8%
13	Requests for Additional Alternatives to be Considered	28	8%
14	Environmental, Air Quality, Noise, and Wetland Concerns	25	8%
15	Requests for More Information	18	5%
16	Requests to Only Resurface Wolf Road with No Additional Improvements	18	5%
17	Sidewalk Concerns	15	5%
18	General Support of Project	12	4%
19	Privacy Concerns	12	4%
20	Two-Way Left Turn Lane Concerns	9	3%
21	Requests for Fences to be Permitted along Wolf Road	6	2%
22	Positive Comments About the Two-Way Left Turn Lane	5	2%
23	Requests for Additional Traffic Signals	4	1%
24	Speed Limit Concerns	3	<1%
25	Requests for On-Street Bike Lanes	2	<1%
26	Positive Comment About Preliminary Alternative 1 (5 Lane Typical Section)	1	<1%



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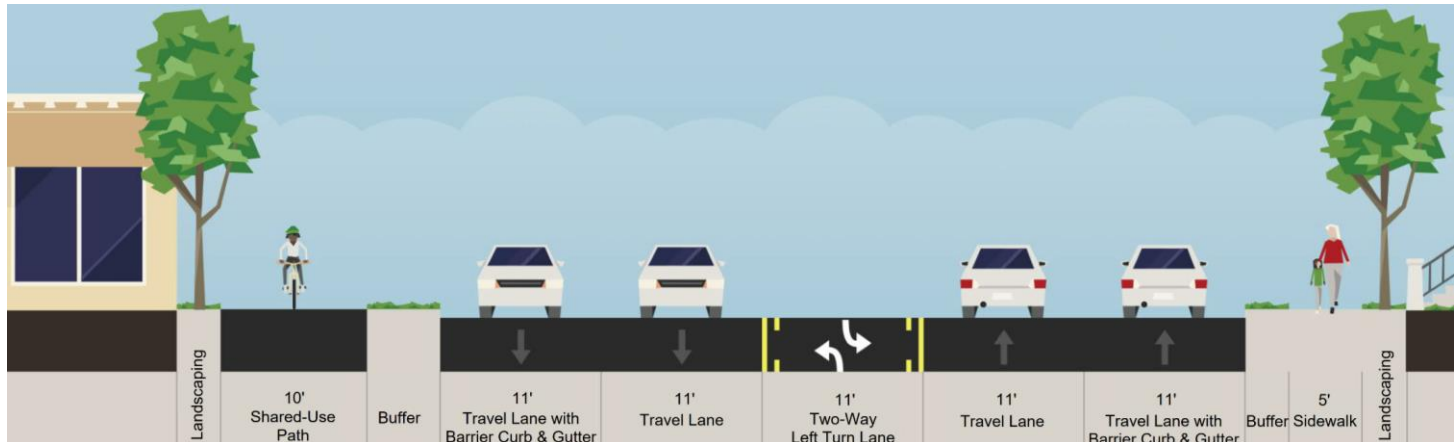
...Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)

## Proposed Alternatives

### Preliminary Alternative 1 (5 Lane Typical Section)

*Comment Categories 1 and 26*

This Preliminary Alternative was evaluated because the segment of Wolf Road between the I-294 Northbound Off-Ramp and Plainfield Road meets Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Bureau of Local Roads and Streets Manual design criteria warranting 2 travel lanes in each direction in the design year of 2050. The 5 Lane Typical Section consists of 2 Northbound travel lanes, 2 Southbound travel lanes, a center Two Way Left Turn Lane, and curb and gutter.



This Preliminary Alternative generated substantial opposition from those who attended the public involvement events and/or submitted comments on the Phase I Study. Due to this opposition and satisfactory traffic analysis results for Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section), the Phase I Study team will recommend to IDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that this Preliminary Alternative not be carried forward as the Preferred Alternative. IDOT and FHWA will make the final determination and will grant a design variance if they concur with the recommendation.

### Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section)

*Comment Categories 6 and 9*

Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section) was evaluated as another option to Preliminary Alternative 1 (5 Lane Typical Section). Although the segment of Wolf Road between the I-294 Northbound Off-Ramp and Plainfield Road meets IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets design criteria warranting 2 travel lanes in each direction in the design year of 2050, the future Wolf Road traffic projections are only slightly above the minimum design criteria warrants. In addition, the segment of Wolf Road between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and the I-294 Northbound Off-Ramp only meets the design criteria warrants for 1 travel lane in each direction. The 3 Lane Typical Section consists of 1 Northbound travel lane, 1 Southbound travel lane, a center Two Way Left Turn Lane, and curb and gutter. It was reasonable to evaluate this Preliminary Alternative as a consistent 3 Lane Typical Section from 79<sup>th</sup> Street to Plainfield Road. A 3 Lane Typical Section exists along Wolf Road north of this project's limit at Plainfield Road.

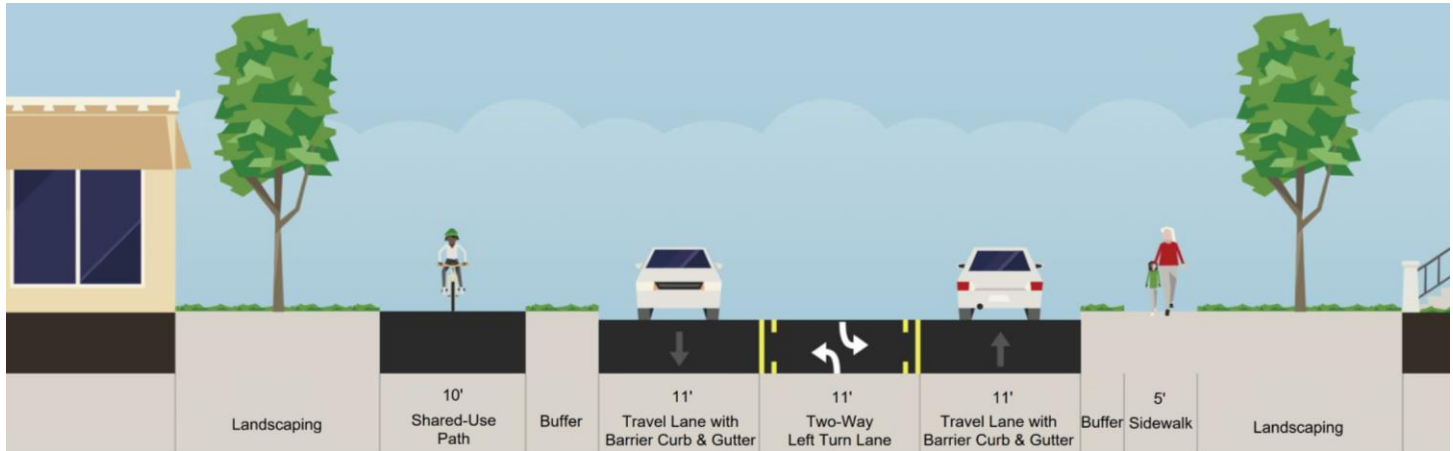
# Wolf Road Reconstruction Phase I Study Fall 2022 Newsletter

...Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)

## Proposed Alternatives (Continued)

### Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section) (Continued)

Comment Categories 6 and 9



Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section) meets the purpose and need for this project by providing improved operational efficiency and safety along the Wolf Road corridor and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. The Wolf Road corridor total crash rate and corridor injury crash rate exceed statewide averages, so the inclusion of curb and gutter and a Two-Way Left Turn Lane will improve safety, as discussed on page 6.

