

Frequently Provided Comments – Project Need

These comments are focused on why Alden Road is being reconstructed. Many feel that the road is in good shape and does not need to be reconstructed. Others also mentioned other areas that should be a focal point prior to any work being done on Alden Road.

- *County funds would be better spent on other roadways within the County.*

The needs of the entire county were taken into account when the decision to improve Alden Road was made. Every year, the McHenry County Division of Transportation (MCDOT) evaluates its priorities and adjusts them as needed. Visually, the pavement appears to be in better condition than it actually is due to frequent resurfacing. The current deteriorated condition of Alden Road's subbase makes it a priority to the County to avoid repetitive resurfacing. The funds identified to be used to improve Alden Road are meant for County and locally-owned roads; the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has separate funding for its improvements on state-owned highways (such as Illinois Route 47 and US Route 12). Township roadways are also funded from a separate pool of funding from Motor Fuel Taxes which are allocated specifically to each township based on the miles of roadway they maintain.

- *County funds would be better spent on other County services.*

The funds that will be used to improve Alden Road are set aside for roadway improvements to County-owned roads. They come from the Division of Transportation's budget and are used for transportation-related services.

- *Is the County planning Alden Road to be a "gateway project" for future development?*

It is not the County's intent to create a "gateway" for future development along Alden Road. The proposed roadway will provide the same number of lanes (one in each direction) as currently exists on Alden Road. Any future developments will have to apply for a permit to access Alden Road and comply with all requirements of the MCDOT's Access Control and Right-of-Way Management Ordinance.

- *The improvement will decrease the "country aesthetic" of Alden Road.*

The proposed improvements along Alden Road are not intended to change the "country aesthetic" of the area. The design as proposed at the Public Hearing is to maintain an open-ditch, rural cross section. McHenry County will continue to work with project stakeholders to balance the needs of the roadway with the way it appears visually.

- *Drivers are not currently following the posted speed limit. What is being done to remedy this?*

The County Sheriff's Office is aware of the speed issues along Alden Road. The Sheriff's Office has officers patrolling Alden Road on a consistent basis. Over the last 18 months, the McHenry County Sheriff has issued on average one ticket or warning on Alden Road each day.

- *Passing zones on Alden Road create unsafe driving conditions.*

Passing zones along Alden Road are designed based on the required driver sight distances along the roadway. Drivers need to be able to see far enough down the road to make a decision to pass a slower-moving vehicle, make the passing maneuver, and move back into their own lane in a safe manner. If segments of Alden Road cannot accommodate the aforementioned movements, placement of a no passing zone would be evaluated.

Frequently Provided Comments – Drainage Issues

- *How did the County decide to use shoulders rather than curb and gutter?*

The County decided to provide shoulders along Alden Road to preserve the rural nature of the area. All MCDOT projects follow the Stormwater Management Ordinance, which provides requirements for maintaining water infiltration and water quality. The use of shoulders and drainage ditches will help the Alden Road project meet these requirements. The only exception was within the limits of the area of the unincorporated Town of Alden where curb and gutter was considered to minimize impacts to existing structures.

- *There are no existing drainage problems along Alden Road.*

The drainage problems that exist along Alden Road do not stretch the entire 10.2-mile length of the project. There are spot locations where water is ponding on private and public property as a result of deficient roadway drainage systems. Many of the pipes that cross under the road to help water follow its natural path are crushed, preventing the flow of water. As a result, water is trapped under the roadway, out of sight, where it causes the most damage to the roadway. Storm water is not draining from under the roadway itself, so the resulting freeze/thaw cycles cause the pavement to crack and break apart.

- *The current lack of ditches is creating drainage problems.*

Currently, the roadway drainage is accommodated in traditional ditches in some locations and there are other sections where no ditches exist and water finds a natural path back into the ground. As part of this project, a consistent ditch cross section will be created along Alden Road to help keep the water out from under the roadway.

