

MARCH 26, 2024

# I-94 & Dolton Road Interchange PEL Study



**I-94/Dolton Road Interchange**  
CALUMET CITY, IL

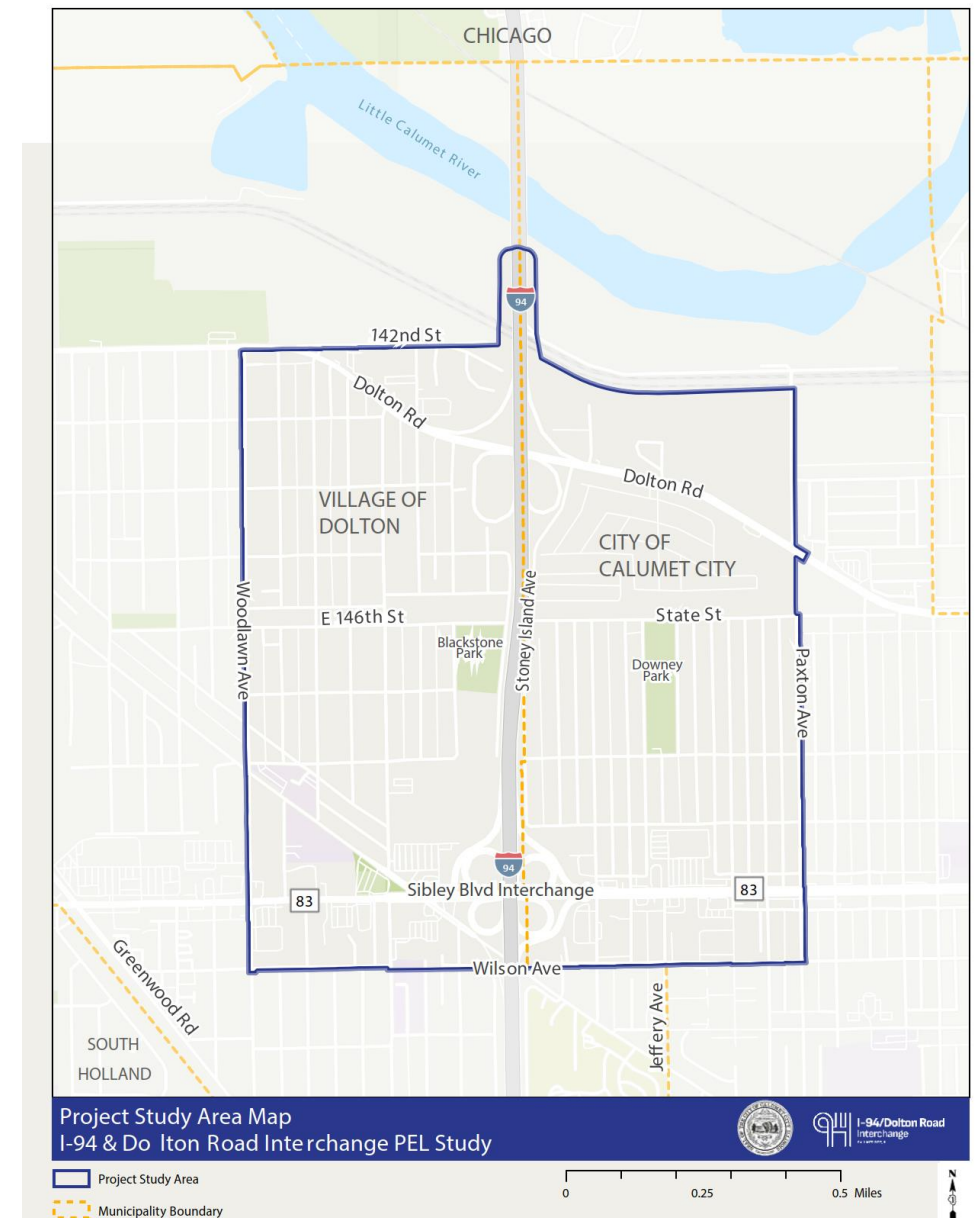
# Kicking off the Study

- Introductions
- The PEL Study Process
- Study Overview & Timeline
- Community Engagement
- SAC Engagement Process
- Questions & Answers
- SAC Next Steps