### General Opposition to Project ("Do Nothing")

Comment Category 5

The purpose of this project is to provide improved operational efficiency and safety along the Wolf Road corridor and enhance pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Existing Wolf Road does not meet the future needs of the surrounding communities (Village of Indian Head Park, Village of Burr Ridge, City of Countryside, Village of Willow Springs). Within the corridor, existing pavement needs to be rehabilitated or replaced, existing structures need to be rehabilitated or replaced, drainage needs to be improved, and existing intersections need to be upgraded to handle future traffic volumes. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations are not provided for much of the corridor. The Wolf Road corridor crash history was analyzed, and it was determined that the corridor total crash rate and corridor injury crash rate exceed statewide averages. Cook County's 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan has policy goals to prioritize transportation alternatives, including walking and biking, along their routes. Given the presence of local businesses, schools, parks, and other destinations along and adjacent to the Wolf Road corridor, the Village of Indian Head Park and the County believe that improving pedestrian and bicycle access through this corridor will provide long-term benefits to the community.

If nothing is done to the Wolf Road corridor, the pavement surface, structure conditions, safety, and traffic operations will continue to deteriorate over time. There will also continue to be a lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to access local businesses, schools, parks, and other destinations along and adjacent to the corridor.

### Requests for Additional Alternatives to be Considered

Comment Category 13

Although only two Preliminary Alternatives were shared at Public Information Meeting #1 (Alternative 1: 5 Lane Typical Section and Alternative 2: 3 Lane Typical Section), various other project elements and sub-Alternatives were considered throughout the Alternatives identification stage of the process. Items that were not included in the Preliminary Alternatives presented at Public Information Meeting #1 were determined to not be feasible to be carried forward or did not meet the project's purpose and need. As part of the Corridor Advisory Committee process, the Range of Alternatives that were considered by the Study Team but eliminated will be shared. Additional Preliminary Alternatives that meet the project's purpose and need may be identified, evaluated, and shared with the public.

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...Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)

### Proposed Alternatives (Continued)

#### Requests to Only Resurface Wolf Road with No Additional Improvements

*Comment Category 16*

The purpose of this project is to provide improved operational efficiency and safety along the Wolf Road corridor and enhance pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. The existing Wolf Road corridor does not meet the future needs of the surrounding communities (Village of Indian Head Park, Village of Burr Ridge, City of Countryside, Village of Willow Springs). Within the corridor, existing pavement needs to be rehabilitated or replaced, existing structures need to be rehabilitated or replaced, drainage needs to be improved, and existing intersections need to be upgraded to handle future traffic volumes. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations are not provided for much of the corridor. Only resurfacing Wolf Road would provide a short-term solution to address the pavement condition only but not address the long-term corridor needs. The Wolf Road pavement, surface and underlying materials, has exceeded its useful life. Resurfacing the pavement surface will only temporarily address its condition and issues will return within a few years. Since no significant improvements have been made to the roadway since its original construction, reconstruction is recommended.



**Wolf Road pavement conditions necessitate full reconstruction for better long-term performance.**



**Pedestrian accommodations are not consistently provided along Wolf Road.**

#### Two-Way Left Turn Lane Concerns

*Comment Categories 20 and 22*

The IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets Manual and IDOT Bureau of Design and Environment Manual provide guidance on when it is advantageous to include a Two-Way Left Turn Lane along a corridor. These include corridors that are two-lane undivided urban arterials, have projected traffic volumes between 5,000 and 14,000 Average Daily Traffic, and have design speeds between 25 and 45 mph. The Wolf Road corridor meets this guidance, indicating that it will benefit from the inclusion of this element.

The IDOT guidance also recommends providing a Two-Way Left Turn Lane when there are 30 to 60 driveways or side streets per mile, or in areas that generate substantial mid-block left turns. Between 79th Street and Joliet Road, there are 33 driveways per mile (46 driveways over 1.4 miles). Between Joliet Road and Plainfield Road, there are 10 minor, offset intersections into residential neighborhoods that generate substantial mid-block left turns.

