



Want More Information?  
Have a Question?  
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Welcome to the second newsletter for the Fleming Road Improvement Project. McHenry County would like to thank all the residents and public who have participated in the public involvement process by providing comments and attending the first Public Meeting. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide background on the project, respond to the most frequently made comments and questions received at the first Public Meeting, and inform the public of the next steps in the project.

## Project Goal

The project goal is "To develop a preferred improvement plan which replaces the deteriorated pavement, improves safety, limits disruption to property owners, and maintains the character of the corridor." This goal will be achieved by engaging with the project stakeholders who include residents, property owners, users, local officials, townships, police and fire departments throughout the project duration. Input from and discussions with project stakeholders will help shape the proposed improvement.

## Initial Public Meeting Open House

On March 23, 2010, the Initial Public Meeting Open House was held at the McHenry County Administration Building. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit input from the meeting attendees. A Project Brochure was provided to each attendee. Exhibits showing the Potential Project Needs and Aerial Maps were on display to generate suggestions, ideas and comments from the public about the project. No detailed engineering or design drawings were on display as no design work had been performed in advance of the public meeting. This meeting was purposely held before the design of any improvement alternatives were initiated, allowing the stakeholders to provide input on the project from the beginning, before any conclusions or decisions were drawn by the McHenry County Division of Transportation (MCDOT). This allowed the MCDOT to obtain pre-design information about local concerns, and hear what the stakeholders would like to include or not include with the Fleming Road improvements.

The open house was well attended, with approximately 150 people and interested parties signing the meeting roster. A total of 408 comments were received from 153 stakeholders – 110 on the day of the Public Meeting Open House and 43 after the meeting. Although the comment period deadline was April 9, 2010, comments were accepted beyond this date. Post meeting comments were submitted through the project website [www.FlemingRoad.info](http://www.FlemingRoad.info) or mailed to the MCDOT. All materials and exhibits presented at the open house are available on the project website.

## MCDOT Process – How did we get here?

Many questions were asked about what steps were taken in advance of the County holding the public meeting for Fleming Road on March 23, 2010. The following describes in general terms how any project gets started:

- A project is identified in the County's Long Range Transportation plan or Five-Year Highway Improvement Program (updated annually) for various reasons. For Fleming Road, it was included in the program because of its deteriorating pavement.
- In the budget year when work is anticipated to begin, funds are identified to be expended on a particular project. The funding amount and source (i.e. types of funding such as Motor Fuel Tax dollars, Matching funds, RTA Sales Tax, etc.) is included in the overall budget for the MCDOT, and is approved as part of the overall County's budget each year by the County Board.
- The MCDOT then obtains concurrence from the Transportation Committee (TC) to post a Request For Qualifications to select a project consultant (if one is required). The TC is a group of 7 of the 24 County Board members that serve as the liaison committee between the MCDOT and the full County Board.
- The MCDOT Consultant Selection Policy procedures are then enacted and a consultant is chosen by the Committee. The selection is based on Illinois Statutes which require the selection to be made based on a firm's qualifications.
- The MCDOT then negotiates a scope and fee with the selected consultant and submits the contract for the Transportation Committee's consideration.
- Upon approval, the contract is considered by the full County Board.
- Following County Board approval, work is authorized to proceed.

The process detailed above was followed in the County's identification and funding of the Fleming Road project and the selection of TranSystems as the project consultant.

## Open House Comment Summary

The first step towards achieving the project goal was to engage the project stakeholders and obtain input. From the initial meeting a total of 408 comments were submitted by 153 individuals. All the comments were read and reviewed. The comment types were then sorted into the six Potential Project Needs categories which were presented at the Public Meeting Open House. The categories were:

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. ACCESS     | 4. ENVIRONMENT |
| 2. AESTHETICS | 5. SAFETY      |
| 3. DRAINAGE   | 6. OTHERS      |

"How did we get here?  
How does a project get started?"



"From the initial meeting a total of 408 comments were submitted by 153 individuals. After reviewing all the comments, they were sorted into the six Project Needs categories."



