

MEMORANDUM

TO: David A. Hulseberg, Village Manager

FROM: William J. Heniff, AICP
Director of Community Development

DATE: January 20, 2011

SUBJECT: ISTHA Strategic Advisory Report Recommendation

Attached is a copy of a recently completed Strategic Advisory Report produced by the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA). With the recent completion of the Veterans Memorial tollway extension (Interstate 355) and widening projects, such as along the Reagan Memorial Tollway (Interstate 88, Illinois Route 110) the ISTHA sought to create the attached "A Roadmap for the Future - Recommendations and Guiding Principles for Illinois Tollway Decision-Making". The final report was transmitted to the Village in October, 2010 and is intended to set a framework to think creatively, not only about current Tollway roles and responsibilities, but also about new ways in which the agency can contribute to the economic and social well-being of the region and the state. The report assessed opportunities and challenges and offered input and recommendations to refocus the Illinois Tollway on the customers and the communities it serves.

As many of the concepts and recommendations have land use and transportation impacts for the communities along the tollways (like Lombard) staff transmitted the report for consideration by the Plan Commission and the Transportation & Safety Committee.

On November 15, 2010, the Plan Commission considered the report and offered its comments. The Plan Commission agreed with the comments outlined in the staff report. They also suggested that additional information pertaining to the website should be included in the report. They also suggested that a list of the various other transportation agencies who interface with the ISTHA be identified in their report.

On January 3, 2011, the Transportation & Safety Committee reviewed the report and concurred with the staff findings. They reiterated the importance in inter-governmental review and cooperation and coordination, particularly as it relates to projects and programs (such as congestion pricing) that can affect the local roadway network.

With these Committees completing their work, staff is forwarding staff's comments and the Committee recommendation to the Village Board for consideration. A draft letter to the ISTHA is attached for consideration.

BACKGROUND

In April, 2010, the Illinois Tollway Strategic Advisory Team was established to undertake the planning and vision effort. It comprised of a diverse array of business, labor, transportation planning and advocacy and hospitality management interests. Governmental participation in the document creation was limited. The document was intended to provide a comprehensive review and evaluation of the ISTHA to offer improved service to the region.

The document serves more as a policy statement rather than a physical plan. The report establishes eight guiding principles and four priority areas. Key principles that are most germane to the Village would be:

Environmental Stewardship

Two of the principles (Principles 2 and 3) and Priority Area 2 recognize the need for environmental stewardship, including wetland mitigation, stormwater management and water quality improvements. The report also identifies sustainable practices in plant material selection to accommodating non-motorized transportation linkages. The principles also state that the ISTHA develop a policy to incorporate local and regional plans into their project planning. To this end, staff will forward the recently adopted Open Space Plan component of the Village Comprehensive Plan to the ISTHA for incorporation and inclusion within their planning activities. Moreover, staff recommends to ISTHA that the Village be made an active participant in future planning and engineering studies on projects within the Village's planning area. Lastly, the Village recommends increased participation and facilitation in establishing such linkages, in the form of partnerships, inter-governmental agreements and funding opportunities.

Collaboration with Public Agencies

Principle 6 states that the ISTHA become more active in land use planning on a regional basis. Moreover, they will also coordinate planning with local governments and maintain themes of higher densities, reduced sprawl, protecting open space and maximizing efficient use of existing assets. Staff suggests that these concepts can be conceptually supported but also notes that such land use decisions, such as density increases, must be reviewed carefully as such increase can excessively burden other transportation or infrastructure components of the community.

Promoting the Regional Economy – Maximize Land Planning

Priority Area 1 (page 7) identified a number of activities to maximize the usage of tollway property to serve a wide variety of needs, including an "asset usage study" for non-road related uses. Staff recommends that the Village be provided the opportunity to play an integral role in such analyses so that such studies can advance the goals of the ISTHA and the Village.

Partnerships with Communities

The report notes the partnership roles the ISTHA can have with municipalities. The Village applauds these efforts and looks forward to partnering with the Tollway on bridge/viaduct aesthetic enhancements and other improvements that draw attention to the community.

Congestion Pricing

The report introduces the concept of congestion pricing as a potential method to address congestion issues. As this is a very complex issue, the Village would like to be kept informed of any future studies pertaining to this issue and such studies should address the economic impacts

of the pricing structures on the regional transportation network as well as the impacts of such pricing systems on the adjacent local, non-tollway roadway networks.

Zoning Coordination

Staff is pleased to see that the report recognizes the municipal role of zoning in tollway decision-making, particularly as it relates to truck traffic usage. The report also seeks support from local communities as it relates to drop-off and pick-up times for deliveries. Staff suggests that the Village is willing to work with the ISTHA on this effort, but also recognizes the impact of delivery limitations may have on existing or proposed business activity.

ACTION REQUESTED

The Plan Commission and the Transportation and Safety Committee recommend that the Village Board authorize the signature of the Village President on a letter to the ISTHA summarizing the issues set forth in the report review and transmit the comments to the ISTHA accordingly.