

# APPENDIX H. RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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# PROPEL

*Smarter Transportation.  
Stronger Communities.*

## US 31

US 31 North

## Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #1

June 2, 2023

This report was finalized prior to the issuance of several Executive Orders (EOs) and one United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) order, including:

- Federal EO: EO 14154, EO 14148, EO 14173, and EO 14281;
- State EO: EO 25-49, EO 25-37, and EO 25-14;
- USDOT Order 2100.7



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# 1. STUDY OVERVIEW

ProPEL is an Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) initiative for transportation planning that uses collaborative Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) studies to consider environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning process. Through the PEL studies, INDOT aspires to create smarter transportation systems that build stronger communities.

INDOT is using PEL studies on the US 30 and US 31 corridors in central and northern Indiana. The ProPEL US 30 and 31 studies span 180 miles across 12 counties. The ProPEL US 31 North study corridor is 27 miles in length and extends from just south of the Eel River in Miami County (County Road [CR] 300 North) to just south of the Fulton/Marshall County line (CR 700 North in Fulton County). US 31 is a critical transportation link in Indiana that serves cross-state travel from Louisville, Kentucky, through Indianapolis, to South Bend near the Michigan state line. However, in the vicinity of the study limits, US 31 serves as both a thoroughfare for regional trips as well as a connector for local communities including Rochester, Mexico, Denver, and Macy.

This report provides a summary of the information provided at one (1) Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting and one (1) in-person public meeting, as well as the feedback that was collected from the public through December 31, 2022. It also includes the information presented and feedback received from three resource agency coordination meetings held in early 2023. Public feedback will continue throughout the remaining phases: Purpose and Need, Alternatives Analysis, and the completion of the PEL Study.

# 2. PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Feedback from residents, motorists, businesses, and others is vital to the success of the studies. Along with the other study areas, the ProPEL US 31 North study team is gathering public feedback throughout the planning process. The initial round of public engagement occurred in December 2022 as part of the Vision and Scoping phase of the ProPEL study (see Figure 2-1 for the study schedule). The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Introduce the concept of a PEL study;
- Define the ProPEL US 31 North study process;
- Identify the specific goals of the ProPEL US 31 North study;
- Help people understand how to participate in the ProPEL US 31 North study;
- Provide opportunity for an open discussion concerning public and stakeholders' desired vision for the corridor;
- Provide highlights of the schedule for the planning process;
- Solicit input on the fit and function of the study corridor (e.g., future corridor vision, specific transportation concerns, environmental resources of concern, as well as community goals).

Figure 2-1: ProPEL US 31 Study Schedule



### 3. OUTREACH AND ADVERTISEMENT

The study team conducted stakeholder and public outreach to raise awareness of the ProPEL US 31 North Vision and Scoping portion of the study, encourage participation and solicit feedback during the public comment period. The ProPEL US 31 North Study Team has organized ongoing, community office hours (beginning in October 2022) to engage local residents, educate them on the study and gather feedback. Community Office Hours have been housed at multiple locations across the study corridor to facilitate public access and increase engagement. Community office hours have been held two days each month within Miami and Fulton counties.

The ProPEL US 31 North study team have advertised the community office hours through social media, the study website, and other communications platforms and opportunities. Attendance and discussions occurring during community office hours are documented via a visitor log (e.g., name, contact information, and topics discussed) or through Public Involvement Management Application (PIMA) database. To promote the Public Information Meeting (PIM), notices are published in local papers, hardcopies are placed in-person at notable locations around Rochester (courthouse, gas stations, community centers, etc.), as well as information released through INDOT press releases and stakeholder email blasts. These outreach efforts are ongoing by the study team, and Figure 3-1 below contains a summary of the efforts thus far.

Figure 3-1: ProPEL US 31 North Outreach Efforts

Outreach Efforts		Date(s)
<b>Stakeholder Advisory Committee</b>	Virtual meeting	11/16/2022
<b>Website information</b>	ProPELUS31.com	11/22/2022
<b>Press release (Appendix A)</b>	INDOT media list	11/30/2022
<b>Media alert (Appendix B)</b>	INDOT media list	11/30/2022
<b>Social media posts (Appendix C)</b>	Twitter, Facebook & Instagram posts with in-person meeting information	10/25/2022; 11/22/2022; 11/30/2022
	Twitter, Facebook & Instagram with virtual meeting information	12/21/2022
<b>Stakeholder email blasts (Appendix D)</b>	93 recipients and 59% open rate	11/22/2022
	93 recipients and 52% open rate	11/29/2022
	143 recipients and 52% open rate	12/2/2022
<b>Public notices (Appendix E)</b>	Rochester Daily Sentinel	11/26/2022
	Peru Tribune	11/26/2022
<b>Community Office Hours</b>	Fulton County Public Library	10/27/2022
	Mexico Fire Station	11/17/2022
	Denver Fire Station/Fulton County Public Library	12/14/2022

#### 3.1. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OUTREACH

The study team has conducted a thorough corridor analysis to identify underserved communities, which refer to populations sharing a particular similar characteristic as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. Several sources were used to provide data to meet the stated regulations and guidance.

US Census data, specifically the 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS), was used for demographic information, including: race and Latino/Hispanic origin, age, poverty status (low-income persons), persons with Limited English Proficiency, persons with disabilities, households with no vehicle available, and internet access by household. Additionally, populations along the study corridor, including disadvantaged communities, federally subsidized communities, manufactured home communities, and Amish/Mennonite communities, were identified through agency databases and other outreach. The population analyses are provided in the ProPEL US 31 North study's *Environmental Constraints Report*.

Outreach to these populations is ongoing and will continue to grow throughout the study as more ambassadors representing EJ populations are identified, informed, and offered appropriate means of providing feedback. This includes utilizing SAC members, local officials, and community leaders to distribute information throughout the community, specifically EJ populations. Representatives from these communities were invited to the ongoing community and public meetings for the ProPEL US 31 North study area. Materials are being translated into Spanish to accommodate limited-English proficiencies. Additionally, a representative for the Mennonite community is an active participant in the SAC.

Concerted outreach within identified communities, including mobile home parks, apartment complexes, and the Amish/Mennonite community, will be a primary focus of the ProPEL US 31 North study team. Further outreach tactics include, but are not limited to, mailing hardcopy post cards or fliers to mitigate potential limitations of internet access, conducting on-the-ground outreach to nursing homes, churches, community and health centers, neighborhoods, ride share organizations, farmers markets, and other public events, and expanding the breadth of information delivery via local media, small groups, school newsletters, church bulletins, and SAC meetings.

## 4. STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The ProPEL US 31 North study team established a SAC, which included representatives from local agencies, community organizations, churches, businesses, local governments, schools and social service representatives, emergency service providers, and local residents in the study area. The first SAC meeting for the ProPEL US 31 North study, held virtually on November 16, 2022, covered an overview of the PEL process, why the study is needed along US 31, and identification of the community's mobility needs and goals. The purpose of these meetings is to introduce the committee to the study, discuss expected roles, and facilitate feedback from the community stakeholders. Committee members also serve as ambassadors, raising community awareness about the study and its feedback opportunities. Meeting materials and a summary are included in **Appendix F**.

## 5. US 30 & 31 COALITIONS PRESENTATIONS

The ProPEL US 30 and 31 Advisor team met virtually with members of the US 30 and US 31 Coalitions on September 1, 2022, to provide an update on the studies, discuss community and stakeholder engagement activities, provide information on next steps, and answer any questions from attendees. Meeting materials and summaries are included in **Appendix G**.

## 6. AGENCY COORDINATION

As part of the Vision/Scoping phase of the study, three coordination meetings were held with resource agencies, cultural resource stakeholders and federally recognized Tribes. These meetings included:

- November 30, 2022: Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology Coordination Meeting (Virtual)
- January 27, 2023: Resource Agency Meeting & Cultural Resource Stakeholder Meeting (Virtual)
- February 23, 2023: Tribal Partner Coordination Meeting (Virtual)

In general, the purpose of these meetings was to introduce the PEL study process, kick-off the ProPEL US 30 and US 31 studies (all four studies), discuss proposed analysis methodologies and to communicate specific next steps for the studies. Meeting materials and summaries are included in **Appendix H**. (Note: The meeting summary for the February 23, 2023, Tribal Partner Meeting is still in development.)

## 7. PUBLIC MEETING

The study team held one in-person Public Information Meeting on December 1, 2022, at Rochester Community High School from 5 to 7 p.m. The information graphics and materials, along with a recording of this meeting, were made available online at the ProPEL US 31 website the following day. The online experience included a recording of the presentation and interactive online stations for public comment. All public comments received prior to December 31, 2023, were considered as part of this report.

### 7.1. MEETING FORMAT

The format of the meeting was an open house with a presentation (**Appendix I**) from study team members. The open house was held from 5 – 7 p.m. with a presentation scheduled for 6 p.m. During the presentation, the study team shared an overview of the study purpose, process, how public feedback will be gathered and considered, and the importance of public feedback in the study process. The study team highlighted the need for public input on how the US 31 corridor fits and functions within the community.

At the in-person meetings, the informational boards and feedback opportunities (**Appendix J** and **Appendix K**) were situated in the school cafeteria and included multiple stations and a dedicated comment area with laptops. The adjacent auditorium was designated for a formal presentation by the study team. The information presented at the meeting was organized into the following stations:

- Welcome/Sign-In
- Station 1: Exercise – Location-Specific Input
- Station 2: Exercise – Corridor Vision
- Station 3: Exercise – Opportunity to Comment
- Station 4: PEL Study Areas/ProPEL US 31 North Study

Informational boards included an introduction into the PEL study process, a map of the overall study area, a roadmap of the study purpose, an outline of the study schedule, and maps of the US 31 North study area.

The open house exercises were focused on identifying existing corridor issues and the community's vision of the future for the US 31 corridor. The purpose of these exercises was to gather input on the corridor fit and function. For fit, the study team wanted to understand how participants would like to see any improvements reflect the

character of the area, create desirable gateways, and support the local economy. For function, the study team sought to understand how the corridor could support safety, traffic flow, connections and access, and pedestrian-focused improvements.

Roll plot maps of the US 31 North study area were available. Attendees had the option to write on the maps or provide comments via sticky notes to identify areas of concern, interest or possible solutions.

The existing corridor issue boards prompted attendees to identify concerns with the current transportation conditions, specifically focused on safety and movement, transit opportunities and pedestrian access, and the potential for nearby environmental resources. The prompting questions included:

- What are your biggest safety concerns along the corridor?
- Where are your biggest traffic concerns along the corridor?
- Are new intersections or turns needed? How should they function?
- Are new signals needed?
- Are there intersections that need to be upgraded? If so, how?
- What locations need better transit service and bicycle and pedestrian access?
- Are there sensitive environmental resources along the corridor (wetlands, cemeteries, historic properties, etc.) that should be preserved?
- What other concerns do you have along the corridor?

The corridor vision for the future boards sought to understand the community's ideal vision for desired improvements to reflect the character of the area and serve as community gateways. The boards included prompting questions and designated areas for participants to identify top priorities under each with a colored dot, as well as write specific details on sticky notes. The prompting questions included:

- What would improve travel along US 31?
- How could US 31 reflect the local area?
- How should US 31 support the local economy?
- When you travel US 31, where do you go?
- Vision for the Future (Imagine it is the Year 2035)
  - What do you want US 31 to look like in 2035?
  - It is 2035, how would you finish the sentence: "The best decision made in 2023 for US 31 was..."

Several laptop computers were provided to the attendees to further document more drawn-out thoughts, concerns, and suggestions through the PIMA database. In order to further provide meeting participants the opportunity to give feedback and ask questions, a map of the other three corridors was available, as well as representatives from the adjacent US 31 South and the US 30 West study areas.

## 7.2. MEETING ATTENDANCE

Seventy individuals – not including study team members – attended the December 1, 2022, Public Information Meeting. During registration, attendees were asked to provide their names, ZIP codes and email addresses, as well as to identify their primary mode of transportation and stakeholder type (resident, business owner, elected official, etc.). Participants represented a wide range of interests and included residents, business owners (including agriculture), elected officials, school systems, emergency services, community organizations, and one media outlet.

## 7.3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments have been received and documented in the PIMA database for the ProPEL US 31 North corridor since August 2022. The comments reflected in this summary include those received through December 31, 2022, upon completion of the study Visioning and Scoping Phase. They have been submitted by members of the public through the study website, during community office hours, and the in-person and virtual public information meetings in December 2022.

### 7.3.1. COMMENT SUMMARY

The PIMA database includes 229 stakeholders and 170 documented submissions (comments or suggestions) from the public for the ProPEL US 31 North corridor. Stakeholders have been added to the database as identified or upon request, so not all stakeholders in the PIMA database have submitted comments. Comments within the PIMA database include input submitted online, at community office hours, and shared at public information meetings.

Of the approximately 170 comments and responses received, most covered multiple topics or concerns and were each individually considered.

Input focused on future improvements made up a large percentage of comments. Comments to maintain and/or improve access for residents, businesses, farmers and farming equipment, and emergency medical services, was a major theme, with 20.9% of responses. Comments on the need for interchanges/ overpasses made up 11.5% of comments, including at US 31/3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Old US 31/Southway 31, SR 16 and in Rochester. Other comments for future improvements were in support of limited access (6.4%) and general accessibility/spot improvements (1.4%).

Mobility was a top priority mentioned in the comments. Concerns were primarily related to existing connections to, from, or across US 31, both for specific areas or specific users, or generally throughout the corridor. 14.9% of the comments noting mobility referenced the needs of existing users within the study area, particularly at existing intersections, including emergency vehicles, school buses, non-motorized vehicles (including horse-drawn vehicles and bicycles), farm and heavy equipment, and trucks. General connectivity needs in the corridor for communities, notably Rochester, Mexico, Macy, Denver and Leiters Ford, made up 8.4% of comments.

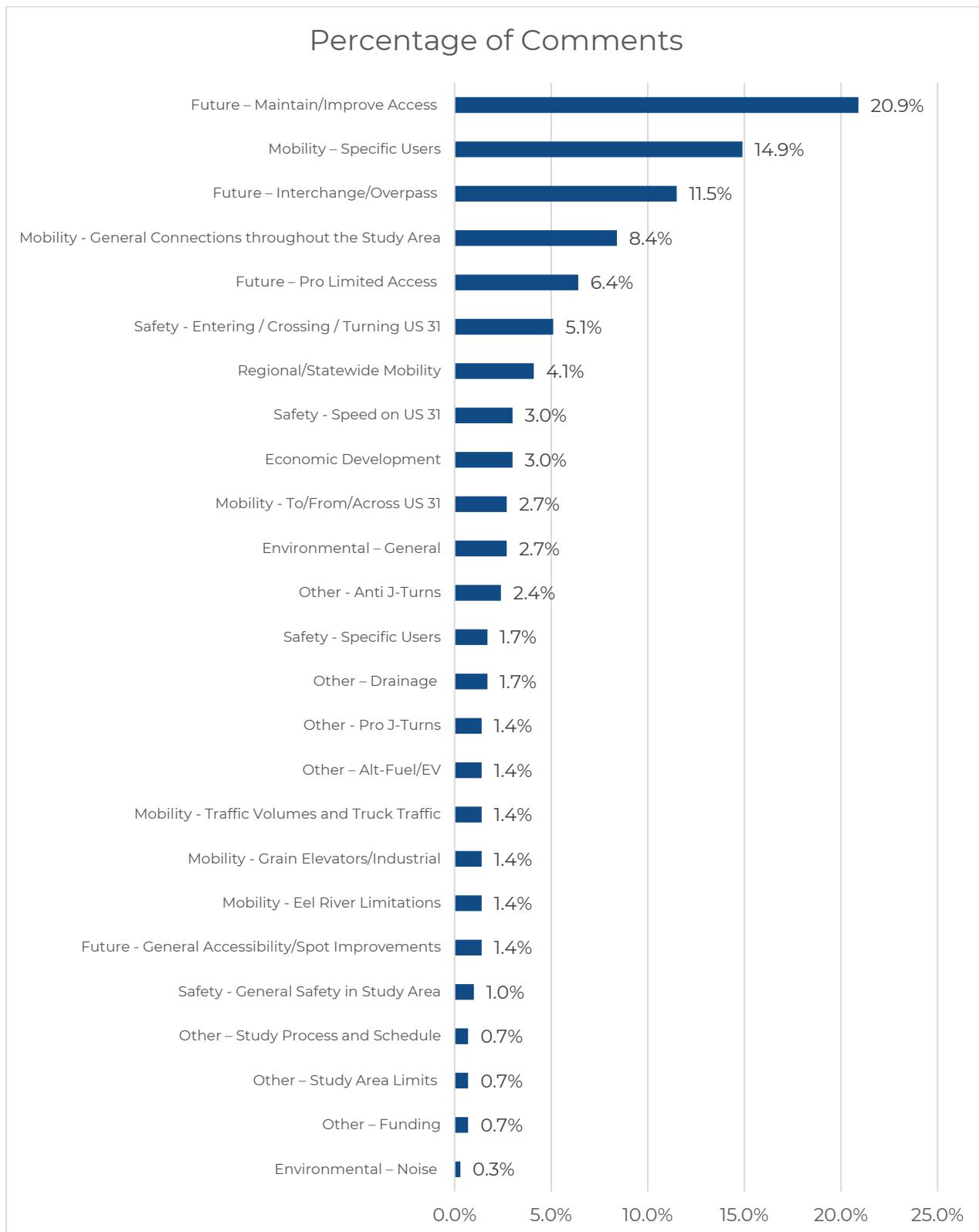
Safety was the next most mentioned priority, particularly when entering, crossing and/or turning across US 31, with 5.1% of comments. Locations of concern along US 31 included 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, the interchange at SR 25/Access in Rochester, Old US 31/Southway 31, CR 650 South/CR 1350 North and Old US 31, SR 16, CR 400 North and CR 300 North. Speed on US 31 was mentioned as a concern in 3% of comments.

Regional and statewide mobility was mentioned in 4.1% of comments. Concerns were primarily related to the importance of travel along US 31 in the study area as part of the larger transportation network, and US 31 being a free-flow facility within the study area to facilitate more regional transportation needs.

Input on economic development accounted for 3% of comments. Feedback was related to current population, development, economic trends, and the associated importance of US 31 in the communities within the study area.

Comments on environmental concerns accounted for 3% of comments, including general input (2.7%) and possible noise impacts (0.3%). Other comments included feedback in opposition to J-Turns (2.4%), alternative fuels and electric vehicles (1.4%), study funding (0.7%), study area limits (0.7%), and the study process and schedule (0.7%). Figure 7.3.1-1 provides a full percentage breakdown of the most common themes expressed in public comments.

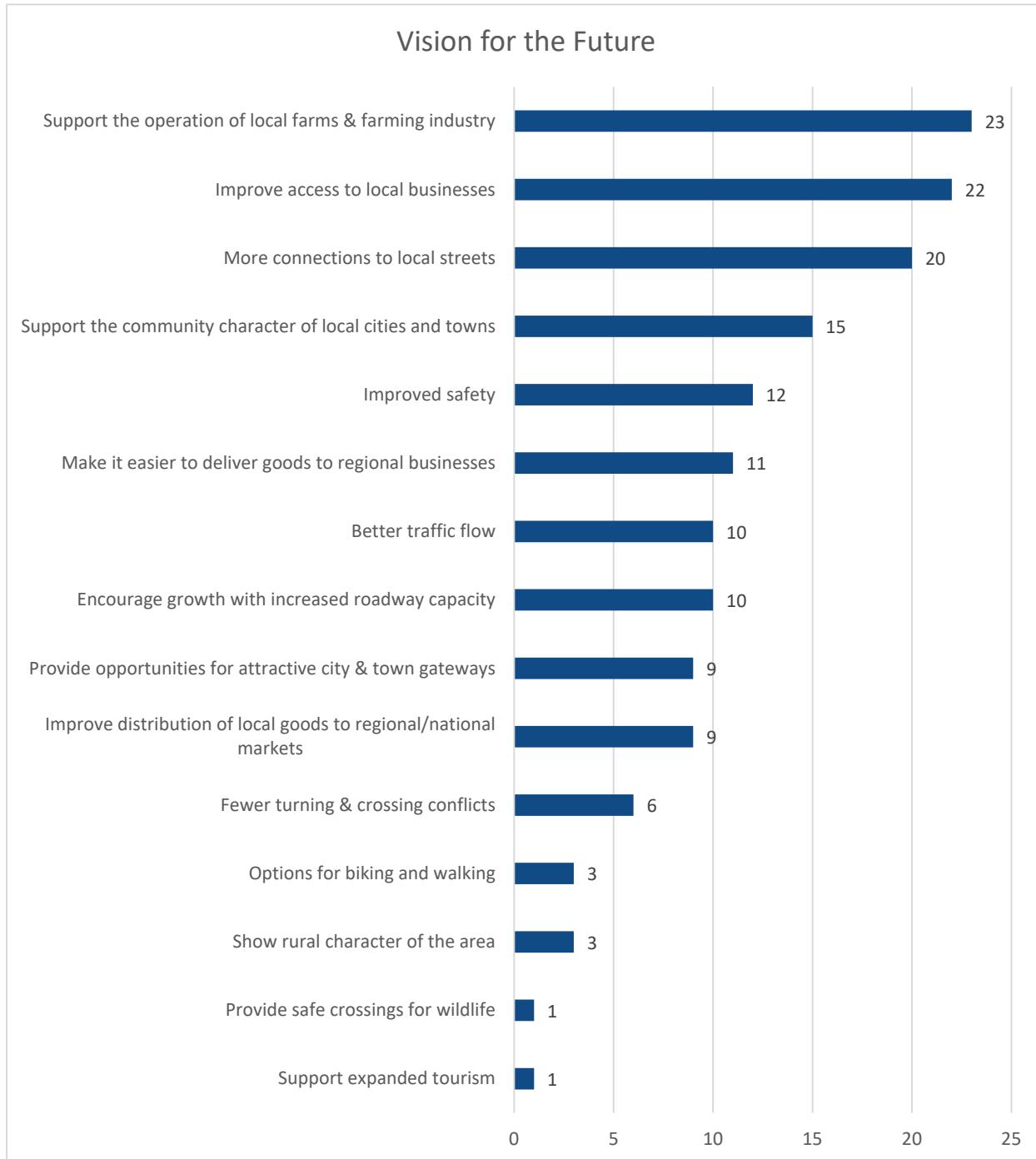
Figure 7.3.1-1 Percentage of Comments by Common Theme



### 7.3.2. PUBLIC MEETING EXERCISES AND FEEDBACK

Public meeting participants were given 10 dot stickers that they could place on display boards to indicate what priorities are most important to them. Priorities for the Rochester meeting are reflected by number of votes in Figure 7.3.2-1 below.

Figure 7.3.2-1 Public Meeting Visioning Feedback



# US 31 North RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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## Appendix A. Press Release



## Indiana Department of Transportation

### INDOT begins studies along U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors

Indiana Department of Transportation sent this bulletin at 08/26/2022 12:42 PM EDT

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## Indiana Department of Transportation News Release

### INDOT begins studies along U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors

*Public input sought in collaborative planning process*



INDIANA – The Indiana Department of Transportation is asking for Hoosiers' input as it begins a streamlined planning process along the U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors in northern Indiana. The ProPEL U.S. 30 and ProPEL U.S. 31 studies will use a collaborative approach to consider environmental, community and economic goals early in project development.

The two-year studies will follow the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process used by transportation agencies, such as INDOT, to assess innovative ways to address transportation challenges and needs. PEL studies allow INDOT to interact with communities as they share ideas and feedback related to long-term solutions on U.S. 30 and U.S. 31.

The process includes development of alternatives that balance input from the community with transportation engineering needs and environmental concerns. The information, analysis and decisions made during the PEL process can be leveraged in later phases of project development, including the environmental review process based on requirements established in the National Environmental Policy Act.

The studies span 180 miles across 12 counties and includes U.S. 30 from Valparaiso to the Indiana/Ohio state line (excluding the Fort Wayne bypass), as well as U.S. 31 between Hamilton County and Plymouth (excluding the Kokomo bypass). Counties within the study area include Allen, Fulton, Hamilton, Howard, Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall, Miami, Porter, Starke, Tipton and Whitley Counties.

