



SR 3 Intersection Improvement at Waits Road Noble County, Indiana INDOT Des No. 1900138

PUBLIC HEARING PROJECT FACT SHEET

The intersection of SR 3 and Waits Road has been experiencing a high amount of normal number of crashes, especially those that involve injuries and even deaths. In response, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) programmed a project to potentially make improvements to the intersection. This public hearing is intended to review the project needs, alternatives considered, identification of the preferred alternative, and gather input from the public.

The subject intersection is located on the southwest side of Kendallville in Noble County. SR 3 is a four-lane divided highway with wide, grassy median. Its posted speed limit is 55 MPH. Waits Road is a two-lane roadway without turn lanes or shoulders and has a posted speed limit between 30 MPH and 40 MPH. SR 3 currently has a daily traffic volume of 12,500 and Waits Road a volume of 920. The intersection is unsignalized, with traffic approaching along Waits Road coming to a stop. There are left turn lanes along both directions of SR 3 along with a northbound right turn lane. The Waits Road approach does not have any turn lanes.

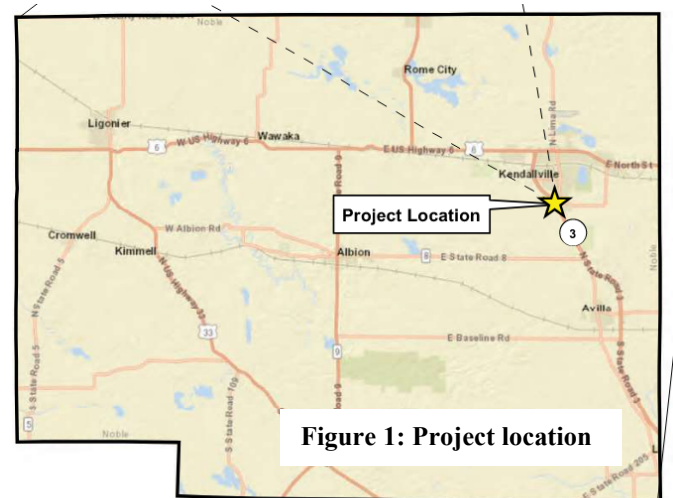


Figure 1: Project location

The primary needs for the project is a high crash rate at the intersection and the time it takes for Waits Road traffic to proceed through the intersection. During a study period encompassing years 2017, 2018 and 2019, 13 crashes occurred at the intersection. This exceeds the average number expected by over one standard deviation. In addition, four of the thirteen crashes involved injuries. In the spring of 2021, a particularly serious crash event occurred which involved multiple fatalities. Studies also show that traffic approaching along Waits Road need to wait an above acceptable amount of time to find acceptable gaps in traffic, which likely also contributes to the crashes.

All of the more serious crash events involved the same pattern. The driver was able to safely cross the first direction of SR 3 and enter at the median. However, it was trying to then find a gap in the second direction of SR 3 traffic where these serious right-angle crashes occurred. Considering the speeds at which traffic can travel along SR 3, such crash events can be serious.

A number of alternatives were evaluated to address the purpose and need. Since a traffic signal does not meet warrants and closing-off legs of the Waits Road approaches would cause significant amount of additional travel time, a series of Reduced Conflict Intersection (RCI) treatments were considered. RCI modifications have been proven both nationally and in Indiana to reduce the number of total crashes and the number of serious crash events significantly. They are effective since they reduce (or outright eliminate) the number of right-angle

conflict points that exist at a traditional intersection. The RCI options that were considered varied whether to keep the median open to SR 3 traffic turning left onto Waits Road as well as the location of where median U-turns could occur.

Alternative	SR 3 Corridor Crash Expectancy	Total Study Area Travel Time (Seconds)	Number of Crossing Conflict Points	Construction Cost (\$2020)
No Build	4.4		24	n/a
Alternative #1 - Standard RCI	3.3	72.4	4	\$2,122,250
Alternative #2 - Standard RCI Without Median U-Turns	3.3	74.0	4	\$1,000,000
Alternative #3 - Closed RCI	2.9	72.3	0	\$1,450,000
Alternative #4 - Closed RCI Without Median U-Turns	2.9	74.4	0	\$390,000
Alternative #5 - Closed RCI Hybrid	2.9	74.0	0	\$1,001,875

Figure 2: Assessment of the alternatives considered

The preliminary preferred alternative selected is a RCI treatment that fully closes the median at the Waits Road intersection. A new median U-turn would be added about 1,200’ to the north of the intersection. To the south, median U-turns would make use of the existing signalized intersection at SR 3 and Main Street. This option is shown to have the highest safety improvement and median range in terms of added travel time and project costs when compared to the others.

The project is estimated to have costs of \$1,001,875. It will not require any new right of way acquisition. The project is expected to start construction in the fall of 2023 and may extend into 2024. During construction, SR 3 traffic will remain open. Waits Road will be closed for up to three months and traffic detoured to other local streets.



Figure 3: Strip map showing the preliminary preferred alternative

See the project website for additional information, such as the project plans, environmental studies, and location maps: <http://fortwayne.indot.in.gov/>

Questions? Contact Nick Batta, project engineer, at NBatta@cmtengr.com or 317-492-9162.