

US 20 at Shales Parkway Phase I Engineering Study

P-91-027-20

Community Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary December 9, 2021 from 9:30AM – 11:30AM

SUMMARY

The first Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting for the US 20 at Shales Parkway Study was held virtually on Thursday, December 9 from 9:30AM-11:30AM. Study area residents and representatives of various local agencies and businesses were in attendance to share their concerns with existing transportation, environmental and community related issues within the study area. The meeting consisted of introductions of each member and a live presentation, followed by time for questions and a large group discussion. CAG members were asked to share their concerns and experiences with everyone.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

- The PowerPoint presentation was given by staff members from RS&H and Metro Strategies. The presentation included details on the study focus and study process components. It also included an overview of the study area which contains routes under IDOT jurisdiction as well as local roads under the jurisdiction of Cook County and the City of Elgin.
- An overview of a CAG and the roles and goals for this CAG specifically were presented.
- The CAG is one of the tools utilized in the Public Outreach process for stakeholder involvement and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS). Other tools for stakeholder involvement include public meetings and hearings, a study website, media outreach, newsletters and small group meetings. The project website serves as a resource for the public to access updates on the progress of the study.
- Existing conditions within the study area were presented including roadway classifications, speed limits, daily average traffic counts, queues and operations or Level of Service (LOS). Projected future conditions were also reviewed for anticipated traffic and operations.
- Crash history statistics, including crash and injury types, for the US 20 and Shales Parkway intersection were presented.
- A summary of the results and comments obtained from the first virtual public outreach were presented. The most frequently recurring comments received during the outreach period included the following concerns: safety, homeowner impacts and truck traffic. The first virtual public outreach was open to the public on the study's website from September 29 through October 20, 2021.

PROJECT TEAM

Illinois Department of Transportation

Lori Brown
Abbas Divani
Tania Muller
Kimberly Murphy
Sagar Sonar

RS&H:

Anne Hevrdejs
Ashley Hochstatter
Richard Hoffman
Arielle Malinowski

Metro Strategies Group:

Kristen Robinson
Tammy Wierciak

Quigg Engineering:

Caroline Levenda

ATTENDEES

Residents:

John Beasley
Gregory Holland
Marvin Kramer
Faiyaz Khan
Doug Nommisto
Joli Sumoski
Gregory Winer

Agencies & Businesses:

Robb Cagann (Elgin Fire Department)
Marc Mylott (City of Elgin)
Tara Orbon (CCDOTH)
Ron Rudd (City of Elgin)
Kevin Senne (Elgin Police Department)
David Waden (City of Elgin)
Mark Whaley (Elgin Police Department)

- A question-and-answer session was held as well as a large group discussion. The comments and questions received during those periods are described in greater detail below.
- Before concluding the meeting, information regarding next steps in the study was presented which will consist of the development of the problem and purpose and need statements. The study schedule was also shared, with emphasis on the remaining public involvement efforts scheduled, which includes a second public meeting, a public hearing and two additional CAG meetings.

QUESTIONS

The following documents the comments and questions provided by CAG members during the open question and answer time and before the meeting concluded.

- Mr. Gregory Holland (Resident) asked if the crash data takes into consideration the time-of-day accidents occur. The study team advised that the crash data looks at whether the crash occurred a daytime versus nighttime as well as the weather conditions.
- Mr. Holland also asked if the average daily traffic counts were adjusted to reflect new pandemic traffic patterns and the study team confirmed adjustments were made as necessary.
- Mr. Ron Rudd (City of Elgin) mentioned that he believes the heavy truck traffic will be greatly reduced once the mining and reclamation site is no longer operating. Mr. Dave Waden (City of Elgin) confirmed the site is estimated to be in operation for three to five years.
- Mr. Gregory Winer (Resident) shared his concerns with the steep grade at the intersection. The elevation challenge, in addition to traffic congestion, the lack of a median and the location of the Canadian National Railway bridge a driver's line of sight is hindered and increases probability of a crash.
- Mr. John Beasley asked if the study improvements will address the debris from truck traffic. The study team advised they will document this concern to investigate potential solutions.
- Mr. Rudd followed up with the study team to see if there have been any updates regarding the flooding issues at the Shales intersection which was caused by the lack of maintaining cattails and other plants located nearby. The study team confirmed his comment was passed to IDOT and would check on the status.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

The meeting opened up for a large group discussion to provide CAG members with an opportunity to provide their comments. A study team member documented the concerns and pinned them on a map of the study area in real-time for meeting participants to see.

- **Concern #1 – Study Impacts to Surrounding Areas:**

Many CAG members inquired about the impacts to operations of nearby intersections and local neighborhoods that would come as a result of improvements implemented for this study. Participants did not want to see problems shifting east or west on US 20. Intersections of concern mentioned by multiple members include US 20 and Naperville Road/Elizabeth Drive and US 20 at Lambert Lane. Several members live in neighborhoods within the study area and have had difficulty in the past accessing their route home or their driveways as a result of congestion, crashes or the inability to turn due to the heavy volume of oncoming traffic. Some have altered their routes due to concerns about turning/crossing US 20.

- **Concern #2 – Truck Traffic:**

There are several industrial parks and areas immediately surrounding the study area that trucks frequently visit. There are also several new developments in the area being built or planned to be built that will play a factor in truck traffic. The increased truck traffic is especially a concern when it comes to the safety of the local high school students, residents and commuters who are traveling the same route.

- **Concern #3 – Existing Operations/Conditions & Related Safety Issues:**

Several existing conditions and operational factors within the study area contribute to safety issues. One example shared was the sharp curve that westbound US 20 traffic experiences when turning left on Naperville Road is dangerous due to the high speed and limited visibility for drivers. Another example is the traffic signal timings for northbound and southbound traffic is shorter than the eastbound and westbound signal which contributes to congestion. A final issue that was discussed was the need for more enforcement in the study area, that many drivers not only speed but do not stop for red lights along US 20 either.

- **Concern #4 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Access & Safety:**

Participants mentioned the lack of pedestrian and bicycle access in the area. The lack of pedestrian crossings/control devices near Lambert Lane and within the study area in general forces people to use the existing crossings which are dangerous due to the high volume of traffic.

These identified concerns will be considered and become part of the overall problem statement that will be developed and presented at the second CAG meeting, tentatively scheduled for Spring 2022.