Anticipated completion of ProPEL U.S. 30 and ProPEL U.S. 31 is in fall of 2024. With community support, each study will identify a range of alternatives, including a no-build alternative for each corridor.

#### Information Gathering

The PEL studies will be collaborative, data-driven and influenced by the public's ideas. Throughout the process, INDOT will invite input from communities along the corridor to identify what needs and concerns should be addressed by future improvements. With help from residents, motorists, businesses and other road users, INDOT can build infrastructure that will better serve Hoosiers. The studies will gather questions, concerns and ideas through a variety of means, including project websites, social media, and in-person and virtual public information meetings.

The first round of public meetings are planned for this fall. More information about each meeting will be available at a later date.

ProPEL U.S. 30 and ProPEL U.S. 31 are about what is possible. Together we will look at transportation challenges and needs, and work together to identify solutions that will enhance safety, mobility and economic development along each corridor. INDOT will evaluate the public's suggestions to provide recommendations using engineering, environmental, economic and community factors.

Once the studies are complete and funding is identified for projects, INDOT will move into the next phases of development using the feedback and alternatives gathered during the PEL process.

For more information on each study, and to share ideas, visit the project websites listed below (*live by end of day on Friday, August 26*).

ProPEL U.S. 30: [ProPELUS30.com](http://ProPELUS30.com)

ProPEL U.S. 31: [ProPELUS31.com](http://ProPELUS31.com)

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- Mobile App: [iTunes App Store](#) and the [Google Play store](#) for Android



#### About the Indiana Department of Transportation

INDOT continues to solidify the Hoosier State as the Crossroads of America by implementing Gov. Eric J. Holcomb's \$30 billion Next Level Roads plan. With six district offices and 3,500 employees, the agency is responsible for constructing and maintaining more than 29,000 lane miles of highways, more than 5,700 bridges, and supporting 4,500 rail miles and 117 airports across the state. INDOT was recently ranked #1 in the United States for infrastructure in CNBC's 2022 "America's Top States for Business" ranking. Learn more about INDOT at [in.gov/indot](http://in.gov/indot).

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## Indiana Department of Transportation



### INDOT invites public input on U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors

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## Indiana Department of Transportation News Release

### INDOT invites public input on U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors

Comments sought in collaborative planning process



INDIANAPOLIS – The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is seeking input for planning studies along the U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors in northern Indiana. Members of the public may submit comments via project websites for ProPEL U.S. 30 and ProPEL U.S. 31 that launched last month.

The two-year studies will follow the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process used by transportation agencies, such as INDOT, to assess innovative ways to address corridor challenges and needs. PEL studies allow INDOT to interact with communities as they share ideas and feedback related to long-term solutions on U.S. 30 and U.S. 31.

The PEL studies will be collaborative, data-driven and influenced by the public to define the future of each corridor. INDOT is inviting ideas and input from communities within the study areas to identify what needs or concerns should be addressed by future improvements. With help from residents, motorists, businesses, and other road users, INDOT can build infrastructure that will better serve Hoosiers. The public can share its vision for the corridors through a variety of means, including project websites and public information meetings. The first round of public information meetings is expected this fall. More details will be announced prior to the meetings on the project websites and social media.

INDOT will evaluate the public's suggestions to provide recommendations using engineering, environmental, economic and community factors. Once the studies are complete and funding is identified for projects, INDOT will move into the next phases of development using the information gathered and alternatives evaluated during the PEL process.

For more information on each study, and to share ideas, visit the project websites listed here:

[ProPELUS30.com](#)

[ProPELUS31.com](#)

The studies span 180 miles across 12 counties and include U.S. 30 from Valparaiso to the Indiana/Ohio state line (excluding I-69 and I-469 around Fort Wayne), and U.S. 31 between Hamilton County and Plymouth (excluding the Kokomo bypass). Counties within the study area include Allen, Fulton, Hamilton, Howard, Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall, Miami, Porter, Starke, Tipton and Whitley Counties.

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## Indiana Department of Transportation

### INDOT to host public meetings for US 30 and US 31 corridors

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### INDOT to host public meetings for US 30 and US 31 corridors

INDIANAPOLIS – The ProPEL US 30 and US 31 study teams are asking for Hoosiers' input as they begin Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies along approximately 180 miles of US 30 and US 31. The study teams will host six public information meetings to provide updates and gather input about the vision and scope for the planning studies, including local transportation needs and community priorities along the US 30 and US 31 corridors in northern Indiana.



Public information meetings will be held in each of the four study areas:

#### US 30 West

Wednesday, November 30, 2022

- 5-7 p.m., presentation at 6 p.m.
- Oregon Davis School (5990 N. 750 E., Hamlet, IN 46532)

#### US 30 East

Monday, December 5, 2022

- 5-7 p.m., presentation at 6 p.m.
- Sweetwater Sound (5501 US Hwy 30 W., Fort Wayne, IN 46818)

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

- 5-7 p.m., presentation at 6 p.m.
- Lincoln Elementary School (203 N. Lincoln St., Warsaw, IN 46580)

#### US 31 North

Thursday, December 1, 2022

- 5-7 p.m., presentation at 6 p.m.
- Rochester Community High School (1645 S. Park Rd., Rochester, IN 46975)

#### US 31 South

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

- 5-7 p.m., presentation at 6 p.m.
- Tipton County Fairgrounds (1200 S. Main St., Tipton, IN 46072)

Thursday, December 8, 2022

- 5-7 p.m., presentation at 6 p.m.
- Peru Jr. High School (30 Daniel St., Peru, IN 46970)

To accommodate those unable to attend the in-person public meetings, recorded presentations and opportunities to comment will be available after each meeting at [ProPELUS30.com](#) and [ProPELUS31.com](#).

In addition to public information meetings, ProPEL US 30 and US 31 study team members are visiting communities on a regular basis to hold office hours. Office hours are informal, in-person conversations where residents, businesses and others interested in the studies can ask questions, provide input, and receive regular updates. The goal of community office hours is to make it easier for community members to interact with the study teams – at a time and location that is convenient for them. Community office hours will be held twice per month in each area and locations will vary. Dates, times and locations can be found on each study website, as well as on ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 social media pages.

ProPEL US 30 and US 31 is an INDOT initiative to streamline transportation planning using collaborative PEL studies to consider environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning process. Through the PEL studies, INDOT aspires to create smarter transportation systems that build stronger communities. The studies span 180 miles across 12 counties and includes US 30 from Valparaiso to the Indiana/Ohio state line (excluding I-69 and I-469 around Fort Wayne), as well as US 31 between Hamilton County and Plymouth (excluding the Kokomo bypass). Counties within the study area include Allen, Fulton, Hamilton, Howard, Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall, Miami, Porter, Starke, Tipton and Whitley Counties.

Once the studies are completed in 2024, INDOT will evaluate results to identify and develop projects along these corridors.

More information about each study can be found on the websites and social media pages listed below.

#### **ProPEL US 30:**

[ProPELUS30.com](#)

Twitter: [@ProPELUS30](#)

Facebook: [@PropelUS.30](#)

Instagram: [@propelus30\\_31](#)

#### **ProPEL US 31:**

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e.g. name@example.com

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- Mobile App: [iTunes App Store](#) and the [Google Play store for Android](#)

**About the Indiana Department of Transportation**

INDOT continues to solidify the Hoosier State as the Crossroads of America by implementing Gov. Eric J. Holcomb's \$30 billion Next Level Roads plan. With six district offices and 3,500 employees, the agency is responsible for constructing and maintaining more than 29,000 lane miles of highways, more than 5,700 bridges, and supporting 4,500 rail miles and 117 airports across the state. INDOT was recently ranked #1 in the United States for infrastructure in CNBC's 2022 "America's Top States for Business" ranking. Learn more about INDOT at [in.gov/indot](http://in.gov/indot).

**Customer Service**

1-855-463-6848  
[www.indot4u.com](http://www.indot4u.com)  
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# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix B. Media Alert



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

November 30, 2022

**Contact: Stacey Osburn**

317-374-8998

**Community invited to INDOT public meeting to provide input on the future of US 31**

**What:**

The ProPEL US 31 North study team is hosting a public information meeting to gather input regarding the US 31 corridor in northern Indiana. Community members are invited to attend to learn more about the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study and share comments, questions and concerns regarding long-term transportation solutions along US 31 in Cass, Miami and Fulton counties.

**When:**

Thursday, December 1, 2022

5 – 7 p.m. ET

Open house begins at 5 p.m. ET followed by a presentation at 6 p.m. ET

***Media availability begins at 4 p.m. ET. Other availability can be coordinated upon request.***

**Where:**

Rochester Community High School

1645 S. Park Rd.

Rochester, IN 46975

**Why:**

ProPEL US 31 is an INDOT initiative to streamline transportation planning using collaborative PEL studies to consider environmental, community, and economic goals early in the process. Through the PEL studies, INDOT aspires to create smarter transportation systems that build stronger communities. Once the studies are completed in 2024, INDOT will evaluate the results to identify and develop projects in the corridors. More information about the study can be found on the project website: [ProPELUS31.com](http://ProPELUS31.com). [\[propelus31.com\]](http://propelus31.com)

**About the Indiana Department of Transportation**

INDOT continues to solidify the Hoosier State as the Crossroads of America by implementing Gov. Eric J. Holcomb's \$30 billion Next Level Roads plan. With six district offices and 3,500 employees, the agency is responsible for constructing and maintaining more than 29,000 lane miles of highways, more than 5,700 bridges, and supporting 4,500 rail miles and 117 airports across the state. INDOT was recently ranked #1 in the United States for infrastructure in CNBC's 2022 "America's Top States for Business" ranking. Learn more about INDOT at [in.gov/indot](http://in.gov/indot).



# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Attachment C. Social Media Posts

The following is provided in this attachment (listed in chronological order):

- October 2022, ProPEL US 31 Facebook Posts
- November 2022, ProPEL US 31 Facebook Posts
- December 2022, ProPEL US 31 Facebook Posts

## OCTOBER 2022, PROPEL US 31 FACEBOOK POSTS

Propel U.S. 31  
October 24, 2022 ·

Introducing ProPEL US 31! [Indiana Department of Transportation](#) is conducting studies along the US 30 & US 31 corridors and we need your help! We will be out in the community throughout the next two years. Follow us for more information on how you can be involved.



PropelUS31.com [f](#) [t](#) [i](#)

Propel U.S. 31  
October 25, 2022 ·

The ProPEL US 31 studies are underway! There are many ways to get information about the study in your area. One of those is through our COMMUNITY HOURS. Take a look at the for the first round – starting this week!



24

COMMUNITY OFFICE HOURS SCHEDULE

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER

27	THURSDAY	01	TUESDAY	02	WEDNESDAY
<b>US 31 NORTH</b>					
LOCATION FULTON COUNTY LIBRARY					
TIME 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM					
ADDRESS 320 W 7TH ST. ROCHESTER, IN 46975					
<b>US 31 SOUTH</b>					
LOCATION PERU PUBLIC LIBRARY					
TIME 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM					
ADDRESS 102 E. MAIN ST. PERU, IN 46970					
<b>US 31 SOUTH</b>					
LOCATION TIPTON COUNTY LIBRARY					
TIME 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM					
ADDRESS 127 E. MADISON ST. TIPTON, IN 46072					

PROPEL  
Smarter Transportation. Stronger Communities. US 31

Propel U.S. 31  
October 26, 2022 · 

The Indiana Department of Transportation is propelling US 31 forward and we need YOUR HELP. Take a look at how you can share your comments below 



0:00 / 1:19

Google Earth®  
Limited / Experiential

▶  

Propel U.S. 31  
October 28, 2022 · 

**The ProPEL study process is all about YOU. What would you like to know?**

 **Timeline?**

 **Dates for meetings?**

 **How to comment?**

**Respond with the emoji you want to learn more about!**



## Propel U.S. 31

October 30, 2022 ·

...

Indiana Department of Transportation split the ProPEL US 31 studies into two separate areas to better serve each community. Which study area do you live in?



## NOVEMBER 2022, PROPEL US 31 FACEBOOK POSTS



## Propel U.S. 31

November 2, 2022 ·

...

We have public information meetings coming up very soon. Want to know more about the US 31 study areas? Take a look at this video!



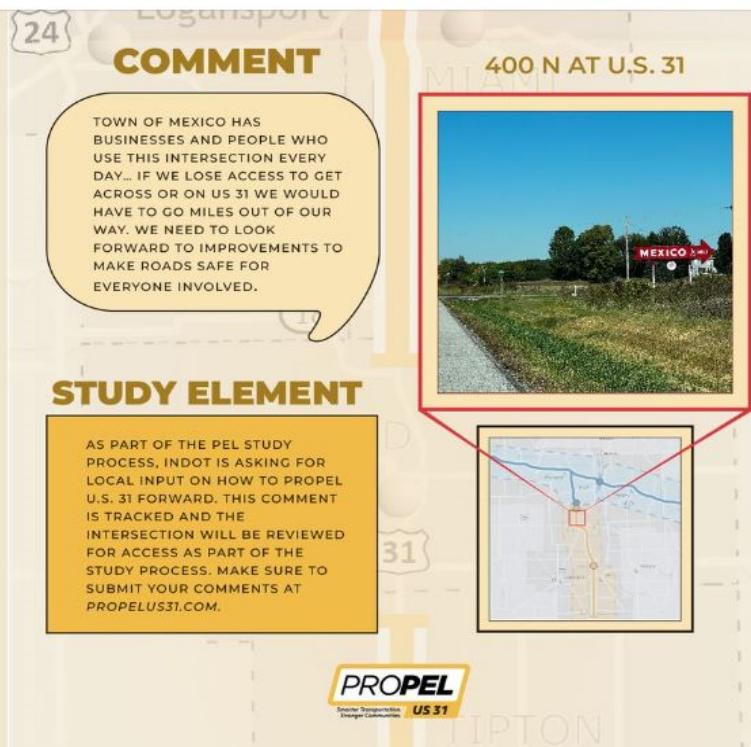


Propel U.S. 31  
November 6, 2022 ·

...

We are already getting valuable feedback! Take a look at this comment ... and how the study team is addressing it!

Now it's your turn ... leave your comments here: <https://propelus31.com/>



**COMMENT**

TOWN OF MEXICO HAS BUSINESSES AND PEOPLE WHO USE THIS INTERSECTION EVERY DAY... IF WE LOSE ACCESS TO GET ACROSS OR ON US 31 WE WOULD HAVE TO GO MILES OUT OF OUR WAY. WE NEED TO LOOK FORWARD TO IMPROVEMENTS TO MAKE ROADS SAFE FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED.

**STUDY ELEMENT**

AS PART OF THE PEL STUDY PROCESS, INDOT IS ASKING FOR LOCAL INPUT ON HOW TO PROPEL U.S. 31 FORWARD. THIS COMMENT IS TRACKED AND THE INTERSECTION WILL BE REVIEWED FOR ACCESS AS PART OF THE STUDY PROCESS. MAKE SURE TO SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS AT [PROPELUS31.COM.](https://propelus31.com/)

**400 N AT U.S. 31**



**PROPEL**  
Smarter Transportation. Stronger Communities. US 31

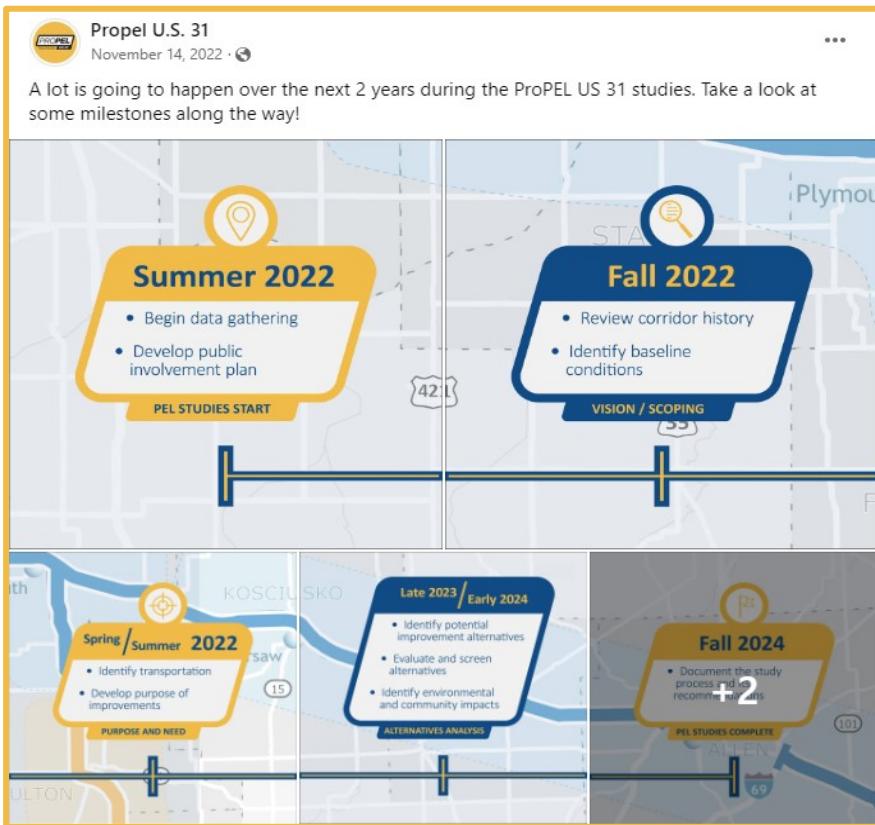


Propel U.S. 31  
November 11, 2022 ·

...

Today we are taking a moment to honor everyone who has served our country. We have many veterans on our project team for [Propel U.S. 31](#) and want to recognize them today. Thank you for your service! [#VeteransDay2022](#) [#HappyVeteransDay](#)





Propel U.S. 31  
November 22, 2022

Public meetings are one way to provide your feedback. The first ProPEL US 31 public information meetings are NEXT WEEK. For more information: <https://lnks.gd/2/xX7zR2>

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

US 31 NORTH	US 31 SOUTH	US 31 SOUTH
<b>DECEMBER 01</b> THURSDAY	<b>DECEMBER 07</b> WEDNESDAY	<b>DECEMBER 08</b> THURSDAY
<b>LOCATION</b> ROCHESTER COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL	<b>LOCATION</b> TIPTON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS	<b>LOCATION</b> PERU JR. HIGH SCHOOL
<b>TIME</b> 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	<b>TIME</b> 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	<b>TIME</b> 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
<b>ADDRESS</b> 1645 S. PARK RD. ROCHESTER, IN 46975	<b>ADDRESS</b> 1200 S. MAIN ST. TIPTON, IN 46072	<b>ADDRESS</b> 30 DANIEL ST. PERU, IN 46970

**PROPEL**  
Smarter Transportation, Stronger Communities. US 31

Propel U.S. 31  
November 24, 2022 · 

Have a happy, healthy and safe holiday! As you travel to friends and family, learn more about how ProPEL US 31 will address mobility along the corridor. [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com)



# HAPPY THANKSGIVING

**PROPEL**  
Smarter Transportation. Stronger Communities. **US 31**

Propel U.S. 31  
November 30, 2022 · 

The ProPEL US 31 North study team is hosting a public meeting TOMORROW at Rochester Community High School to share more information about the study and gather your feedback. Stop by anytime 5-7pm ET, with a presentation at 6pm. Public input is a crucial part of the study process.



## Public Meetings This Week



IN-PERSON THURSDAY



VIRTUAL AVAILABLE FRIDAY

Learn more @ [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com)

## DECEMBER 2022, PROPEL US 31 FACEBOOK POSTS

Propel U.S. 31  
December 6, 2022 · 

The US 31 South study team is hosting public information meetings on Wednesday in Tipton and Thursday in Peru. Learn more about ProPEL US 31 and provide your valuable feedback to the study team. More information at [www.propelus31.com](http://www.propelus31.com).

**DECEMBER**  
**07**  
WEDNESDAY

## PUBLIC MEETING

### US 31 SOUTH

**LOCATION**  
TIPTON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

**TIME**  
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM ET

**ADDRESS**  
1200 S. MAIN ST.  
TIPTON, IN 46072

**DECEMBER**  
**08**  
THURSDAY

## PUBLIC MEETING

### US 31 SOUTH

**LOCATION**  
PERU JR. HIGH SCHOOL

**TIME**  
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM ET

**ADDRESS**  
30 DANIEL ST.  
PERU, IN 46970

Propel U.S. 31  
December 8, 2022 · 

The US 31 South study team is hosting a public information meeting on Thursday in Peru. Learn more about ProPEL US 31 and provide your valuable feedback to the study team. More information at [www.propelus31.com](http://www.propelus31.com).

**DECEMBER**  
**08**  
THURSDAY

## PUBLIC MEETING

### US 31 SOUTH

**LOCATION**  
PERU JR. HIGH SCHOOL

**TIME**  
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM ET

**ADDRESS**  
30 DANIEL ST.  
PERU, IN 46970



Propel U.S. 31

December 9, 2022 ·

\*\*\*

If you missed the US 31 South public information meetings this week, you can still participate in an on-demand meeting experience. Complete the meeting registration form to launch the virtual presentation at [bit.ly/3iONQff](https://bit.ly/3iONQff)



US 31 South

Meeting Presentation

Station 1: Location-Specific Input

Station 2: Corridor Vision

Station 3: Comment

Station 4: Other Studies



Meeting Presentation

Watch a recording of the presentation of the US 31 South public information meeting. You can use the comment form to provide your comment or ask a question to the study team.

View Public Comment

## AGENDA



Propel U.S. 31

December 21, 2022 ·

\*\*\*

There is still time to provide your public comment on the Vision and Scope phase of the ProPEL US 31 North study. Your feedback is a fundamental component of the study process!  
[www.propelus31.com](http://www.propelus31.com)

Unable to attend the  
public involvement meeting  
for US 31 North?



0:01 / 0:37





Propel U.S. 31

December 22, 2022 · 3

...

It's not too late to provide your feedback on the Vision and Scope phase of the ProPEL US 31 South study. The study team wants to hear from you! [www.propelus31.com](http://www.propelus31.com)



Unable to attend the  
public involvement meeting  
for US 31 South?



0:03 / 0:39



US 31



Propel U.S. 31

December 24, 2022 · 3

...

The ProPEL US 31 study teams wish you all the joy and peace of the season! Wherever your travels may take you, be safe and stay warm.



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Smarter Transportation,  
Stronger Communities.

US 31

# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix D. Stakeholder Email Blasts

Join the ProPEL US 31 North team on Thursday, Dec. 1

Indiana DOT <[do-not-reply@pima.indot.in.gov](mailto:do-not-reply@pima.indot.in.gov)>

Mon 5/1/2023 11:58 AM

To: Erin Pipkin <[erin@compassoutreachesolutions.com](mailto:erin@compassoutreachesolutions.com)>



## First Public Information Meeting to be Held on Dec. 1

**Please join the ProPEL US 31 North team on Dec. 1 for our first public information meeting.**

INDOT asks for Hoosiers' input as it begins Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies along US 30 and US 31 in northern Indiana. The ProPEL US 31 North Team will host a public information meeting for the ProPEL US 31 North study located in Fulton and northern Miami counties.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide study information and seek public feedback about the vision and scope for the ProPEL US 30 East study, including local transportation needs and priorities. INDOT intends to use the information, analysis, and decisions from the PEL study process to inform future federal environmental reviews conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The meeting will be held in an open house format with a presentation:

**When: Thursday, Dec. 1, 2022\***

- Doors open/open house: 5 p.m.
- Presentation: 6 p.m.
- Meeting adjourns: 7 p.m.

**Where: Rochester High School Auditorium**

- 1 Zebra Lane
- Rochester, Indiana 46975

Virtual meeting replay will be available Friday, Dec. 2 on the project website at [propelUS31.com](http://propelUS31.com).

\*In case of inclement weather that makes travel hazardous, the meetings will be rescheduled for a date to be determined. Dates, times and locations for rescheduled meetings will be posted on the website.