A Two-Way Left Turn Lane was included in the Preliminary Alternatives because it increases safety, improves operational efficiency, and reduces rear-end collisions by providing space for left turning vehicles away from the through lanes. It also brings continuity to the Wolf Road corridor, since a Two-Way Left Turn Lane is present along Wolf Road north of Plainfield Road.



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...Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

Comment Categories 3, 11, 12, 17, and 25

One of the key elements of the Phase I Study is the inclusion of a sidewalk and a shared-use path within the project limits to meet the project's purpose and need and to increase overall accessibility and safety throughout the area. Cook County's 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan has policy goals to prioritize transportation alternatives, including walking and biking, along their routes. Additionally, Cook County has established a "Complete Streets" Policy with similar established multi-modal transportation goals. Therefore, with the presence of schools, parks, and other bicycle/pedestrian friendly destinations along the corridor, an off-road sidewalk and shared-use path that accommodates pedestrians and bicyclists is included in the Preliminary Alternatives for the entire length of the corridor. The sidewalk and shared-use path will be separated from the back of curb and gutter with minimum landscaped buffers following IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets Manual criteria, which are 3 feet for sidewalks and 5 feet for shared-use paths. Where feasible, the sidewalk and shared-use path may be located further than the minimum buffers away from the roadway. The sidewalk and shared-use path will connect to existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along the corridor.

#### Shared-Use Path

Currently, bicyclists must ride on the roadway, where there is minimal shoulder width to accommodate them. Sidewalks are intermittently present between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and Plainfield Road for pedestrians, but these existing sidewalks are not intended for bicycle use. In gap areas between sections of existing sidewalk, pedestrians must walk on the roadway. The proposed shared-use path will connect to existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian accommodations adjacent to the project limits. The shared-use path will allow residents from adjacent neighborhoods and other users to access public destinations located along the corridor, including Indian Head Park's Heritage Center Library, Pleasant Dale Park District facilities, and the Pleasantdale Middle School. Future shared-use paths are proposed along Plainfield Road at Wolf Road and along Joliet Road east of Wolf Road.

The addition of on-street bike lanes along Wolf Road was evaluated as part of the Phase I Study. Based on the IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets Manual, a minimum of 6 feet of pavement (4-foot-wide bike lane with a 2-foot-wide buffer) would be required in both the northbound and southbound directions. This would increase the overall roadway footprint to be larger than a 10-foot-wide off-road shared-use path on one side of the roadway. Additionally, shared-use paths are safer for inexperienced bicyclists and children when compared to on-street bike lanes, as they provide off-road accommodations separate from vehicular traffic. For these reasons, this element was not further evaluated.



Current roadway shoulder conditions along Wolf Road.

#### Sidewalk

Currently, sidewalks are intermittently present between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and Plainfield Road for pedestrians. In gap areas between sections of existing sidewalk, pedestrians must walk on the roadway. The proposed sidewalk will connect to existing and planned pedestrian accommodations adjacent to the project limits. The sidewalk will allow residents from adjacent neighborhoods and other users to access public destinations located along the corridor, including Indian Head Park's Heritage Center Library, Pleasant Dale Park District facilities, and the Pleasantdale Middle School.

Portions of the existing sidewalk along Wolf Road may not be compatible with the proposed roadway geometry or may not meet current Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. In those situations, the existing sidewalk will be removed and reconstructed in a compatible location to current standards.



Current sidewalk conditions along Wolf Road.

# Wolf Road Reconstruction Phase I Study Fall 2022 Newsletter

...Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)

## Safety

Comment Categories 2, 23, and 24

### Roadway Improvements

During the Phase I Study's analysis of current and future traffic capacity, traffic signal warrant criteria were evaluated at three unsignalized intersections: 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, the I-294 Southbound On-Ramp, and the I-294 Northbound Off-Ramp. None of the evaluated locations met the minimum thresholds to warrant a new traffic signal.