Frequently Provided Comments – Right-of-Way

The majority of these comments were related to large amount of right-of-way that needs to be acquired from residents' properties. Most felt this is unnecessary and were concerned about negative impacts to their property. Many people were concerned about the impacts to old trees and septic fields. Below are some of the questions and comments that were received:

- *What will the right-of-way and easement acquisitions involve?*
- *Will there be tree removal and building impacts?*
- *Will there be historic property impacts?*
- *The loss of right-of-way will bring unsafe and unhealthy traffic conditions closer to our properties.*
- *Land acquisition will negatively affect the flow of Nippersink Creek Tributary.*
- *Land acquisition will negatively impact septic fields and wells.*
- *Existing right-of-way currently extends to the centerline of Alden.*
- *Property acquisition will result in some changes to a property's zoning.*
- *How will the improvement affect future property sales?*
- *Can right-of-way vary from property to property?*
- *When will property owners be contacted about right-of-way acquisition?*

The goal of the Alden Road project is to address the needs of the road. As the Phase I engineering process continues, MCDOT will look to avoid or minimize right-of-way acquisition as much as possible. Not all impacts can be avoided—mitigation for each property will be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Right-of-way impacts are defined in more general terms.

Coordination with property owners along Alden Road will be ongoing throughout the remainder of the Phase I engineering process. All potential impacts to septic fields, wells, fences, and trees, if any, will be studied in detail as the project moves forward with the Phase I engineering process. Unavoidable impacts would be coordinated with each property owner as the design process/land acquisition process moves forward. MCDOT will also work with individual property owners to mitigate impacts that relate to zoning changes where prompted by changes in lot size due to land acquisition.

Compensation is offered for any proposed easements and right-of-way that may be required for the Alden Road project. Once the preliminary design is complete and impacts have been determined, the next step would be initiation of the land acquisition process. This process involves having appraisals performed for the affected properties, followed by negotiations between the property owner and the MCDOT. County representatives will meet individually with each property owner.

Frequently Provided Comments – Federal Money Usage and Roadway Classifications

- *What is the percentage of Federal funds for the project?*

Currently, there are no Federal Funds for this project. It is the County's intent, however, to process the project in a manner that offers the County the most options and opportunities to obtain funding through other means aside from County resources. To that end, the process being followed would allow the use of Federal funds to be utilized on this project in the future.

- *What is the roadway classification?*

Alden Road is classified as a rural minor arterial based on the federal classification system. The County and State determine the classification of roadways based on how connected to other county and state highways the road is and the degree of mobility within the County the road provides and the value it serves. These characteristics alone determine the classification. Some confusion has occurred as the County's Access Control and Right-of-Way Management Ordinance refers to Alden Road as a principal arterial. The Ordinance does not get into the same level of detail as the Federal classifications, hence the slight terminology difference.

Frequently Provided Comments – Project Scope

These comments generally consisted of residents who believe the road does not need to be expanded beyond the existing right-of-way. This also includes those who think the County should forgo the Federal money and build the road with only County money. Most comments focused on keeping the improvements within the existing right-of-way.

- *Why isn't the roadway being built within the existing right-of-way?*

The roadway (driving lanes and shoulders) have been proposed to be built within the existing right-of-way. The drainage ditch feature, which is still being evaluated as part of the continuing Phase I engineering process, may require additional right-of-way.

- *If Alden Road is built to Federal standards, it may become a Federal route.*

Alden Road is a County-owned and maintained highway and will continue to stay that way.

- *Additional right-of-way is only required because Alden Road is being built to Federal standards.*

The right-of-way that is required is due to designing Alden Road to current highway construction standards. County, state, and Federal standards are based on the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' Roadside Design Guide and Greenbook. Also, to maintain eligibility for Federal funding, the Federal Aid Procedures for Local Highway Improvements and the Illinois Department of Transportation Bureau of Local Roads and Streets manuals are also utilized in determining the design requirements for the project. These design standards must be followed no matter the funding source.

- *The roadway doesn't need to be widened. The project may be "overbuilt".*

The proposed roadway will provide the same number of lanes as currently exists on Alden Road. The width of each lane will be made a consistent twelve feet as compared to the existing condition where each lane varies from ten to twelve feet in width. The proposed shoulder width of four feet of pavement and four feet of gravel is consistent with the applicable design standards and is required for safety.

