

**I-355 South Extension
Important Information about the New Road & Noise Abatement**

The Illinois Tollway is building a 12.5 mile extension of I-355 south from I-55 (Stevenson Expressway) to I-80 to serve the residential and commercial growth in Will County. The current construction is the culmination of **plans that began more than 40 years ago**. **Over the past 15 years**, the Illinois Tollway and local municipalities have held **numerous public meetings** about the North-South Tollway Extension. Official **public notice** of the route (see map on back of Project Fact Sheet) was filed in **April 1999**. Construction on some portions of the extension has already begun, and completion of the new road is expected in late 2007.

Those who live or work near the route may be concerned about noise. Wherever possible, the road will be **depressed below existing roads/activity to buffer road-related noise**. Whenever a new road is built, there are typically many requests for additional noise abatement, such as noise walls. Unfortunately, noise walls are very expensive and the **Tollway project budget of \$730 million** has been committed primarily to the construction of the road and related structures like ramps and bridges. Therefore, the Tollway used the following set of criteria, based on federal highway guidelines, to determine if and when noise abatement measures (such as noise walls or earth berms) would be included in Tollway-funded construction.

Tollway Noise Abatement Criteria (in effect since 2000)

- To be considered for a noise study, all of the following three criteria must be met:
 - Major improvement on roadway (i.e. building a new road);
 - Noise sensitive land use adjacent to road where frequent human activities occur; and
 - Sensitive land use within 500 feet of travel lanes.
- **Results of a noise study are evaluated in the context of other key factors:**
 - Will noise abatement be effective in reducing noise levels?
 - Will it be cost effective? (based on number of benefited residences within 500' of travel lanes)?
 - Is Tollway-funded noise abatement reasonable & feasible?
 - **History – Was development there before road was public knowledge?**
 - Notice of Intent published in Federal Register in April 1999
 - Developers/Realtors responsible for informing home buyers
 - Home buyers expected to perform due diligence

Tollway Noise Abatement Policy

Only developments platted before project was public knowledge in April 1999 will receive Tollway-funded noise abatement.

I-355 South Extension

Important Information for Community Planning of Noise Abatement

With the recent growth of Will County, there are a number of newly developed residential areas and schools near the extension route that do not meet the Tollway's noise criteria/policy and, therefore, will not receive Tollway-funded noise abatement. However, there are various options for these areas. The Tollway is providing the following information for neighborhoods and developments that want to pursue noise abatement measures on their own.

Guidelines for Locally Funded Noise Abatement

- Must be built on developer/development Right-of-Way
- Locals must assume cost, maintenance and liability
- Tollway will provide 355 contractor information upon request
 - Locals must establish separate contract for noise abatement work

Funding

- Possible funding sources include community, developers, homeowners association etc.
 - May be possible to apply for grants
- Potential cost-saving measures
 - Use of Tollway-funded 2005 Noise Study Results
 - **Tollway will provide technical data & noise study results for use in the planning of future noise abatement**
 - Noise study results often required for grants and saves costs with contractors
 - **Alternate types of noise abatement** to consider, in addition to noise walls, may include:
 - Earth/landscape berms
 - Window treatments or insulation
 - Buffer area
 - Detention basin (soft surface)
 - Lower cost walls may be possible since **don't have to meet FHWA requirements** or building on Tollway ROW (i.e. a wall with a shorter design life than required by FHWA)
 - **Use of 355 project contractor**
 - May be cheaper since working in close proximity

The Tollway is willing to work with homeowner groups, developers and/or municipalities to help identify opportunities for noise abatement so you can work through the funding needs of various alternatives. You can get more information by calling **Community Coordinator Beth Rahe** in the I-355 South Extension Project Office at **630-633-2022 x109**.

We hope that you find this information helpful and want to reaffirm that the Illinois Tollway will work with you to do what we can about your concerns. As you know, the I-355 South Extension has been a long-awaited connection between I-55 (Stevenson Expressway) and I-80 in Will County. The Tollway's \$730 million investment in this project will increase mobility between home and jobs, reduce travel times, relieve congestion on local roads, and create 35,000 jobs.