Marked pedestrian crossings are included at the three signalized intersections within the corridor: 79th Street, Joliet Road, and Plainfield Road. Additional crossings are proposed at several unsignalized locations along the corridor and were selected based on geometric compatibility and proximity to other crossings. The specifics of their advanced warning signage, pavement markings, and potential flashing warning beacons will be finalized later in the Phase I Study or during the Phase II portion of this project.

The inclusion of barrier curb and gutter along the roadway will help better contain errant vehicles from leaving the roadway than the current narrow shoulders and open ditches do. The speed limit along Wolf Road is proposed to be reduced from 40 mph to 35 mph between 79th Street and Joliet Road, further contributing to traffic calming initiatives along the corridor. The proposed Two-Way Left Turn Lane will also increase safety, improve operational efficiency, and reduce rear-end collisions by providing space for left turning vehicles away from the through lanes.

The Wolf Road corridor crash history was analyzed, and it was determined that the corridor total crash rate and corridor injury crash rate exceed statewide averages. The corridor total crash rate is approximately 1.5 times higher than the statewide total crash rate. The corridor injury crash rate is also higher than the statewide injury crash rate. It is anticipated that these trends will continue in the future with a projected traffic increase over time.

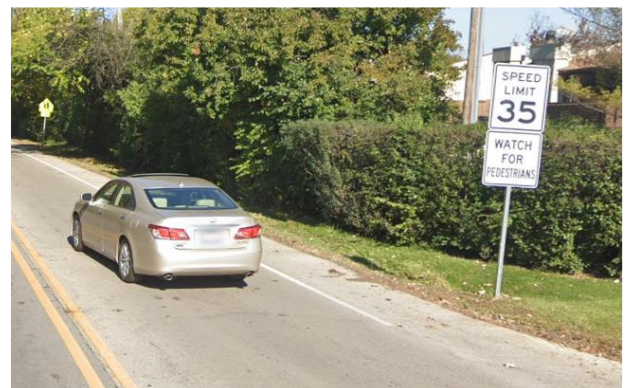
### Speed Limit

The speed limit along Wolf Road from 79th Street to Joliet Road is proposed to be reduced from 40 mph to 35 mph. The speed limit along Wolf Road from Joliet Road to Plainfield Road will remain unchanged at 35 mph. By reducing the speed limit between 79th Street and Joliet Road, consistency will be brought to the corridor in conjunction with these proposed improvements. North of Plainfield Road, where a 3 Lane Typical Section with curb and gutter is already present, the speed limit is 35 mph. This corridor speed limit is consistent with IDOT design criteria for roadways of this type.

A speed limit reduction is proposed as part of the overall Wolf Road improvements, which are anticipated to include full roadway reconstruction, conversion from a rural cross section to an urban cross section with curb and gutter, the addition of a Two-Way Left-Turn Lane, off-road pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, and other geometric improvements. When a cross section is changed from rural to urban, the corridor often feels more constrained due to the presence of curb and gutter and adjacent pedestrian accommodations. These perceived constraints typically result in slower moving traffic.



**Marked pedestrian crossings are proposed at signalized intersections and other select mid-block locations.**



**The speed limit between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and Joliet Road is proposed to be reduced to 35 mph, matching the current speed limit between Joliet Road and Plainfield Road.**



# Wolf Road Reconstruction Phase I Study Fall 2022 Newsletter

...Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)

## Miscellaneous Comments and/or Concerns

### Landscaping, Vegetation, and/or Wildlife

*Comment Category 4*

Impacts to trees, fences, and other roadside objects will be determined and mitigated after the Preferred Alternative is selected. Impacted trees will be replaced in accordance with IDOT's Design and Environment Policy Memo 18: Preservation and Replacement of Trees. This guidance specifies that impacted trees are replaced at a minimum 1:1 ratio.

