

# University Avenue / IA 934 Study

August 2012

## Study Overview

Since Fall 2011, the Iowa Department of Transportation, in coordination with the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) and the cities of Cedar Falls and Waterloo, have been studying the University Avenue/IA 934 corridor to determine what types of future transportation improvements are needed. In 2010, a University Avenue Corridor Study was conducted, which recommended reducing the lanes on the corridor from six lanes to four lanes, and incorporated roundabouts and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The current study is an Environmental Assessment, which is a study to evaluate the impacts of the proposed alternatives on the natural and man-made environment, and help agencies and the public make well-informed decisions about investments in their communities. The goals of the study are to:

- Optimize corridor operations to move people across and through the area safely and efficiently.
- Develop a *Complete Street* Corridor that is functional and appealing for non-motorists and motorists alike.
- Determine what type of intersection improvements are needed to improve corridor operations.

## Purpose of Tonight's Public Meeting

As part of the Environmental Assessment and overall planning process, the corridor is evaluated and alternatives are developed that meet the project goals while minimizing impacts to both the natural and man-made environment. Tonight's meeting presents the five alternatives being evaluated. Those alternatives are:

- **No Build Alternative** – Retain University Avenue/IA 934 as it currently exists.
- **Alternative 1** – Retain six lane roadway and optimize traffic signals at intersections. Provide accommodation for pedestrian and bicycle use and corridor aesthetic treatments.
- **Alternative 2** – Reduce roadway to four lanes and optimize traffic signals at intersections. Provide accommodation for pedestrian and bicycle use and corridor aesthetic treatments.
- **Alternative 3** – Reduce roadway to four lanes and construct roundabouts at intersections. Provide accommodation for pedestrian and bicycle use and corridor aesthetic treatments.
- **Alternative 4** – Reduce roadway to four lanes and include both optimized traffic signals and roundabouts at intersections. Provide accommodation for pedestrian and bicycle use and corridor aesthetic treatments.

## How do we evaluate the alternatives?

The alternatives are evaluated based on several screening criteria in each category.

**Engineering** – minimizing right-of-way and construction impacts and costs

**Safety** – reducing severity of crashes and potential conflict points at intersections

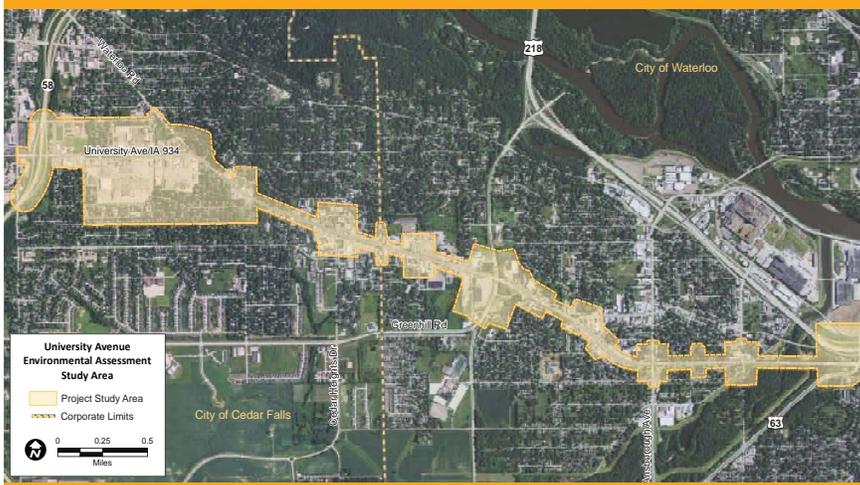
**Traffic Operations** – improving traffic flow

**Multi-modal** – incorporating opportunities for other modes of travel, including bicycles, pedestrians and transit

**Local Access & Aesthetics** – improving access and aesthetic opportunities along the corridor

*Your input is needed. Please review the alternatives shown tonight and fill out a comment form. The study team will review and consider all comments received. Please return your comments by August 20, 2012.*

## University Avenue / IA 934 Study Area



# Managing Traffic at Intersections

The alternatives being evaluated include different ways to handle traffic at the intersections. Those options are:

**Traffic Signal Optimization.** Traffic signal optimization includes installing new, modern traffic signal equipment and coordinating the traffic signals to improve traffic flow. Through traffic on a main roadway can travel through multiple, coordinated signals without having to stop.

