

THE WEST STATE CONNECTION

This is the first edition of The West State Connection, a newsletter prepared by the Illinois Department of Transportation, Missman, Stanley & Associates, P. C. and TranSystems Corporation to provide information on the West State Street (U.S. Bus. 20) study.

Any highway project is sure to generate a lot of questions. We hope that this newsletter will help to answer many of those questions.

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions for articles or information regarding the project or the study area, or would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact:

- Jon McCormick, P.E.
- IDOT District 2
- 819 Depot Avenue
- Dixon, IL 61021-3500
- Phone: 815/284-5513



Illinois Department of Transportation

Public Informational Meeting Scheduled

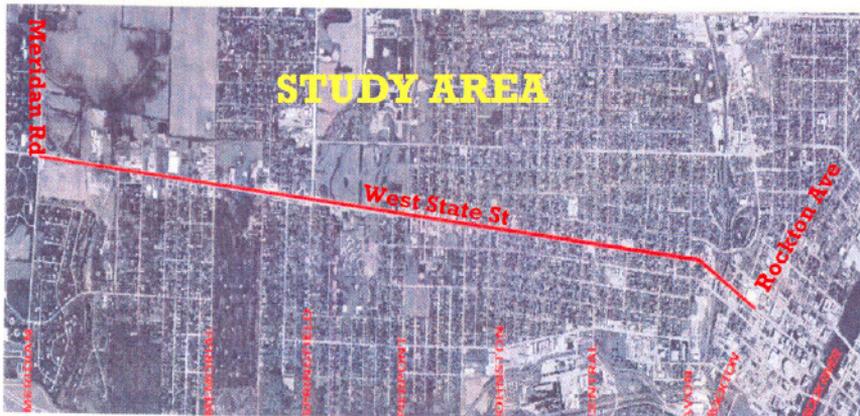
The Illinois Department of Transportation will host a public meeting on the Phase I study to improve West State Street (U.S. Business Route 20) from Meridian Road to Rockton Avenue in Rockford, Illinois, on Thursday July 29, 2004. The meeting will be held at Ellis Arts Academy at 222 South Central Avenue, Rockford, Illinois in the gymnasium and will last from 1 to 6 p.m. An aerial photo of the project will be on display showing the scope of improvements being considered. Other project related exhibits will also be available. Representatives of the Illinois Department of Transportation and their consultant team will be on hand to answer questions and receive your comments. There will not be a formal presentation or program, so you can drop by at any time during the afternoon to review the project. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend.



input will be used by the study team, along with engineering, environmental and planning information, to determine the most economically, socially and environmentally acceptable solution to this area's traffic needs

The meeting is wheelchair accessible. If you need special accommodations, please contact Geoff Smith at the Illinois Department of Transportation (815) 284-5510 at least three days prior to the meeting.

People attending the meeting will receive an informational flier and have an opportunity to submit questions or comments regarding the project. Your



Inside this issue:

Purpose & Need of the Project	2
Frequently Asked Questions	7
The Project Team	8

PURPOSE AND NEED OF PROJECT



Crusader Clinic

The Illinois Department of Transportation is conducting an engineering study to provide an improved transportation facility along West State Street (U.S. Business 20) from Meridian Road to Rockton Avenue, in order to facilitate the free flow of traffic and insure safety for the motoring public, as the western entry into the Rockford Community. The State has been working closely with the City of Rockford. Both the city and state have approved the West State Street Corridor Study, which is the local framework plan for the corridor and is being used to guide the current Phase I project. The need for the project is based on:

Community and Economic Transportation Demand

The project will begin to correct years of deferred investment and maintenance of infrastructure that has contributed to the decline of the West State Street area.

The project will support and sustain projected development in accordance with the Framework Plan. Key goals of the Framework Plan include improving access to downtown Rockford from the west, extending utility services, instituting incentive programs, establishing TIF districts, improving transit services and increasing business opportunities along the corridor.

The project seeks to provide elements of community and context sensitivity by incorporating ideas that represent a clear consensus of the local community.

System Linkage and Continuity

The project will widen West State Street to provide a consistent cross section and system continuity.

