

University Avenue / IA 934 Study

December 2011

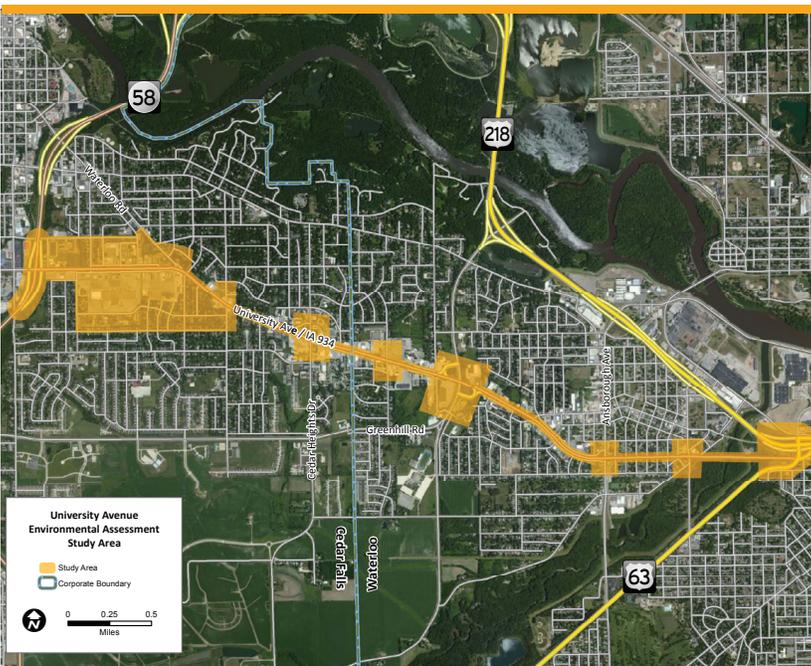
Study Overview

The Iowa Department of Transportation, in coordination with the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) and the cities of Cedar Falls and Waterloo, has initiated planning and preliminary design studies for the improvement of the University Avenue / Iowa Highway 934 corridor from Iowa Highway 58 in the City of Cedar Falls on the west to U.S. Highway 63 in Waterloo on the east. The goals of the study are to:

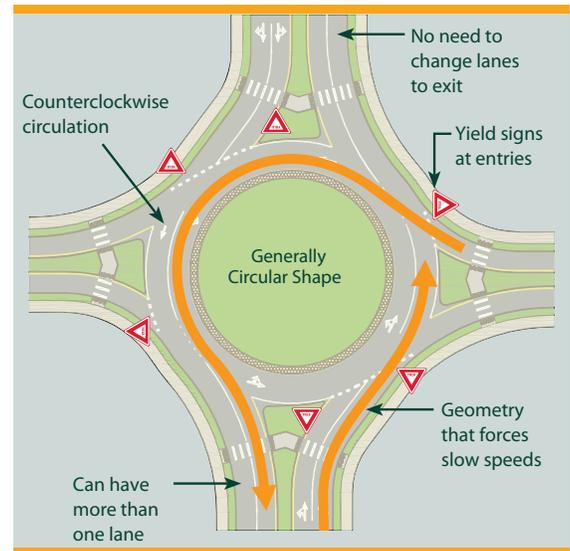
- Optimize corridor operations to move people across and through the area safely and efficiently.
- Develop a *Complete Street* corridor that is functional and appealing for non-motorists and motorists alike.
- Determine what type of intersection improvements are needed to improve corridor operations.

Haven't We Already Completed a Study?

The University Avenue Corridor Study was performed between 2008 and 2010 to investigate future transportation needs and functions of University Avenue, and to develop feasible alternatives for future reconstruction and improvement of the operations and efficiency of the corridor. The key study recommendations included:



University Avenue is also designated as Iowa Highway 934 and is maintained jointly by the Iowa DOT and the cities of Cedar Falls and Waterloo.



The corridor study completed in 2010 recommended roundabouts as an option to improve traffic flow. A Roundabout is a circular intersection designed for uniform, low-speed flow in one direction with yield control for entering traffic.

