

# Willow Road Public Meeting

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **Q1: What is the latest news on efforts to improve Willow Road in Northfield?**

A1: In the fall of 2009, an inclusive and transparent study for an improved Willow Road began. In addition to a comprehensive technical evaluation, IDOT is using a process known as Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS), which involves frequent and meaningful public outreach at every step in the planning process, as well as the exchange of information and ideas between the stakeholders, which include the four affected communities and IDOT.

### **Q2: What is the CSS process?**

A2: CSS is a State of Illinois requirement for major or complex projects that seeks effective, multi-modal transportation solutions by working with stakeholders to develop, build and maintain cost-effective transportation facilities that fit into and reflect the project's surrounding—its "context." Residents, business leaders and local representatives will have opportunities to be engaged in the study through public involvement meetings and a Community Advisory Group (CAG) that will meet throughout the study. In addition, a website tailored to the study provides progress updates, upcoming meeting times and locations, and facilitate the exchange of information and ideas.

### **Q3: What communities are involved in the Willow Road study?**

A3: The Willow Road study encompasses the 2 mile stretch of Willow Road which runs between Illinois Route 43 (Waukegan Road) on the west to Interstate 94 (Edens Expressway) on the east. The project area is located primarily within the Village of Northfield, but also affects the Villages of Northbrook, Glenview, and Winnetka. All four villages will play an active role in the CSS process.

### **Q4: What is a CAG and who appoints members?**

A4: A key element of the CSS process is the creation of a Community Advisory Group (CAG), a working group consisting of community leaders and other interests who will assist IDOT to identify community issues and help determine community characteristics that should be taken into consideration in the planning process. Through a coordinated process with the village leaders, members for the Community Advisory Group (or CAG) were selected. The members represent a broad cross section of the four villages and project interests, both local and regional, and there are a few at-large members.

### **Q5: How is this process different than previous studies on Willow Road?**

A5: The many past studies either did not come to any conclusions or did not fully resolve the major issues along the Willow Road corridor, such as improving both safety and mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. IDOT's goal is to work collaboratively with project stakeholders to develop a consensus plan for Willow Road.

### **Q6: Who will make the final decision on improvements to Willow Road?**

A6: The goal of an effective CSS process is to reach consensus among all stakeholders, which is why the Community Advisory Group is so important. A consensus of all stakeholders in this project will be sought, but the ultimate decisions remain in the hands of IDOT and the State of Illinois.

**Q7: How will the communities and stakeholders take part in this process?**

A7: As part of the CSS process, local residents, business leaders, and representatives from schools, parks and local governments are included in the Willow Road Study. We encourage the community to visit the Willow Road Study website, [www.willowroadfuture.org](http://www.willowroadfuture.org) for the latest information. The website will be updated throughout the study, and will offer an easy way for everyone to provide input. In addition, there will be other larger public meetings and opportunities for public input.

**Q8: Why are changes being proposed for Willow Road?**

A8: There has been considerable discussion over the years about improving the Willow Road corridor but there are unresolved issues. The Department is conducting this study to work with stakeholders to define those issues and develop a range of alternatives to address them. The final decision to make changes to Willow Road will come near the completion of the CSS process. Any enhancements will help improve the safety and mobility along the Willow Road corridor so that it is capable of meeting the current and future demands of all users for many years to come.

**Q9: How will Willow Road improvements be funded?**

A9: The Phase I preliminary engineering work is being funded out of IDOT's current engineering program. There is also construction funding earmarked in the 5-year multi-year capital program, Illinois Jobs Now. It will be appropriated when preliminary work is concluded.

**Q10: How long will the Willow Road Study last and most importantly, when will construction start?**

A10: The Willow Road Study, including stakeholder involvement, began in Fall 2009 and is expected to be completed in Spring 2011. The design and land acquisition phases, if required, would take another two years thereafter. The project could begin construction in 2014.

**Q11: Why will the Willow Road Study take two years to complete?**

A11: In order for all aspects of the project to be thoroughly reviewed and input provided, it could take up to two years to complete. We encourage the communities to visit the Willow Road Study website, [www.willowroadfuture.org](http://www.willowroadfuture.org) for the latest information on events relating to the project. A calendar on the website is available which details upcoming meetings and important dates.