



McHenry County

Division of Transportation

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10/6/2020 Ackman Road Virtual Public Informational Meeting Question and Answer:

Please note: Comments and answers have been edited for clarity.

Discussion of Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations:

How will the County decide what type of accommodation (multi use path, sidewalk, or bike path only) is appropriate to implement?

A lot of variables go into the decision making process for determining what accommodations to select for a roadway. County staff and consultants will analyze the amount of right-of-way needed for each design, the cost, and the predicted usage, whether it is predominately used by cyclists or pedestrians and the public input to determine the ideal accommodations.

Our goal is to select the accommodation that provides the most amount of safety and utility for our residents while staying within reason financially and creating minimal impacts to nearby residents and business owners.

When will the location of the sidewalk or multi use path be determined and which gaps will be filled in and which will not?

The location of the sidewalk and/or multiuse path will be determined during the 1st and 2nd engineering phases of the project. Currently we are in the feasibility phase which comes before the two engineering phases. The County will use the input gathered during the feasibility phase to help determine which infrastructure to implement for the corridor.

How will the decision be made between an Urban versus Rural cross section?

Information gained during the phase I engineering phase is used to pick the ideal cross section.

If a resident is concerned about potential impacts to their property, what should they do?

Submit an online comment detailing the concern on the [Ackman Road project page](#) or send an email to mcdot@mchenrycountyil.gov

Will a lack of neighborhood connectivity be considered when determining locations of multi-use paths?

Yes, accommodating cyclists and pedestrians is one of the main goals of the project. A lot of gaps that still exist separate neighborhoods and residential areas from academic institutions within the corridor. The County wants to enable active transportation, such as walking and biking, both across and along Ackman Road.

Discussion of Design Options for Intersections:

What is the recommended distance between roundabouts to achieve optimum traffic flow?

The spacing of roundabouts is dependent upon the 95% queue which ensures that the traffic won't back up into one roundabout and impede the flow of traffic of the circulatory roadway into the next roundabout.

What is the recommended distance between traffic signals to achieve optimum traffic flow?

The McHenry County Division of Transportation follows current design guidance from the Federal Highway Administration which states that spacing between signalized intersections should range from $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Signal spacing less than 1,000 feet should be avoided as it is difficult to coordinate the signals to platoon traffic flow along the major road. Also, signals spaced less than 500 feet apart provide few operations benefits to the side streets.

What is the typical diameter of a multi-lane roundabout?

The diameters of roundabouts change depending on the location and impacts that are determined during the study process. For a single lane roundabout, they usually range from 120' to 150' in diameter. For dual lane roundabouts it is typically 150' to 200', which is operational dependent. Other things can be done such as offset, or shift, a roundabout to a particular corner of the intersection to avoid or mitigate impacts.

Has consideration been given to adding right turn lanes from Ackman Road onto Golf Course Road?

Based on future traffic projections the west leg of Ackman Road does not show a need for a right turn lane. The east leg of Ackman Road does show a need for a right turn lane. A right turn lane is recommended on the east leg of Ackman Road at Golf Course.

How have high school drivers responded to Roundabouts?

From an operations standpoint, roundabouts typically slow drivers down, which increases safety. Roundabouts reduce high impact crashes that take place when speeding is an issue at signalized intersections. Successful implementation of roundabouts requires education. As part of the Phase I study, if roundabouts are determined to be the best option at this location, outreach to educate the local public about the operations of roundabouts will begin.

Huntley Road/Swanson Road/Redtail Drive Intersection Discussion:

What is the County policy on spacing of traffic signals and/or roundabout?

The County follows the Federal Highway Administration's design guidelines which state that spacing should range from ¼ mile to ½ mile. There are areas within the County that have less than ¼ mile spacing. Consideration has occurred when the decreased spacing will result in improvements to safety, operations, and capacity. Consideration will be taken on Ackman Road.

Are the three intersections spaced too close to one another along Ackman Road to provide traffic control at each intersection?

There is approximately 600' between Swanson and Redtail and approximately 1200' between Swanson and Huntley. Both those distances are below the threshold for signal spacing. In a Feasibility Study, we want to identify improvements that will meet the project goals of safe and efficient intersections. Future Phase I studies will further vet out options. The distance between the intersections will play a factor in phase I when making decisions for traffic signals versus roundabout.

