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**VILLAGE OF HAWTHORN WOODS VOTES TO OPPOSE ROUTE 53 EXTENSION
Hawthorn Woods becomes second Village in Lake County to object to road plan**

HAWTHORN WOODS, IL – The Hawthorn Woods Village Board took official action at their November Board meeting to send a message to the Illinois Tollway Authority, IDOT, and Governor Rauner that the extension of Route 53 through Hawthorn Woods would be devastating to the municipality, the environment, and the people and businesses in its alignment.

In a packed Village Hall meeting, several residents voiced opposition to the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council's (BRAC) report that erroneously moved the alignment from a preferred corridor back through the sensitive Indian Creek Marsh wetlands, where a previous Environmental Impact Study (EIS) strongly recommended avoiding the 130 acre conservation area. The BRAC committee, comprised of many special interest groups, made recommendations changing the study without a single community that would be impacted by the extension of Route 53 through their community represented in the group. The BRAC members did not include the Village of Hawthorn Woods, Long Grove, Mundelein, Kildeer, and Round Lake. These are the communities directly in the path of the proposed Rt. 53 extension.

The Village of Hawthorn Woods resolution highlights:

- A lack of consensus among stakeholders. Only 16% of the Lake County population supported the Route 53 extension in the last advisory referendum, which did not identify the road as a freeway or tollway.
- A flawed process where state statutes have been violated with Open Meetings Act violations and wrongful composition of the BRAC omitting all corridor communities.
- A promise to construct a 45 mph boulevard with two lanes with an estimated \$2.6 billion price tag, while the state of Illinois is in financial crisis and unable to pay existing expenses.
- A controversial funding plan that would take future property tax revenues from new commercial development away from schools, police, libraries, fire districts and other critical emergency services.
- An elevated road on high piers that would create a bridge over several communities in Lake County, creating salt, noise and light pollution destroying the quality of life in Lake County and polluting drinking wells of adjacent homeowners.
- More traffic congestion that would funnel onto already congested roads to avoid additional tolls priced at 20 cents per mile, and congestion pricing at an even higher rate.

- The extension would impact the very high quality ADID Indian Creek Wetland Complex, a 130-acre conservation area with documented sensitive flora and fauna and high functional value that qualifies this wetland as a High Quality Aquatic Resource (HQAR) based on the floristic quality inventory along with Sandhill Cranes, Great Blue Herons and the Great egret surveyed in 2015. (ADID Site 143).

“The Village of Hawthorn Woods objects to yet another multi-million dollar Environmental Impact Study that should not be funded by the Tollway, as the last study proved the extension of Route 53 should not proceed in its current alignment,” stated Mayor Joseph Mancino.

The northern leg of Route 53 was abandoned in the mid-1990’s (FAP 420) that was planned to connect to the Wisconsin state line. Route 53 was originally planned to connect to Wisconsin to spur economic development and interstate commerce, but the northern part of the road was abandoned because of the potential for destruction of sensitive conservation areas in its projected path. With the Tollway only focusing now on the southern leg into central Lake County, and not to the state line, the same sensitive environmental impacts through ADID wetlands and several pristine conservation sites has been determined and not recommended by the existing Environmental Impact Study. In fact, the Tollway’s own study suggests that this sensitive area in Hawthorn Woods be avoided completely.

“The Village of Hawthorn Woods will continue to take lawful steps necessary to prevent any extension of Route 53 through the corporate limits of the municipality,” stated Mancino.

ABOUT THE VILLAGE OF HAWTHORN WOODS

In 1958, Hawthorn Woods became Lake County’s 31st municipality and distinguished itself as an upscale, friendly community that placed a high value on the protection of natural resources. Hawthorn Woods is recognized for its beautiful open spaces and park amenities as well as great schools, friendly business districts, and professional services. A full service Police Department, Public Works Department, Finance Department, Community Development Department, and Parks and Recreation Department all work together to provide excellence in service to the citizens, visitors, and business community of Hawthorn Woods. For more information, visit www.vhw.org.

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