



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Eric J. Holcomb, Governor
Joe McGuinness, Commissioner

DES. # 1900095

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Improvement of US 20 between CR 35 and SR 13 in Elkhart County

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will host a public hearing on Wednesday April 21, 2021 at the Northridge High School Atrium and Auditorium, 56779 Northridge Drive, Middlebury, IN 46540. The doors will be open at 5:00 p.m. to give participants time to view displays and talk to project representatives prior to the start of the meeting. The public hearing will begin at 6:00 p.m. To accommodate those unable to attend in person, the public meeting presentation and comment period will also be broadcast live via the INDOT Northeast Facebook page located at <https://www.facebook.com/INDOTNortheast/>. In addition, a video recording of the presentation to be presented at the public hearing has been made available for viewing at <https://us20section2elkhartcounty.com/>.

The in-person public meeting will include appropriate social distancing measures. Meeting attendees and the project team are required to wear face coverings per statewide and local ordinance and will practice social distancing. Attendees who do not have a mask will be provided one, and hand sanitation stations will be available.

The purpose of the public hearing is to offer all interested persons an opportunity to comment on current preliminary design plans for a proposed Added Travel Lane and Two-way Left Turn Lane (TWLTL) project on United States Highway (US) 20 between County Road (CR) 35 and State Road (SR) 13 in Middlebury, Indiana, Elkhart County (DES 1900095).

The purpose of the US 20 project is to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion, correct geometric and drainage deficiencies, and address local community needs and interests.

The preferred alternative includes reconstruction of existing 2-lane US 20 to a 5-lane cross-section, including a 14-foot TWLTL, two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction, and two 10-foot paved shoulders. The addition of a TWLTL will remove left turning vehicles from live traffic. The additional through lane, in conjunction with the TWLTL, will contribute to reducing traffic congestion and improving safety throughout the corridor. Sidewalks will be added on the north side of US 20 from Northridge High School to Wayne Street (CR 16) and to the south side of US 20 between Westlake Drive and Spring Valley Road. The proposed sidewalks will provide separation between vehicular and pedestrian traffic. A High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk Beacon (HAWK Beacon) will be installed in the vicinity of the Northridge Middle School and Northridge High School to provide a dedicated pedestrian crossing and improve pedestrian safety. The addition of a through lane in each direction will increase the capacity of the roadway, while also facilitating ingress/egress movements for trucks accessing the industrial businesses between Wayne Street (CR 16) and Orpha Drive (CR 22). The 10-

foot paved shoulders are wide enough to safely accommodate buggy traffic and will be specifically designed to support long term buggy traffic without forming ruts. The preferred alternative will eliminate the horizontal alignment deficiencies that exist near the intersection of US 20 and Wayne Street (CR 16) by smoothing out the horizontal curve in the road through this area.

Proposed construction of the project is anticipated to begin in Spring of 2024 and would be constructed utilizing phased construction.

Two lanes of traffic, one in each direction, will be maintained during construction. The maintenance of traffic (MOT) plan for construction will be implemented in three phases. In Phase 1, MOT will be accomplished by shifting traffic to the current eastbound shoulders and constructing temporary pavement on the northern portion of US 20. In Phase 2, after completion of temporary pavement on the northern portion of the project, traffic will be switched over to the temporary pavement while the southern half of the project is constructed. In Phase 3, traffic will be shifted to the newly constructed road on the southern portion of the project area while the construction of the northern portion of the roadway is finalized. During construction, a suitable path for use by bicyclists and pedestrians that wish to use the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail will be provided. Access to properties will be maintained at all times during construction. INDOT will coordinate with emergency services, local school corporation officials and project stakeholders to ensure potential disruptions and impacts are minimized as much as possible.

The US 20 Section 2 project will require approximately 12.3 acres of permanent right-of-way. The project will also require approximately 7.3 acres of temporary right-of-way. No right-of-way re-acquisition will be required for this project. The need for one potential residential relocation has been identified.

The US 20 Section 2 project will require the purchase of approximately 0.118 acre of permanent right-of-way and 0.075 acre of temporary right-of-way associated with the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, which is a publicly owned recreational facility that is subject to protection under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. Additionally, the Ridge Run Trail, which is also subject to protection under Section 4(f), will be reconstructed and realigned to facilitate the widening of US 20. Coordination with the Middlebury Department of Parks and Recreation and the Elkhart County Parks and Recreation Board regarding the potential effects to these resources is underway.

Federal and State funds are anticipated to be used for construction of this project. INDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have agreed that this project falls within the guidelines of a Categorical Exclusion (CE) Level 4 environmental document with minimal environmental impact anticipated. An Additional Information (AI) document was prepared to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A separate public notice announcing the conclusion of the Section 4(f) analysis for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and the Ridge Run Trail will be published prior to final approval of the AI document. Preliminary design plans, along with the AI document, are available for review at the following locations:

1. US 20 Section 2 Project Website (<https://us20section2elkhartcounty.com/>)
2. INDOT Fort Wayne District Website (<https://www.in.gov/indot/2703.htm>)
3. Middlebury Community Public Library, 101 Winslow Street, Middlebury, IN 46540, Phone #: (574) 825-5601

Project information, including the environmental document, may be mailed to interested persons upon request. Please contact Rich Connolly, HNTB, 111 Monument Circle, Suite 1200, Indianapolis, IN 46204 or rconnolly@HNTB.com or (317 636-4682).

Public statements for the record will be taken as part of the public hearing. Public statements may be restricted to time limitations due to the number of speakers. All verbal statements recorded during the public hearing and all written comments submitted prior to, during, and for a period of two (2) weeks following the hearing date, will be evaluated, considered, and addressed in subsequent environmental documentation. Written comments may be submitted prior to the public hearing and within the comment period to: Rich Connolly, HNTB, 111 Monument Circle, Suite 1200, Indianapolis, IN 46204 or rconnolly@HNTB.com. **INDOT respectfully requests comments be submitted by May 17, 2021.**

With advance notice, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), INDOT will provide accommodations for persons with disabilities with regards to participation and access to project information as part of the hearings process including arranging auxiliary aids, interpretation services for the hearing impaired, services for the sight impaired and other services as needed. In addition, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, INDOT will provide accommodations for persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requiring auxiliary aids including language interpretation services and document conversion. Should accommodation be required please contact Rich Connolly, HNTB, 111 Monument Circle, Suite 1200, Indianapolis IN 46204 or rconnolly@HNTB.com.

This notice is published in compliance with Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1) states: "Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program." 23 CFR 450.212(a)(7) states: "Public involvement procedures shall provide for periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all and revision of the process as necessary." approved by the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation on August 16, 2012.