Join the ProPEL US 31 North team this Thursday, Dec. 1

Indiana DOT <[do-not-reply@pima.indot.in.gov](mailto:do-not-reply@pima.indot.in.gov)>

Mon 5/1/2023 11:59 AM

To: Erin Pipkin <[erin@compassoutreachesolutions.com](mailto:erin@compassoutreachesolutions.com)>



## First Public Information Meeting: Dec. 1

**Please join the ProPEL US 31 North team this Thursday for our first public information meeting.**

The ProPEL US 31 North Team will host a public information meeting for the Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study located in Fulton and northern Miami counties.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide study information and seek public feedback about the vision and scope for the ProPEL US 31 North study, including local transportation needs and priorities. INDOT intends to use the information, analysis and decisions from the PEL study process to inform future federal environmental reviews conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The meeting will be held in an open house format with a presentation. If you'd like to skip the sign-in table, you can [pre-register at this link](#).

**When: Thursday, Dec. 1, 2022\***

- Doors open/open house: 5 p.m.
- Presentation: 6 p.m.
- Meeting adjourns: 7 p.m.

**Where: Rochester High School Auditorium**

- 1645 S. Park Rd.
- Rochester, Indiana 46975
- Enter door S7

Virtual meeting replay will be available Friday, Dec. 2 on the project website at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com).

\*In case of inclement weather that makes travel hazardous, the meetings will be rescheduled for a date to be determined. Dates, times and locations for rescheduled meetings will be posted on the website.



If you would like to unsubscribe please click [here](#).

## ProPEL US 31 North meeting now available online

Indiana DOT <do-not-reply@pima.indot.in.gov>

Mon 5/1/2023 12:00 PM

To: Erin Pipkin <erin@compassoutreachesolutions.com>



## First Meeting Available Online

### On-demand meeting is available in case you missed last night's meeting in Rochester

The ProPEL US 31 North Team hosted its first public information meeting on Dec. 1 for the Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study located in Fulton and northern Miami counties. The purpose of the meeting was to provide study information and seek public feedback about the vision and scope for the ProPEL US 31 North study, including local transportation needs and priorities.

A video of last night's presentation, the exhibits that were shared and a link for providing feedback are now available online. [Click here to access the meeting.](#)

Please note, when you click the link, you will be asked to provide contact information. Once you've completed the form, you will be entered into the meeting. This link will remain live until the next public meeting, which is anticipated in the spring.

### Mark your calendar

The study team will be in the area again on Dec. 14. The first community office hours will be hosted at the Denver Volunteer Fire Department from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., with hours at the Fulton County Public Library between 3 and 6 p.m.



If you would like to unsubscribe please click [here](#).

If you would like to unsubscribe please click [here](#).

# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix E. Public Notices

**Notice of Public Meeting for the ProPEL US 31 North Planning Study  
- Des#2100113**

The ProPEL US 31 North study team asks for Hoosiers' input as it begins Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) studies along US 30 and US 31 in northern Indiana. The ProPEL US 31 North Team will host a public information meeting for the ProPEL US 31 North Study located in Miami and Fulton counties.

The meeting's purpose is to provide study information and seek public feedback about the vision and scope for the ProPEL US 31 study, including local transportation needs and priorities. The meetings will be held:

- Place: Rochester Community High School, 1645 S. Park Rd., Rochester, IN 46975
- Date: December 1, 2022
- Time: Open house from 5:00 to 7:00 ET, presentation at 6:00 p.m. If inclement weather occurs, the study website and social media channels, as well as an e-blast, will provide a rescheduled meeting date. A virtual public meeting will be available at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com) the day following the in-person public meeting.

The ProPEL US 31 North Study Area begins at 300 N in Miami County, where the Eel River crosses US 31, and runs to 700 N in Fulton County. The approximately 26-mile stretch includes Mexico and Rochester. The Study Team is working to understand local needs, and identify opportunities, concerns and areas of conflict along the corridor. Public input is an important part of the process.

INDOT intends to use the information, analysis and decisions from the PEL study process to inform future federal environmental reviews conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Find more information about the study at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com) and sign up for study updates to receive the latest news and information. The Study Team will host community office hours twice a month along the corridor.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons with disabilities or representing an ADA and/or Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population are encouraged to contact Berry Craig, (270) 705-1640 or [berry.craig@parsons.com](mailto:berry.craig@parsons.com) in advance to coordinate services such as participation during the meeting, language, visual and audio interpretation services.

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 July 7, 2021. Current INDOT Public Involvement guidance can be found at <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/>. hspaxlp

## Rochester Daily Sentinel

**Notice of Public Meeting for the ProPEL US 31 North Planning Study****– Des#2100113**

The ProPEL US 31 North study team asks for Hoosiers' input as it begins Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) studies along US 30 and US 31 in northern Indiana. The ProPEL US 31 North Team will host a public information meeting for the ProPEL US 31 North Study located in Miami and Fulton counties.

The meeting's purpose is to provide study information and seek public feedback about the vision and scope for the ProPEL US 31 study, including local transportation needs and priorities. The meetings will be held:

- Place: Rochester Community High School, 1645 S. Park Rd., Rochester, IN 46975
- Date: December 1, 2022
- Time: Open house from 5:00 to 7:00 ET, presentation at 6:00 p.m.

If inclement weather occurs, the study website and social media channels, as well as an e-blast, will provide a rescheduled meeting date. A virtual public meeting will be available at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com) the day following the in-person public meeting.

The ProPEL US 31 North Study Area begins at 300 N in Miami County, where the Eel River crosses US 31, and runs to 700 N in Fulton County. The approximately 26-mile stretch includes Mexico and Rochester. The Study Team is working to understand local needs, and identify opportunities, concerns and areas of conflict along the corridor. Public input is an important part of the process.

INDOT intends to use the information, analysis and decisions from the PEL study process to inform future federal environmental reviews conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Find more information about the study at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com) and sign up for study updates to receive the latest news and information. The Study Team will host community office hours twice a month along the corridor.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons with disabilities or representing an ADA and/or Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population are encouraged to contact Berry Craig, (270) 705-1640 or [berry.craig@parsons.com](mailto:berry.craig@parsons.com) in advance to coordinate services such as participation during the meeting, language, visual and audio interpretation services.

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 July 7, 2021. Current INDOT Public Involvement guidance can be found at <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/>.

hspaxlp

# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix F. Stakeholder Advisory Committee



**Meeting:** Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #1

**Time and Date:** November 16, 2022, 10 – 11:30 a.m. ET

**Location:** Virtual via Microsoft Teams

**Attendees:**

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Doug Beller	Fulton County Council on Aging	Cindy Mauro	INDOT
Sandy Chittum	Miami County Chamber of Commerce	Jonathan Wallace	INDOT
Thomas Dow	Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Council	Dan Miller	HNTB
Alan Fisher	Woodlawn Hospital	Berry Craig	Parsons
Tiffany Futrell	Fulton County Economic Development Corporation	Eric Jagger	Parsons
Kenneth Hanson	North Miami Community Schools	Jenny Kleinman	Parsons
John Hayes	New Life Church	Junell O'Donnell	Parsons
Marvin Ramer	Ramco Supply	Mindy Peterson	Parsons
Jillian Smith	Fulton County Chamber of Commerce	Dan Prevost	Parsons
Eryn Fletcher	Federal Highway Administration	Marian Hull	CDM Smith
Erin Pipkin	Compass Outreach Solutions		

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

This first Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting for the ProPEL US 31 North study covered an overview of the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process, why the study is needed along US 31, and what potential solutions there may be based on the community's mobility needs and goals. The study team – with help from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee – will craft the vision and outline the community's needs for the future of the US 31 North corridor.

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING PROCESS**

- a) The ProPEL US 31 North study is being led by Parsons. It includes US 31 in Fulton and the northern portion of Miami County. It runs from CR 300 N, just south of the Eel River on the south to CR 700 N in Fulton County. INDOT is the study owner that manages the planning process and is responsible for evaluating study recommendations.
- b) The Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) is comprised of business leaders, local government representatives, schools and social service representatives, emergency service providers, local industry representatives and local residents.
- c) The ProPEL studies are divided into four teams: US 31 North, US 31 South, US 30 West and US 30 East.
- d) PEL stands for Planning and Environmental Linkages. PEL is a process. It allows for innovative ways to address corridor challenges with long-term solutions. PEL studies allow for efficient transportation planning, robust public involvement opportunities, a collaborative approach to decision-making, and considers the environment and community.
- e) This PEL study includes four key milestones over about two years:
  - We are in the visioning and scoping stage.
  - The next phase will be developing the purpose and need.
  - Next the team will analyze alternatives.
  - Finally, the team will complete the study with preliminary recommendations.
- f) This study will take about two years.
  - Projects will be identified and programmed as funding becomes available.
  - After that, there are one to two years of preliminary design and environmental review.
  - Then INDOT will identify a selected alternative and complete final design.

### **2. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH**

- a) A key part of the PEL process is public involvement.
- b) We will host four SAC and public information meetings and monthly office hours at two locations along the corridor.
- c) There is a website ([www.propelus31.com](http://www.propelus31.com)) to provide study information and collect public feedback. There are Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts, and meetings with resource agencies. SAC members are encouraged to follow study social media accounts and share with colleagues and friends.

- d) Kenneth Hanson asked whether all studies completed to date will be scratched. Mindy Peterson explained that the PEL study team is gathering data and will consider all other studies completed to date. SAC members are encouraged to let the team know if there are any complementary plans that should be considered.
- e) The first community office hours were held at the Fulton County Library in Rochester on October 27, 2022. On Nov. 17, the team will be at the Mexico Fire Department. Doug Beller suggested the Community Center in Rochester as a good location for a meeting, and SAC members said that hosting meetings later in the afternoon will draw more residents.

### **3. PROPEL US 31 CORRIDOR**

- a) The team will consider options along the corridor that improve safety, provide better traffic flow, reduced turning and crossing conflicts, provide connections to the local road network, provide options for biking and walking, and support transit service.
- b) Public input from residents and travelers helps inform the Study Team of community needs and develop alternative solutions to meet those needs.
- c) The team will also look at how potential corridor solutions support current and future economic development efforts. This includes maintaining access to existing businesses and downtown Rochester.
- d) Community character and the environment are also important considerations.
- e) Another element of the PEL study is environmental justice, which seeks to ensure the fair treatment of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, Limited English proficiency, income or age with respect to the development of projects and investment of resources.

### **4. CORRIDOR DISCUSSION**

- a) What are the biggest safety concerns along the corridor?
  - Marvin Ramer (MR) noted that access is needed from one side of US 31 to the other. Many Mennonite community members live on the west side of US 31 and travel to the east. Buggies regularly cross 600 N and 700 N, and it is difficult with the traffic volume.
  - Semis crossing the highway or turning left onto US 31 block traffic, create backups and can lead to accidents. MR said that his drivers are only allowed to cross US 31 at traffic signals.
  - Notre Dame football games create a big increase in traffic and those drivers aren't familiar with the area or the busy crossings.
  - McClure's Orchard also creates traffic congestion. Some people are even backed up on US 31 waiting to turn west.
- b) What changes are needed along the corridor?
  - People need to be able to access McClure's, Green Oaks Antiques and the Fulton County Museum safely.
  - A SAC member asked whether J-turns are off the table or still being considered because they are not in favor of them.

- Better access to Rochester is needed.
- Access to some county roads require sharp right-hand turns with no turning blisters to keep US 31 clear.

c) What are the critical resources in the study area?

- Comment: John Hayes (JH) noted in the winter months, the US 31 route is well maintained compared to county roads. There are several people that use it with inclement weather that would not if the roads weren't as clear. This would also be an issue of limited access.
- Comment: Jillian Smith (JH) noted that she crosses US 31 at 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> streets daily. Conditions are often unsafe in the winter when snow is piled in medians.
- Comment: Kenneth Hanson (KH) noted that the southern end has limited access to cross. There are no other crossings for people west of the highway that want to travel south.
- Comment: JH noted that Green Oak Antiques right off US 31, the museum just west of US 31 and a small neighborhood west of US 31 need quick emergency vehicle access.

d) What function do you want from the roadway? How do you want the roadway to fit within your community?

- Q: DP asked what function do you want of the roadway? What changes are needed? Think big and think long-term.
  - Comment: Sandra Flum (SF) noted that another way to think about features or statements of other roads in the states feel, that you know exactly where you are because of features of the transportation system.
  - Comment: Junell O'Donnell (JOD) noted that we want to get this message back to the community and get feedback. The visioning exercise is a big opportunity for individuals to have their voices heard.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

- There will be a public information meeting from 5 to 7 p.m. on Dec. 1 at Rochester High School.
- The meeting content will be available on the website on Dec. 2.
- After public feedback is considered, the team will start to draft the purpose and need statement. The team will host another SAC meeting and public information meeting in the spring to present what we've heard and share how input helped with the project purpose and need.
- The SAC is encouraged to stay engaged in the study by promoting community office hours, sharing the website URL and social media channels, sharing general study information, and inviting the team to speak to local organizations.
- The SAC was asked if they prefer in-person or virtual meetings, and most prefer continuing to meet virtually.

## **6. GROUP DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Received throughout the meeting)**

Q: Mindy Peterson (MP) asked about other ideas or suggestions for community office hours.

- Comment: KH - The Mexico Fire Department makes sense for the southern part of the study area.
- Comment: Doug Beller (DB) – The Community Center in Rochester has space available for office hours.

Q: Sandra Flum (SF) asked if there is a preferred time of day for office hours?

- Comment: KH – Later afternoon times would be convenient for people who may be driving home from work and be unable to make day hours.
- Comment: JS – A few early mornings would be nice for retailers and restaurant owners.

Q: Dan Prevost (DP) asked about other possible EJ populations beyond the data. The goal is to target outreach opportunities for people to participate in the study.

- Comment: Alan Fisher (AF) noted that the Community Care Clinic administrator Mary Kay (574-223-6080) is a great connection to make for possible EJ outreach.
- Comment: JS noted that there are several board members at the Community Care Clinic that are well connected with the Spanish-speaking community.
- Comment: DB suggested reaching out to the elderly (he sits on the Council of Aging).
- Comment: MR said the horse and buggy Mennonite community has a concern about the 700 North Crossing and would have a strong interest in the area and a solution.

Q: DP asked about the presence and number of Spanish speakers in the study area? Any other languages?

- Comment: DB noted English and Spanish languages are the majority. There is a Spanish Community Center around Akron.

Comment: KH noted that he wanted to understand how information would be used and understanding where we are going from here. He noted a community feeling of frustration of “having gone down this road before”, particularly with strong opinions on J-turns and limiting access. The study team should expect those same strong opinions again.

Q: MP asked how to stay in touch? What time of the day do you want to meet? And virtual or in-person?

- Comment: DB noted the current time and virtual format works well.
- JS said yes to the current time and virtual format.
- AF noted a hybrid model around the existing time might work well.

# PROPEL US 31 NORTH STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #1



NextLevel  
ROADS

November 16, 2022

## WELCOME

- Attendees are welcome to **keep cameras on**, but please mute microphone unless asking a question
- **Use the chat function** to submit a question or make a comment
- Questions or comments can be entered **at any time during the presentation**



## PRESENTERS



**Dan Prevost**

PEL Lead, Parsons



**Mindy Peterson**

Public Involvement Director, Parsons

## AGENDA



# INTRODUCTION & PLANNING PROCESS



## STUDY TEAM



### Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)

- Study owner
- Manages the planning process
- Tasked with evaluating study recommendations

### Parsons Team

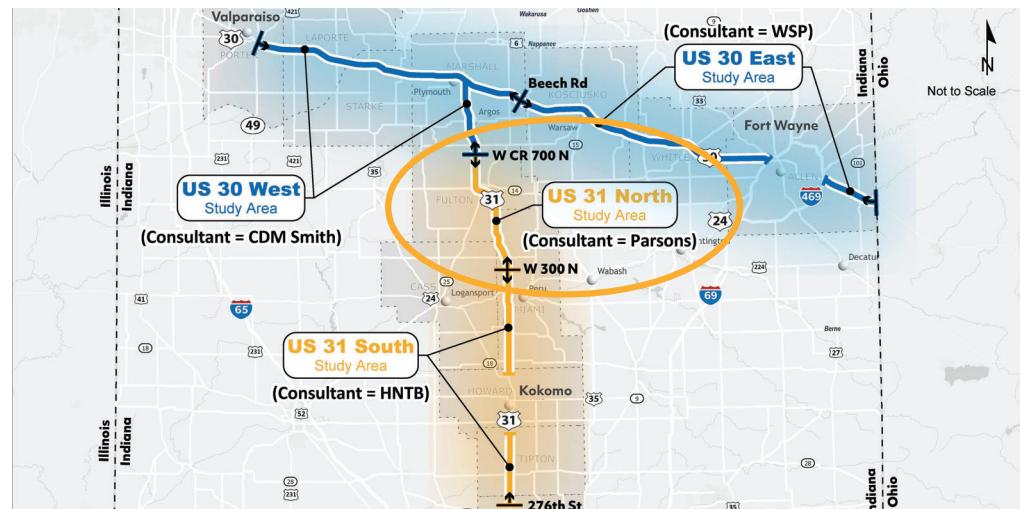
- Compass Outreach Solutions

INDOT is overseeing the work of **three other consulting teams** along the US 30 and US 31 corridors across northern Indiana.

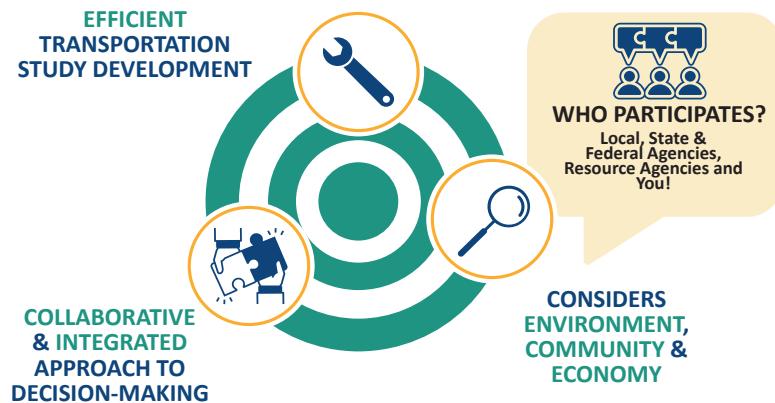
## STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE



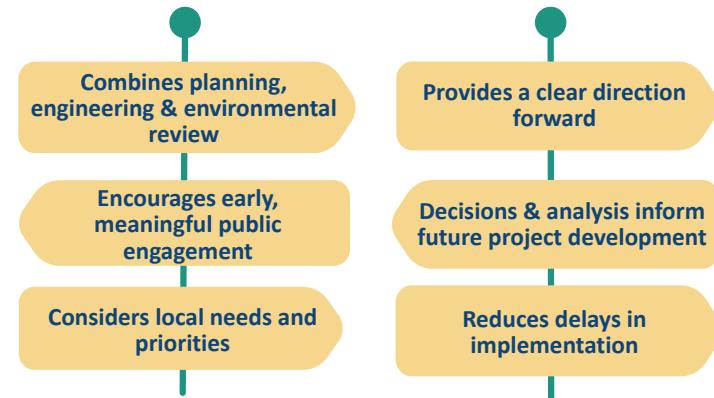
## PROPEL US 30 AND US 31



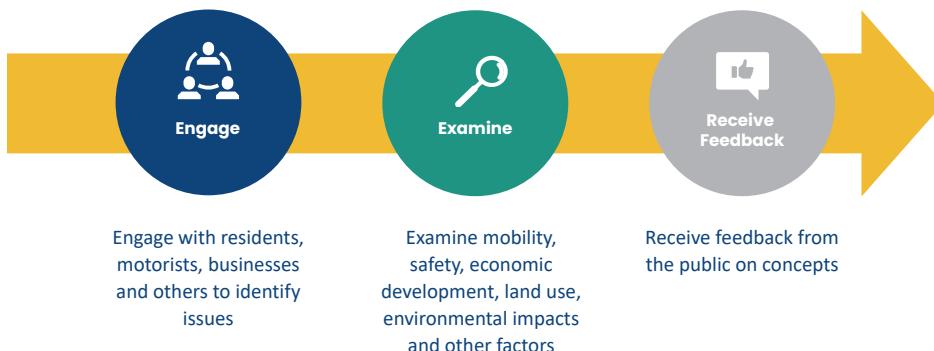
## WHAT IS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES?



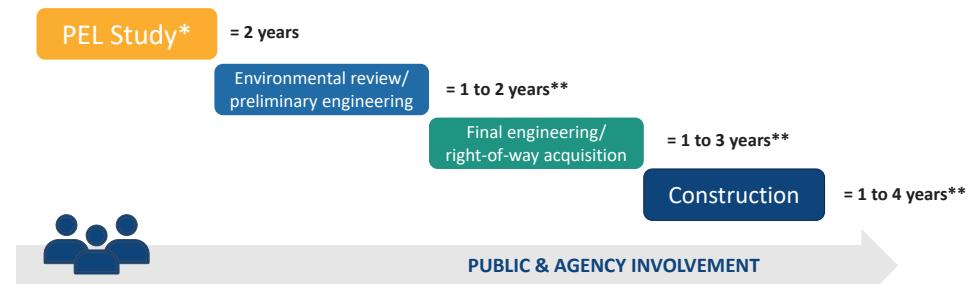
## PEL STUDY BENEFITS



## PROPEL PROCESS



## TRANSITIONING FROM PEL STUDY TO PROJECTS



\* ProPEL US 31 North study may recommend multiple alternatives. \*\*Timelines vary due to funding and complexity of the project. INDOT intends to carry forward the information, analysis and decisions from the ProPEL US 30 and 31 studies into the NEPA process.

## US 31 NORTH - PEL SCHEDULE



## STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## WE'RE LISTENING

- Four Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings
- Monthly office hours along the corridor in Rochester and Mexico
  - Are there other possible locations?
  - Would you host?
- Public meetings at four study milestones – in person and virtual



## WE'RE LISTENING

- Website with online comment tool at [PropelUS31.com](http://PropelUS31.com)
- Social media channels
  - Facebook: Propel U.S. 31
  - Twitter: @PropelUS31
  - Instagram: @PropelUS30\_31
- Meetings with resource agencies



## STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Regularly attend stakeholder meetings (4 total)
- Provide meaningful feedback to help guide the PEL
- Convey key takeaways from these meetings back to the community you represent



## BENEFITS OF BEING STAKEHOLDER

- Consistent communication
- Better understanding of study issues
- Detailed discussion of key issues
- Opportunity to hear differing views
- Opportunity for collaborative problem solving
- Opportunity to build understanding and support throughout the study



## STAKEHOLDERS' IMPACT ON THE STUDY



Provide information on local and regional issues



Advise Study Team on how transportation needs could be met



Share your community's needs

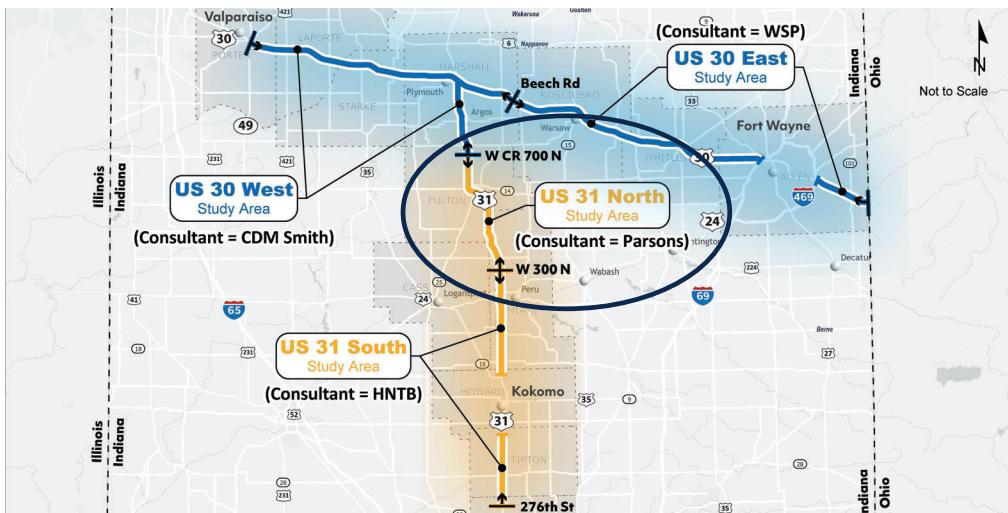


Encourage participation in public meetings, office hours, website, & surveys

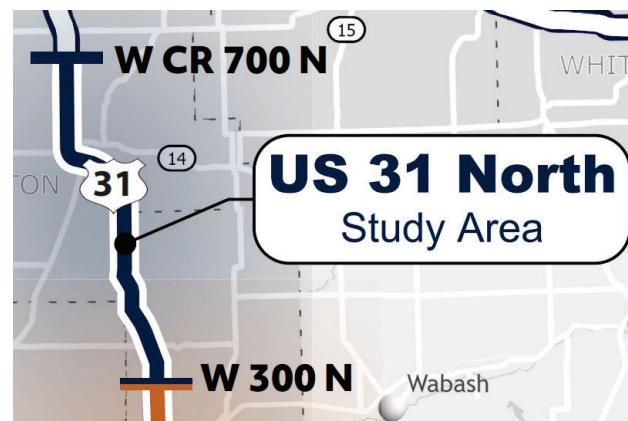
## PROPEL US 31 NORTH



## PROPEL US 31 NORTH – WHERE AND WHY



## PROPEL US 31 NORTH STUDY AREA



- Study area runs along US 31 North from W 300 N in the south to W CR 700 N in the north.