- Reduces congestion by increasing intersection capacity and smoothing traffic flow
- Reduces vehicle emissions and improves safety by reducing congested, stop-and-go travel conditions and promoting uniform speed
- Reduces delay and travel time along a corridor

**Roundabouts.** A roundabout is a circular intersection designed for uniform, low speed flow in one direction with yield control for entering traffic.

Benefits include:

- Operates efficiently due to free flow travel conditions
- Provides simpler and safer crossings for pedestrians due to lower speeds and shorter crossing distances
- Reduces severity of crashes by eliminating angle crashes and lowering speeds
- Provides long-term environmental benefits because there is less stop-and-go traffic and no electricity is needed for traffic signals
- Provides opportunity to incorporate aesthetic treatments, such as landscaping or public art

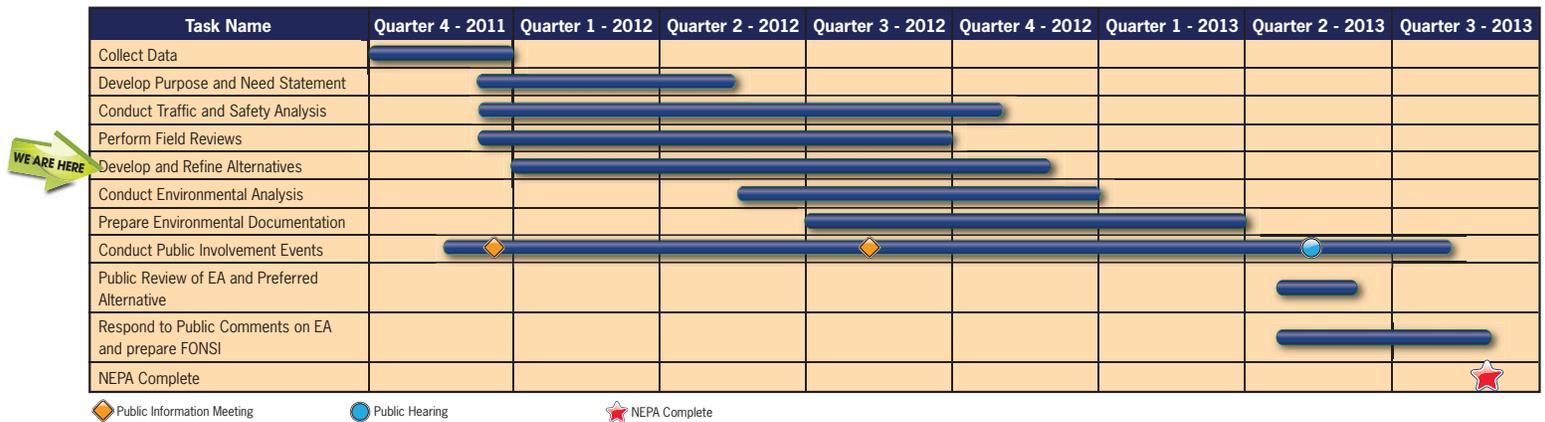


Educational video on roundabouts, Washington State DOT: <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL596EDA4F852D8ABD&feature=plcp>

Roundabouts: A Safer Choice, Federal Highway Administration: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/roundabouts/fhwasa08006/fhwasa08006.pdf>

# Schedule and Next Steps

The schedule shows the tasks and next steps that it will take to complete the Environmental Assessment for the corridor. Once the project completes the Environmental Assessment phase, design of the initial improvements could begin in Fall/Winter 2013. Right-of-way acquisition and construction will not occur until funding is identified.



# Contact Information – If you have additional questions or comments please contact:

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All information presented tonight will be posted at the Iowa DOT's web site: <http://www.iowadot.gov/pim>

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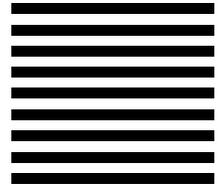
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