- Reducing the number of lanes along the corridor from 6-lanes to 4-lanes with bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, incorporating *Complete Streets* improvements.
- Reconfiguring intersections and incorporating roundabouts in key locations to improve traffic operations, safety and efficiency.
- Adding aesthetic treatments, including public art and landscaping, to the corridor.

Why Is a New Study Needed?

In all projects that use federal funds or need federal permits, it is necessary to follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires the completion of an environmental study to help communities identify the best way to meet future needs and avoid or minimize impacts to both the natural and man-made environment. For University Avenue, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being developed and will likely take between 18 and 24 months to complete. The EA will use the recommendations from the Corridor Study as a baseline for refining and evaluating corridor alternatives and assessing their impacts to the natural and man-made environment.



Draft Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to improve the condition, safety and traffic flow of University Avenue / IA 934 between Iowa Highway 58 in Cedar Falls and U.S. Highway 63 in Waterloo, and incorporate *Complete Streets* improvements.

- Improve pavement and bridge condition

- Enhance safety
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian access and mobility
- Improve traffic flow
- Support economic growth and revitalization

What is an Environmental Assessment?

An EA is one kind of environmental study. The EA helps agencies and the public make well-informed decisions about investments in their communities. The EA documents the decision-making process and answers the following questions:

- What is the **purpose and need** for the improvement?
- How would the proposed improvement **function**?
- How might improvements impact the **natural and man-made environment**?

- Which alternative **best meets the purpose and need** while minimizing or avoiding impacts?
- How do the **public and project stakeholders** feel about the proposed project?

The Federal Highway Administration is responsible for overseeing the EA and approving the selected alternative. This approval is necessary for the project to move forward into design, right-of-way acquisition and construction.

What are Complete Streets?

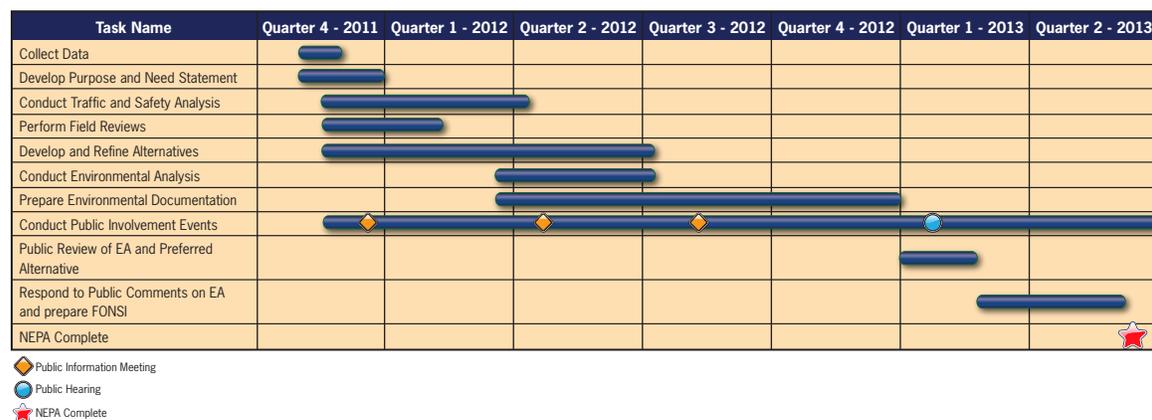
Complete Streets are planned, designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Motorists, truck drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a *Complete Street*. A *Complete Street* may include:

- Sidewalks or multi-use trails
- Bike lanes or wide paved shoulders
- Bus turn-outs
- Comfortable and accessible public transportation stops
- Frequent and safe crossing opportunities
- Median islands
- Accessible pedestrian signals
- Narrower travel lanes
- Aesthetic treatments and landscaping
- Roundabouts



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:

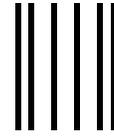
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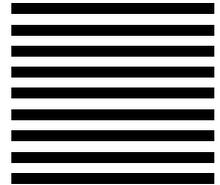
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