



Harlem Avenue between 63rd and 65th

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP | COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP?

The Community Advisory Group (CAG) is a small working group that will assist the Project Study Group (PSG) in identifying the project's context and formulating recommendations for items that should be taken into consideration during the planning process. The CAG will include representatives from the community, local agencies, and key project stakeholders and will meet periodically over the course of the project.

WHAT IS THE PROJECT STUDY GROUP?

The PSG is a multidisciplinary team made up of members of the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and consultant staff. The PSG will oversee the project from planning through construction.

WHAT IS THE CSS PROCESS?

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is a State of Illinois program that seeks effective, multi-modal transportation solutions by working with stakeholders to develop, build, and maintain cost-effective transportation facilities that fit into and reflect the project's surrounding – its "context." Consideration will be given to preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources while maintaining and enhancing safety and mobility. Residents, business leaders, and local representatives, among others, will have opportunities to be engaged in the study through three public involvement meetings, one public hearing, and five CAG meetings. For more information about the CSS process in Illinois visit <http://www.dot.stat.il.us/css/home.html>.

WHAT IS THE CAG'S ROLE IN THE CSS PROCESS?

The CAG will achieve several study objectives as defined in the CSS process. The main role of the CAG will be to provide detailed insight of community and stakeholder interests and assist the PSG with building general agreement on project solutions. Each CAG meeting will have a specific project topic for consideration and discussion. The consultant team will present detailed engineering and technical information to the CAG throughout the study development. In this way, the CAG will function as a community liaison or pipeline between the PSG and the public. The CAG meeting format is not intended as a public forum or workshop; however, the meetings will be open to the public. It is important to note that a general agreement will be sought for every issue. However, if a general agreement cannot be achieved, IDOT will document the objections and make a final decision allowing the process to move forward.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CAG MEMBERS?

- Attend each CAG meeting and participate in group-facilitated activities.
- Participate openly and honestly, while respecting the opinions of all group members.
- Support the specific role of the Group in the study process.
- Represent his or her organization and community interests.
- Work to achieve general agreement among all interested parties and the public/community interests.

WHO SHOULD BE ON THE CAG?

The CAG should be representative of the overall study area's interests, including those that have a stake in the outcome. Therefore, the CAG membership will include individuals from a broad range of interest organizations. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Local government and planning agencies
- Advocates of community interests
- Chambers of commerce
- Transportation organizations
- Environmental coalitions
- School and local religious representatives
- Neighborhood groups
- Area residents
- Utility companies
- Local school districts
- Pace
- Local businesses
- Railroads
- Others that have an interest in the project

To foster an open and balanced community working group, it is recommended that CAGs be composed of non-elected officials. Briefings will be conducted with local and regional elected officials regarding project updates and progress. These meetings may be held at major milestones in the project or as requested.

In order to be effective, the number of stakeholders in the CAG should be sufficient to ensure all potential social, economic, and environmental project issues, from both a local and regional perspective, are considered and evaluated throughout the project development process. The CAG must also be manageable in size and structure to ensure meetings are effective and productive to permit project progress.

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

It is expected that the CAG will meet approximately five times during business hours over the course of the study period. They will be held at a location near the project. The time commitment is expected to be two hours per meeting.