The proposed roadway design, one lane of traffic in each direction with eight-foot shoulders, meets the design criteria for the proposed Alden Road. The size of the drainage ditches and required side slopes will continue to be evaluated as the Phase I engineering study proceeds to ensure that the project complies with the McHenry County Stormwater Management Ordinance.

- *The new roadway will attract industry and development.*

The proposed improvement is to provide an improved safer transportation facility along Alden Road from Nelson Road to State Line and meet the MCDOT's mission of providing safe and efficient transportation systems.

- *The elevation of the road has gotten out of hand.*

Years of repetitive resurfacing without first removing the top layers of pavement will cause the elevation of any roadway to be raised. The existing profile of the road, the hills, valleys, and flat segments, are being evaluated as part of the Alden Road reconstruction. Areas where there is a potential driver sight problem or steep driveway grades will be evaluated and potential corrections will be evaluated during the design process.

Frequently Provided Comments – Traffic Increase

- *The current traffic volume does not justify the improvement.*

The current traffic volumes on Alden Road are at the low end of the spectrum for two-lane roadways. The improvement is being designed to accommodate the traffic volumes that are anticipated for the life span of the roadway. Typically, new roads are expected to last 20 years from the time they are constructed. The traffic volumes on Alden Road are not anticipated to show large increases over the life span of the proposed improvement. It is not the traffic volume that is necessitating the improvement. Alden Road is in need of rehabilitation due to the failing condition of the pavement and for improved safety.

- *Widening roadway will increase traffic.*

The proposed roadway will provide the same number of lanes as currently exists on Alden Road today, so there should not be an appreciable increase in traffic as a result of this project. Traffic projections for the year 2030 provided by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning confirm that additional lanes are not required.

Frequently Provided Comments – “Alternative Motives”

- *The County has not been correctly resurfacing the road.*

The County continuously evaluates the maintenance needs for each roadway on the County Highway system. Those needs are weighed against each other to develop a program for best maintaining the roadway within the available County resources. Oftentimes, roadways which are planned to be reconstructed have a different maintenance plan than those that do not have any plans to be worked on. This leads the County to utilize its resources more efficiently by not investing large amounts of resources into an area that might not get an adequate return on the investment.

- *Not enough information has been provided to residents by the County.*

The purpose of a public hearing is to provide information to affected property owners and other interested parties and to answer questions and gather input from those who attend. As the preliminary design process continues, residents will be kept informed of the progress that is being made.

- *The County has a “hidden agenda” for the purpose of the improvement.*

The purpose of the Alden Road improvement is to provide an improved transportation facility from Nelson Road to State Line Road. The current pavement is deteriorating rapidly and needs to be addressed by the County.

Frequently Provided Comments – Other

- *Will access to existing businesses be maintained?*

Access to existing businesses along Alden Road will be maintained during and after the reconstruction of Alden Road.

- *Will utility improvements be included in this project?*

Minor relocations and adjustments will be done throughout the project limits, as required by the proposed improvement. No new utilities are planned to be installed as part of this project.

- *There were requests that the project include a scenic bikeway and horse trail.*

A scenic bikeway or horse trail would add a significant amount of additional right-of-way acquisition to the project. The path would have to be located between the shoulder and the drainage ditch. A typical path is ten feet wide and needs to have five feet of separation from both the roadway shoulder and the top of the sloped ditch wall. Depending on the area in question, an additional 20 feet of right-of-way would be required. Also, bike paths should have logical starting and ending points, such as parks, forest preserves, or schools. The current project limits for Alden Road do not provide logical starting and ending points for a bike path.

- *What driveway improvements will be included?*

All driveways within the project limits will be reconstructed back to the proposed right-of-way, and in some cases will be reconstructed further, using a temporary grading easement in order to provide a transition back to the existing driveway.

- *Who are the project stakeholders?*

The project stakeholders are people who could be affected by the project and have a stake in how the project is constructed.

- *Has the County coordinated with Wisconsin DOT and Walworth County?*

Yes, MCDOT communicated with Walworth County and coordination with Walworth County has been part of the public involvement process for the Alden Road reconstruction project. Wisconsin DOT does not have any involvement with this project, since Alden Road in Walworth County, Wisconsin is owned and maintained by Walworth County.