New trees will be planted in the same general location as trees that are impacted. The specifics of the proposed landscaping plans will be further established and refined in Phase II Engineering. Cook County and the Village of Indian Head Park are committed to reducing the impacts of the proposed roadway improvements using landscaping. Cook County will be responsible for the replacement of impacted trees, but the Village has committed the use of Village funds to provide landscaping improvements above and beyond what Cook County will provide within its municipal limits.

It is anticipated that the Village of Indian Head Park will establish a Landscaping Advisory Committee after Phase I Study completion to help guide this element of this project. The Phase I Study Team will discuss with the Village of Burr Ridge and other municipalities within the study limits if they desire additional landscaping improvements in a similar manner.



**Current landscaping conditions along Wolf Road.**



**Wolf Road does not currently have truck traffic restrictions.**

### Truck Traffic

*Comment Category 7*

Wolf Road does not currently have truck traffic restrictions. Since Wolf Road is an arterial route between I-294 and Plainfield Road and collector route south of I-294, it serves as a route to deliver goods and provide connectivity to state routes. Arterial and collector routes are typically designed to accommodate passenger vehicles, buses, and trucks. As part of these improvements, Cook County cannot implement any truck traffic restrictions on roadways under their jurisdiction. Converting an existing 2 lane roadway to a 3-lane roadway with a center Two Way Left Turn Lane is not anticipated to cause any appreciable differences in traffic volumes (including truck traffic), beyond what is already projected for the 2050 design year by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, the Chicagoland region's planning organization. Similar projections are anticipated even in a "no-build" scenario.

Illinois state law requires that reasonable access be provided for trucks to travel off the National Highway Freight Network (which includes I-294 and I-55) for the purposes of food, fuel, repair, rest, and to points of loading and unloading. This further prohibits the ability to restrict truck traffic along Wolf Road.

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...Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)

## Miscellaneous Comments and/or Concerns (Continued)

### Property Values

*Comment Category 8*

Some of the comments submitted questioned whether the proposed improvements would have an impact on individual property values. Proximity to a roadway or other transportation infrastructure is one of several factors, including zoning, land-use planning, desirability, and economic conditions which may impact property values. Given that these factors influence property values, it is difficult to ascertain the impact that a specific factor may have on the value of an individual property. This project will provide a safer travel environment, improve accessibility, and enhance the quality of life within the community by providing better mobility for residents and commuters within the project area.

Planning organizations, public works associations, and the American Association of Retired Persons have found that communities with pedestrian accommodations add to the walkability and livability of those communities, making them more desirable than communities without those accommodations. According to the National Association of Home Builders, trails and paths for walking and biking consistently remain one of the most sought-after community amenities by prospective homeowners. Also, an improved pedestrian and bicycle network in and around Indian Head Park, Burr Ridge, Countryside, and Willow Springs will allow more people to visit local businesses, schools, parks, and other destinations along and adjacent to the corridor.

### Privacy

*Comment Categories 19 and 21*

The Phase I Study Team acknowledges and is sensitive to concerns regarding privacy as they relate to the potential expansion of the Wolf Road footprint and potential impacts to existing landscaping, which provides a natural screening barrier between the roadway and existing residential properties in portions of the corridor. While specific potential impacts to these natural barriers are not yet known, the Phase I Study Team will have more information to share regarding this at future public information meetings. See Page 9 for additional information on the plan to replace impacted trees and landscaping.

The Village of Indian Head Park's ordinances currently do not permit the broad use of fences within their municipal limits. As the specific impacts to properties along the Wolf Road corridor are further refined, the Village may consider allowing fences to help mitigate some of the potential impacts of the proposed improvements.

### Drainage

*Comment Category 10*

Drainage improvements, including switching from open drainage ditches to a closed drainage system with curb and gutter and storm sewers, are included in this project for the entire corridor. The proposed drainage system will be designed in accordance with the IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets Manual, the IDOT Drainage Manual, and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) standards. The proposed drainage system will be reviewed by Cook County, IDOT, and MWRD as applicable.

