CITIZENS FOR APPROPRIATE TRANSPORTATION (CAT)

ACTION ALERT – AUGUST 19, 2015

www.CitizensForAppropriateTransportation.org

The Village of Oak Park is holding a Study Session on Monday August 24 starting at 7 PM at Village Hall to consider the ramp heights at Harlem, air quality, and noise. There is a 3-D model of the proposed Harlem Ramps near the entrance in Village Hall for public viewing (see photos). The comments below provide you with background information.

Ramp Designs - IDOT's stated goal for the Eisenhower Transportation Corridor is "*create an asset for adjoining communities.*" Do you think they have achieved that goal? If they have not avoided negative impacts, have they minimized or mitigated them as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

Air Quality – Breathing polluted air is bad for human health. Motor vehicles on roads emit particulates into the air directly (from tailpipes and normal brake and tire wear) and indirectly because precursors in vehicle exhaust can react in the atmosphere to form particulates. Stop-and-go traffic increases particulates because of increased idling. Engines have an increased load when stopped vehicles accelerate. Air quality analysis uses two computer models. The **Emissions Model** forecasts emissions from cars, trucks, motorcycles, and buses on the expressway. The **Dispersion Model** uses emission levels to forecast pollution levels for receptors at various distances from the expressway. Receptor locations such as schools, churches, residences, and parks are coded into the computer model based on their physical relationship to the expressway.

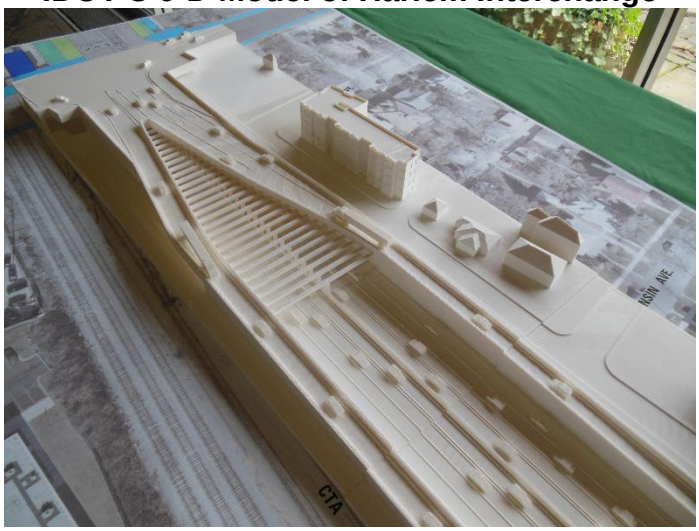
Noise is unwanted sound. It is measured in decibels (dB), but the human ear filters out both low and high frequencies, so noise analyses use the A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) to measure noise the way the human ear perceives it. Traffic noise from the expressway varies based on traffic volume, speed, number of trucks, distance, roadway grade, and related factors. Traffic noise comes from three sources: engines, exhausts, and tires. Noise generally affects people who live within 500 feet or so from the expressway. Traffic noise has more impact on us when windows are open. Noise barriers cannot completely block all noise. To be effective, the barrier must be high and long enough to block the view of the road. Bridge openings lessen the effectiveness of noise barriers. For IDOT to consider noise barriers, they must be feasible and reasonable.

Conclusion - Multi-modal corridors in developed communities have many impacts. IDOT cannot meet everyone's expectation, so decisions will be based on trade-offs. The major question is whether we do as much as possible to achieve positive outcomes and reduce negative impacts.

Rick Kuner

800 South Maple with a truck idling on the westbound ramp to Harlem

IDOT'S 3-D Model of Harlem Interchange



IDOT's 3-D Model of Harlem Interchange