## Frequently Made Comments

The following comments and questions were made most often. In an effort to provide the most information to the residents and public at-large, responses have been provided below to these most frequently made comments and questions:

### Comment: Keep Fleming Road a posted route limiting truck access.

Fleming Road is currently posted with a restriction to trucks weighing over 6 tons per axle. The posting was made by the County Board on March 1, 1996. The weight posting substantiates that prior to 1996 the road condition was deteriorating. The County posted Fleming Road to extend the life of the pavement.

A reconstructed pavement would seek to sustain the loads of heavier everyday trucks including: delivery trucks (5-7 tons/axle) and municipal services vehicles, i.e. garbage trucks (7-10 tons/axle), snow plows (7-10 tons/axle), and fire trucks (7-12 tons/axle). However, the decision to remove the weight restriction along Fleming Road rests with the County Board. The Board will need to decide whether or not to remove the vehicle weight restriction.

### Comment: What's happening with the intersections at both ends of Fleming Road at IL 120 and at Country Club Road?

The intersection of Illinois Route 120 and Fleming Road is under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). As a separate project, IDOT is currently designing the intersection of Illinois Route 120 and Fleming Road with a new traffic signal and intersection improvement. This intersection is part of IDOT's ongoing efforts to install traffic signals at locations where it has been determined to warrant traffic signals. Construction of the IDOT project will likely be completed prior to the Fleming Road Improvements, and the Fleming Road project will tie into the IDOT project.

As part of the Fleming Road project, the intersection of Country Club Road and Fleming Road will be evaluated. The MCDOT will determine if any intersection improvements are warranted. Traffic control warrants, sight distance, realignment needs, and turn lane improvements at this intersection will be studied and evaluated during the next part of the project.

**ACCESS**



- Driveways
- Side Streets
- Intersections

“The Board will need to decide whether or not to remove the vehicle weight restriction.”

“The intersection of Illinois Route 120 and Fleming Road is under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation.”



**AESTHETICS**



- Landscaping
- Fencing
- Rural Setting

“The project goal is to limit disruption to the residents and maintain the character of the corridor.”

**Comment: Maintain the rural charm of Fleming Road.**

The goal of the project is to develop a preferred improvement plan which replaces the deteriorated pavement, improves safety, limits disruption to property owners, and **maintains the character of the corridor**. Through the public involvement process, MCDOT is striving to identify what rural charm features are important to the stakeholders. These features will be incorporated, as practicable, with current design practices and criteria in an effort to arrive at a consensus for the preferred improvements. As the owner of the roadway, MCDOT is required to provide a safe, maintainable, and cost-effective facility for the nearly 3,000 daily users of Fleming Road.

**Comment: Don't remove the hills and curves along Fleming Road.**

Survey information for the hills and curves will be evaluated and compared to current design criteria for this type of roadway facility. For the curves, the curvature and banking of the roadway will be evaluated. For hills, the sight distance or the visibility of vehicles from driveways and side streets will be reviewed.

It is anticipated that the hills and curves that give Fleming Road its rural charm will remain relatively unchanged. The improvements needed to address safety deficiencies will not require that all curves be completely straight or that all hills be completely flat. The design team will review all viable alternatives to implement improvements which will minimize impacts to the hills and curves while still complying with current design and safety needs.

**Comment: Don't allow the loss of the existing landscape and 22-year daffodil project.**

The project goal is to “limit disruption to the residents” and “maintain the character of the corridor.” The existing landscaping and daffodil project are important to stakeholders, and the MCDOT intends to look for ways to incorporate this character in the project. Additional input will be gathered from project stakeholders. i.e. Bull Valley Garden Club. Relocating and replanting landscaping options will be discussed once impacts, if any, have been determined.





### Comment: No flooding problems have been observed along Fleming Road.

Flooding problems in the form of long-standing water along the roadway corridor, road wash-outs from water running over the roadway, and basement or residential flooding may not be commonly observed. However, ineffective roadway drainage may still exist. Drainage of the roadway is important so the sub-soils below the pavement don't retain water for prolonged periods of time. This can cause freeze-thaw cycles to compromise the pavement base thereby deteriorating the riding surface. The project soils investigation will identify the types of soils below the roadway and their ability to drain stormwater run-off. Drainage alternatives will be evaluated in the next part of the study.