The County's policy is ½ mile spacing between signals but ¼ mile minimum spacing in between traffic signals. If Swanson Road was realigned with Redtail Drive, would it be advantageous to realign the roadway given the impacts?

All the quadrants of Swanson Road were looked at for a realignment. The southwest quadrant was chosen in the Feasibility Study because it impacted the least number of properties and therefore had the least human-environmental impacts. Other impacts do exist in the southwest quadrant and those will be considered in the Phase I engineering study. Any decision made between the five main alternatives presented for Segment 2 will take into account the impacts to the southwest quadrant.

If a roundabout is implemented at Swanson and Ackman, how will the homes immediately on the north side of the intersection be accessed?

The driveway will have access to the circulatory roadway. The owner will have access to go all directions by following the circulatory roadway.

Has there been any consideration to adding right turn lanes onto Ackman Road from Swanson Road and or Redtail Drive?

For the un-signalized option and the signalized option right turn lanes were identified as a need at those intersections.

Do additional turn lanes along the Ackman Road Corridor alleviate the need for traffic signals?

Segment 2 Option 1 did look at this alternative. It does not solve the concern for the critical movements of vehicles turning left from side streets onto Ackman. Adding turn lanes on Ackman Road will not help vehicles turning left onto Ackman Road.

Could signage be restricted/reduced at Redtail Drive and Ackman Road to improve visibility of traffic that is heading eastbound on Ackman Road?

The current signage at Redtail Drive will be looked at to see if visibility can be improved.

Swanson Road does not currently have a sidewalk along it. Would the realigned Swanson Road have a sidewalk along it?

Coordination with the Township and/or other municipal partners would need to take place to determine what type of pedestrian or bicycle accommodations should be added to the realigned section. The County supports providing safe access for all roadway users.

If Swanson Road is realigned will the existing Swanson Road become a dead end road to access the existing homes?

Access to the current homes will be provided to the realigned Swanson Road.

Open Discussion and Q/A

How is information being shared to involve all stakeholders?

The County is committed to an open and inclusive public participation process. In addition to the October 6, 2020 Virtual meeting one year ago, the County held a public meeting at Woods Creek Elementary School and invited residents and users of Ackman Road to give feedback on the project. We have posted all the project memos and reports to the project webpage for public viewing. The County has met with the Village of Lakewood, the Village of Lake in the Hills, the City of Crystal Lake, the Crystal Lake Park District and Grafton Township. If the public has any additional ideas on how to reach others in the public please provide the information by leaving a comment on the project webpage. The County is open to other ideas to reach more people.

If a resident has concerns about impacts to their property what should they do?

Please submit a comment to McHenry County Division of Transportation by using the online comment form on the project webpage or the general DOT email box which is mcdot@mchenrycountyil.gov

Why is the year 2050 referenced in the design of Ackman road? Can you clarify why 2050 is being used and when is Ackman Road in the County's plan to be constructed?

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) conducts population and traffic projections for all parts of the region. Local agencies such as MCDOT use their projections to right size our projects. CMAP's latest projections look out to 2050 which is why we use that year to design our current projects. The year 2050 used in this project analysis does not mean to imply that this project will be built in 2050. The ultimate improvements should be expected to accommodate those traffic projections for 2050.

There is mention of an extension of Ackman Road out to Illinois Route 47. Is the extension of Ackman Road in the County plan?

The extension is included in the 2040 long range transportation plan that was conducted back in 2012. The project was labeled as a medium priority project and dependent on developers participating in the project west of Haligus Road. The extension is not a high priority for the County at this time. The Ackman Road Feasibility Study does take into account traffic generated from a possible extension of Ackman Road out to Illinois Route 47.

Noise is a concern to residents who back up to Ackman Road. When will consideration of a noise wall be evaluated?

Noise was not looked at in this early Feasibility Study stage. The Phase I engineering study typically looks at noise with monitoring or identifying existing noise levels. Documenting what the noise levels could be with the proposed improvements. Noise would be considered when the identified segment moves into Phase I design.