## TRANSPORTATION FUNCTION

- Improve safety
- Better traffic flow
- Connections to local streets
- Options for biking and walking
- Support transit service



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage growth with increased capacity
- Support the operation of local farms and farming as an industry
- Improve access to local businesses
- Improve distribution of local goods to regional/national markets
- Make it easier to deliver goods to regional businesses and residents
- Support expanded tourism, including agritourism



## COMMUNITY CHARACTER & ENVIRONMENT

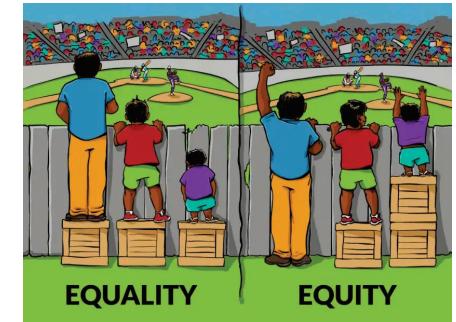
- Reflect character of area
- Support community character of local cities and towns
- Provide opportunities for attractive community gateways
- Support wildlife crossings



## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ)

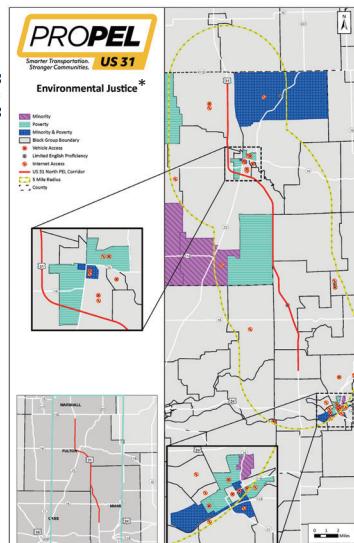
- EJ outreach seeks fairness in mobility and accessibility to meet the needs of everyone:

- Low income
- Race or Ethnicity
- Elderly
- Children
- Limited English Proficiency
- Persons with disabilities

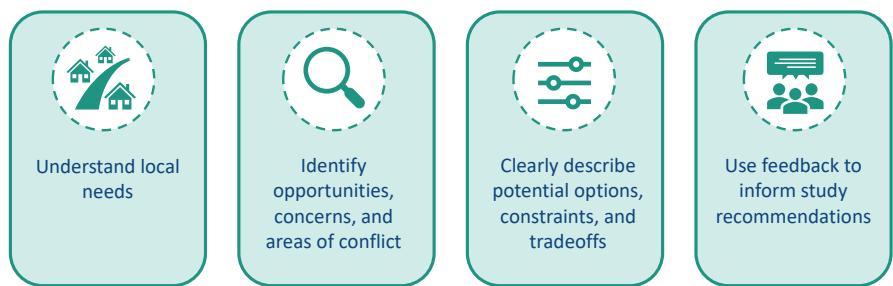


## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ)

- The study team is developing a map of environmental justice communities, examining:
  - 5-mile radius
  - Data from US Census, US Department of Housing and Urban Development and White House's Justice40 Initiative
- Do you know of other possible environmental justice communities in the area?



## HOW WE WILL USE WHAT WE LEARN



\*The Environmental Justice (EJ) Map is preliminary.

## DISCUSSION

Current Conditions & Future Vision



NextLevel  
ROADS

## CORRIDOR ISSUES

- What are your biggest safety concerns along the corridor?



## TRAFFIC OPERATIONS AND DELAY

- Have you experienced traffic congestion or delays along US 31?
  - Traffic delays?
  - Traffic congestion?
  - Need for turning lanes?
  - Need for traffic signals or signage?
  - Long traffic queues?
- Are there areas of multi-modal concerns or need for improved access to reduce vehicle delays for:
  - Pedestrians and bicycles
  - Farm equipment
  - Others?



## CRITICAL RESOURCES

- What are some of the sensitive or critical resources in your community? Things like:
  - Parks, forests, recreation
  - Agriculture and farms
  - Wetlands, natural resources
  - Streams, lakes, water
  - Schools, community uses
  - Homes, businesses
  - Sensitive populations of people
  - Plants and animals
  - Others?



## FUNCTION AND FIT

- What **function** do you want from the roadway?
  - Improved safety
  - Improved travel times
  - Walkability access
  - Multimodal access
- How do you want the roadway to **fit** within your community?



## FUTURE VISION

- What changes are needed along the corridor?
- How do you use the US 31 corridor?
- How can US 31 best serve your community?
  - Freight travel
  - Commuting
  - Multimodal



## REACHING THE PUBLIC

- What is the best way to reach residents in your community?
- Public input and comments:  
[PropelUS31.com](http://PropelUS31.com)
- It's easy to make a comment – let us show you how.
  - Visit our website
  - Click study section button
  - Follow prompts and share feedback

**PROPEL**  
Smarter Transportation. Stronger Communities. US 31

INDIANA STATEMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Select Language  Powered by Google Translate

**ProPEL US 31 North**  
INDOT is asking for Hoosiers' input as it begins streamlined planning studies along the U.S. 31 corridor in Northern Indiana. The ProPEL studies seek to ProPEL our communities forward by using a collaborative approach to consider environmental, community and economic goals early in the process. INDOT wants your help in identifying what the corridor could look like in the future.

**Open Project Documents**

**1) Please enter your comment below:** Required  
Submit your comment here.  
  
Please do not place any personally identifiable information (name, phone, or email) within your comment.

**2) Select any of the following topics that apply to your comment: (Select all that apply)**  
 Bike and Pedestrian    Economic Development    Environmental    Mobility    Safety  
  
 Overall US 31 Corridor

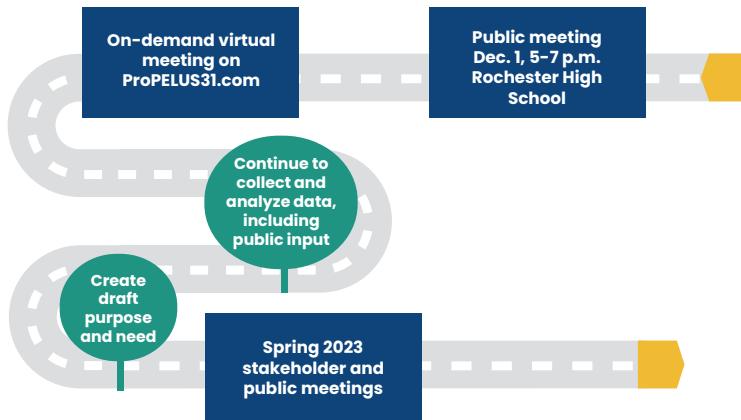
**3) Tell us about yourself and stay up to date with the project**  
Zip Code \* Required Last Name \* Required Email \* Required  
00000   Doe   jadedoe@jadedoe.com

**4) Do you have a specific question or concern that you would like a response to?**  
Do not send me a response

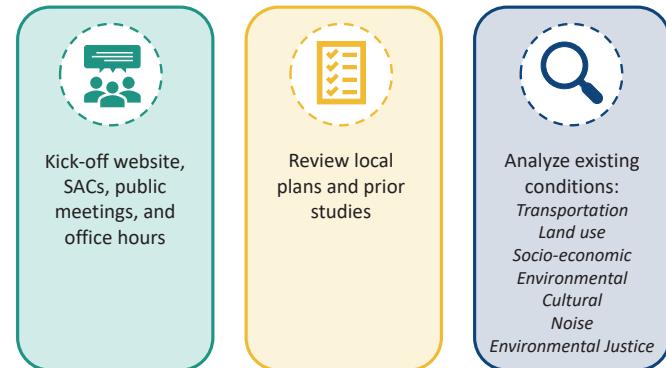
**CONTINUE →**

## NEXT STEPS

## VISIONING TO PURPOSE AND NEED

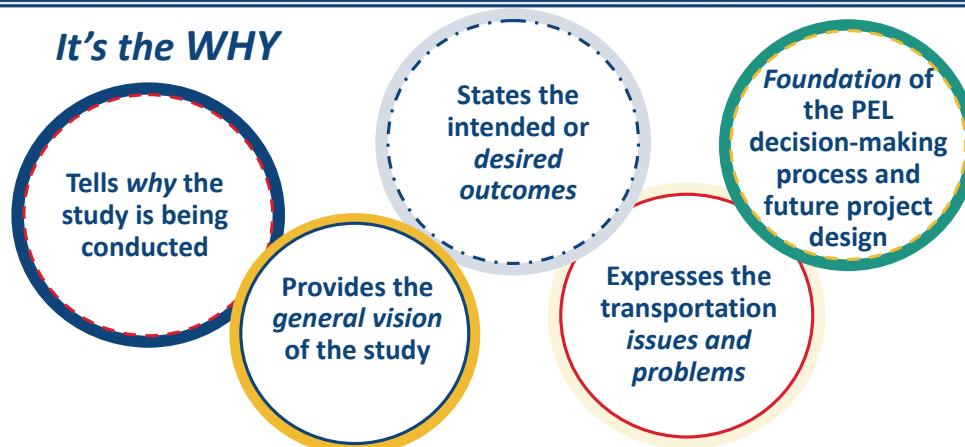


## VISION AND SCOPING

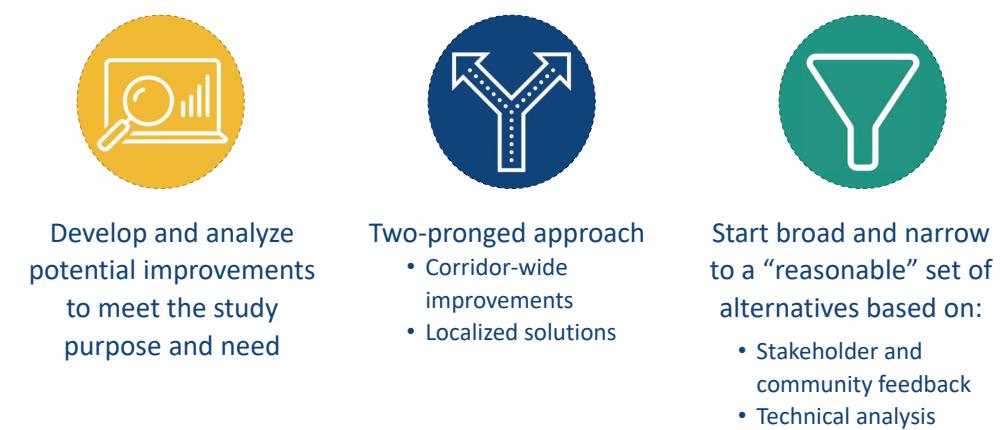


## WHAT IS A PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT?

### *It's the WHY*

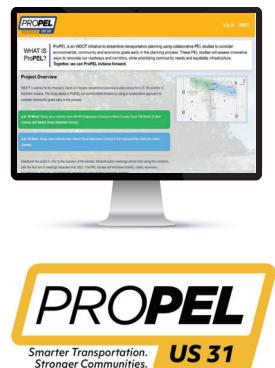


## ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS



## STAYING IN TOUCH

- **Send** public meeting information to your email contacts, share what you hear
- **Share** the study website: [PropelUS31.com](http://PropelUS31.com)
- **Host** or promote office hours - those are regular and happening over the next 2 years
- **Invite** the study team to speak
- **How do you prefer to meet** – virtually or in person?



## PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

- **Public meetings coming soon**
- **Rochester High School**
  - Thursday, December 1, 5 to 7 p.m.
  - 6 p.m. presentation
- **Virtual meeting available at** [PropelUS31.com](http://PropelUS31.com) following the public meeting
  - **Walk** through virtual stations
  - **Ask** questions and learn more
  - **Share** feedback with the team



# THANK YOU

Visit the website at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com)

US 31 North Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #1

November 16, 2022



# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix G. US 30 & 31 Coalition Presentations



Adin McCann, PE  
Project Manager  
c. 312.909.1434  
amccann@hntb.com

Stacey Osburn  
Communications Lead  
p. 317.374.8998  
sosburn@hntb.com

## MEETING NOTES

Date: November 21, 2022

Re: ProPEL US 30/31 Coalition Meeting

### In Attendance:

Adin McCann	<i>ProPEL US 30/31 Advisor PM, HNTB Corporation</i>
Stacey Osburn	<i>ProPEL US 31 Advisor Communications Lead, HNTB Corporation</i>
Sandra Flum	<i>INDOT, ProPEL US 30 PM, ProPEL US 31 Deputy PM</i>
Kevin Sears	<i>INDOT, Government Relations</i>
Andrea Zimmerman	<i>INDOT, Government Relations</i>
Andy Brooks	<i>Brooks Construction Co, Inc.</i>
Arlan Friesen	<i>Ambassador Enterprises</i>
Bill Hartman	<i>Allen County Highway Department</i>
Bill Konyha	<i>Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana</i>
Brad Bagwell	<i>President, US 31 Coalition</i>
Bret Morris	<i>Tipton County Highway Department</i>
Dan Avery	<i>Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council</i>
Dan F. Brown	<i>Phend &amp; Brown, Inc.</i>
David Long	<i>Retired Indiana Senator</i>
Geary Buchanan	<i>Buchanan Hauling &amp; Rigging</i>
Jeff Harding	<i>Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana</i>
Jeff Rea	<i>South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce</i>
Jim Tidd	<i>Miami County Economic Development Authority</i>
Lauren Maudlin	<i>Executive Director, US 31 Coalition</i>
Mark Gourley	<i>Starke County Commissioner</i>
Mayor Ryan Daniel	<i>Mayor, Columbia City</i>
Nick Darrah	<i>Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership</i>
Eric Ottinger	<i>Lake City Bank</i>
Patrick Zaharako	<i>City Engineer, Ft. Wayne</i>
Tony Rodriguez	<i>La Porte County Office of Community and Economic Development</i>
Scott Glaze	<i>Fort Wayne Metals</i>
Sonny Beck (Megan)	<i>Beck's Superior Hybrids</i>
Steven Townes	<i>Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana</i>
Tracy Powell	<i>Tipton County Commissioner</i>
Rick Ranstead	<i>Fulton County Commissioner</i>
John Geier	<i>Fulton County Highway Department</i>

<i>Mayor Joe Thallemer</i>	<i>Mayor, City of Warsaw</i>
<i>Chris Brandt</i>	<i>Steel Dynamics, Inc.</i>
<i>Mike Metzger</i>	<i>Metzger Trucking Company</i>

## MEETING SUMMARY

A US 30/31 Coalition meeting was held (virtually) on November 21, 2022, for the ProPEL US 30/31 advisor team to provide an update on the studies, discuss community and stakeholder engagement activities, provide information on next steps, and answer any questions from attendees.

### 1. INTRODUCTIONS

- a. The consultant introduced the presenters (below) as well as INDOT staff participating in the meeting.
  - i. Presenter: Adin McCann, Advisor Project Manager
  - ii. Presenter: Stacey Osburn, Advisor Communications Lead
- b. The consultant facilitated a stakeholder introduction period where participants were asked to state their name and affiliation. A complete list can be found under meeting attendees.
- c. The consultant encouraged interaction during the meeting and suggested using the chat function or raising your virtual hand to ask a question or provide a comment.
- d. The consultant reviewed the agenda, which included: PEL studies refresher, update on community and stakeholder engagement activities, next steps, and dedicated time after the presentation for discussion and an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and provide feedback.

### 2. PEL REFRESHER

- a. The consultant explained that INDOT is sponsoring Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies for 180 miles of US 30 and US 31 in northern Indiana.
  - i. There are four study areas.
  - ii. Each study area has a consultant working with INDOT to facilitate the study in their area.
  - iii. While there are four study areas, each consultant is working closely with the others to coordinate information and, ultimately, any improvement recommendations.
  - iv. An important benefit of having four study areas is that the consultants can focus on the specific transportation and community needs in that area so that any recommendations resulting from the PEL studies will be closely aligned with community goals and values.
- b. The consultant reviewed the timeline of the PEL study.
  - i. Each study is moving along the same basic timeline because we are coordinating so closely.
  - ii. At this time, we are in the Vision/Scoping phase and are completing the outreach efforts associated with that, which includes a lot of listening. Being in the community and listening allows each of the four teams to understand where the transportation challenges exist in their study area and how community goals and objectives can be incorporated into the studies.

- iii. Community and stakeholder input combined with the technical work that is being done (e.g., analyzing crash data, identifying mobility concerns through traffic operations analysis) will help develop a Purpose & Need Statement for each study area. Timeline for completion of this task is Spring/Summer 2023, and the consultant plans to gather this group together to share the outcome.
- iv. In late 2023/early 2024, the consultant anticipates another round of engagement around the identification of potential alternatives to address the needs that were previously defined.
- v. In Fall 2024, the four PEL studies will be completed, and the results will be shared through stakeholder engagement and outreach.
  - 1. One of the major benefits of a PEL study and one of the reasons that INDOT is using them to evaluate these corridors is that the resulting information, analysis and decisions can be carried forward into the next phase of project development, which is the federal environmental review process (NEPA).
- vi. Overall timeline for the PEL study is two years.
- vii. After the PEL studies are complete, it is anticipated that several alternatives will be carried forward into NEPA, which is the federal environmental review process.
- viii. Once a preferred alternative is identified in the NEPA process, final engineering and right-of-way acquisition can begin, followed by construction (contingent on funding).
- ix. The timelines should not be viewed as prescriptive. Based on project complexities and funding availability, the timelines to get to “boots on the ground” within the communities will vary.

### 3. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DURING VISION & SCOPING

- a. The consultant outlined the stakeholder and community engagement that is currently planned throughout the two-year PEL study planning process, including stakeholder meetings, public information meetings (in-person and web-based opportunities), social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), the study websites ([www.propelUS30.com](http://www.propelUS30.com) and [www.propelUS31.com](http://www.propelUS31.com)), monthly community office hours, and resource agency coordination.
  - i. To date, seven stakeholder meetings have been held with Stakeholder Advisory Committees established for each study area.
    - 1. The role of a stakeholder is to provide input throughout the study process, serve as a sounding board for study information, facilitate problem solving and discussion of specific issues and serve as a link to the community to share study information and receive feedback.
    - 2. Stakeholder Advisory Committees are comprised of local agency representatives, resident and community organizations, churches and social services providers, businesses and business organizations and emergency service providers.

- a. The consultant shared a list of Stakeholder Advisory Community Members to give an idea of community members engaged in this process. This list is expected to grow as the study process moves farther along.
- ii. Six public information meetings are scheduled throughout the US 30 and US 31 corridors. Those meetings will be held in person and available on demand on the study websites to inform the public about the PEL studies and begin to gather feedback. All in-person meetings begin at 5 p.m. and include a short presentation, as well as open house time for participants to interact with study team members. The meetings are scheduled to conclude at 7 p.m. Specific meeting details are available on the attached slides.
- iii. Monthly community office hours are opportunities for informal, in-person and one-on-one conversations with study team members to ask questions, provide input, and get regular project updates. These efforts are intended to make it easier for stakeholders to learn about the project and provide their feedback – in locations and at times that are more convenient for them. Community office hours will be held twice per month in each study area. Locations and times will vary to reach as many people as possible.
  - 1. The consultant asked attendees to consider possible locations and times for office hours that would have a large community draw and submit to the study team.
- b. The consultant identified how stakeholder and community feedback will be utilized in the PEL study process. This includes but is not limited to, understanding local needs, identifying opportunities and concerns, assessing potential options, constraints, and tradeoffs within the corridor, and finally to inform the PEL study recommendations.
- c. Through these public engagement and outreach activities, the consultants are trying to understand the fit and the function of the corridor to determine what changes are needed and what needs to be preserved.
  - i. “Fit” explores issues such as access, economic development, depicting the character of the community, how to identify the community (gateways, etc.) and also identifies sensitive resources.
  - ii. “Function” explores safety and traffic concerns, important access points, intersection upgrades, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- d. The consultant noted that engagement efforts will be regularly assessed to make sure that we are reaching community members in the right way and people know how to get in touch with the study teams as the studies continue.

#### 4. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- a. Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful engagement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.

- b. Each of the study teams is looking at data and other indicators in their study area to determine where underrepresented populations exist and how to best reach those communities of concern encourage their engagement in this process. This is an area where the study teams could use local input to make sure that potential populations of concern are meaningfully engaged in the study process. Examples of input needed from this group includes specific locations where potential populations of concern may exist, as well as specific methods to best communicate with them.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

- a. The consultant encouraged attendees to sign up to receive email updates, visit the study websites and follow the social media channels to stay up to date on outreach details and the status of the study. The consultants are eager to work with you in any capacity to help get the word out in your communities.
- b. The consultant outlined the next two phases of the study process and what each will focus on.
- c. The Purpose and Need is determined by collecting and analyzing the technical data and the public input. The Purpose & Need statement will be presented to stakeholders in Spring/Summer 2023.
  - i. The Purpose & Need statement tells why the study is being conducted, provides a general vision for the study, states the desired outcomes of the study, expresses transportation issues and concerns, and represents the foundation of the decision-making process and the future project design.
- d. After the needs are identified, the next step is alternatives analysis. It is anticipated that multiple alternatives that meet the purpose and need will be carried forward into the NEPA process.

## 6. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Question: Is it possible to get a list of stakeholders for each county?
  - INDOT can provide a general listing of the organization types.
- Comment: Would also recommend a stakeholder group be established for regional and local economic development directors. Most times we are negotiating projects before they get to planning departments, elected officials, etc. Get help focus development into strategic locations along the corridor based on current and future demand.
  - The consultants are trying to get a broad cross-section of representatives across a large area to capture many different perspectives, including economic development. That will be an ongoing process as the studies move forward. The study teams will review this input and assess how best to incorporate economic development considerations into the study process, including the Stakeholder Advisory Committees.
  - The PEL studies are forward-looking in their approach. Current INDOT construction projects will continue, and the consultants will work with the appropriate contacts across the study area to ensure that current programmed projects are considered as inputs to the PEL study process.
- INDOT noted that a specific focus of the engagement process is to help the study teams supplement the data and technical analyses. This is a primary focus of the community office hours

approach each study team is implementing. For example, if there is stakeholder feedback about safety and congestion issues that is more anecdotal or qualitative, we want that input as it could help us identify areas where future problems could develop. If we have not yet met with a representative member of your community, we are more than happy to meet with you by appointment.