### Comment: Don't install curbs along Fleming Road.

The use of curbs usually brings to mind an urban setting. This would seem opposite to the rural context of Fleming Road. However, curbs can be a useful tool in any setting to minimize impacts. Curbs can be used to "contain" the width of a road while still providing positive drainage, protect trees which are close to the roadway edge, and minimize grading. As such, the use of curbs, if appropriate, will be considered as the MCDOT works to minimize project impacts, and then balance the impacts of the improvements with the desires of the project stakeholders.

## DRAINAGE



- Flooding
- Stormwater
- Field Tiles

"The project soils investigation will identify the types of soils below the roadway and their ability to drain stormwater run-off. Drainage alternatives will be evaluated in the next part of the study."



**ENVIRONMENT**



- Trees
- Wetlands / Stormwater
- Agricultural Lands
- Historic / Cultural

“Trees along the corridor were tagged for identification of the type, size and health. The tree tags did not compromise the health of the trees, and if a tree was tagged it does not mean that it will be removed during the project.”

“The presence of endangered species will determine the protective measures needed prior to and during construction.”



**Comment: Don't remove trees along Fleming Road. Why were private trees tagged?**

The MCDOT is aware of and sensitive to the importance of the trees along Fleming Road. The scope of work for its project consultant was developed with this in mind. To that end, the MCDOT had a tree survey performed to determine the location, type, size and health of the trees within the project study area. Trees along the corridor were tagged for identification of the type, size and health. The tree tags did not compromise the health of the trees, and if a tree was tagged it does not mean that it will be removed during the project.

The tree survey information will be used during the alternatives development. It will help identify species trees (i.e. oaks, elms, etc.) to avoid, determine limits of excavation minimizing tree root and canopy impacts, and identify locations where retaining walls or other concepts can be constructed to further avoid or minimize tree impacts. If we know where a tree is, we have a better chance of avoiding it. The cost to review the need for retaining walls has been included in the engineering contract. The need for and location of these alternatives will be determined during the alternatives development.

Trees that need to be removed will be replaced with new trees in accordance with the County's tree replacement policy, which replaces trees on a tree per tree basis. Tree replacement locations (if required) will be coordinated with the project stakeholders as the design moves forward.

**Comment: Designate Fleming Road as a Scenic Route.**

The need to re-build Fleming Road would exist even if it were designated a Scenic Route. Any such designation would be incorporated into the context for the project. The “Scenic Route” designation is an honorary title which offers no more preservation than any other County route receives.

**Comment: How will wildlife be protected?**

The study phase includes environmental reviews for the presence of endangered species in the study area. The presence of endangered species will determine the protective measures needed prior to and during construction. Wildlife crossings will also be evaluated in the next part of the study to determine what measures are needed for protection of wildlife that is not endangered. These could include features such as animal crossing signage or small culverts for animal crossings.



## Comment: Reduce the speed limit along Fleming Road.

The current posted speed limit is 40 mph between Country Club Road and Bull Valley Road, and 45 mph between Bull Valley Road and Illinois Route 120.

The Illinois Vehicle Code requires that an engineering and traffic investigation be used as the basis for posting any speed limit other than those specified by statute. The methodology used in these investigations has been developed by traffic engineers and is uniformly applied nationwide to determine speed limits on all types of roadways. An engineering and traffic investigation includes many factors for consideration. The factors include: road characteristics; shoulder conditions; grade; alignment; and sight distance; the pace speed; roadside development and environment; parking practices and pedestrian activity; and reported crash experience for at least a 12-month period. In accordance with the law, these steps are taken to ensure speed limits are changed based upon sound engineering principals and practices and have a common "basis in fact" determination, appearance and application.