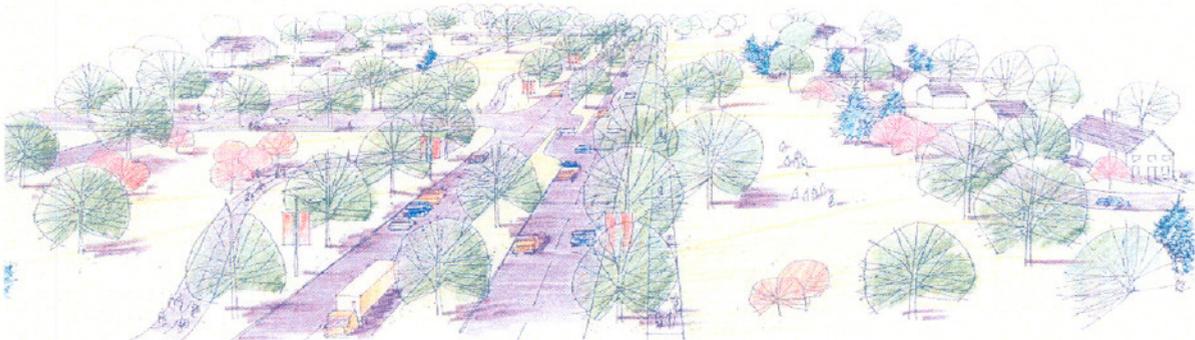
The project will enhance continuity and capacity by incorporating elements for safe and efficient travel for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

Capacity

The project will provide intersection channelization and a continuous four-lane cross section to improve capacity to an acceptable level through the design year 2025.

Safety

The project will reduce the potential for vehicle conflicts and thereby increase safety by partially controlling access and introducing new local access connections.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

“One-Way Pair” realignment

One aspect of the Phase I Study is to more efficiently tie together the “one way pair” roadway system through downtown Rockford. One current concern is that the west-bound vehicles on Jefferson Street continue west into the residential area, where Jefferson Street turns into Mulberry Street. One consideration in Phase I is to realign Jefferson Street and tie it into westbound West State Street at Avon Street. This part of the reconfiguration directs traffic back to West State Street and may strengthen the retail activity in the area. This realignment also consolidates neighborhood green space and redevelopment opportunities in this area and provides a more efficient way to enter the west bound one-way pair system.

The eastbound one-way pair tie-in to West State Street is proposed as a new “crossover” from Kilburn Avenue south to the intersection of Rockton Avenue and Chestnut Street. Some modifications to Kilburn Avenue north of West State Street would be required for alignment purposes. This crossover provides a smooth transition for U.S. Business 20 eastbound. The eastbound crossover is important for the downtown area as U.S. Business 20 is the main route to the Metro Centre arena, Davis Park festival grounds and the proposed Federal Building and Winnebago County correctional facility.



