

233 South Wacker Drive Suite 800 Chicago, Illinois 60606

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MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Committee and MPO Policy Committee

From: CMAP Staff

Date: December 5, 2011

Re: Public Comment on TIP amendment for project 09-11-0034 adding lanes on IL 47

between Caton Farm Road in Kendall County and I-80 in Grundy County

The attached comment letter was received on the proposed TIP amendment adding lanes on IL 47 between Caton Farm Road in Kendall County and I-80 in Grundy County. IDOT has provided the below draft response.

Ms. Urban's objection in her letter is based on the population forecasts for the area and that the improvement is inconsistent with the GO TO 2040's goals.

Her point concerning population forecasts is based on her review of the Prairie Parkway study which used population forecasts as a basis for developing regional transportation needs. In the Prairie Parkway Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) the widening of this portion of IL 47 is actually identified as completion of the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) IL 47 corridor from I-88 to I-80. Currently IDOT has started phase one engineering and let a construction contract for the widening of IL 47 from Caton Farm Road to the current four lane section of IL 47 in Sugar Grove. The section of IL 47 in question will complete the corridor to tie into the existing four lane section north of I-80 in Morris.

A more appropriate indicator to determine whether the additional lanes are warranted is the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of the roadway. The existing ADT over the project length is currently 8300. The ADT north of I-80 in Morris is 14,300 and in Yorkville it varies from 11,400 to 22,000. The forecasted ADT for the subject portion of IL 47 exceeds the Department's four lane warrants (12,500) within 20 years based on traffic projects averaged over the last 20 years. The Department recently received CMAP's traffic projections for IL 47 north of Yorkville and the 2040 volumes exceed the Department's six lane warrants.

As for the GO TO 2040 goals this improvement is an efficient use of transportation funds by improving the existing corridor to a SRA level facility. In this area IL 47 is the only primary north-south roadway for both Grundy and Kendall Counties. IL Route 47 extends north through Kane County where it provides a north-south route for the Metro west communities in the Fox Valley Area. To the south, IL 47 extends to Champaign County near the Champaign/Urbana metropolitan area. Unlike the Chicago metropolitan area, there are few alternate routes for traffic in this region and no routes that are maintained (snow removal) to this level for the travelling public. Also, the proposed roadway and much of the IL 47 corridor will also provide bicycle accommodations to increase the area's "Livability".





December 2, 2011

Christopher Snyder Chairman, Transportation Committee Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning 233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800 Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Mr. Snyder:

I am writing in my capacity as the Director of the Transportation and Community Development Program at the Center for Neighborhood Technology to object to the TIP Amendment adding lanes on IL 47 between Caton Farm Road in Kendall County and I-80 in Grundy County. Having reviewed the public information available on the Prairie Parkway website (http://prairie-parkway.com/faqs/default.asp#4), it would appear that the justification for this improvement is based in part on population forecasts for Kane and Will counties, two areas with much larger populations that will experience greater growth than Kendall's growth which is only forecasted to be 93,000 between 2010 and 2040 according to CMAP's estimates.

My objection is based both on the fact that it would appear that population forecasts for the area of the improvement do not appear to warrant the additional lanes and that the proposed arterial improvement is inconsistent with the GO TO 2040's goals. Adding lanes to IL 47 in this furthest corner of the region creates further incentive for unsustainable growth by increasing transportation capacity through an area that today is largely farmland and where the nearest town is Yorkville to the north with a population of just over 18,500.

I am not at all surprised that the conformity analysis shows that resulting emissions fall below the applicable attainment demonstration SIP budgets given how remote this area is and how small the population. It seems to me better to return the Prairie Parkway earmark to the Federal Highway Administration than to spend it in such a location.

Sincerely,

María Choca Urban

Director, Transportation and Community Development

Center for Neighborhood Technology

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