- *Will the revised plans be available for public review and input?*

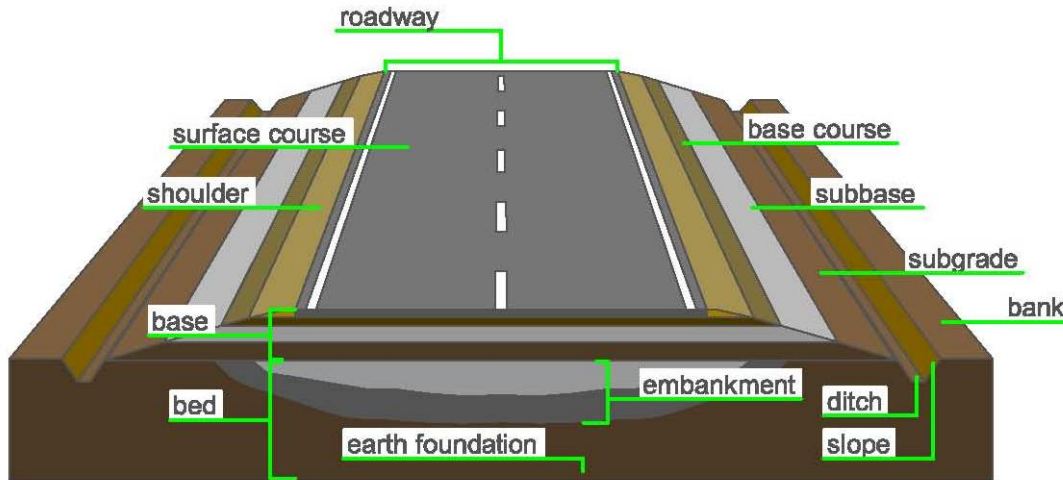
The revised plans will be made available for public review through a second public hearing to be held in 2010. The County also plans to involve the public as it continues the Phase I engineering process through newsletters and McHenry County Transportation Committee meetings. Residents can also visit www.AldenRoad.info for additional information.

- *Why was the length of time the residents were given for the response period so short?*

The three-week response period provided after the public hearing is a typical time frame for publicly-sponsored improvement projects. The IDOT requirement is 14 days. A deadline is given in order to efficiently move the project forward.

Roadway Diagram

A typical road consists of much more than just the part that is seen by drivers. This is what the average cross section looks like for roads built today. It is not specific to federal, state, county or local roadways.



- **Roadway** – the surface upon which vehicles drive
- **Surface course** – the roadway's driving surface, which is smooth and impermeable and provides a good grip for vehicles
- **Shoulder** – the visible area between the edge of the driving surface and the ditch, which provides the roadway lateral support and also is a place for emergency stops
- **Base** – the series of layers that comprise the foundation of the roadway, consisting of the base course, subbase, and subgrade
- **Base course** – the top foundation layer, made up of fine compacted material
- **Subbase** – base of the roadway, made up of coarse compacted gravel, making the roadway solid and stable
- **Subgrade** – the layer supporting the base course and the subbase; provides drainage for under the roadway
- **Bed** – the layer the base rests on and is composed of the embankment and the earth foundation
- **Embankment** – layers of material used to build up or level the route the road is to take
- **Earth foundation** – the part of the ground that is not excavated during the road's construction
- **Ditch** – runs parallel to the roadway and is used to collect water that runs off the roadway and shoulder
- **Slopes** – the sides of the ditch
- **Bank** – the natural land along the edge of the road