THE WEST STATE CONNECTION

Page 4

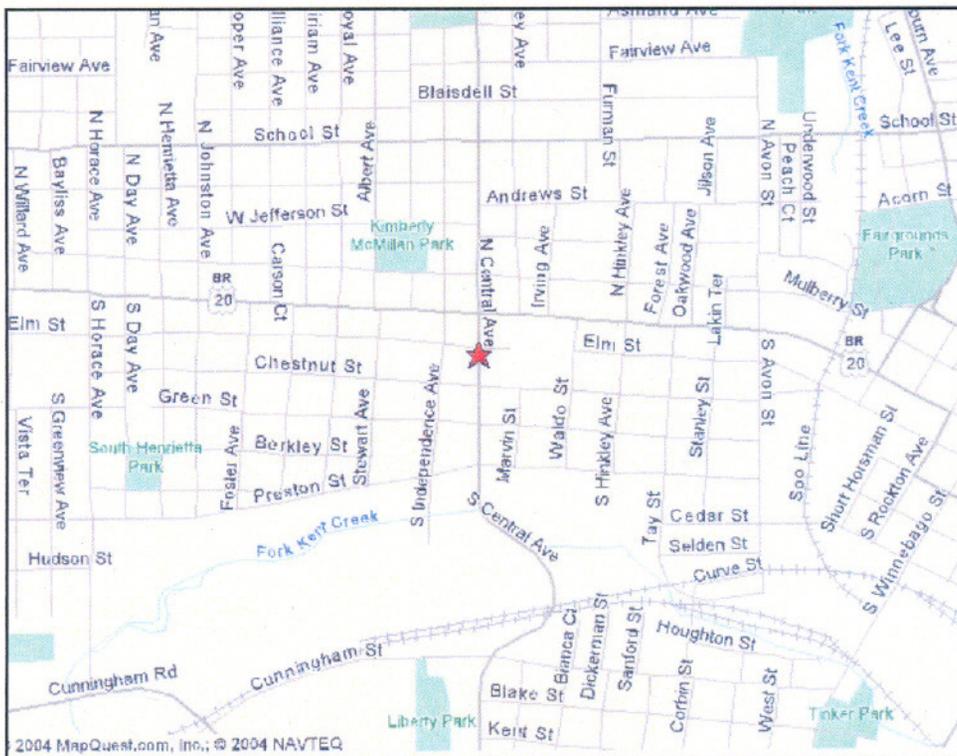
PUBLIC MEETING: July 29, 2004

Ellis Arts Academy

Rockford Public Schools

222 South Central Avenue

Rockford, Illinois 61102-2011



The Ellis Arts Academy is located on South Central Avenue, one block south of West State Street. The public meeting will be held in the gymnasium. Directions to the meeting room will be posted around the school. The meeting is handicapped accessible.



THE WEST STATE CONNECTION

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Illinois Department of Transportation

District Engineer, District 2

Attn: Jon McCormick, P.E.

819 Depot Avenue

Dixon, IL 61021-3500



Illinois Department of Transportation

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the project funded?

At this point the project is funded for Phase I preliminary engineering and environmental studies for the entire corridor. Additional funding is also available for the section between Day Avenue and Rockton Avenue, including Phase II engineering, land acquisition, and construction.

When will it be built?

The timeline for construction will be determined based upon availability of funding for project design and construction. The first section, Day to Rockton, is included in the 2006-2011 Highway Improvement Program, but a specific year for this work has not been established.

Will access to properties be changed?

Traffic flow will be aided through the control of access to the roadway. Some existing intersections will be removed at West State Street, and local connections made between adjacent streets so that both safety and mobility are effectively addressed. Other streets will have access to West State Street via right turns only.

How can I find out more about the project as it moves forward?

Attend the Public Informational Meeting on July 29, 2004. Project team members will be available to discuss the project and answer your questions. You may also contact the IDOT project manager, Mr. Jon McCormick (815-284-5513) at any time with your questions. Please complete the Comment Form in this newsletter to be added to the mailing list for future newsletters and announcements.

What about pedestrian and bicycle access?

The project includes provisions for the construction of a pedestrian and bicycle path. Such access is currently somewhat limited within the corridor. Potential improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access will be coordinated with the City of Rockford.

How will I get to local businesses during construction?

Access will be provided during construction. The work along West State Street will likely be staged such that some traffic can remain on the roadway, although the number of lanes and widths would be reduced during construction.

Will there be visual improvements along the road?

The proposed grass median will provide opportunities for planting vegetation such as shrubs and trees. On the outside edges of the roadway landscaping and streetscaping opportunities are presented in wide areas that will incorporate a sidewalk on the north side, and a multi-use path for bikes and pedestrians on the south.

Motorists are driving too fast on this stretch of roadway now. Can the speed limit be lowered to slow the traffic down?

In accordance with Illinois State Statutes, an engineering study must be done which takes into consideration the vehicular speed, side road & driveway conflicts, pedestrian activity, parking conditions and accident history before an existing speed limit can be lowered.

Who determines how much compensation I will receive for the proposed right-of-way that the Department will acquire with the project and how is it calculated?

The Department would have an appraisal prepared on your property to determine fair market value, either by an IDOT Staff Appraiser or a private Appraiser hired by the Department. They would determine the value of the area being purchased from you and determine effects to the remaining parcel. If the whole property is being acquired then additional relocation assistance would be provided by the Department.

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The Project Team

A transportation improvement project requires contributions from many different groups to be successful. The West State Street (U.S. Business 20) project team includes planners, design professionals, surveyors, environmental scientists and many others. The team is headed by the Illinois Department of Transportation from its District 2

headquarters in Dixon, Illinois. The City of Rockford is working closely with the Department to provide input throughout the planning process.

The Department is being assisted by Missman, Stanley & Associates, P.C. of Rockford Illinois and TranSystems Corporation of Schaumburg,

Illinois. Missman has primary responsibility for all of the engineering studies, surveying, project management, public involvement and preparation of the final design report. TranSystems is responsible for environmental studies, and preparation of the project environmental assessment.



Illinois Department of Transportation



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