- Comment: The Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana is not listed as a member of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. Please include us.
  - It was believed this group was included as a member of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee list, but INDOT will coordinate with the US 30 East study team to review and confirm.
- Question: Are you going to share public meeting information on the ProPEL websites?
  - Yes, we will have the information about the public meetings on the websites and social media. The websites will also be updated regularly to reflect dates, times, and locations of community office hours.
- Question: Are there areas of the corridor that you are missing data/information that we can help with?
  - The study teams are working with multiple points of contact to gather the appropriate data to support their technical work. If needed, the study teams may follow-up with specific data requests resulting from stakeholder or community input.
- Question: Will the stakeholder list be posted?
  - i. Once the first round of outreach is completed, a summary of the completed activities and the feedback received will be made available on the study website.
- Comment: Please send slides from this session to [trodriguez@laportecounty.org](mailto:trodriguez@laportecounty.org).
  - The slides from the briefing are attached with this meeting summary.
- Two comments were provided regarding traffic levels on US 31 and adjacent local roadways:
  - “I think one thing I’ve noticed with the US 31, especially the railroad crossing construction in Tipton County, has really shown the effect US 31 can have on local traffic and vice versa. In the past, INDOT has said there’s not enough traffic to justify a lot of things, but some of the delays that I’ve seen as I’m going north and the traffic coming south has been about two miles long to get through that railroad crossing that goes down to one lane. I just want to make sure that we know that it may be spread out normally but when it gets backed up, it can really get backed up both northbound and southbound on US 31. Not sure what traffic studies have shown there in the past, but I think we need to have good, current information on US 31 traffic counts especially after the railroad crossing is done.”
  - “Our local roads will show the increase of the traffic coming off US 31 compared to what it used to be.”
    - The study teams are working with multiple points of contact and data sources to gather the best available data for their work and will continue to do so. Depending on what they find and what they hear from stakeholders, there may

be some follow-up with local agencies to see if supplemental data exists to support the technical work.

- Question(s): What type of lead time are you giving the public on these public meetings? We were in a US 30 Coalition meeting last Friday and were made aware by one of our members that they received information on the public meeting. No one else on the Coalition board was aware of that. We quickly sent that information out, but still really haven't seen anything public beyond the website. We are very much interested in getting the information out to our constituents. What is the process for notification as these meetings come along? What kind of lead time are you looking at in getting the information out?
  - The consultants are attempting to give as much notice as possible, with a goal of no less than two weeks' notice. The US 30 West public information meeting notices are scheduled to run in local newspapers about a week in advance; however, the meetings were also advertised in a variety of other ways, including: print media, email blasts, social media, the study websites, as well as sharing the information with the Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings. This is the first of many stakeholder engagement activities, so there will be lots of opportunity to provide input. Additionally, if people miss the public information meetings, the information will be available online following the meetings, including an opportunity to see the in-person presentation which will be recorded and posted to the website.
- Comment: Howard County uses 31 north and south, so I'm not sure how much notification you're giving in Kokomo and Howard County for these meetings. You might even plan a meeting in Howard County to talk about US 31 activity.
  - The US 31 South study team will evaluate opportunities to announce the public information meetings in Kokomo and Howard County. Additionally, options for holding public information meetings closer to or within Kokomo will be considered.
- Question: How does out-of-state traffic get compared to the local inputs, for instance with 30 and 31 there is a huge amount of through traffic. How do you weigh those against each other in this process?
  - Public comment is encouraged from all stakeholders – regardless of their geographic location, and the study teams have heard from folks outside of the study area, including outside of Indiana. Sometimes it's challenging to get this broader geographic feedback, but it's always welcome and useful. There's not really a direct weighing of input against each other. All the input received – which can include local users, as well as a broader user base – gets combined to help us identify the transportation needs and the potential solutions to those needs. When considering potential solutions, we also consider the benefits and impacts of a concept and how those are distributed among different stakeholders.

# US 30 AND 31 COALITION BRIEFING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

November 21, 2022



## AGENDA

PEL STUDIES REFRESHER

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

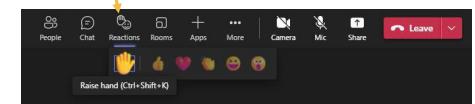
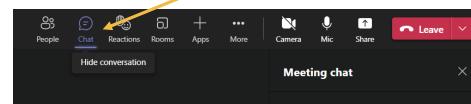
NEXT STEPS

QUESTIONS?



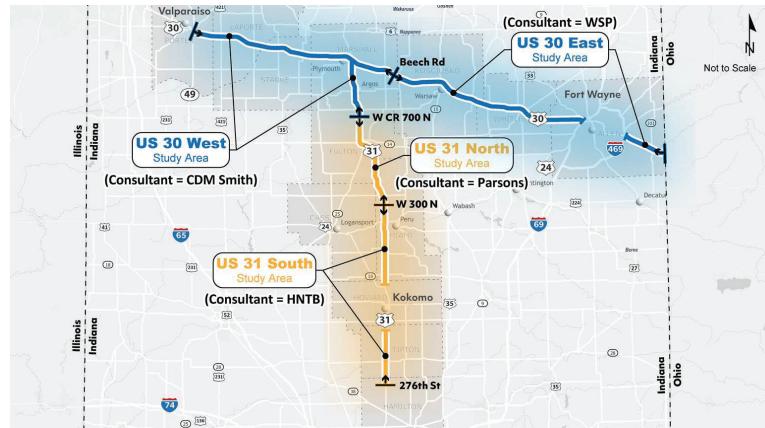
## WELCOME

- Feel free to leave cameras on, but please mute your mic unless asking a question
- Comments and questions are welcome throughout the presentation
- Use the **chat function** to ask a question or **raise your virtual hand**



- NOTE: Comments are visible to the full group

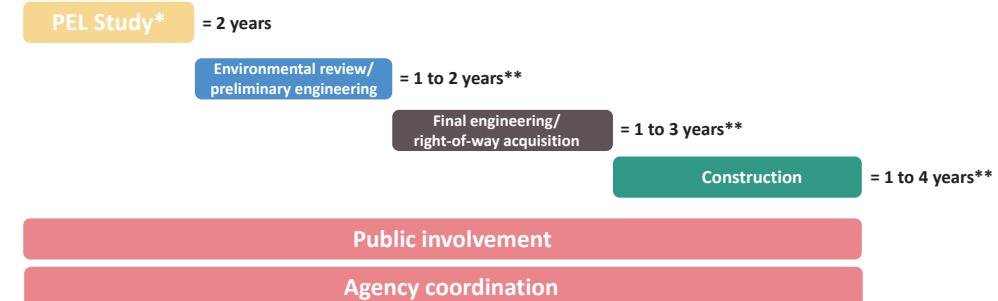
## ProPEL US 30 and US 31



## SCHEDULE



## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE PEL STUDY?



\*ProPEL US 31 South study may recommend multiple alternatives

\*\*Timelines vary due to funding and complexity of projects

## COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



NextLevel  
ROADS

PROPEL  
Smarter Transportation. Stronger Communities. US 30

PROPEL  
Smarter Transportation. Stronger Communities. US 31

## STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Seven stakeholder meetings
- Six public information meetings
  - In-person and web-based
- Social media
  - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Study website
- Monthly community office hours
  - 8 completed
  - Informal format, rotating venues
  - Appointments available
- Resource agency coordination



## STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

### Role of a Stakeholder:

1

Provide input throughout the study process

2

Serve as a sounding board for study information and choices

3

Facilitate problem solving, discussion of specific issues

4

Serve as a link to the community, sharing study information

## STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE



## SAC MEMBER EXAMPLES

Black Chamber of Commerce  
Reynolds Farm Equipment  
Tipton County Foundation  
United Way  
Boys and Girls Clubs  
Indiana Farm Bureau  
Lewis Cass School Corporation  
Howard County Highway Department  
Logansport Cass County Planning Department  
Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic  
Kokomo and Howard County MPO  
Indiana State Police  
Community Foundation of Howard County  
Hamilton County Highway Department  
Tipton County Highway Department  
Hamilton County Emergency Management  
Hamilton County Planning Department  
Plymouth Fire Department  
Marshall County EMA  
Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission

Tipton County Farmers & Artisans Market  
Tipton County Planning Department  
3 Rivers Velo Sport  
Creighton Brothers  
Hilger Family Farm  
4 KCV Bike Club  
Lutheran EMS  
NIRCC  
NW Allen County Schools  
Parkview Hospital  
Steel Dynamics  
Sweetwater Sound  
Warsaw Community Schools  
Whitko Community School Corporation  
Kosciusko County Chamber of Commerce  
Deer Chase HOA Board, Columbia City  
Whitley County Emergency Management  
Greater Fort Wayne Inc.  
Northeast Indiana Partnership  
Marian University Ancilla  
Marshall County Community Foundation  
Knox-Center Township Fire Department

Community Transportation Network  
New Haven Public Works  
Allen County Sheriff's Department  
Ramco Supply  
Woodlawn Hospital  
Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission  
Fulton County Historical Society  
Fulton County Council on Aging  
Fulton County Economic Development Corporation  
New Life Church  
Miami County Chamber of Commerce  
North Miami Community Schools  
InTrucking  
MACOG  
Oregon-Davis School District  
Plymouth Community School Corporation  
Plymouth Baptist Church  
Starke County EMA  
Wanatah Public Library

**US 30 West**  
Wednesday, November 30, 2022  
5 – 7 p.m.  
Oregon Davis School  
5990 N. 750 E.  
Hamlet, IN 46532

**US 30 East**  
Monday, December 5, 2022  
5 – 7 p.m.  
Sweetwater Sound  
5501 U.S. Hwy 30 W.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46818

Tuesday, December 6, 2022  
5 – 7 p.m.  
Lincoln Elementary School  
203 N. Lincoln St.  
Warsaw, IN 46580

**US 31 North**  
Thursday, December 1, 2022  
5 – 7 p.m.  
Rochester Community High School  
1645 S. Park Rd.  
Rochester, IN 46975

**US 31 South**  
Wednesday, December 7, 2022  
5 – 7 p.m.  
Tipton County Fairgrounds  
1200 S. Main St.  
Tipton, IN 46072

Thursday, December 8, 2022  
5 – 7 p.m.  
Peru Jr. High School  
30 Daniel St.  
Peru, IN 46970

## HOW WILL FEEDBACK BE USED?

- Understand local needs
- Identify local opportunities and concerns
- Assess potential options, constraints, and tradeoffs
- Inform study recommendations



## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

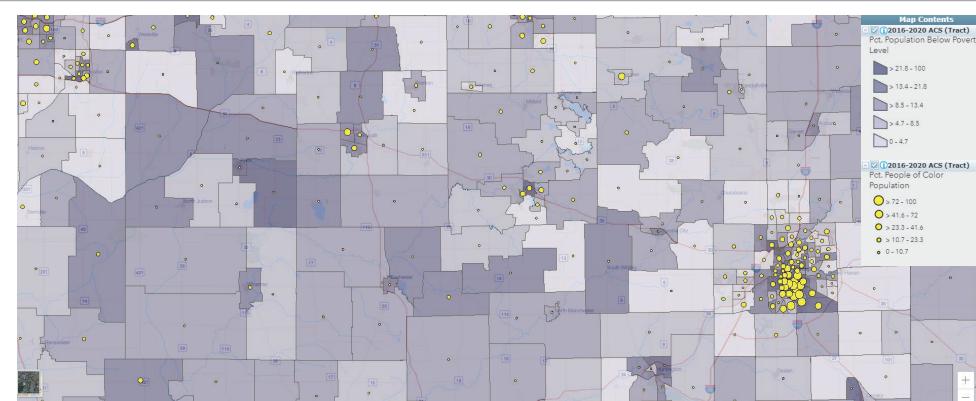
The fair treatment and **meaningful engagement** of all people **regardless of race, color, national origin, or income** with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies



**Fair Treatment**  
No group of people should bear a disproportional share of the negative environmental consequences of a transportation investment

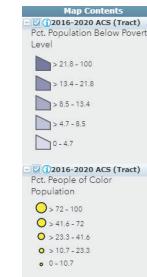
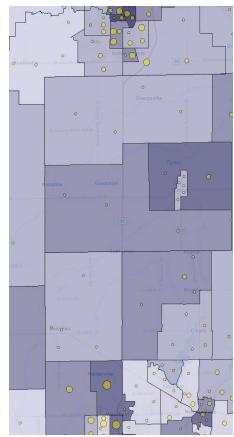
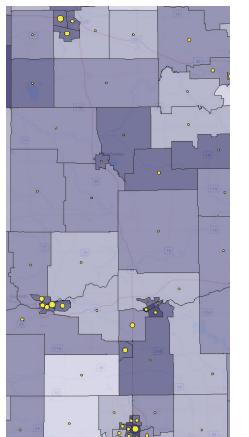
**Meaningful Engagement**  
Seek out and facilitate the involvement of potentially affected communities so that they can shape the process

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



Source: USEPA EJScreen

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

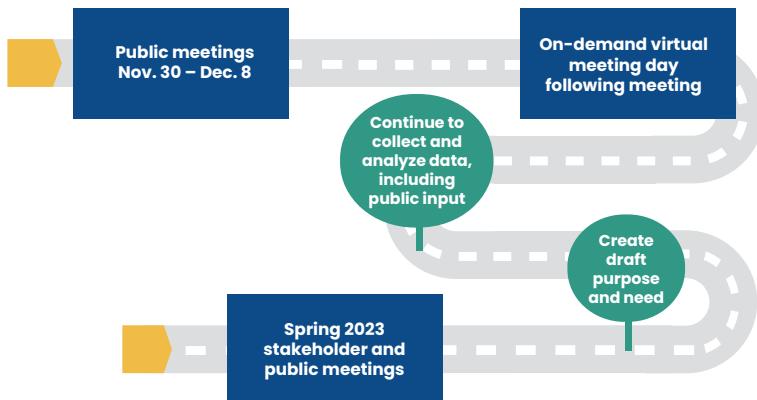


Source: USEPA EJScreen

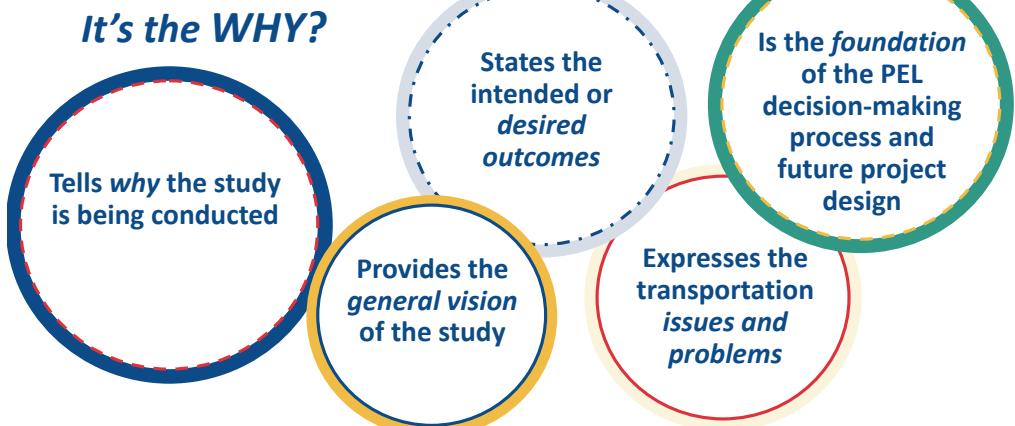
## NEXT STEPS



## VISIONING TO PURPOSE AND NEED



## WHAT IS A PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT?



## ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS



Develop and analyze potential improvements to meet the study purpose and need



Two-pronged approach

- Localized solutions
- Corridor-wide improvements



Start broad and narrow to a “reasonable” set of alternatives based on:

- Technical analysis
- Stakeholder and community feedback



## THANK YOU



# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix H. Agency Coordination Presentations



Date: November 30, 2022, 10-11 a.m., INDOT I-69 Conference Room and Microsoft Teams



## DHPA INFORMATIONAL MEETING

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & PURPOSE

- Kia Gillette from HNTB started the meeting at approximately 10:05 a.m. and explained it is intended to be informal and informational.
- Introductions were made for attendees in the room and of the people joining virtually (see page 5 for attendee list).

#### 2. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES (PEL) OVERVIEW

- Adin McCann from HNTB discussed the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process. INDOT will complete other PEL studies, so please provide any thoughts or feedback to help improve the process in the future.
- The key part of PEL is planning. The PEL study is pre-project development/pre-NEPA. This study happens very early, before there are needs/solutions/or even projects developed.
- No alternatives are determined at this stage.
- The process starts with extensive data collection.
- The benefit of PEL is it is very comprehensive and considers:
  - Transportation needs
  - Environmental resources
  - Community goals
  - Economic objectives
- It allows INDOT to engage with the affected communities earlier in the process, allowing for better outcomes overall with projects.
- Agency coordination occurs early in the planning process.
- Information developed during the PEL can be used in the NEPA process. This is the intention for the US 30 and US 31 studies.
- Why PEL?
  - Multi-disciplinary
  - Flexible (not all PEL studies need to accomplish the same thing)
  - Collaborative
  - Efficient

#### 3. PROPEL US 30 & US 31 STUDIES

- INDOT is the study owner and is managing the process.
- INDOT Project Managers:
  - Sandra Flum: US 30, Deputy PM US 31
  - Johnathan Wallace: US 31, Deputy PM US 30
- The US 30 and US 31 corridors include 180 miles and are broken into 4 different areas/studies.
- There are 4 consulting teams working on these studies. The 4 teams are working together across study boundaries to ensure each study is comprehensive and recommendations work together across study area boundaries.
- US 30

- 2 studies:
  - US 30 West (includes some of US 31): CDM Smith
  - US 30 East (excludes I-69 and I-469 around north side of Fort Wayne): WSP
- US 31
  - 2 studies
    - US 31 North: Parsons
    - US 31 South (excludes Kokomo bypass): HNTB
- All 4 studies are on the same timeline; however the DHPA won't receive the same documents for each study at the exact same time.
- HNTB is in the advisor role to help with consistency across the 4 studies. HNTB is also the consultant for the US 31 South study.
- Resource agencies will receive the PEL study technical memos and study report before any NEPA documentation.
- The US 31 bypass of Kokomo and portion of US 30 that coincides with I-69/I-469 around north side of Ft. Wayne are excluded because the portions are already freeway facilities and the long-term, future vision of them is not in question.
  - Public and stakeholder engagement will still occur in Fort Wayne and Kokomo.
- The PEL studies are in the first round of public involvement. The input received from these outreach activities will help the study teams develop purpose and need statements for each study area.
  - DHPA asked if the results of the public outreach could be shared.
    - One deliverable for each study is a summary of public involvement for each engagement period. This summary can be shared with DHPA when it is ready. For example, the summary for the first round of meetings could be sent to DHPA when sending the draft purpose and need statement for review and comment.
  - The project websites are:
    - <https://propelus31.com/>
    - <https://propelus30.com/>
  - In addition to the in-person public information meetings (PIMs), there are virtual public meetings that include workshop-like activities and a recording of the in-person PIM presentation.
  - The first round of public/agency/stakeholder involvement includes explaining the PEL process and soliciting feedback from the communities.
  - Each team is working with local stakeholders and holding community office hours for 2 days per month at different locations and times along the corridors.
- There is still a lot of work to do after the PEL study:
  - Environmental review/preliminary engineering
  - Final engineering/right-of-way acquisition
  - Construction
- PEL can help streamline the NEPA process by minimizing duplication of effort. INDOT intends to carry the information, analysis, and decisions from these PEL studies into the NEPA process.
- A PEL study has an approximate 5-year shelf life.
  - The 5-year time frame is a general rule of thumb. Regardless of the time factor, the information and analysis contained in the PEL study should be deemed valid to be relied upon in NEPA.
- DHPA asked if the PEL studies were in response to the State's desire to make US 31 a limited access highway?
  - The US 31 Coalition has been requesting US 31 be converted to a freeway for a long time.

- The PEL studies are a fresh look at the entire corridors and all options (i.e., solutions) will be considered. INDOT wants to hear from all stakeholders to ensure the correct projects move forward.
  - This does not necessarily mean US 31 will be converted to a freeway, but also does not necessarily mean that it won't be either.
  - At the end of this study there will be a range of solutions at a variety of locations throughout the corridors.
- The following are anticipated study outcomes:
  - Purpose and need for each study area that can be carried into NEPA
  - Range of reasonable alternatives for each study area that can be carried into NEPA
  - High level of understanding of impacts, potential permits that will be required, potential mitigation requirements
  - Early agency and public engagement
  - Plan for the corridor and an intentional way to move forward

#### 4. PEL STUDIES VS. NEPA & SECTION 106

- PEL is not NEPA nor a replacement for NEPA.
- PEL allows for early identification of potential issues and allows documentation and elimination of unreasonable alternatives.
- Information can be carried into the NEPA process.
- PEL studies will not include detailed field investigations.
  - They will use data from secondary sources.
  - Agencies and communities are asked to share things that need to be on the radar and considered in the analysis as the alternatives are defined and comparatively evaluated.
- PEL is not Section 106 consultation. Section 106 consultation will be completed once projects move into the NEPA process.
  - Undertakings have not yet been identified.
  - The PEL studies will identify cultural resource stakeholders. They will target those who can speak about cultural resources in the community such as:
    - Indiana Landmarks
    - Historical societies
    - County historians
  - The cultural resources records review will be for a 0.5-mile study area on each side of the corridor.
  - No formal National Register evaluations will occur. The analysis will include a desktop evaluation using data from existing sources combined with input from cultural resource stakeholders.
  - The goal is to collect an inventory to understand what resources are present to make sure they are considered in the decision-making process.
  - DHPA asked about potentially being locked into any of the information that comes from the PEL studies, since detailed field surveys and official eligibility determinations have not been made.
    - This is a high-level study (similar to a red flag investigation).
    - No agency will be locked into the resource information collected for the PEL studies. NEPA and Section 106 consultation will be required once projects are identified and move forward.
    - If new information comes to light during the NEPA process, the analysis will be

revisited to confirm the PEL study recommendations.

- DHPA will receive memos with methodology stating that this is preliminary, is for planning, and may change.
- DHPA asked about the archaeology methodology.
  - It is a records check for the 0.5-mile search radius on each side of the corridor using SHAARD data.
  - It only included eligible and potentially eligible sites (based on current recommendations).
- The PEL study will look at National Register properties, as well as notable and outstanding properties through the county surveys. The project teams will ask for DHPA input based on their knowledge of properties that are known and have been evaluated and included in reports.
- Maps showing parcels with structures constructed between 1940-1976 will be included in the memo to identify potential post-WWII properties. Commercial and residential will both be included.
- DHPA asked how will archaeology information be presented?
  - DHPA will receive maps showing the locations of sites. These will be redacted from the documents that are made public.
- DHPA asked if contributing properties will be included in the memo?
  - Not unless they are included within a previously identified district. Adding all contributing properties tends to clutter the maps.
- Previously identified historic districts will be included in the memo.
- Cultural resource stakeholders will be identified as part of the PEL study. They include those individuals or agencies with a dedicated interest in cultural resources. It will not include elected officials or county engineers – although these individuals (and others) will be engaged in the PEL studies through other meetings and coordination efforts.
  - In addition to the SHPO, tribes, Indiana Landmarks, as well as local historians, local historical societies, and local preservation organizations will be included the PEL study coordination process.
  - Individual property owners will not be included unless they are known consulting parties on previous projects (US 31 South). This is because:
    - The goal is to keep the number of cultural resource stakeholders manageable.
    - We are still in the planning process. There are no projects yet.
    - The public will be made aware of the PIMs through the study websites and social media channels. Community office hours will also be held to keep local stakeholders updated and allow them to interact with the study team at a time and location that is more convenient and less formal.
- DHPA will receive the following documents:
  - Four-study early coordination letter and invitation to resource agency/cultural resource stakeholder meeting (December 2022)
  - Study-specific early coordination letter and Environmental Constraints Report for each study (Early 2023)
    - The Environmental Constraints Report will include all resources, not just cultural resources. HNTB clarified it is ok for DHPA to only comment on the cultural resource memo appendices portion of that report.
  - Draft Purpose and Need Memo for each study

- Alternatives Screening Memos for each study
  - The screening criteria have not been identified yet, but there will be 3 levels of alternatives screening.
- PEL Study & Recommendations Report for each study
- DHPA suggested the study team provide guidance for what information, or any suggestions as to what would be useful feedback from them during the review process. This information should be provided when transmitting a document for DHPA review.
- In general, what is the expectation for DHPA? INDOT is looking for two primary things from DHPA during their reviews of PEL study items:
  - At a high level, is this all of the resources that we collectively know about and should be considered in the analysis?
  - Do you, as the agency, know of something that we have missed?