The Illinois Vehicle Code sets limitations for maximum speed limits, the number of altered speed limits per mile, and the difference in speed limit between adjacent altered speed zones for counties, park districts, cities, villages and incorporated towns. County facilities outside urban districts shall be reduced to no less than 35 mph, be limited to 6 speed limit alterations per mile, and shall have a difference in adjacent altered speed zones of no more than 10 mph.

## Comment: Why are improvements being proposed for Fleming Road and why can't it be left alone?

The lack of defined ditches, poor drainage, pavement condition, and the age of the facility make it necessary to reconstruct the roadway. Maintenance of the roadway has demanded more resources over recent years and the existing pavement has reached the end of its useful life.

Fleming Road was first paved in 1966. The last time it was repaved was in 2002 when it was resurfaced with 1¾ inches of asphalt. Its age and poor drainage have compromised the roadway base causing the pavement to fail resulting in crumbling shoulders and pot holes. The existing pavement thickness is relatively thin compared to today's standards. As a result of the poor conditions and more frequent maintenance needs, Fleming Road was first programmed in the County's 5-Year Highway Improvement Plan in April 2005 as adopted by the County Board.

**SAFETY** 

- Hills & Curves
- Sight Distance
- Accident Experience

"In accordance with the law, these steps are taken to ensure speed limits are changed based upon sound engineering principals and practices and have a common 'basis in fact' determination, appearance and application."



**OTHERS** 

- "New Input From the Public"

**OTHERS**



“New Input From the Public”

“There are no plans to make Fleming Road a bypass route for Illinois Route 47 or for any other route.”

“The roadway will remain a two-lane facility with one lane in each direction.”

**Comment: Will Fleming Road eventually become a bypass route for IL 47 or a thoroughfare to connect US 14 to IL 120?**

There are no plans to make Fleming Road a bypass route for Illinois Route 47 or for any other route. There are currently no federal, state, or local plans that the MCDOT is aware of to develop Fleming Road into a thoroughfare connecting US Route 14 and Illinois Route 120. The McHenry County 2030 Land Use Plan has not identified Fleming Road to be extended, serve as a bypass nor become a connecting thoroughfare.

The existing and the 20-year projected Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on Fleming Road and on Country Club Road are as follows:

Roadway	Location	Current ADT Vehicles per Day	2030 ADT Vehicles per Day
Fleming Road	North of Bull Valley	2,910	5,000
Fleming Road	South of Bull Valley	2,600	4,000
Country Club Road	East of Fleming Road	7,590	9,000
Country Club Road	West of Fleming Road	5,000	6,000

Traffic projections are provided by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the northeast region of the State of Illinois, based on a projected regional roadway network and regional population growth. Based on the existing and projected 2030 traffic, there is no need to make Fleming Road a bypass.

**Comment: Don't widen Fleming Road – just maintain the existing footprint.**

The existing pavement ranges from 21 to 22 feet wide from edge of pavement to edge of pavement, and gravel shoulders vary in width from 0 to 8 feet.

The roadway will remain a two-lane facility with one lane in each direction. Traffic volumes (existing and projected) are low and additional through lanes are not needed. Typically a four-lane facility is not considered until the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) exceeds 14,000 vehicles per day (vpd). Since the projected traffic along Fleming Road ranges from 4,000 to 5,000 vpd, a four-lane roadway is clearly not required or being considered. The proposed travel lane widths will be similar to the existing dimensions.

The proposed roadway shoulder width will be determined by a number of factors including bicycle, equine and pedestrian accommodations; roadway drainage; roadside grading; and the clear zone from roadside hazards. These factors will be evaluated in the next part of the study while addressing the comments received from the public.



**Comment: Make improvements to other roads in the area such as Queen Anne Road, IL 47, IL 176, IL 31, IL 120, Bull Valley Road, Ridge Road, Raffel Road, and Country Club Road.**

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) owns and maintains IL 47, IL 176, IL 31, and IL 120. Queen Anne Road, Ridge Road, Raffel Road, and Country Club Road west of Fleming Road are owned and maintained by townships or the Village of Bull Valley. Each of these agencies receives their own funding and set their own priorities for roadway maintenance. The current focus for utilizing the County’s funding mechanisms is to address roadways under the jurisdiction of the MCDOT.

