



PUBLIC HEARING – OCTOBER 29, 2013 5-7 P.M.

CLARION INN, 5826 UNIVERSITY AVENUE

CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

To view additional information concerning this project please access the following website:

<http://www.iowadot.gov/pim>

Welcome to the Iowa Department of Transportation's Public Hearing for the improvement of Iowa 934/University Avenue in Cedar Falls/Waterloo from Iowa 58 to U.S. 63. The purpose of this hearing is to update the public on the progress of the project; present the completed Environmental Assessment (EA) for the study area, the alternatives carried forward in the EA and the impacts of those alternatives; and gather feedback from the public about the project and EA. The final design should meet the purpose and need from the EA and fit within the impact area provided in this document.

PUBLIC HEARING FORMAT

This public hearing will be conducted utilizing a combined open forum and formal format. The hearing will begin with an open forum session during which interested individuals are encouraged to express their views and ask questions in an informal setting. A formal presentation, followed by a question and answer session, will follow the open forum session. Oral and written statements will be accepted during both the open forum and the formal sessions.

We encourage you to express your views concerning the proposal in one or more of these ways:

1. Individual discussion with Iowa DOT staff;
2. Presentation of oral and written statements at the hearing. Written statements should be presented to the staff person near the entry;
3. Submission of written statements following the hearing. Those received by November 18, 2013, will become a part of the public hearing transcript.

Hearing transcripts are provided to Iowa DOT staff, the Transportation Commissioners and the Federal Highway Administration for review before project plans are completed. A copy will be forwarded to you if you send a written request to Office of Location and Environment, Iowa DOT, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa, 50010.

This hearing satisfies the public involvement required by federal and state regulations and helps assure that social, economic and environmental effects are identified. In addition, this project, as are all Iowa DOT projects, will be constructed in compliance with Title 6 of the Civil Rights act of 1964.

PROJECT HISTORY

Iowa 934/University Avenue, originally designated as U.S. 218, was initially constructed as a two-lane rural highway, which was widened to four lanes in the late 1960's. Later, U.S. 218 was widened to six lanes. In the mid-1980's, the Iowa DOT constructed a new 6-lane freeway north of the existing U.S. 218, and designated this new highway as U.S. 218.

The Iowa DOT, the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments, and the cities of Cedar Falls and Waterloo prepared a study of the University Avenue Corridor in 2010. The purpose of the study was to examine the needs and functions of Iowa 934/University Avenue and to develop feasible

alternatives for future reconstruction. The study included alternatives to modify the current 6-lane roadway to a 4-lane roadway with intersection modifications, including roundabouts. The addition of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations and corridor aesthetic treatments and landscaping were also studied.

Public meetings were held on December 11, 2008, and August 7, 2009, to present information concerning the proposed project alternatives. A stakeholder survey and one-on-one meetings were also conducted to solicit input from the business owners along Iowa 934/University Avenue.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the proposed project is to upgrade and modernize Iowa 934/University Avenue between Iowa 58 in Cedar Falls and U.S. 63 in Waterloo. The need for the project is to improve pavement conditions; enhance intersection safety; provide bicycle and pedestrian access and mobility; improve traffic flow; and support economic growth and revitalization.

The current statewide average crash rate for urban intersections in Iowa is approximately 0.9 crashes per million vehicles entering the intersection. Iowa 934/University Avenue has eight intersections that are at or above the statewide average crash rate for similar facilities (ranging from a crash rate of 0.9 to 2.0). These intersections are Valley Park Drive, Holiday Drive, Cedar Heights Drive, Progress Avenue, Falls Avenue, Ansborough Avenue, Fletcher Avenue, and U.S. 63.

In 2011, average daily traffic volumes on this segment of Iowa 934/University Avenue ranged from 7,000 vehicles per day at U.S. 63 to 22,000 vehicles per day near the western end of the corridor. By 2040, the average daily traffic volumes are projected to range from 8,000 vehicles per day at U.S. 63 to 30,000 vehicles per day near the western end of the corridor.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE

The Proposed Alternative would reduce the majority of the roadway from six lanes to four lanes and incorporate both optimized traffic signals and roundabouts. From the Iowa 58 interchange to Valley Park Drive a 6-lane corridor would be constructed. The remaining corridor, from Valley Park Drive to the intersection with U.S. 63, would have four lanes. The completed roadway would generally include two 12-foot wide driving lanes in each direction, a 16-foot wide raised median, a 6-foot wide on-street bicycle lane in each direction, a 2-foot wide curb and gutter, a 6-foot wide sidewalk on the north side of the roadway and a 10-foot wide multi-use path on the south side.