## 5. DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

- DHPA can reach out to the INDOT Project Management Team (Jonathan Wallace or Sandra Flum) and/or the Advisor Team Kia Gillette ([kgillette@hntb.com](mailto:kgillette@hntb.com)) with questions.
- The Des Number (2100113) is the same for all 4 studies.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

- Resource agency/cultural resource stakeholder kick-off meeting (January 2023)
- Early Coordination Letters and Environmental Constraints Report with cultural resource memos (all 4 studies) (Early 2023)

**Table 1. Meeting Attendees**

Name	Organization	Attendance Type
Matt Coon	INDOT-CRO	In-person
Jonathan Wallace	INDOT-MPD	In-person
Clint Kelly	INDOT-CRO	In-person
Chad Slider	DNR-DHPA	In-person
Beth McCord	DNR-DHPA	In-person
Adin McCann	HNTB	In-person
Patrick Carpenter	Gray & Pape	In-person
Jeff Laswell	Gray & Pape	In-person
Kia Gillette	HNTB	In-person
Sandra Flum	INDOT-MPD	Virtual
Wade Tharp	DNR-DHPA	Virtual
Toni Giffin	DNR-DHPA	Virtual
Susan Branigin	INDOT-CRO	Virtual
Brett Lackey	CDM Smith	Virtual
Jamie Bents	WSP	Virtual
Candy Hudziak	Metric	Virtual
Sam Snell	Metric	Virtual
Dan Prevost	Parsons	Virtual
Jenny Kleinman	Parsons	Virtual

Dan Miller	HNTB	Virtual
Mackenzie Knotts	HNTB	Virtual



Date: January 27, 2023, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. (EST), via Microsoft Teams

## RESOURCE AGENCY & CULTURAL RESOURCES

### STAKEHOLDER MEETING

#### MEETING SUMMARY

##### 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & PURPOSE

- Kia Gillette from HNTB started the meeting at approximately 10:03 am and explained that the meeting is being recorded only to assist with the development of the meeting summary.
- Kia from HNTB explained the meeting is being held because the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process is different than typical INDOT projects.
  - ProPEL is the INDOT brand name for PEL studies.
    - Agencies may see this term, ProPEL, used in other planning studies in the future.
    - The specific studies discussed in this meeting are referred to as ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31.
  - Kia Gillette introduced those individuals in attendance. The floor was opened for anyone to speak up if they were not listed in the attendees (see pages 6-7 for attendee list).
  - The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the studies, provide information and answer questions on the PEL process, and communicate the future steps in the PEL study process.
    - This is a study and not a project. INDOT is in the planning phase for approximately 180 miles of US 30 and US 31.
    - This is a high-level discussion of PEL and the ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies.
    - ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 are broken into 4 different studies.

##### 2. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES (PEL) OVERVIEW

- Adin McCann from HNTB discussed the PEL process.
- PEL is a federal planning process tool used by transportation agencies, such as INDOT, to make and document planning decisions.
  - The key of PEL is planning.
  - PEL studies are conducted early – before transportation needs and solutions are known. Therefore, no project details are available at this stage.
  - It is used for decision making.
  - Several factors are considered in the PEL study:
    - Transportation needs
    - Environmental resources
    - Community goals and values
    - Economic objectives
    - Public Involvement
  - The end products from a PEL study can be carried forward and relied upon in the next phase of project development, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.
- Why PEL?
  - Indiana is commonly referred to as the “Crossroads of America”. Transportation infrastructure is vital not only to Hoosiers, but to those that live and work outside Indiana as well. INDOT wants to remain a leader in transportation infrastructure and believes PEL studies can support that goal by helping build smarter transportation and stronger communities by engaging stakeholders early in planning.
  - Benefits of PEL studies include:
    - Multi-disciplinary
      - Combines planning, engineering, and environmental disciplines early in the process
    - Flexible
      - Is not a one size fits all
      - Don’t need to follow the same path

- Don't need to achieve the same outcome
- Collaborative
  - Engages the public, the agencies, and stakeholders at the earliest time possible
- Efficient
  - Can provide a "jump start" by using study results and recommendations.
  - Can save time and avoid revisiting or reanalyzing certain issues in the NEPA process.
- PEL studies do not necessarily reduce the level documentation or analysis required to comply with NEPA.

### 3. PROPEL US 30 & US 31 STUDIES

- INDOT's intent is to carry the information and decisions made in these PEL studies to a more in-depth environmental review process.
- INDOT is managing the planning process and working with FHWA to ensure all federal requirements are met during the study.
  - Sandra Flum: US 30 PM, Deputy PM US 31
  - Jonathan Wallace: US 31 PM, Deputy PM US 30
- The project websites are:
  - <https://propelus31.com/>
  - <https://propelus30.com/>
- HNTB is in the PEL studies advisor role working with INDOT
  - HNTB contacts:
    - Adin McCann: [amccann@hntb.com](mailto:amccann@hntb.com)
    - Kia Gillette: [kgillette@hntb.com](mailto:kgillette@hntb.com)
- The 4 studies encompass approximately 180 miles of US 30 and US 31.
  - INDOT is overseeing the work of 4 consulting teams (1 per study).
  - The corridors are divided into 4 areas so that each study can better focus on the specific transportation needs and community context in each study area. A map showing the study area extents was shown to the meeting attendees.
    - US 30 West (includes a portion of US 31): CDM Smith
    - US 30 East (excludes I-69 and I-469 around the north side of Fort Wayne): WSP
    - US 31 North: Parsons
    - US 31 South (excludes Kokomo bypass): HNTB
  - The analysis and recommendations of any potential solutions identified by the 4 study teams will be coordinated across study lines so that potential solutions will work together.
  - Coordination is occurring across the teams on a regular basis to ensure the technical work is well coordinated and that the study teams are thinking comprehensively about the corridors.
- The ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies are anticipated to take approximately 2 years to complete. A milestone schedule was discussed.
  - Step 1: Work started in late summer 2022
    - Initiated data collection
    - Developed the public involvement/agency coordination plan
  - Step 2: Vision/Scoping
    - Initiated public involvement activities.
    - First round held in November and December 2022
    - Starting agency coordination today at this meeting
    - Right now, the four PEL study teams are between Steps 2 (Vision/Scoping) and 3 (Purpose and Need)
  - Step 3: Purpose and Need
    - Identify transportation needs
    - Develop purpose of improvements
  - Step 4: Alternatives Analysis, expected to occur fall 2024
    - Identify potential improvement alternatives
    - Evaluate and screen alternatives
    - Identify potential environmental and community impacts
  - The outreach, the public involvement, and agency coordination will occur throughout the

- studies with a specific focus on meetings at each of the four identified milestones.
- Given the approximately 2-year schedule, this is the start of the conversation with resource agencies and cultural resources stakeholders.
- After the PEL studies are completed, there's still a lot of work to do. This work includes all the steps or phases of INDOT's project development activities such as:
  - Environmental review (NEPA)/preliminary engineering
  - Final engineering/right-of-way acquisition (if required)
  - Construction
- Typical timeframes associated with these activities can vary greatly depending on multiple factors, including funding availability and complexity of a project. The main point is that it could be several years after the PEL studies before improvements recommended as part of the PEL studies get constructed.
- The overarching vision for the 4 ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies is to identify future transportation investments in a way that streamlines their implementation. To do that, we anticipate the PEL studies will have several outcomes, including:
  - A Purpose and Need statement for each study area
  - Each study area will develop, analyze, and screen alternatives.
    - INDOT does not believe a single alternative will be the recommendation of each PEL study area.
    - INDOT anticipates carrying forward a smaller set of reasonable alternatives into the NEPA process.
  - Preliminary assessment of impacts, potential permits, mitigation (if appropriate)
    - The intent will be to provide a side-by-side comparison of benefits, costs, and impacts so that an informed decision can be made.
  - Engaged and educated public and resource agencies
  - Action plan to pursue reasonable alternatives

#### 4. PEL STUDIES VS. NEPA & SECTION 106

- PEL
  - PEL is not NEPA, nor is it a replacement for the NEPA process.
  - PEL studies allow for early identification of potential issues and allows documentation and elimination of unreasonable alternatives. It is essentially better transportation planning.
  - Information developed during the PEL study can be carried forward into the NEPA process and relied upon during that work.
  - PEL studies will not include detailed field investigations. They will use data from secondary sources.
    - Agencies and communities are asked to share resources that study teams need to be aware of and considered as alternatives are defined and comparatively evaluated.
  - PEL studies often result in clearly defined projects that can be advanced into NEPA. These projects would have logical termini and independent utility as required by NEPA.
- NEPA
  - NEPA review will still completed following the PEL process on whatever alternatives come out of the PEL at process.
  - It requires agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions
  - It will act as the "umbrella" including all environmental laws, including Section 106.
  - The NEPA process will identify a selected alternative.
- KEY TAKE AWAY: ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies do not anticipate a single, long corridor project coming out of each study.
- Section 106 vs. PEL
  - PEL will not include Section 106 consultation. Section 106 consultation will be completed once the projects move into the NEPA process.
    - The studies are using the term "cultural resources stakeholder" and not "consulting party", which is used during Section 106 consultation.
  - Section 106 includes 4 main steps 1) Initiate consultation, 2) Identify historic properties, 3) Assess effects to historic properties, and 4) Resolve adverse effects to historic properties.
  - PEL

- Identifies cultural resources stakeholders
  - They include individuals or organizations who may be involved later during Section 106 who may want to also be a part of the planning study.
- Identifying potentially significant cultural resources
  - Looking at 0.5-mile on each side of the study corridor
  - Properties will not be evaluated for National Register eligibility
  - Study teams will complete a records check
  - Taking data and feedback from cultural resources stakeholders and incorporating this into the planning and PEL decision-making process

5. Environmental Justice

- PEL is a federal planning process. The 4 studies are identifying possible EJ communities near and within their study areas.
  - USEPA recommends the term “communities with environmental justice concerns” instead of the term “EJ community.”
- Each team has developed a robust public involvement plan to ensure each study is reaching the right people and the right way during the PEL study process. These efforts will be monitored and adapted, if needed, as the study progresses.
- Justice 40 is a federal initiative that stems from a relatively recent executive order. Justice 40:
  - Broadens the focus beyond low-income and minority communities
  - Shifted the focus more toward a distribution of benefits from a federal investment
- Each of the 4 study teams is also considering how to meaningfully engage disadvantaged communities as part of their PEL study work.

6. What to Expect

- The study teams will be sending the agencies and cultural resources stakeholders a letter inviting them to participate in the PEL study and a link to an Environmental Constraints Report (ECR).
- The ECR identifies environmental resources within or near the study corridor.
  - It is similar to a Red Flag Investigation, but with additional information on some resources/topics.
  - Only existing data is used, which may be supplemented with a limited windshield survey.
  - Resources considered in the ECR include:
    - NRHP-listed and potentially eligible historic properties
    - Wetlands, streams, lakes, floodplains
    - Federal threatened/ endangered species list
    - Potential hazardous material sites
    - Pipelines, railroads, churches, cemeteries
    - Managed lands and trails
    - Noise sensitive areas
    - Communities with environmental justice concerns
- The PEL studies will include the following resource agency/cultural resources stakeholder coordination points:
  1. PEL Study Invitation Letter/ECR
    - Up to 4 documents/ 1 for each study
    - Agencies/stakeholders may receive documents for one or multiple studies depending on their jurisdiction
  2. Draft Purpose and Need Memo
    - Up to 4 documents/ 1 for each study
  3. Alternatives Screening Memos
    - Up to 4 documents/ 1 for each study
      - 3-tiered alternatives screening
      - Universe of Alternatives Identification and Screening (memo review only)
      - Preliminary Alternatives Identification and Screening (memo review only)
      - Reasonable Alternatives Identification and Screening (memo and meeting)
  4. PEL Study & Recommendations Report
    - Up to 4 documents/ 1 for each study

**[Note, after the ProPEL US 30 and US 31 Studies Introduction meeting, INDOT decided to combine Coordination Points #1 and #2 above into one coordination point. Resource agency meetings for each study will be held at two steps, 1) PEL Study Invitation Letter/ECR/Draft Purpose and Need Memo, and 2) Reasonable Alternatives Identification and Screening Memo]**

## 7. DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

- When will the letters be sent out? (IDEM)
  - Study invitation letters will likely be staggered, will not receive all studies' documents at the same time, they will be sent out individually.
  - Agencies/stakeholders can expect to start receiving the invitation letters with ECR link in the next 3 to 4 weeks.
- How are the PEL study teams picked initially? (IDNR DHPA)
  - The PEL study teams were selected through a qualifications-based process.
  - Selection of the ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL 31 study teams was a 2-step process:
    - Qualifications submitted by interested firms/teams
    - INDOT short-listed and some teams were interviewed
    - INDOT selected teams after the interview process.
- Have the firms been chosen for the ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies? (Howard County Historical Society and Museum)
  - Yes. The prime consultants assigned to each study are as follows:
    - US 30 West: CDM Smith
    - US 30 East: WSP
    - US 31 North: Parsons
    - US 31 South: HNTB
  - Each of these prime firms has multiple subconsultant teammates.
  - Further details can be found on the INDOT RFP Archives website (<https://pscsrcfp.indot.in.gov/Rfp/Archives>).
- There are already a number of projects in these areas, such as making US 31 south of Kokomo a limited access highway with new interchanges and one west of Fort Wayne on US 30. So where do those ongoing projects fit into this study of the same areas? (USFWS)
  - There are multiple stand-alone projects programmed by INDOT in both the US 30 and US 31 corridors. Each team is aware of the ongoing projects and are coordinating with those project teams. This includes making sure the PEL study teams understand what those projects are considering, including the potential types of improvements. This information will be used as inputs or baseline conditions into ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies.
- Why is US 30 west of Valparaiso not included? (USFWS)
  - The overall study limits are a direct reflection of dialogue and conversations that INDOT had with stakeholders, including the communities along the corridors.
- Is there a reason why the City of Fort Wayne was left out of it too? Is that the same reason is that they consider the highway there more of a city street? (USFWS)
  - There are 2 reaches, 1 on US 30 and 1 on US 31, that have been excluded from the studies.
    - A portion of US 30 runs concurrent with I-69 and I-469 around the north side of Fort Wayne. The long-term vision for that portion of US 30 is essentially established because it is a freeway facility with an interstate designation.
    - A portion of US 31 that bypasses Kokomo on its east side is in a similar situation. That portion of US 31 was upgraded to a freeway facility several years ago. So, again, the long-term vision is essentially established for that portion of US 31.
  - Although those two portions of US 30 and US 31 were specifically excluded from the PEL studies, it is important to note the communities of Kokomo and Fort Wayne have been and will continue to be engaged as part of the studies.
- Are you looking at the Kokomo bypass at all, are you including that in the cultural and NEPA investigations? (Howard County Historical Society and Museum)
  - No, it is not included.
- Who do we send contact info for others to be part of the ProPEL studies sections? (Indiana Landmarks)
  - Send to Kia Gillette via email at [kgillette@hntb.com](mailto:kgillette@hntb.com)

## 8. NEXT STEPS

- At this time, we are asking the following of the meeting attendees:
  - 1. What questions do you have?
  - 2. Are there other resource agencies/cultural resource stakeholders we should engage?
  - 3. Do we need to update our initial contact list?
- Meeting attendees may respond to these questions by providing comments or feedback formally and/or with email. Please refer to above Advisor contacts (listed above) for where to send this information.
- Following today's meeting, each of the 4 PEL studies is going to be sending out letters of invitation to participate in the PEL studies. These letters will be sent to the resource agencies and cultural resource stakeholders that were invited to this meeting. This letter will include the draft Environmental Constraints Report, as well as an invitation to a virtual meeting to discuss the draft report and obtain an update on the PEL studies progress.
- Note: If you **do not** respond to the invitation letter, you **will not** be sent future information for that study

**Table 1. Meeting Attendees**

Name	Organization
Sandra Flum	INDOT Major Projects Delivery (MPD)
Jonathan Wallace	INDOT MPD
Laura Hilden	INDOT Environmental Services Division (ESD)
Matt Coon	INDOT ESD
Susan Branigin	INDOT ESD
Clint Kelly	INDOT ESD
Sandy Bowman	INDOT ESD
Drew Passmore	INDOT ESD
Cindy Mauro	INDOT ESD
Kari Carmany-George	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Adin McCann	HNTB
Kia Gillette	HNTB
Jeff Laswell	Gray & Pape
Brett Lackey	CDM Smith
Krista Goodin	CDM Smith
Briana Hope	American Structurepoint
Brandon Miller	American Structurepoint
Rusty Holt	WSP
Jamie Bents	WSP
Dan Prevost	Parsons
Jenny Kleinman	Parsons
Alex Lee	Parsons
Berry Craig	Parsons
Dan Miller	HNTB
Mackenzie Knotts	HNTB
David Calease	National Park Service
Robin McWilliams Munson	US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Elizabeth McCloskey	USFWS
Paul Allerding	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Stasi Brown	USACE

Name	Organization
Kathleen Chernich	USACE
Charlie Uhlarik	USACE
Elizabeth Pelloso	US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
William Stanifer	US Coast Guard
Michael Walker	US Coast Guard
Alisha Turnbow	Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management (IDEM) – Groundwater
Jason Randolph	IDEM – Wetlands & Stormwater
Matt Buffington	Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW)
Brian Boszor	IDNR DFW
Dale Brier	IDNR Division of Outdoor Recreation
Jessica Gumbert	IDNR
Nathaniel Simmons	IDNR
Mark Becker	IDNR
Beth McCord	IDNR Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology (DHPA)
Chad Slider	IDNR DHPA
Toni Giffin	IDNR DHPA
Wade Tharp	IDNR DHPA
Todd Zeiger	Indiana Landmarks
Kurt Garner	Historic Michigan Road Association, Marshall County Historian, Wythougan Valley Preservation Council
Anne Shaw	Howard County Historical Society and Museum
Sandy Garrison	Marshall County Historical Society
Luke Lightfoot	Hopewell Methodist Church



Date: February 23, 2023, 1-2:30 p.m.

## TRIBES, FHWA, AND INDOT PEL INTRODUCTION MEETING



### MEETING SUMMARY

#### 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & PURPOSE

- Kari Carmany-George from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) started the meeting at 1:03 p.m. She explained this is the early stages of the study and some background on the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process. Kari expressed her gratitude to the Tribes for taking their time to participate in the meeting and the importance of coordinating with the Tribes early in the studies.
- Kia Gillette from HNTB stated that the purpose of the meeting is to explain what a PEL study is and give the Tribes an overall understanding of the study process and more specifically what to expect with the ProPEL US 30/31 studies. The meeting will be recorded only to assist with the development of meeting summary. This is intended to be informal, please ask questions if you have them.
- Kia discussed the agenda for the meeting:
  - Introductions
  - An overview of the PEL process
  - PEL vs National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106
  - Next steps and how Tribes can be engaged in the studies, if interested
- Kia introduced those individuals from the study teams in attendance. The floor was opened for anyone to speak up if they were not listed in the attendees. The Tribe representatives then introduced themselves (see page 7 for attendee list).
- Kia discussed three purposes for the meeting:
  1. Introduce the ProPEL US 30 and 31 studies.
    - It is different than the normal NEPA process.
    - INDOT does not have projects at this point.
    - No decisions have been made about what will be done along the corridors.
    - This is a study phase, part of the planning process.
    - Coordination is happening earlier than it normally would.
  2. Provide information and answer questions regarding the PEL process.
  3. Communicate future steps for the studies if the tribes are interested in being involved.

#### 2. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES (PEL) OVERVIEW

- Adin McCann from HNTB discussed the PEL process.
- PEL is a federal planning process tool used by transportation agencies.
  - It is used very early for planning.
  - There are no project details at this point.
  - PELs are a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision making considering multiple factors, while also coordinating with resource agency and Tribes to the extent they want to participate in the study.
- The PELs will look at:
  - Transportation needs
  - Environmental and cultural resources
  - Community goals and values
  - Economic objectives
- The information, analysis, and decision making that comes out of the study can be carried forward to the next phase of project work, Federal environmental review process as part of NEPA.
- ProPEL is the “brand” that INDOT has identified for PEL studies to show what to expect when

- INDOT performs a PEL study.
- Why PEL?
  - Indiana is commonly referred to as the “Crossroads of America”. Transportation infrastructure is vital not only to Hoosiers, but to those that live and work outside Indiana as well. INDOT wants to remain a leader in transportation infrastructure and believes PEL studies can support that goal by helping build smarter transportation and stronger communities by engaging stakeholders early in planning.
  - Benefits of PEL studies include:
    - Multi-disciplinary
      - Combines planning, engineering, and environmental disciplines early in the process
    - Flexible
      - Is not a one size fits all
      - Don’t need to follow the same path
      - Don’t need to achieve the same outcome
    - Collaborative
      - Engages the public, resource agencies, and tribal stakeholders at the earliest time possible
    - Efficient
      - Can provide a “jump start” by using study results and recommendations.
      - Can save time and avoid revisiting or reanalyzing certain issues in the NEPA process.

### 3. PROPEL US 30 & US 31 STUDIES

- INDOT’s intent is to carry the information and decisions made in these PEL studies into the more in-depth environmental review process in NEPA.
- INDOT is managing the planning process and working with FHWA to ensure all federal requirements are met during the studies.
  - Sandra Flum: US 30 Project Manager (PM), US 31 Deputy PM
  - Jonathan Wallace: US 31 PM, US 30 Deputy PM
- The project websites are:
  - <https://propelus31.com/>
  - <https://propelus30.com/>
- The 4 studies encompass approximately 180 miles of US 30 and US 31.
  - INDOT is overseeing the work of 4 consulting teams (1 per study).
  - The corridors are divided into 4 areas so that each study can better focus on the specific transportation needs and community context in each study area. A map showing the study area extents was shown to the meeting attendees.
    - US 30 West (includes a portion of US 31): CDM Smith
    - US 30 East (excludes I-69 and I-469 around the north side of Fort Wayne): WSP
    - US 31 North: Parsons
    - US 31 South (excludes Kokomo bypass): HNTB
  - Study boundaries were determined to facilitate community engagement, stakeholder involvement, and public involvement.
    - The portion of I-69 and I-469 around the north side of Fort Wayne is excluded due to the long-term vision of that section already being determined.
    - The Kokomo bypass is excluded due to the section already being upgraded to a controlled access more of a freeway facility, long term vision already determined.
    - Residents, the businesses, and all the stakeholders within the excluded portions of the study are an important part of the studies.
  - The analysis and recommendations of any potential solutions identified by the 4 study teams will be coordinated across study lines so that potential solutions will work together.
  - Coordination is occurring across the teams on a regular basis to ensure the technical work is well coordinated and that the study teams are thinking comprehensively about the corridors.
- The ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies are anticipated to take approximately 2 years to complete. A milestone schedule was discussed.
  - Step 1: Vision/Scoping
    - Work started in late summer 2022
    - Initiated data collection
    - Developed the public involvement/agency coordination plan

- Initiated public involvement activities.
- First round of public meetings held in November and December 2022
- Starting coordination with the Tribes today at this meeting
- Right now, the 4 PEL study teams are between Steps 1 (Vision/Scoping) and 2 (Purpose and Need)
- Step 2: Purpose and Need
  - Identify transportation needs
  - Develop purpose of improvements
- Step 3: Alternatives Analysis, expected to occur fall 2024
  - Identify potential improvement alternatives
  - Evaluate and screen alternatives
  - Identify potential environmental and community impacts
- Step 4: PEL Study Report
- The outreach, the public involvement, and agency coordination will occur throughout the studies with a specific focus on meetings at each of the 4 identified milestones.
- Given the approximately 2-year schedule, this is the start of the conversation with the Tribes.
- After the PEL studies are completed, there's still a lot of work to do. This work includes all the steps or phases of INDOT's project development activities such as:
  - Environmental review (NEPA)/preliminary engineering
  - Final engineering/right-of-way acquisition (if required)
  - Construction
- Typical timeframes associated with these activities can vary greatly depending on multiple factors, including funding availability and complexity of a project. The main point is that it could be several years after the PEL studies before improvements recommended as part of the PEL studies get constructed.
- The overarching vision for the 4 ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies is to identify future transportation investments. To do that, we anticipate the PEL studies will have several outcomes, including:
  - Develop Purpose and Need statement
  - Develop, analyze, and screen alternatives
    - INDOT does not believe a single alternative will be the recommendation of each PEL study area. INDOT anticipates carrying forward a smaller set of reasonable alternatives into the NEPA process.
  - Preliminary assessment of impacts, potential permits, mitigation (if appropriate)
    - The intent will be to provide a side-by-side comparison of benefits, costs, and impacts so that an informed decision can be made.
  - Engage and educate the public and resource agencies
  - Develop action plan to pursue reasonable alternatives
- Kia paused the meeting to see if there were questions.
  - Burgundy Fletcher from the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma asked for clarification on the excluded portions of the studies.
    - Adin answered those areas are not included because the long-term vision of the two portions has already been decided, and they are already freeway facilities. He explained that the purpose of the PEL studies is to figure out what the long-term future looks like for the rest of the corridor. He emphasized that the communities within the excluded portions are still being engaged to participate, as they are likely users of the portions of US 30/31.
  - Mathew Bussler of the Pokagon Band of Potowatomi Indians had to leave the meeting to attend another meeting and Kia confirmed that there will be a meeting summary sent out after the meeting along with the presentation slides.
  - Logan York of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma asked if any information is provided by the Tribes, how will that be protected from public knowledge?
    - Kia explained that if there is information provided it can be either marked as environmentally sensitive area or kept completely off public documents.
      - Decisions will need to be documented that we had coordination and that there is something sensitive in the area.
      - If there is something that the study teams should be made aware of and/or avoid it would be extremely valuable at this planning stage.