# What are We Studying?

- Interchange of Dolton Road and I-94 (Bishop Ford Expressway)
- Current Conditions: Partial Access to/from I-94
- Is there a need for full access to/from I-94?
- Who will provide input to inform the study?
  - Calumet City
  - Regulatory Agencies
  - Property Owners & Residents
  - Businesses
  - Roadway users / Commuters
  - Elected Officials
  - Non-Profit Organizations
  - Overall community



## What is a PEL Study?

Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) combines transportation planning with the initial phases of environmental review while considering the community and its economic and environmental resources.

PEL allows for early “planning-level” discussion with the community and stakeholders, as well as resource and regulatory agencies.

- Define the Study Location
- Develop a well-defined Purpose of and Need for a study
- Develop reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis

These are essential elements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decision-making process.

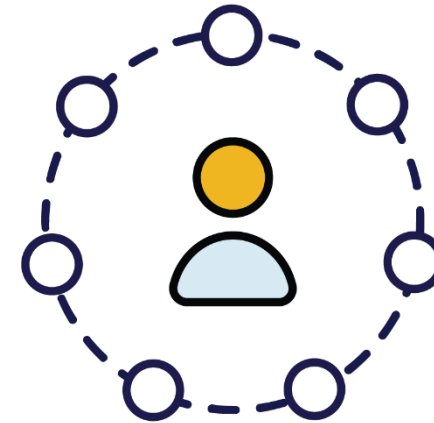


## PEL is a Pre-NEPA Study

NEPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects that their project may have on the environment and the related social and economic effects.

### How do PEL and NEPA work together?

Once the PEL study concludes, alternatives can be carried forward into the NEPA environmental review process and into Preliminary Engineering Design



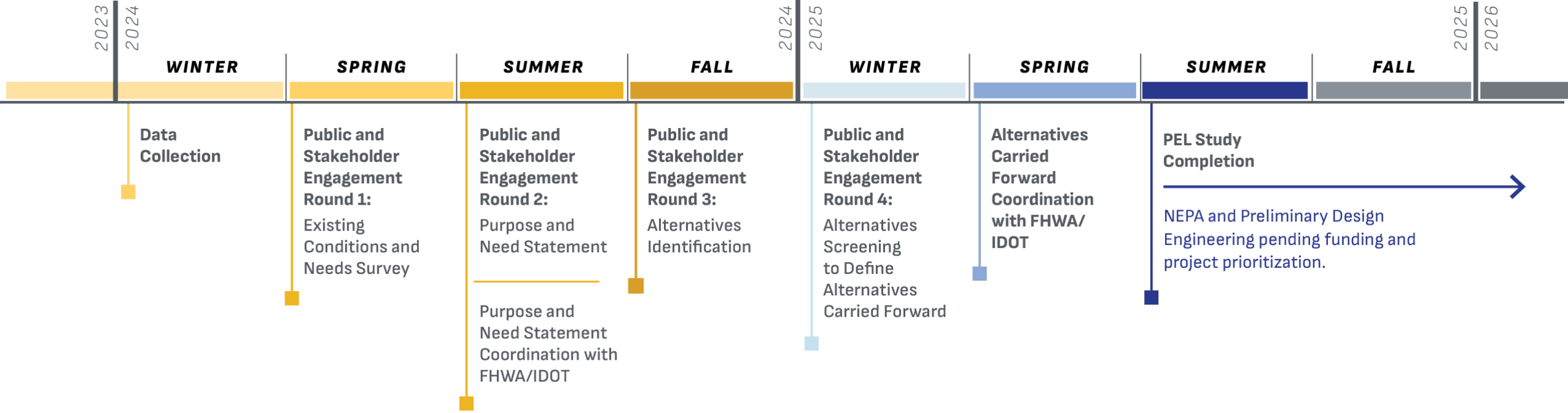
# Benefits of a PEL Study

## PEL accelerates the project delivery process by:

- Connecting initial planning and environmental impact reviews
  - *(location, purpose of and need for a project, considered alternatives)*
- Allowing for early community engagement and input
- Reducing the need for rework and revisiting past decisions
- Building relationships with resource agencies and stakeholders



