



Project Fact Sheet & Environmental Justice Analysis Summary

Project Description

The Cedar Lake Road Realignment project has three main objectives:

- Improve the safety and capacity between Nippersink Road and Hart Road
- Improve operations at Cedar Lake Road and the crossing of the Metra Milwaukee District North Line
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity within the study area

This federally-funded project will realign Cedar Lake Road to the west with a new at-grade rail crossing. The new roadway will be a 5-lane curbed roadway with a multi-use path, sidewalk, and drainage improvements. Improvements to the intersections of Nippersink Road, IL Route 134 and Hart Road, as well as improvements to Metra's Milwaukee District North Round Lake station site, are also being proposed. A map showing the proposed improvements is enclosed.

Summary of Environmental Justice Analysis

The purpose of the Environmental Justice analysis was to determine if minority or low-income communities (i.e., Environmental Justice communities of concern) would enjoy equally in the benefits of the improved roadway, while also not being adversely impacted during or after construction. The full draft analysis is available at <https://cedarlakeroadrealignment.org/>. Options to mitigate adverse effects to the Environmental Justice population were also included.

Below is a list of the key findings of the Environmental Justice analysis:

- Minority (in this case identified as Hispanic or Latino) and low-income populations were identified within the project area based on a review of US Census data. Records research determined that the growth of a Hispanic community in the project area occurred primarily between 1990 and 2010.
- It was essential that the public be informed of the project and have an opportunity to share their concerns and preferences. Outreach efforts included multiple stakeholder and public meetings, a public hearing, and the development of a public website where project information was made readily available throughout the project study.
- The most common issues raised by residents included the impacts that realigned Cedar Lake Road would have on downtown businesses, the need to relocate some businesses, the addition of turn lanes, and the importance of maintaining vehicular, pedestrian and emergency responder access. The absence of Spanish language informational materials was also noted.
- A Spanish translator was present at the public hearing. In response to concerns raised at the public hearing, Spanish language materials were posted to the website and mailed to residents.
- It was determined that while not making improvements to Cedar Lake Road would eliminate negative impacts to adjacent properties and the environment as the result of new construction (see Anticipated Impacts below), a failure to do so would be detrimental to the growth of the area and the safety of residents. Commute times and accidents would increase, and pedestrian accessibility issues would not be addressed if improvements to Cedar Lake Road are not made.

- Based on review of available documents and records, the project team determined that since 1990, no transportation projects in the Round Lake community have resulted in undue burdens being placed on any minority populations. Past projects have served to improve pedestrian connectivity, traffic mobility and multi-modal transit, while positively impacting the community.
- The analysis concluded that Environmental Justice communities would not be unfairly impacted by the project. Both the benefits and burdens of the project will be evenly distributed among the entire population regardless of race, age, disability, income, or other demographic characteristics.

Summary of Positive Benefits and Anticipated Impacts

PROJECT BENEFITS

- An anticipated \$240 million in net benefits including congestion relief, safety benefits, emissions reduction, and economic development (according to Benefit Cost Analysis in 2021 RAISE Grant application).
- Safety benefits include reduced vehicle crashes and train-vehicle-pedestrian conflict points.
- Increased vehicular safety and reduced traffic congestion.
- A path for emergency vehicles to use emergency vehicle preemptive equipment and not contend with on-street parking conflicts and the existing four-way stop sign.
- Additional on-street public parking in the central business district on Aylon Avenue and Nippersink Road.
- Improved multi-modal connectivity and transit access through the reconfiguration of the Metra Station to a more centrally located site near the business district.
- Improved pedestrian safety and connectivity, access to facilities and community through the addition of signalized pedestrian crossings, and greater walkability in the downtown business district.
- Improved air quality due to reduced vehicle idling time.
- Reduced flooding on roadway and properties in flood prone areas through improvements to the drainage system, including storm sewers, detention ponds, and new culverts.

PROJECT ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

- Seven properties will need to be relocated to accommodate the roadway improvements. One is a minority-owned business, and the remaining are non-minority-owned residential, business and institutional properties, including the Village Hall Annex Building occupied by the School District. Impacts to these property owners and their occupants will be mitigated by the Uniform Relocation Act, including fair market compensation for impacts and relocation assistance.
- The School District Welcome Center may be relocated outside of the Village center.
- A perception that the existing businesses district will be less visible to through traffic. Increased traffic to the area, improved walkability, and access to transit should help mitigate this impact.
- The potential separation of residential areas to the west and the downtown area due to widening Cedar Lake Road to 4 lanes and a longer walking distance to the downtown area due to the elimination of a pedestrian crossing at Aylon Avenue. Signalized pedestrian crossings on proposed Cedar Lake Road at IL 134 and Nippersink Road should mitigate this impact.
- Minor traffic noise impacts to three residences on Cedar Lake Road south of Nippersink Road.
- Environmental impacts include 0.8 acre of wetland and 0.1 acre of streams, along with tree removal in the area.