



Illinois Department of Transportation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS ON
PRAIRIE PARKWAY TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES**

OTTAWA, Ill. –The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will hold two public hearings for the Prairie Parkway Preliminary Engineering Study that is evaluating the need for future transportation improvements in northeastern Illinois.

IDOT has scheduled public hearings on December 6, 2006 and December 7, 2006 to obtain public testimony on the alternatives for the construction of an access controlled, four-lane limited access freeway between I-80 and I-88 in Grundy, Kendall, and Kane counties, and the widening of IL-47 to four lanes from I-80 to Caton Farm Road. Detailed alternatives have been identified as Alternatives B2 and B5. Alternative B2 is generally a straight north-south connector segment between I-80 and I-88 located four miles west of existing IL-47 connecting to I-80 near Morris, Ill. Alternative B5 is similar to Alternative B2 except that south of Caton Farm Road, Alternative B-5 traverses to the east to connect to I-80 near Minooka, Ill. Both build Alternatives also include widening IL-47 to four lanes from Caton Farm Road to I-80. The option of taking no-action remains an Alternative.

All persons interested in this project are invited to attend. The hearings will be open house format, with a question and answer session at each meeting. Throughout the evening, people will have the opportunity to enter their comments into the public record regarding the B2 Alternative, the B5 Alternative, and the no-action alternative. The IDOT representatives will answer individual questions and record comments offered by those in attendance. Verbatim comments will not be recorded.

The presentation will address topics such as the need for the project, the design alternatives under consideration, right of way acquisition and relocation assistance, change of access issues, environmental impacts, and the next steps of the study. The alignment of the two build alternatives resulted from IDOT's environmental field investigations, engineering studies and public input. IDOT worked closely with environmental groups, landowners, communities, agencies, and the Corridor Planning Group to identify and evaluate these potential alternatives. The Draft Environmental Assessment, exhibits, and engineering analysis with drawings, maps, and aerial photography will be available for viewing during the hearings. This same information will be available for viewing at the IDOT District 3 Office, 700 East Norris Drive, Ottawa, Ill.; at the office of Smith Engineering, 759 John Street, Yorkville, Ill.; and at public libraries throughout

the study area. This data and other information about the Prairie Parkway Study, can also be viewed on-line by visiting www.prairie-parkway.com.

The Corridor Planning Group is a volunteer group led by elected officials of the counties and municipalities affected by the improvements. These officials are supported by technical task forces members selected from entities such as farm bureaus, economic development councils, forest preserve districts, and environmental conservation groups with experience and knowledge of issues related to land use planning, environmental resources, and transportation. They bring a local perspective to the effects the potential alternatives may have in their own communities. IDOT has worked with them to develop alignments that best blend factors such as providing the most travel benefits, compatibility with future land use plans, and minimizing impacts to the scenic, economic, historic, and natural qualities of the communities.

The Prairie Parkway Preliminary Engineering Study began in 2002. Throughout the process, IDOT has placed a high priority on extensive public involvement as an important aspect to guide the study. IDOT has made significant realignments to the corridors throughout the study area that resulted from public involvement and other findings. Following these hearings, public comment and other study findings will be considered to develop the recommended Alternative.

The two public hearings will be held at:

Date:	Wednesday, December 6, 2006	Thursday, December 7, 2006
Time:	5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.	5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Location:	Yorkville Intermediate School 103 Schoolhouse Road (IL 126) Yorkville, Illinois	White Oak Elementary School Gym 2001 Dupont Ave. Morris, Illinois

* Presentation and question & answer session at 6:30 p.m. each night

The public is invited and encouraged to attend at any time during the public hearings. In the open houses, the public will be able to review exhibits and discuss the study with representatives from IDOT. A presentation by IDOT representatives followed by a question and answer session will start at 6:30 p.m. each night.

Both public hearing sites are accessible to persons with disabilities. If special accommodations are needed, please contact IDOT's office at 815-434-8435, or TTY 815-434-8510.

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