The Fleming Road project is part of the approved McHenry County Five-Year Highway Improvement Program, which is updated annually to help prioritize and focus the County’s resources. This project has been a component of the plan since 2005.

**Comment: What is the roadway classification of Fleming Road?**

Roadways are assigned a functional classification based on the character of service they are intended to provide in accordance with a federal classification system. The classification is assigned based on two functions – access to property and travel mobility. The classification provides the foundation for determining the geometric design criteria. Fleming Road is classified as a rural minor collector. Some characteristics of a rural minor collector are providing service to small communities, collecting traffic from local roads, and emphasizing more access to property than traffic mobility.

**Comment: Don’t take Right-of-Way and lower the real estate value of the properties.**

Survey and data collection work is currently underway to determine the right-of-way widths and ownership boundaries. There are different categories of ownership that need to be investigated before any discussion of land acquisition can begin. Since a full range of alternatives has not been identified or analyzed, land acquisition needs are unknown at this stage in the project. Compensation is offered for any proposed easements or right-of-way that may be required based on Federal land acquisition procedures. Additional information on land acquisition will be provided as the design and needs are defined and the ownership is investigated.

**Comment: Why did the survey extend into private property?**

The survey was extended onto private property to locate trees and other features near the property line so that the constraints of the existing topography could be identified. The survey extension onto private property also helps determine if the direction of drainage flow is toward or away from private property. This drainage information is needed to design the proposed roadway system.

**OTHERS** 

- “New Input From the Public”

“Since a full range of alternatives has not been identified or analyzed, land acquisition needs are unknown at this stage in the project.”



## Comment: How will horses, bicyclists and pedestrians be accommodated on Fleming Road?

The MCDOT recognizes that riding trails across and along Fleming Road are part of Fleming Road's rural charm. The location of these trails and crossings will be evaluated in the next part of the study. Future meetings with the Bull Valley Riding Club will take place to coordinate this effort.

The existing roadway width offers little space for horses, bicyclists and pedestrians to share the road with motorists. One alternative to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians is a path separate from the roadway or a bike lane on the roadway. There are many possibilities to accommodate non-motorized users along Fleming Road, including not making an accommodation. Evaluation of the design criteria and consideration of public comments will help develop alternatives for bicyclists and pedestrians in the next part of the study.

## What's Been Happening Recently?

We have completed the topographic and tree surveys, and recently conducted traffic counts at the intersections of Fleming Road/Bull Valley Road and Fleming Road/Country Club Road. The soils investigation began last month. Borings were drilled approximately every 500 feet along Fleming Road.

## What's Next?

**Soils Investigation** We will continue the soils investigation in the coming months by taking pavement cores to measure the pavement thickness and by digging excavation pits to observe the soil strata. The coring and excavation equipment you may see for this work does not mean that the road construction has begun. Prior to the drilling and coring, we are required to call JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) so the various utility companies can stake out their underground facilities with markings, flags or stakes. This allows us to locate our soils pits and excavations away from the utilities so as not to disrupt service to the residents or be dangerous for the workers. Please do not remove any of these flags locating the underground utilities. The flags will be removed after the drilling operations are complete.

Last month before conducting the soil borings, the utility flags were removed between Bull Valley Road and Illinois Route 120, delaying the work until the utilities could be re-marked. If you see someone removing these markings, please notify the police. There are penalties for removing or moving utility flags/markings before work is completed as noted in Illinois JULIE Law 220 ILCS 50/1 et.seq.

**Stakeholder Meetings** We will be reaching out to key project stakeholders to answer any remaining questions and begin working with them on aspects of the project design. The number of key stakeholder group participants will be limited to allow for productive work sessions. These sessions will be used to obtain input and feedback on the design work as it progresses in advance of being presented at future Public Meetings.