# Study Overview & Timeline



# PEL Public Engagement is:

- Collaborative with Stakeholders
  - Stakeholder Advisory Committee
  - Workforce Development
  - Public Meetings and Surveys
- Consistent throughout the Study
- Data-based



# Our Public Engagement will Include:

- Regular digital information with the public (via social media, Calumet City website and bimonthly newsletters)
- Participation in community meetings
- Surveys
- Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings
- Workforce and economic development workshops
- Two rounds of Public Information Meetings

# Stakeholder Advisory Council (SAC)



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Will work to provide input on community needs, concerns, and values related to the PEL Study.

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The Council will be a conduit between the study team and the community.

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Members identified from stakeholder groups such as: public officials, businesses, nonprofits, youth groups, seniors, advocacy groups, etc.

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Council to convene regularly scheduled meetings (virtually). Members will identify a proxy to attend meetings in members absence.



# SAC Roles and Responsibilities

## The Council:

- Follows established ground rules
- Provides local insight into issues and concerns
- Identifies potential solutions
- Serves as a communication conduit
- Supports the Project Study Team
- Attends all meetings or designate a representative



*Photo: City of Calumet City Facebook page*



*Photo: City of Calumet City Facebook page*

## SAC Ground Rules

- The Study Team will lead the SAC throughout the study's schedule. Study decision-making will be made by staff at the City of Calumet City, IDOT-BLRS, and FHWA
- Input from all participants is valued and considered, as such all participations must be treated with respect and dignity
- All participants must come to the process with an open mind and participate open and honestly
- All participants understand that topics will not be revisited once the issues have been addressed and general understanding is reached





Photo: WSP

## SAC Ground Rules (Continued)

- The study must progress at a reasonable pace, based on the original project schedule
- All decisions made by the Study Team must be arrived at in a clear and transparent manner, and the stakeholders should agree their input has been considered
- The participants and list of stakeholders are subject to change as the project warrants

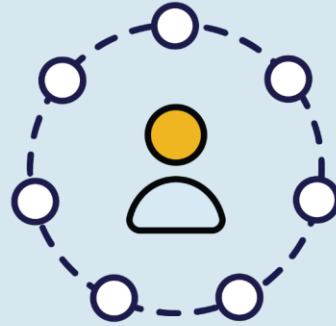


# Workshops

## Building Futures: Empowering communities through workforce and economic development workshops

- There will be a total of two workshops
- Participants could include:
  - Local, county, state, and regional workforce and economic development organizations
  - Small and large local employers
  - Job-seekers
  - And more
- They will be 2-4 hours in duration, and hosted at locations close to the study area in the local community
- They will occur later in 2024, after the Purpose & Need is defined
- These workshops will be data-driven
- SAC members are encouraged to promote the workshops within your networks and attend if you would like

# Workforce Development



## Workforce Development and the I-94 & Dolton Road PEL Study

- Workshops will include breakout session targeted at workforce development that could focus on topics such as:
  - Resume building and effective job searching
  - Interview skills and professional communication
  - Time management and goal setting
  - Discussion with local workforce agencies to present possible job opportunities

# Economic Development



## Economic Development and the I-94 & Dolton Road PEL Study

- Workshops will aim to provide participants with valuable insights and practical skills to contribute to the economic development of their communities.
- Economic development activities could focus on topics such as:
  - A presentation on local economic development initiatives
  - Opportunities for entrepreneurship and small business development
  - Access to funding and resources
  - An introduction to the Calumet City Enterprise Zone
  - Panel Discussion with local area business owners

# Questions?

## Questions About the SAC

- How can SAC members use your networks to better engage the community in the PEL study?
- What kinds of informational materials would be beneficial to share with your networks?
- Do you see any barriers to engaging with the Study Team?
- Is there anyone in the community that you feel would be a great addition to the SAC?

## Questions About the PEL Study

- What opportunities could the interchange bring to the community?
- How will this project help the community and residents?

# Next Steps



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