

159th Street Corridor Communities Seek Public Input on Improvement Strategies

ORLAND PARK, IL - Six municipalities along the 159th Street Corridor have been collaborating on a long-term vision for physical improvements and a common marketing strategy for 159th Street. These same towns are now seeking public input through an on-line survey before recommendations are finalized.

The corridor varies greatly through the study area, from a rural character at the west end in Homer Glen through Orland Park, Orland Hills, Tinley Park and Oak Forest to a fully developed character at the east end in Markham. The study seeks to identify an overall theme for enhancements and marketing efforts, and to improve the corridor's function, appearance and marketability in conjunction with future roadway improvements by Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

"All of the communities along this corridor have a mutual interest in working with IDOT and Will and Cook Counties to ensure that future improvements are of the highest quality, and that they address the needs of all users," said Orland Park Mayor Dan McLaughlin.

The right design will have a positive impact not just on vehicle mobility, but also on pedestrian, bicycle and transit access. In order to avoid 159th Street becoming a dangerous high-speed highway that divides communities, the communities can work together to achieve good design objectives.

These strategies are intended to work toward redeveloping 159th Street as a "complete street" where pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and cross a complete street. Targeted capital improvements can create a more attractive place, providing a more positive perception of the Corridor as a vibrant shopping and recreational destination for the south suburbs.

The draft report that includes design and marketing concepts that have been developed is available for viewing by following the links on the Village of Orland Park's website at www.orland-park.il.us.

Residents, property owners and business owners with an interest in the future of the 159th Street Corridor are encouraged to view these

concepts and provide feedback through the brief on-line survey also available on the village's site.

"Our steering committee decided that providing an opportunity to respond to an on-line survey would be the best way to get feedback from as many interested stakeholders as possible," said Robert Sullivan, Orland Park Planning Director. This feedback will be taken into consideration as representatives of each community meet to discuss improvement priorities and implementation strategies in spring 2010.

The 159th Street Corridor Plan is being developed with grant funding from the Illinois Department of Transportation, supplemented with matching funds from the participating communities, which include from east to west, Markham, Oak Forest, Tinley Park, Orland Park, Orland Hills and Homer Glen.