Glossary of Engineering Terms

ADT	Average Daily Traffic volume. The average number of cars on a roadway for an average day. ADT's are used to determine the type of roadway and the number of lanes to build.
Arterial	Those County Highways that provide connectivity between the municipal street system and other County or State Highways or serve as a connection between County Highways.
County Highway	Those roadways that, in accordance with 605 5/8-101 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, as amended, have been designated by the County Board as freeways and as such are intended to provide the highest level of mobility within the County Highway System. They are intended to provide very low accessibility.
Detention Basin	A facility designed to temporarily store stormwater runoff either on, below or above the ground surface accompanied by controlled release of the stormwater.
Discharge	The outflow of water, silt, or other mobile substances passing along a conduit, watercourse, or a channel, or released detention storage.
Drainage	The removal of surface water or groundwater from land by drains, grading, or other means. Drainage includes the control of runoff to minimize erosion and sedimentation during or after development and includes prevention or alleviation of flooding.
Easement, Maintenance	A permitted, platted easement outside of the right-of-way for the maintenance of roadway-related improvements.
Easement, Permanent	A permanent easement is a right granted by an underlying property owner that entitles its holder to a specific use of the property. The underlying property owner's rights to use a permanent easement are somewhat restricted, although non-structural improvements such as walkways, driveways, and fencing are generally allowable, as are some types of shallow rooted landscaping.
Easement, Shared Access	An easement appurtenance permitting common access from and through adjacent properties pursuant to specified terms and conditions.
Easement, Temporary	A temporary easement is a right granted for a specific period of time and once it expires, the rights granted return to the property owner.
FAS route	Federal-aid Secondary route, which is now referred to as just a Federal-aid route. These are roads that were improved as part of the Federal-aid highway system and are now under the jurisdiction of the.
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration.
Functional classifications	The function of every street is to provide a combination of traffic movement and access to adjacent properties. The conflicting goals between the mobility and land access functions result in traffic flow and safety problems as well as impacts on adjacent land uses. General functional classifications are Expressway, Arterial, Collector, and Local street.
Other roadway	Those roadways within the County Highway System whose functional classification is below an arterial or by their current physical characteristics provides a low level of mobility.
Phase I	The preliminary design phase of a project. This phase helps to determine what impacts the project will have on the environment, community, etc.

Phase II	The design phase of a project. Where plans and specifications are developed to build the project. It is more complex and complete than a Phase I.
Phase III	Construction.
PDR	Project Development Report.
Principal Arterial	Those County Highways that, by their length and connectivity with other county and/or state highways within or adjacent to McHenry County, provide for a high degree of mobility and supplement the mobility of State Highways and freeways
Reconstruction Project	Reconstructed pavement or full depth reconstruction results when an existing pavement structure is completely removed to the sub-grade and replaced with a new pavement structure. This type of work is needed when the existing pavement has deteriorated to such a weakened condition that it cannot be salvaged with corrective action. The type and extent of pavement distress will determine when pavement reconstruction is necessary.
Resurfacing Project	Pavement resurfacing consists of placing the needed thickness of hot mix asphalt on an existing pavement. The resurfacing will return the pavement to a high level of serviceability and provide the necessary structural strength for the pavement design period. This is done when the existing base course and subbase are determined to be in good condition.
Right-of-Way, By Dedication	Property that is set apart from one's private property for some public use.
Right-of-Way, Fee Simple	An absolute ownership interest in property that is transferable without any limitation, restriction or condition.
Right-of-Way, By Occupation	Ownership of a property obtained by the existence of the roadway for a given length of time. The required length of existence is determined by government statutes.
Rural Roadway	Rural roads typically do not have curb and gutter, storm sewers, sidewalks, or lighting. Rural roads usually have open drainage, and an aggregate or stone shoulder.
State Highway	All highways under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation. This includes all Interstate highways, all other marked State and US routes, and some unmarked routes.
Township Road	All rural public roads that are not part of the State highway system, the county highway system, or the municipal street system and not under the jurisdiction of any department, board, commission, agency, or municipal corporation of the State of Illinois.
Urban Roadway	Urban roads have curb and gutter, storm sewers (enclosed drainage), parkway trees, and overhead lighting.

Next Steps

- A survey crew will be out along Alden Road, in early November, gathering more detailed information regarding the land in order to refine the design.
- The County will identify members of a stakeholder group and send out invitations for the first meeting of the group in November 2009.
- In Spring 2010, a follow-up stakeholder group meeting will be held to discuss the progression of the additional engineering analysis that will be ongoing over the winter.