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Residents organize for three-lane Willow Road

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A group of residents opposed to a possible four-lane Willow Road configuration rolled out a new Web site Monday aimed at promoting a three-lane plan.

The North Suburban

Awareness Group advocates for a three-lane plan — specifically one that was scratched before its planned 2005 implementation.

"We're hoping it will organize and bring together our coalition of supporters for the three-lane plan," said Stephanie Gray, a member

of the group.

The Web site is www.northsuburbanawarenessgroup.org.

The site was created in response to efforts by the Illinois Department of Transportation to re-study the issue of lane configuration of Willow Road.

At issue is whether and how the state should widen the 1.2-mile stretch of Willow Road in Northfield. The two-lane stretch is bordered by four-lane stretches on either side.

Many in Northfield prefer three lanes, while others — especially residents and

businesses to the west of Northfield — have argued for four lanes to alleviate traffic.

The NSAG Web site includes a newsletter registration for Willow Road updates, as well as information about the group itself.

For three-lane advocates,

it lists contact information for elected officials and a letter template. The site includes a fund-raising link to help pay for campaign information and items such as "My Kids Cross Willow Road" yard signs — a refer-

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ence to the safety concerns that some Northfielders have noted when opposing four lanes.

Gray said the Web site is intended to provide a rallying point for residents.

"It's important that our supporters are on the ground and at these meetings being heard," she said.

The state hosts an informational Web site — although it does not promote a specific Willow Road solution — at www.willowroadfuture.com.

That site was established

last fall after IDOT announced plans for its most current two-year Willow Road study. It lists meeting dates and other information.

An IDOT representative could not be reached for comment Monday.

The IDOT-established Community Advisory Group comprises representatives from Northfield, Northbrook, Glenview and Winnetka.

It has met twice already, and a Willow Road "open house" is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. March 4 at the Renaissance Hotel, 933 Skokie Blvd. in Northbrook.

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