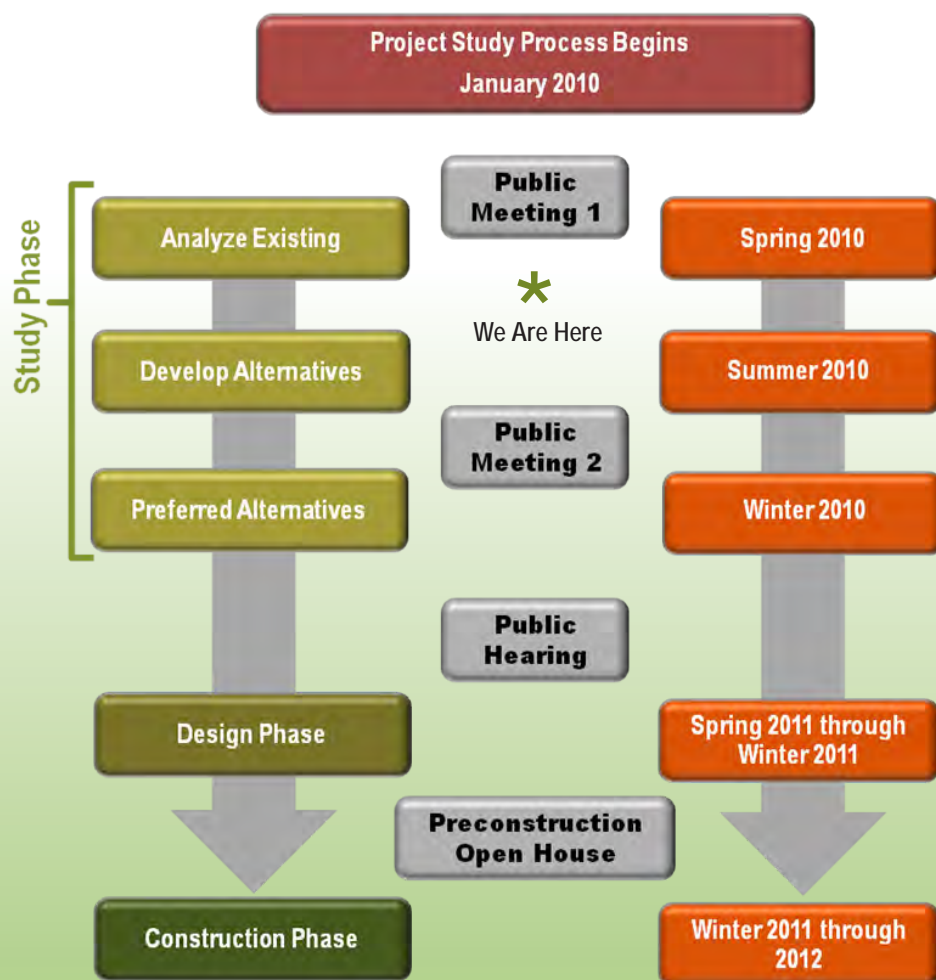


**Developing Alternatives** We will also be evaluating the survey information, comparing it to design criteria, considering and incorporating comments from the public meeting and the key stakeholder groups, and developing proposed improvement alternatives to be presented at a second Public Meeting later this summer.

## Project Schedule

The project will have three phases – Study Phase, Design Phase, and Construction Phase. The project is currently in the study and design phases, concluding by 2011. The construction phase is anticipated to begin late 2011 through 2012. The following are the next project activities and tasks:

- May/June 2010 – Continue Soils and Pavement Cores Investigation
- June/July 2010 – Conduct Key Stakeholder Group Meetings
- May-August 2010 – Analyze Existing Data and Develop Alternatives
- Late Summer 2010 – Public Meeting No. 2 to Discuss Alternatives



## Project Schedule:

- The project schedule is approximately 36 months long.
- The project will have three phases:
  - 1) Study Phase,
  - 2) Design Phase, and
  - 3) Construction Phase
- The project is currently in the early Study Phase – Analyzing Existing. This task includes: data collection, field surveys, auditing existing conditions, and soliciting community input.

Note: Schedule is subject to project readiness and funding availability.



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