Curb and gutter is proposed to collect roadway runoff and direct it to underground storm sewer pipes that would discharge the water at the existing outlet locations. Additional flow, due to added impervious pavement, would be detained in the pipes and released at the same rate as existing conditions. The inclusion of curb and gutter and storm sewer reduces potential land acquisition needs over open ditches, which would have to be expanded from their current sizes to handle increased capacity.



**Current open drainage ditch system along Wolf Road.**

# Wolf Road Reconstruction Phase I Study

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...*Comment Summaries and Responses (Continued)*

### **Miscellaneous Comments and/or Concerns (Continued)**

#### **Environmental, Air Quality, Noise, and Wetland**

*Comment Category 14*

The Phase I Study Team, along with IDOT, is currently identifying environmental resources along the corridor. Once the Preferred Alternative is selected, impacts to the environmental resources will be identified and shared with the public.

This Phase I Study follows the process outlined by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), so it remains eligible for the potential of federal funds to help pay for future engineering phases and/or construction. The NEPA process aims to first avoid, then minimize, then mitigate environmental impacts a project will have on the surrounding environment.

As part of the NEPA process, the project will be reviewed by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the Chicagoland region's planning organization, to determine if the proposed improvements conform with the Agency's Transportation Improvement Program, of which air quality is a conformity evaluation criteria. CMAP will review and ultimately determine whether the proposed improvements are acceptable from an air quality perspective.

The IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets manual provides guidance on when noise analyses are required for projects of this type. The addition of through traffic lanes is an improvement that necessitates a noise analysis to compare existing noise levels to anticipated future noise levels at sensitive locations along a corridor. Although Preliminary Alternative 1 (5 Lane Typical Section) does add through traffic lanes, the Phase I Study Team will recommend to IDOT and FHWA that it not be carried forward as the Preferred Alternative. Preliminary Alternative 2 (3 Lane Typical Section) does not add through traffic lanes. Therefore, a noise analysis will not be prepared for this project.

It is anticipated that some wetlands will be impacted as a result of the proposed improvements. Once the Preferred Alternative is selected, impacts to wetlands will be identified and shared with the public. Impacted wetlands will be mitigated as part of the proposed improvements.

#### **Requests for More Information**

*Comment Category 15*

As the Phase I Study advances and impacts are identified, additional information will be shared with the public. It will be posted on a project specific website and shared at the Corridor Advisory Committee and Public Information Meetings.

Comments that made requests for more information regarding specific elements of the project not addressed as part of this newsletter were responded to on an individual basis in response letters.

#### **General Support of Project**

*Comment Category 18*

Thank you for your support of the Phase I Study. The purpose of this project is to provide improved operational efficiency and safety along the Wolf Road corridor and enhance pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Existing Wolf Road does not meet the future needs of the surrounding communities. If nothing is done to the Wolf Road corridor, the pavement surface, structure conditions, safety, and traffic operations will continue to deteriorate over time. There will also continue to be a lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to access local businesses, schools, parks, and other destinations along and adjacent to the corridor.

### **Next Steps**

As the Phase I Study advances, the Phase I Study Team will enhance public involvement by preparing a Public Involvement Plan (PIP), establishing a Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC), and hosting additional public information meetings. The PIP is a document that identifies how the public involvement portion of a project will be accomplished. It includes components such as stakeholder identification, how those stakeholders will be interacted with, and what meeting types will be held. The PIP will be reviewed and approved by IDOT. The CAC is a group that consists of broad representation from corridor stakeholders, including the IDOT and other government agencies, municipalities, school districts, fire protection districts, members of the general public, and others. Each representative of the CAC is responsible for bringing the perspective of their stakeholder group to the Committee meetings. The Phase I Study Team anticipates having more information to share regarding the PIP and CAC in early 2023.

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