The following changes in access would occur along the corridor:

- Valley Park Drive, Holiday Road, Waterloo Road, Cedar Heights Drive, Midway Drive, Progress Drive, the Greenhill Road western terminal, Falls Avenue, Sager Avenue, Fletcher Avenue and U.S. 63 intersections would be converted to multi-lane roundabouts.
- New intersection access points would be developed at Royal Drive and Melrose Drive on the north side of Iowa 934/University Avenue, and at the south frontage road just east of Cedar Heights Drive. Royal Drive and the south frontage road access point would be developed as right-in/right-out intersection types to assist with traffic flow, access and connectivity to adjacent businesses. Melrose Drive would include a right-in/right-out and additional left-in movement for use by traffic traveling eastbound on Iowa 934/ University Avenue.
- The Black Hawk Village shopping center intersection would be converted from a signalized intersection to a right-in/right-out and additional left-in movement for use by traffic traveling westbound on Iowa 934/University Avenue.

- Tunis Drive would be converted from a signalized intersection to a right-in/right-out and additional left-in movements for use by both traffic traveling eastbound and westbound on Iowa 934/ University Avenue.
- Wallgate Avenue would be converted from a signalized intersection to a two-way stop controlled intersection.

All other intersections along the corridor would maintain their existing intersection types, but would incorporate improvements to turn lanes, vehicle storage lengths, signal timings and phasings.

PROJECT SCHEDULE AND COSTS

This project is not currently funded and no design or construction schedule has been established.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

An Environmental Assessment for the project was signed by the Federal Highway Administration on October 4, 2013. A copy of the EA is available for inspection at this hearing. The EA evaluates the alternatives carried forward and the impacts for those alternatives.

The Iowa DOT completed surveys within the project corridor to identify any possible historic properties. The term historic property includes a prehistoric or historic site, building, structure, object, or district that is listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Proposed Alternative would affect several properties that are eligible for listing on the NRHP. The impacts would involve temporary construction impacts and/or acquisition of minor amounts of land (but not impacts to the structures). The affected properties include the Rownd/Kelly house, the R.P Speer/Nelson house, the Cedar Falls post-war homes residential historic district, and the city of Waterloo water tower. The Iowa DOT is requesting your comments about the impacts this project will likely have on any historic properties. This request is based on the federal regulations known as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The Proposed Alternative would also impact relatively minor amounts of property from Rownd Park, the Peet Junior High School open space, Hope Martin Memorial Park, and the Cedar Prairie Trail. These properties are Section 4(f) resources that are subject to protection as public recreational facilities.

De minimis impacts on properties that are listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP are defined as impacts that have no adverse effect on the historic properties. *De minimis* impacts on publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges are defined as those that do not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of the Section 4(f) resources. The Federal Highway Administration is proposing to make *de minimis* impact determinations for the effects of the Proposed Alternative on the historic and recreational properties listed above. This is your opportunity to review and comment on the proposed *de minimis* effect determinations.

This project will continue to be monitored by the Iowa DOT and FHWA throughout all development stages and construction to ensure that all possible environmental effects are identified.

RIGHT OF WAY

As part of the proposed improvements, additional right-of-way may be required. Appraisal of property and/or property rights is required. These appraisals use professional techniques and methods to determine “just compensation” in accordance with Federal and State constitutions, laws and regulations. The appraisals are prepared to assure fair treatment for both the property owner and the public.

After the appraisals are completed, each owner is contacted by a right of way agent for the purpose of explaining the plans and appraisals and for contracting the required right of way. In instances where an agreement cannot be reached through negotiations, the property may be acquired by the laws of eminent domain.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Acquisition and relocation programs will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646), as amended by the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 and provides relocation resources to all residential and business relocatees without discrimination.

If you are required to move as a result of a highway project, whether an owner or tenant, you will be eligible for relocation assistance advisory services. You may be eligible for moving assistance, supplemental replacement housing payments, and reimbursement for certain expenses incurred in purchasing replacement housing.

Displaced individuals must receive fair and equitable treatment and do not suffer disproportionately from highway programs designed for the whole public. Any person, family, business, or farm displaced by a highway project shall be offered relocation assistance services for locating suitable replacement property. Relocation payments and advisory assistance are offered in addition to the public agency's purchase of your property.

CONTACT US

If you have any comments or concerns regarding the project presented today, please contact:

Krista Rostad, District 2 Planner
Iowa Department of Transportation
1420 Fourth Street SE, Mason City, Iowa 50401
Phone 641-423-7584 or 800-477-4368
Email krista.rostad@dot.iowa.gov.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Please share your ideas with us today, submit them using the attached comment form (self-addressed and pre-paid for your convenience), email your comments to the District Planner above or through the following website <http://www.iowadot.gov/pim>. All comments and information provided will be given consideration as the project development process continues. Other opportunities for input, throughout the process, will be provided through future public meetings.

Thank you for your participation in this hearing.

Federal and state laws prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran's status. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission at 800-457-4416 or Iowa Department of Transportation's affirmative action officer. If you need accommodations because of a disability to access the Iowa Department of Transportation's services, contact the agency's affirmative action officer at 800-262-0003.