- Information will be handled however the information provider prefers it be handled.

#### 4. PEL STUDIES VS. NEPA & SECTION 106

- PEL
  - PEL is not NEPA, nor is it a replacement for the NEPA process.
  - PEL studies allow for early identification of potential issues and allow documentation and elimination of unreasonable alternatives. It is essentially better transportation planning.
  - Information developed during the PEL study can be carried forward into the NEPA process and relied upon during that work.
  - PEL studies will not include detailed field investigations. They will use data from secondary sources.
    - Agencies and communities are asked to share resources that study teams need to be aware of and considered as alternatives are defined and comparatively evaluated.
  - PEL studies often result in clearly defined projects that can be advanced into NEPA. These projects would have logical termini and independent utility as required by NEPA.
- NEPA
  - NEPA review will still be completed following the PEL process on whatever alternatives come out of the PEL process.
  - It requires agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions.
  - It will act as the “umbrella” including all environmental laws, including Section 106.
  - The NEPA process will identify a selected alternative.
- ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL US 31 studies do not anticipate a single, long corridor project coming out of each study.
- Section 106 vs. PEL
  - PEL will not include Section 106 consultation. Section 106 consultation will be completed once the projects move into the NEPA process.
    - The studies are using the term “cultural resources stakeholder” and not “consulting party”, which is used during Section 106 consultation.
  - Section 106 includes 4 main steps 1) Initiate consultation, 2) Identify historic properties (including above-ground and archaeological), 3) Assess effects to historic properties, and 4) Resolve adverse effects to historic properties.
  - The PEL studies will:
    - Identify potential cultural resources that could inform alternative development, as well as avoidance of important resources.
    - Incorporate data from the stakeholder feedback from Tribes, the public, and other resource agencies, such as USFWS or the EPA into the decisions that then move forward into NEPA.
    - Things to expect from the process:
      - Environmental Constraints Report (ERC)
        - Identifying environmental resources that need considered in each study.
        - It looks at a half-mile buffer in either direction from the study corridor.
        - It only uses existing data sources.
        - No detailed field investigations (difference between PEL and NEPA) are included.
        - The ERC is looking at:
          - National register listed eligible above-ground historic properties
          - Wetlands, streams, floodplains, threatened and endangered species, possible hazardous materials, infrastructure: pipelines and railroads
          - Managed lands, recreational sites, and trails
          - Noise sensitive areas
            - Identify areas that need to be evaluated in NEPA
          - Potential environmental justice populations
          - Brief, non-specific summary of archaeology
      - Archaeological resources ID memo
        - Identifies recorded archaeological sites within a half mile of the study corridor
        - Does include maps
          - Will not be available to the public (why this memo is not included in the ERC)

- Looking at recorded sites from the state historic architectural and archaeological research database (SHAARD)
  - Sites are not included if not identified as eligible or potentially eligible
    - Aware that site status may change once field surveys are complete
    - Anticipated that this is how/where the tribes could be involved in the studies. If there are different ideas, please bring them forward.
- Three main points in addition to this meeting where the studies would reach out to the tribes
  - 1<sup>st</sup> coordination point
    - Each study area would reach out individually for input from the tribes within their study area. Tribes would receive a PEL study invitation from each study.
    - The tribes would receive the archaeological resources ID memo and a draft purpose and need memo for review and comment.
    - A meeting would be set up to walk through the information, if interested.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> coordination point
    - Alternative development and screening process
    - 3 Alternatives Memos: Alternatives will start out broad, with a lot of alternatives. Alternatives will be eliminated as the study proceeds.
      - Memo 1= High level, Universe Alternatives Identification and Screening Memo
      - Memo 2 = More detailed in the Preliminary Alternatives Identification and Screening Memo
      - Memo 3= Most detailed alternatives will be in the Reasonable Alternatives Identification and Screening Memo
    - A meeting would be held after the 3<sup>rd</sup> memo to walk through the information
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> coordination point would be sending the PEL study and recommendations report for the Tribes' review.
- Kia Gillette opened the discussion up for questions and thoughts.
  - Responses/thoughts can be sent to:
    - Kia Gillette (HNTB): [kgillette@hntb.com](mailto:kgillette@hntb.com)
    - Matt Coon (INDOT): [mcoon@indot.in.gov](mailto:mcoon@indot.in.gov)
    - Kari Carmany-George (FHWA): [k.carmanygeorge@dot.gov](mailto:k.carmanygeorge@dot.gov)
  - Please provide feedback on thoughts of the process, if you want more information or less information
- Sandra Flum from INDOT stated that she wanted to restate that this is a planning level study and normally you come in when we've already identified that there are projects needed. Now we're hearing a lot from our public involvement that the communities along these corridors are concerned about safety, mobility, and access. So that will be reflected in the report that we put together. Any information or involvement you can provide in this planning level will help INDOT minimize future impacts when there are projects identified.

## 5. DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

- Kia stated that the most important thing being asked is, are there resources Tribes are aware of that are sensitive and should be avoided?
- Logan York of Miami Tribe of Oklahoma asked:
  - "If we do bring up sites at this point in the study, how will that information be used?"
  - "How is it going to affect these projects?"
  - "Is it just going to be filed away or is it actually going to be actively used?"
- Kia answered, we would expect to use it as we develop alternatives, and how we screen alternatives and eliminate them from further consideration.
  - First step, can we avoid it if there is a sensitive resource?
  - Further conversations may be needed if avoidance isn't an option.
- Benjamin Rhodd from the Forest County Potowatomi Community stated he wanted to compliment the process for involving the Tribes in the conversation so early.
  - He has the same concerns as Logan, how will the information be used and protected?
  - Language needs to be incorporated in the process about how the information will be

protected.

- Kia stated that the Tribes' input is appreciated and that INDOT is open to further discussion to incorporate their concerns into the process. There will be additional ProPEL studies in the future, so it would be good to establish a process now.
- Benjamin stated this is what he was alluding to previously, the concern of what recourse will the tribes have in the scenario that information is used or divulged that they did not agree to being used or shared in the planning document?
  - INDOT and FHWA can look into how PEL studies in other states have handled sensitive information.
  - Tribes can think of ways they would like to see the information handled potentially based on previous experience. Perhaps start thinking about what the Tribes are comfortable with and what ways information could be used.
  - INDOT has to be able to justify or provide reasoning to dismiss potential solutions or why they may be avoiding a specific area in the study. The reasoning could be word crafted in a way to avoid sharing specific information.
  - The group agreed further conversations on the topic would be helpful.
- Sandra pointed out HNTB is tasked with writing INDOT's PEL guidance manual. It will explain how PEL will be implemented. The approach to handling sensitive information could be included in this manual.
- Next Steps:
  - Tribes to think about how they would be most comfortable with the process
  - HNTB, INDOT, and FHWA will think, discuss, and collect information from other states and examples of formalized language, or work in that direction. This could be guidelines for how the information is used, displayed, or deleted at the end of the study.
  - Tribal partners agreed to regrouping in 1-2 months but also requested we be respectful of their time, if there is a process already that we uncover please discuss that on the front end of the next discussion.
- Benjamin asked for clarification on the Archaeological Resources Identification Memo.
  - Kia explained the Archaeological Resources Identification Memo is a records check documenting previously identified National Register eligible or potentially eligible archaeology sites. No field surveys were completed for it. The original intent was to send the Archaeological Resources Identification Memo to Tribes for their review and comments, incorporate their feedback into the studies.
- Matt Coon from INDOT reiterated they really want to hear from the Tribes and to continue the conversation.
  - How Tribes would like this process to go?
  - What level of detail would they like to divulge?
  - How can we protect that information Tribes choose to share?
- Benjamin questioned why there wasn't a SHPO representative on this meeting?
  - Kia explained that SHPO was previously included in a separate meeting; however, they will be invited to any follow up meetings with the Tribes.
- Benjamin asked if PEL will be the standard for future INDOT projects.
  - Sandra noted that some scope items or potential project areas where INDOT is not sure what they want to do could use the PEL process, but it will not be completed for every INDOT project.
    - ProPEL US 30 and ProPEL 31 include 180 miles of corridor, and INDOT is trying to figure out how to make it function for the people who live there and use the corridors. The PEL process is being used because it has a lot of flexibility
    - Indiana will use ProPEL as a way of identifying and making sure that the public and all interested parties have a chance to give INDOT input in the planning side.
- Burgundy stated that a 1-2 month timeframe for the next meeting is a good timeline.
- Burgundy asked about the note on the slide "If you do not respond, you will not be sent future information for that study."
  - Kia explained that is how we are handling sharing the documents with other resource agencies, mostly to avoid sending agencies information that they are not interested in reviewing.
  - The Tribes generally agreed it would be better to send them all documents and they will decide

which they will review and provide comments. Kia said this will be done for the Tribes as part of the studies.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

- The next steps in the presentation slides have been put on hold until further conversations can be held.
- FHWA reaching out to other states for information on how they've handled the sensitive information
  - This group will reconvene in a 1-2 month time frame.
  - Please reach out if at any point there are questions or concerns.

## 7. Contacts:

- Kia Gillette (HNTB): [kgillette@hntb.com](mailto:kgillette@hntb.com)
- Adin McCann (HNBT): [amccann@hntb.com](mailto:amccann@hntb.com)
- Kari Carmany-George (FHWA): [k.carmanygeorge@dot.gov](mailto:k.carmanygeorge@dot.gov)
- Matt Coon (INDOT Cultural Resources Office): [mcoon@indot.in.gov](mailto:mcoon@indot.in.gov)
- Sandra Flum (INDOT Project Manager): [sflum@indot.in.gov](mailto:sflum@indot.in.gov)

## Attendees List

Name	Organization
Kari Carmany-George	FHWA
Burgundy Fletcher	Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Erin Paden	Shawnee Tribe
Logan York	Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Mathew Bussler	Pokagon Band of Potowatomi Indians
Benjamin Rhodd	Forest County Potowatomi Community
Sandra Flum	INDOT-MPD
Matt Coon	INDOT-ESD
Clint Kelly	INDOT-ESD
Adin McCann	HNTB
Kia Gillette	HNTB
Mackenzie Knotts	HNTB
Jeff Laswell	Gray & Pape
Krista Goodin	CDM Smith
Rusty Holt	WSP
Jamie Bents	WSP
Jenny Kleinman	Parsons

# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix I. Public Meeting Presentations

# PROPEL US 31 NORTH PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING #1



December 1, 2022

## PRESENTERS



**Dan Prevost**

PEL Lead, Parsons



**Mindy Peterson**

Public Involvement Director, Parsons

## AGENDA



## PLANNING PROCESS



## STUDY TEAM



### Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)

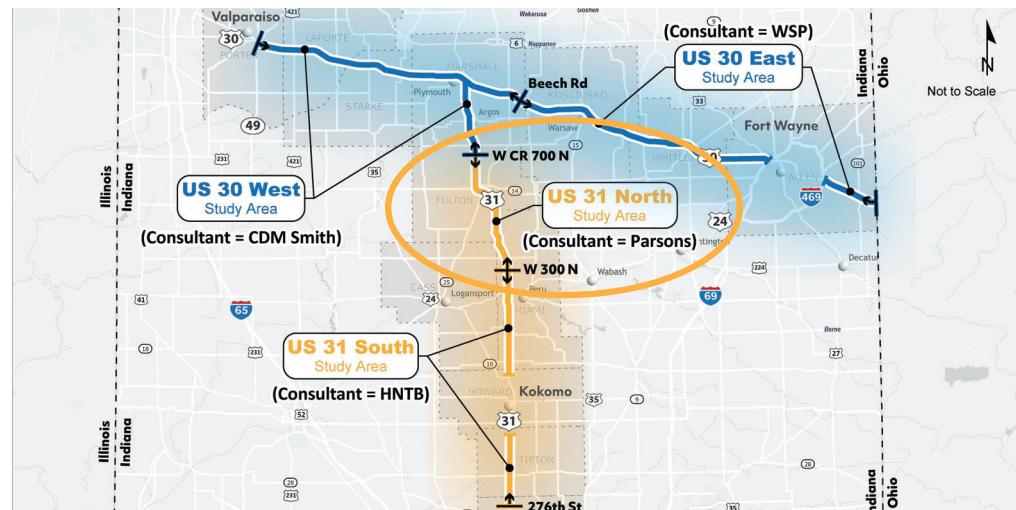
- Study owner
- Manages the planning process
- Tasked with evaluating study recommendations

### Parsons Team

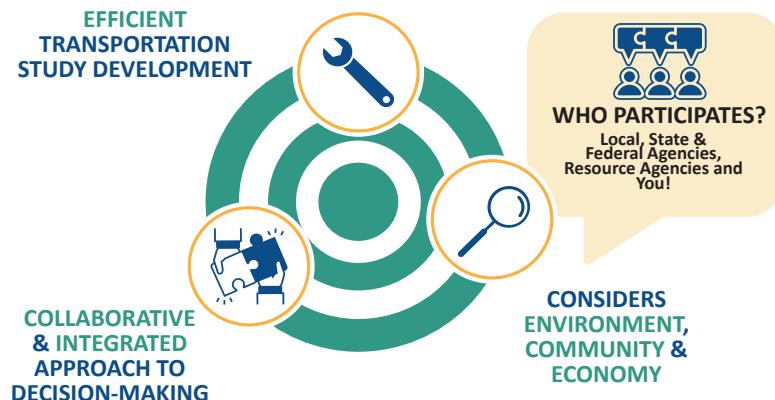
- Compass Outreach Solutions

*INDOT is overseeing the work of three other consulting teams along the US 30 and US 31 corridors across northern Indiana.*

## PROPEL US 30 AND US 31



## WHAT IS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES?



## VISION FOR THE FUTURE

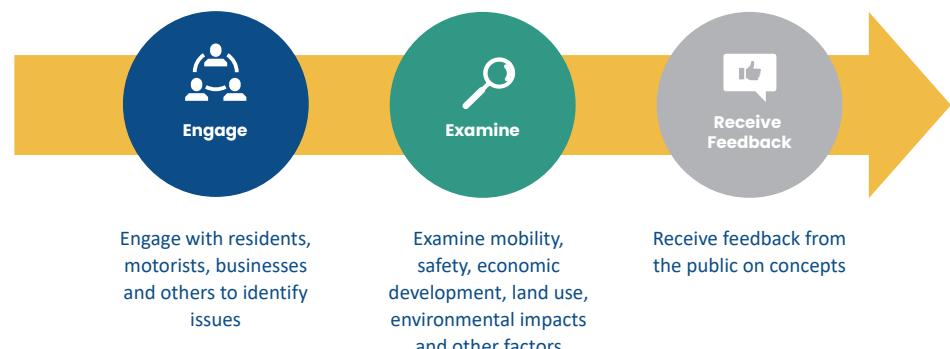
- We want you to **THINK BIG**
  - What would **improve** travel along US 31?
  - How could US 31 **reflect** the local area?
  - How should US 31 **support** the local economy?
  - When you travel US 31, **where do you go?**
- Be thinking about how US 31 should look, fit and function within the community – and share those thoughts with the Study Team.



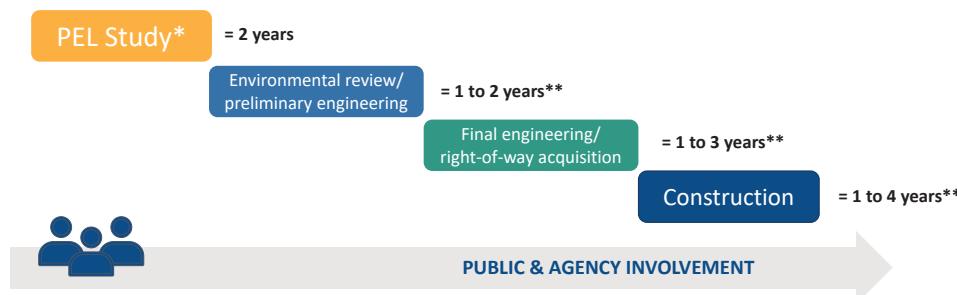
## PEL STUDY BENEFITS



## PROPEL PROCESS



## TRANSITIONING FROM PEL STUDY TO PROJECTS

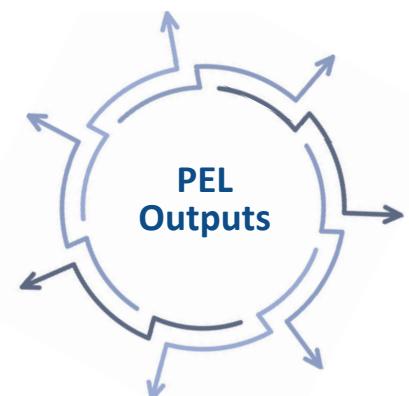


\* PROPEL US 31 North study may recommend multiple alternatives. \*\*Timelines vary due to funding and complexity of the project.

INDOT intends to carry forward the information, analysis and decisions from the PROPEL US 30 and 31 studies into the NEPA process.

## ANTICIPATED PEL STUDY OUTCOMES

- Purpose and need
- Reasonable alternatives
- Preliminary assessment of impacts, potential permits, mitigation assessment
- Engaged and educated public and resource partner agencies
- Action plan to pursue reasonable alternatives



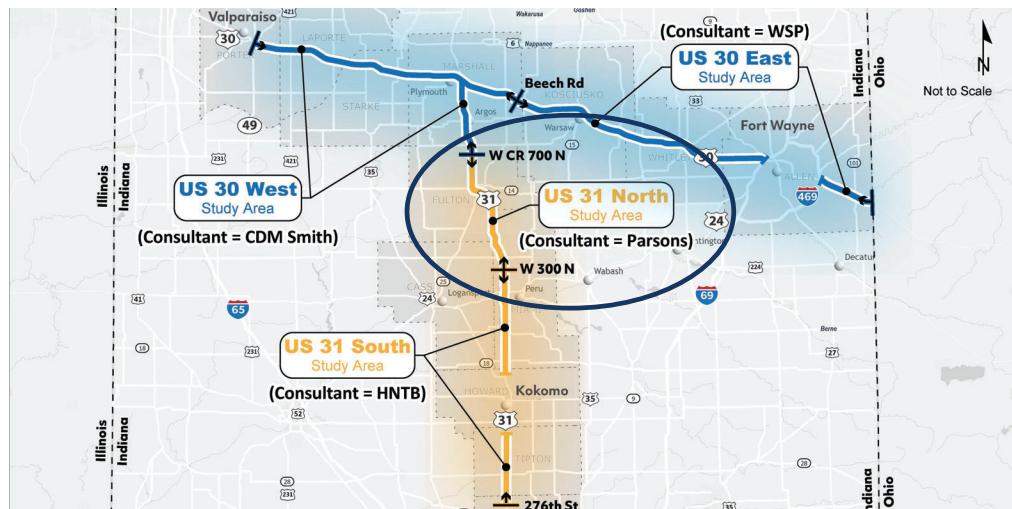
## US 31 NORTH - PEL SCHEDULE



## PROPEL US 31 NORTH



## PROPEL US 31 NORTH



## STUDY CONSIDERATIONS



NextLevel  
ROADS

### TRANSPORTATION FUNCTION

- Improve safety
- Better traffic flow
- Connections to local streets
- Options for biking and walking
- Support transit service



### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage growth with increased capacity
- Support the operation of local farms and farming as an industry
- Improve access to local businesses
- Improve distribution of local goods to regional/national markets
- Make it easier to deliver goods to regional businesses and residents
- Support expanded tourism, including agritourism



### COMMUNITY CHARACTER & ENVIRONMENT

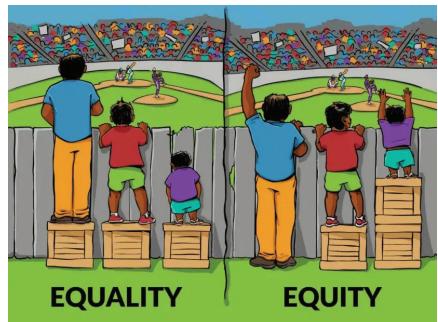
- Reflect character of area
- Support community character of local cities and towns
- Provide opportunities for attractive community gateways
- Support wildlife crossings



## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ)

- EJ outreach seeks fairness in mobility and accessibility to meet the needs of everyone:

- Low income
- Race or Ethnicity
- Elderly
- Children
- Limited English Proficiency
- Persons with disabilities

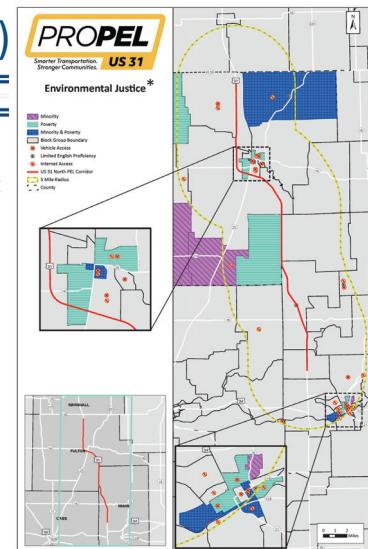


## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ)

- The study team is developing a map of environmental justice communities, examining:

- 5-mile radius
- Data from US Census, US Department of Housing and Urban Development and White House's Justice40 Initiative

- Do you know of other possible environmental justice communities in the area? Talk to Study Team members.



\*The Environmental Justice (EJ) Map is preliminary.