How will land acquisition effect the timeline of projects along Ackman Road?

This project is in the Feasibility Study stage. The Feasibility Study is expected to be complete in 2021. Land acquisition takes place after phase I design approval. Phase I can take several years to complete.

How and when will the evaluation matrix's information be completed and available to the public?

The evaluation matrix is part of the Alternative Analysis Memorandum which takes into account the various options presented and impacts to the environment both natural and human as well as the operational and safety benefits. The Feasibility Study Recommendation Report is what caps the project and will be completed in 2021. All information will be available to the public at the completion of the report.

Runners and bikers are often seen on the sides of Ackman road. Will there be consideration given to multiple Ackman Road crossing locations? Is there concern that people may not use the crossing locations if they are not spaced appropriately?

The County is aware that pedestrians and cyclists use Ackman Road today. A key goal is to provide pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along Ackman road along with crossings of Ackman Road to get from the one side to the other. Feedback from the meeting will help us determine what type of crossing to implement and where they should be located.

Segment 2 appears to affect the greatest number of neighborhoods. How do you prioritize which segment will be improved first?

Due to limited funding, the County will prioritize projects along Ackman Road and phase in projects over a number of years. Prioritization along the Ackman Road Corridor is accomplished by gathering input from the public and by identifying federal and state funding opportunities. The County also works closely with local agencies to prioritize which are highest priority areas that should move forward first and which can wait for a later time.

Based on the 2050 traffic volumes, how many lanes would be required for the proposed roundabout alternatives?

The majority of the intersections would be single lane roundabouts; one lane enter and one lane exit. Huntley Road would be slightly larger. As shown in the segment 2 alternatives it has a right turn bypass lane for westbound and two lanes in the eastbound direction. Golf Course road would be a dual lane roundabout; two lanes enter and two lanes exit.

Were right turn lanes considered at Redtail Drive, Swanson Road and Huntley Road?

A safety analysis and traffic analysis were conducted for each of these intersections. The addition of right turn lanes, both along Ackman Road and along the side streets, were considered during these studies.

When is cost analysis performed for each option?

Cost analysis was performed at a very high level in the Feasibility Study. A roundabout alternative is historically less expensive than a signalized intersection. Maintenance costs were considered for each type of intersection looking at 20-30 year maintenance costs.

In the Phase I Engineering Study, a more detailed cost analysis will be performed. In the Phase II Engineering Study, a construction cost estimate will be determined.

Are there any plans to increase Ackman Road to a 4 lane cross-section from a 2 lane cross-section?

The majority of intersections would not require more than one thru lane in each direction. Golf Course Road does require two lanes in each direction. Depending on the alternative selected Huntley Road and Redtail Drive may require two through lanes in each direction as well. The Phase I Engineering study will determine which locations will require additional lanes along Ackman Road.

Are smaller interim improvements being considered along Ackman Road before long term improvements can be implemented?

The County will be considering smaller interim improvements to move forward with in the near future during a resurfacing project. Larger scale intersection improvements or additional lanes will occur in the long term.

What is the estimated timeline for construction?

The County updates the 5 Year Transportation Program on a yearly basis. The current draft program (2021-2025) to be approved by County Board in November identifies construction after the year 2025 however Phase I and Phase II Engineering is included in the 5 year program.

How is the impacts of COVID and the Longmeadow Bridge Construction factored into future traffic projects on Ackman Road?

CMAA performs traffic projections for the region. They did not see the pandemic coming when performing their 2050 traffic projections. It is expected that when the pandemic is under control traffic will increase to the pre-pandemic levels.

Larger projects such as Longmeadow Parkway and others that will be constructed soon were taken into account for the CMAA projections.

Other Comments:

Will there be three way or four way stops anywhere along Ackman Road?

The intersection of Lakewood and Ackman Roads is currently a four way stop. Depending on the results of the feasibility study and phase I engineering study this intersection could remain a four way stop in the future.

Will the County choose a project that addresses safety over a more economical option that may not address the safety concern?

While safety is the primary concern with every project we undertake, the County will also take into account the most cost effective solutions for the corridor.