## HOW WE WILL USE WHAT WE LEARN



Understand local needs



Identify opportunities, concerns, and areas of conflict



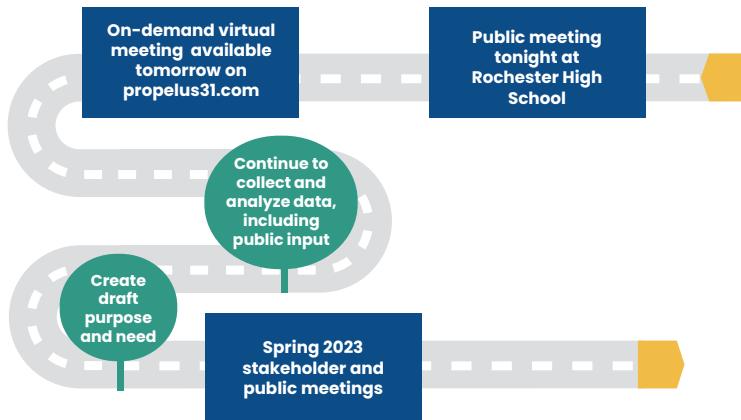
Clearly describe potential options, constraints, and tradeoffs



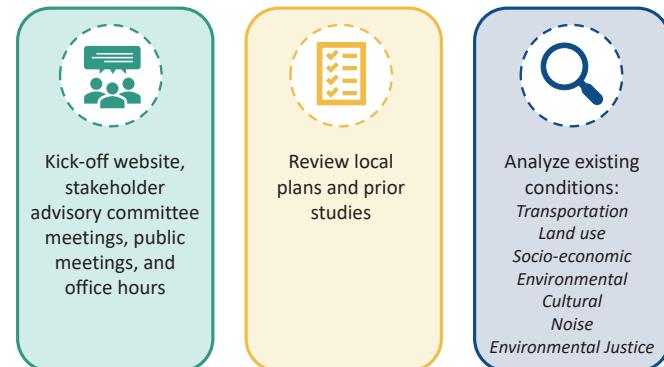
Use feedback to inform study recommendations

## NEXT STEPS

## VISIONING TO PURPOSE AND NEED

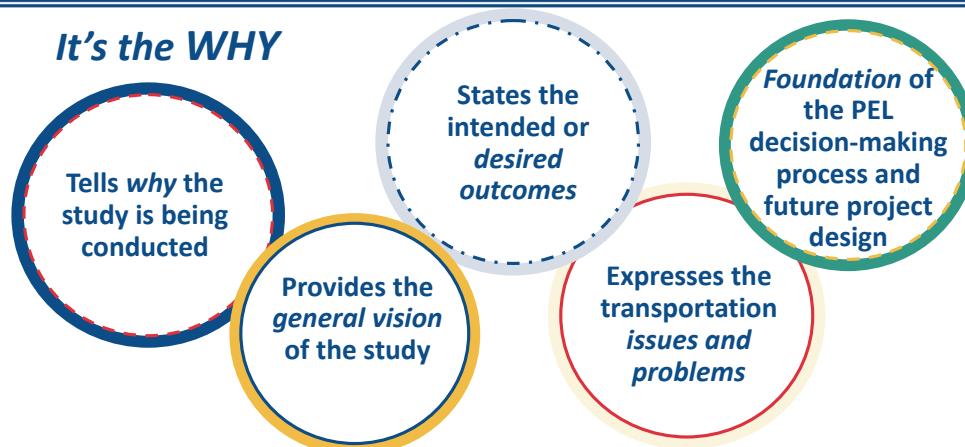


## VISION AND SCOPING

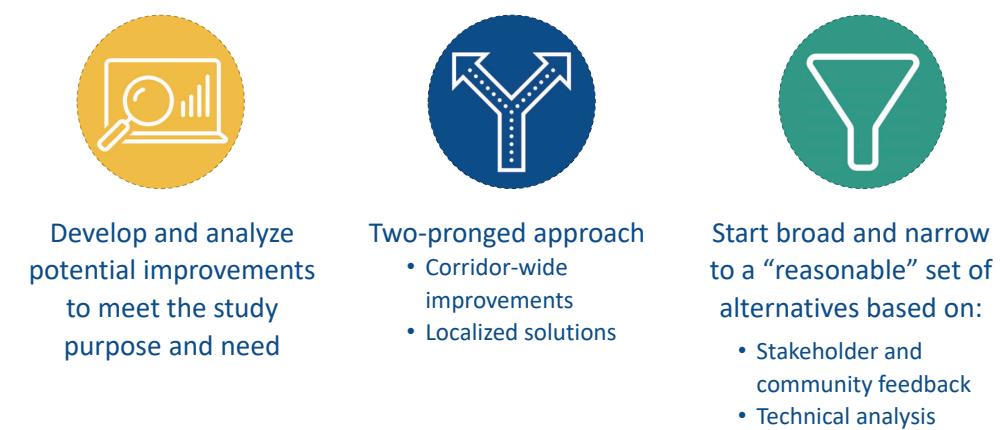


## WHAT IS A PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT?

### *It's the WHY*



## ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS



## OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE



## WE'RE LISTENING

- Stakeholder Advisory Committee
- Stakeholder meetings
- Monthly office hours
- Public meetings at study milestones
- Project website
- Social media



## COMMUNITY OFFICE HOURS

- Monthly office hours along the corridor in Rochester and Mexico
  - Open house format
  - Stop by with questions, share feedback
  - Midday and evening hours available
- Office hours are informal and offer a chance for Study Team to listen
- Check [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com) regularly for updated office hours in your area



Wednesday, December 14:  
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Denver Volunteer Fire Dept.  
500 E. Harrison St., Denver



Wednesday, December 14:  
3 to 6 p.m.  
Fulton County Public Library  
320 W 7th St., Rochester

## PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

- Public meeting tonight
- Virtual meeting available tomorrow at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com) following the public meeting
  - Click through virtual stations
  - Learn more about the study
  - Share feedback with the team
- Next public meeting expected spring 2023



## ENGAGE ONLINE

- Share your feedback and comments at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com)
- It's easy to make a comment:
  - Visit our website
  - Click study section button
  - Follow prompts and share feedback
- Comment stations available tonight or share your thoughts online at any time

**PROPEL**  
Smarter Transportation  
Stronger Communities

INDIANA'S  
STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Select Language  Powered by Google Translate

**ProPEL US 31 North**  
The ProPEL US 31 North study team is asking for Hoosiers' input as it begins streamlined planning studies along the US 31 corridor in Northern Indiana. The ProPEL studies seek to propel our communities forward by using a collaborative approach to consider environmental, community and economic goals early in the process. The team wants help in identifying what the corridor could look like:

1) Please enter your comment below:  
Submit your comment here.

Please do not place any personally identifiable information (name, phone, or email) within your comment.

2) Select any of the following topics that apply to your comment: (Select all that apply)

Bike and Pedestrian   Economic Development   Environmental   Mobility   Safety  
Overall US 31 Corridor

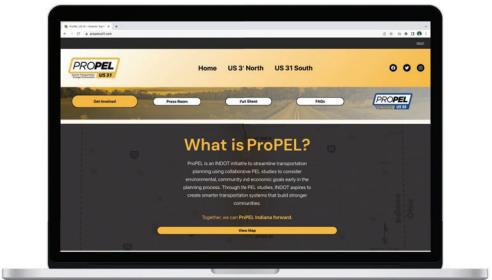
3) Tell us about yourself and stay up to date with the study.  
Zip Code \* Required   Last Name \* Required   Email \* Required  
12345   Doe   janedoe@janedoe.com

4) Do you have a specific question or concern that you would like a response to?  
Do not send me a response

**CONTINUE →**

## KEEP IN TOUCH

- Follow our progress
  - **Online** at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com)
  - **Sign up** for email updates at [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com)
  - **Stop by** during community office hours in your area
- Like us on social media
  - **Facebook:** Propel U.S. 31
  - **Twitter:** @PropelUS31
  - **Instagram:** @PropelUS30\_31



# THANK YOU!

December 1, 2022

# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix J. Public Meeting Boards

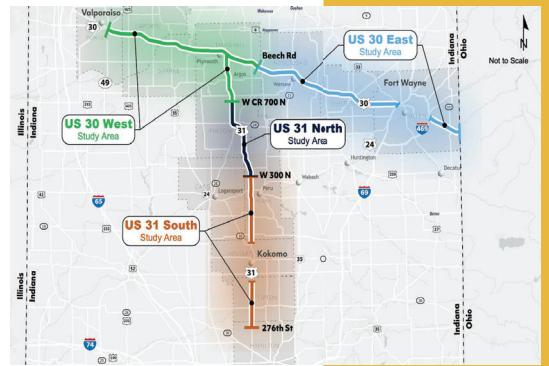
## US 31 North

# TOGETHER, WE CAN PROPEL INDIANA FORWARD



ProPEL is an INDOT initiative to streamline transportation planning using collaborative PEL studies to consider environmental, community and economic goals early in the planning process.

The US 30 and US 31 PEL studies will assess innovative ways to renovate our roadways and corridors, while prioritizing community needs and equitable infrastructure.



## US 31 North

# PROPEL US 31 NORTH STUDY



## US 31 North

# WHAT IS PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES (PEL)?

## PEL Benefits

- Combines planning, engineering and environmental constraints
- Encourages early, meaningful public engagement
- Considers local needs and priorities
- Provides a clear direction forward
- Reduces delays in implementation

## ProPEL Process



## US 31 North

# CORRIDOR ISSUES

?

Tell us what you think here:



You can also write your ideas directly on the maps on the table!

- Where are your biggest safety concerns along the corridor?
- Where are your biggest traffic concerns along the corridor?
- Are new intersections or turns needed? How should they function?
- Are new signals needed?
- Are there intersections that need to be upgraded? If so, how?
- What locations need better transit service and bicycle and pedestrian access?
- Are there sensitive environmental resources along the corridor (wetlands, cemeteries, historic properties, etc.) that should be preserved?
- What other concerns do you have along the corridor?



US 31 North

## VISION FOR THE FUTURE TRANSPORTATION FUNCTION



What would improve travel along US 31?

Improved safety

Better traffic flow

Fewer turning and crossing conflicts

Options for biking and walking

More connections to local streets

More/improved transit service

Other ideas?

Use the dot stickers to  
mark the improvements  
you consider to be top  
priorities.



US 31 North

## VISION FOR THE FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



How should US 31 support the local economy?

Improve access to local businesses

Support expanded tourism

Encourage growth with  
increased roadway capacity

Improve distribution of local goods  
to regional/national markets

Support the operation of local  
farms and farming industry

Make it easier to deliver goods to  
regional businesses and residents

Other ideas?

Use the dot stickers to  
mark the improvements  
you consider to be top  
priorities.



US 31 North

## VISION FOR THE FUTURE AESTHETICS/COMMUNITY CHARACTER



How could US 31 reflect the local area?

Show rural character of the area

Support the community character of local cities and towns

Provide opportunities for attractive city and town gateways

Provide safe crossings for wildlife

Other ideas?

Use the dot stickers to  
mark the improvements  
you consider to be top  
priorities.



US 31 North

US 31 North

## VISION FOR THE FUTURE US 31 NOW AND IN THE FUTURE



When you travel US 31, where do you go?

Local travel

Regional travel

What  
needs to  
change?

Use the dot stickers to  
mark if you use US 31  
primarily for local travel,  
regional travel or both.

Write your ideas on a  
sticky note and place your  
responses in the bottom  
two boxes.



Improvement you most  
want to see for US 31

Concerns about  
driving US 31



**US 31 North**

# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

IMAGINE IT IS THE YEAR 2035



## What do you want US 31 to look like in 2035?

It is 2035, how would you finish this sentence:  
**“The best decision made in 2023 for US 31 was...”**



Write your ideas on a sticky note and place your responses in the box under each prompt

**US 31 North**

KEEP IN TOUCH



## Follow Our Progress



www.propelus31.com



Sign up for email updates  
at [www.propelus31.com](http://www.propelus31.com).



## Share Your Feedback



1. Visit our website, [propelus31.com](http://propelus31.com).
2. Click **U.S. 31 North** study section button.
3. Follow prompts and share your feedback.

Scan with your phone camera to learn more about the study.



# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

---

### Appendix K. Photos of Boards

## US 31 North

# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

## IMAGINE IT IS THE YEAR 2035



What do you want US 31 to look like in 2035?

Have Plans  
OF EAST/WEST  
ACCESS  
(Businesses)  
School Buses

EQUAL ACCESS  
FOR LOCAL  
NOT JUST  
INTERSTATE

County wide  
access SAFELY!

Old 31  
needs access  
to 30!

Same 31  
2023

US 31 NEEDS  
TO BE A  
PRIORITY SO  
COMPANIES  
LOCATE HERE  
FOR JOBS

Freeway  
W/ OVERPASSES  
like US 45

COUNTY ROADS  
AS OVERPASSES  
WITH ACCESS TO  
MERGE ONTO 31.

Same  
as today

It is 2035, how would you finish this sentence:  
"The best decision made in 2023 for US 31 was

Any Acceleration  
Lanes to allow  
Traffic Parallel on  
to RT 31 to  
ACCELERATE TO SPEED

US 31 connected  
across the north  
side of Rochester  
to 67 and 85

Making sure farmers  
get cut off  
from their land!

PUT NORTH  
ACCESS TO  
ROCHESTER  
(MERCHANDISE)

WE DIDN'T LOSE  
ACCESS AND WE  
MADE IT BETTER  
FOR EVERYONE!

Read access  
to main points  
of interest

Keep  
6th st  
open  
west?

Limited  
Access with  
overpasses

Left it  
as is

Write your  
sticky note  
your response  
box under



NextLevel  
ROADS

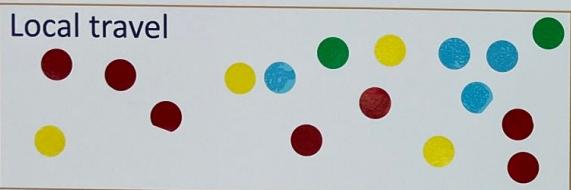
# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

## US 31 NOW AND IN THE FUTURE



When you travel US 31, where do you go?

Local travel



Regional travel



Use the dot mark if you primarily for regional travel

Improvements you most want to see for US 31

Keep Wabash access open to traffic & easy off and on

North Root, intersection

Overpasses at old 31 crossing US 31. Very dangerous now. School buses, pedestrians, etc. students

Only overpasses - limited access

Maintaining access to the Fulton Historical Society Museum  
for farm equipment, vehicles and access for others  
Please don't cut County off!

Interchange at old 31

Concerns about driving US 31

Safety

THAT LOCAL ACCESS WILL LOSE OUT TO OUT OF STATE USE - TRUCKS

Crossing over safely

Emergency Services  
Getting resources in a timely manner w/ limited access



NextLevel  
ROADS

MEXICO

PROPEL

Smarter Transportation.  
Stronger Communities.

US 31 North

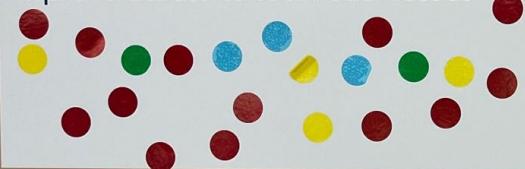
# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### How should US 31 support the local economy?

Improve access to local businesses



Support expanded tourism



Encourage growth with increased roadway capacity



Improve distribution of local goods to regional/national markets



Support the operation of local farms and farming industry



Make it easier to deliver goods to regional businesses and residents



NextLevel  
ROADS

Use the  
mark the  
you co



## US 31 North

# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

## AESTHETICS/COMMUNITY CHARACTER



How could US 31 reflect the local area?

Show rural character of the area



Support the community character of local cities and towns



Provide opportunities for attractive city and town gateways



Provide safe crossings for wildlife

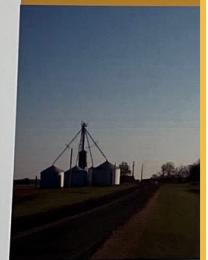


Mascie Sign is an Attraction for Tourist. They take pictures on 400 N when they Tow off.

Mascie needs a place across on 400 S. Grain Trucks going to Elkhorn for Farmers also to Elkhorn selling grain. Town needs about 1000 more citizens. Law enforcement 600 N not wide enough. See TURNING.

Use the mark the you cons

pr



US 31 NORTH

# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

## TRANSPORTATION FUNCTION



### What would improve travel along US 31?

Improved safety



Better traffic flow



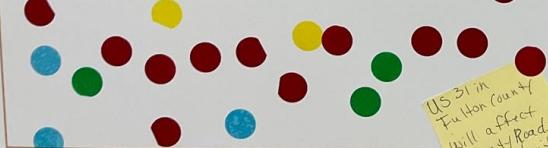
Fewer turning and crossing conflicts



Options for biking and walking



More connections to local streets



US 31 in  
Fulton County  
will affect  
County Roads  
Please don't  
Get them off!

More/improved transit service

Use the  
mark the  
you cons  
pri



NextLevel  
ROADS

PRO

# US 31 North

## RESOURCE AGENCY, STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY #1

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### Appendix L. Public Comment Summary Tables

Number	Date	Topic	Comment
1	8/23/2022	Economic Development, Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	I think that in order to improve safety on US 31 North INDOT should convert US 31 from W 300 N to W CR 700 N to a freeway with interchanges at the following locations: US 31/IN 25 and US 31/IN 14.
2	8/23/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	This "Study" is just kicking the can down the road even further, an unnecessary delay and waste of taxpayers money, in my opinion. It has been clear to most Hoosiers for nearly a decade now that the ENTIRE U.S. 31 corridor, from I-465 in Hamilton County to the Indiana-Michigan state line needs to be upgraded to a full, seamless, Interstate-grade freeway, as parts of it already have been and other parts are currently being. Doing anything less in the remaining, yet-to-be-updated segments is totally unacceptable! Now granted, there may not yet be sufficient traffic volume to justify freeway conversion happening immediately in some parts of the segments being studied. But why can't full freeway conversion be the stated goal? As industry professionals know, full Interstate-grade freeways are safer, more efficient, and more cost-effective than other alternatives. By making such a commitment now, and forgoing this delay, this project could move straight to the NEPA process and save a LOT of money as well as time. Or does the transportation consulting industry balk at losing two years of extra income at our state's expense? I realize that many of the data that comes out of this proposal may carry over to the subsequent the NEPA process (e.g., the inventory of existing conditions), but at the cost of a further two-year delay in getting to the end result. Now there will be a lot opposition to full freeway conversion, from the usual loud NIMBY voices, but with proper public involvement and reasonable public relations and education efforts, that can be overcome, as it (eventually) was for the I-69 extension project in southern Indiana. And such conversion does NOT have to be done for all segments immediately, but I feel it is cheaper to build for the future from the start rather than creating something less then having to come back 5, 10 ,or 20 years later and rebuild it all over again. Thank you for listening. The above comments do not require a response. But here is a question that does: Why was the Fulton County segment of U.S. 31 included with the U.S. 30 study and not part of the one for "U.S. 31 North". It seems this makes no sense, as a lesser, non-Interstate standard design could be decided upon for the adjacent stretches of U.S. 30, That would then compromise U.S. 31 becoming a full freeway. Each route should have its OWN study, totally independent of each other, in my opinion. I realize that the junction of the two routes itself would be impacted by both, but the portion of U.S. 31 south of that junction should be included with the rest of that route, in my opinion. Again, thanks for your attention and future response.
3	8/28/2022	Environmental, Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	I just noticed the US 31 south includes a segment north of Kokomo. I would disagree with that aggregation. Everything north of Kokomo should be a consistent treatment/experience. There is no justification from a cost-benefit standpoint of converting this section of US 31 to freeway status. A FREE-FLOWING facility will meet the mobility needs of INDOT, satisfy the same for the traveling public, and improve corridor safety. Northern Indiana needs to get over the thought that J-turn intersections are not appropriate for US 31. Targeted grade-separated crossings and interchanges are appropriate, but there should be signing on both ends of this segment stating "Freeway Ends". The cost, environmental impacts, property impacts, and long term maintenance of such a freeway corridor are not outweighed by the travel time (minimal except when speeding) and safety benefits of freeway versus free-flowing. Let's make sensible use of taxpayer money to enhance this important mobility corridor for the State of Indiana but not build far more infrastructure than we need to be maintaining.
4	8/29/2022	Economic Development, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Well here we go again. How many times has US 31 been studied? Real improvements could have been funded with the money spent studying this highway. Gov. Holcomb has promised money to remodel the intersections to US 31 & 10 and US 31 & 110. But still nothing two years later but another study. People are still having accidents at these intersections almost monthly but nothing done. Economic development can't occur at US 31& 10 because of the uncertain plans for the intersection. Drivers need a safe, easy way to enter or exit into Argos, IN. Come see the traffic on a weekend. Better yet make it a Norte Dame home football weekend. Traffic count just soars. Let's talk traffic, government spent a lot of money bypassing LaPaz and Lakeville and also Kokomo. All that has resulted is drivers speeding well above the speed limit. 60 is the current limit. Most are driving 70 to 75 mph. Keep in mind that there are cross roads from 31/30 to Kokomo. These cross roads allow for ag traffic and quick response by emergency responders. But no matter, most traffic gives no difference to that kind of traffic. Most times they just ignore the responders. So let's gets this study done so we can waste money on the next one and still not fix the problems.
5	8/29/2022	Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	US 31 should be an expressway (like Wisconsin does on their major corridors) from Indianapolis to South Bend. This could easily be upgraded to a freeway later. This is a major north/south corridor that the citizens of Northern Indiana deserve. This will lead to more economic development and traveling safety for Hoosiers. This will be a relatively easy section of road to upgrade to either a freeway or an expressway.
6	8/30/2022	Safety	There are two areas I am primarily concerned about at this time, one is crossing US 31 where old 31 crosses. There have been many accidents here due to having to see what is coming from the South around the US 31 curve while looking the other way to the west on US 31 when trying to cross both lanes of traffic. It is very dangerous because many people will try to get across both sections with out having to stop. Not a very good design. When people are trying to turn onto US 31 from old 31 or from the median to go South,you then are dealing with traffic coming from several directions. A possible and much safer solution would be an overpass where there is no cross traffic trying to access US 31. The second intersection that is very dangerous is where State Road 10 crosses US 31 at Argos. Having taught at Argos in the past, again, there are people trying to cross that intersection as well as buses crossing to get to Argos Schools. Many accidents have happened there as well. School buses being longer vehicles should not have to worry on how to cross this intersection and whether they are out of harms way with people accessing US 31 or the busbtrying to cross with traffic coming right over a hill due to a railroad overpass. Solution to this problem would also be an overpass either US 31 from railroad continuing over State Road 10 or an overpass from St Road 10 over US 31. As you have stated in your process Listen, listen, listen to people who use these roadways every day and not just engineers or architects for these projects. SAFETY of people and their precious cargo is top priority! I cross US 31 every day to transport my grandsons to Rochester Schools as well as living on 300 S in Fulton County right off of US 31. I understand that my road will probably be closed off due to US 31 becoming an interstate which is fine, but in order for residents in this area of Fulton County to get to Rochester, we have to cross somewhere. If we can do this without having to be in danger due to a much higher increase in traffic on US 31, by an overpass, we are all for it! Thank you for hearing my concepts and good luck!
7	8/31/2022	Environmental, Overall US 31 Corridor	PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE STOP taking big trees down to make more HOT pavement roads !!!! Trees give us OXYGEN, shade and cooling, and a home for birds who help eat biting and destructive bugs.
8	8/31/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Is the CURRENT US 31 project between Indianapolis and South Bend even done yet? I have traveled on 31 north from Indianapolis 15-20 times per year for the past 15 years, and it has been under construction for as long as I can remember. I suggest INDOT finishes the current project before thinking of the next one.
9	9/2/2022	Economic Development, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	<a href="https://www.co.fulton.in.us/egov/documents/1453754881_83678.pdf">https://www.co.fulton.in.us/egov/documents/1453754881_83678.pdf</a> Here is the Fulton County wish list that we paid for. Our property at 2216 North Meridian is directly impacted and we have had the strict highway commercial zoning because Meridian is considered a service road to US 31 for 15 years. On that plan there are 2 portions that are crucial to Rochester and Fulton County. 1. a north interchange to Rochester and 2. the Meridian Road connection as a service road. Otherwise, without an interchange, it would be about 9.5 miles from 110 to 25 south, limiting the commercial access for Rochester and Fulton County negatively for 50 years or permanently. I have shown some local officials and economic development a cost effective and north interchange location. I hope that INDOT will work with me, because so far, my communications are one way and not responded to. ALSO, I want to use my property for EV charging, battery removal, repair, and have direct PV charging for replacement systems. We have about 22 acres for the EV, that is only 50" from existing crossroads. How can we invest in our commercial property with this hanging on for years and years and years...that to date, INDOT has refused to talk, listen or make a mutually beneficial plan.
10	9/2/2022	Safety	If the state is interested in stopping most of the accidents, at the secondary crossings, we need a stop put on cars stacking up in the median. If this is not a law, it need to be. I have even witnessed a police officers doing this same thing. It creates a very dangerous situation because drivers cannot see the oncoming traffic. Second, I know I live in a fly over state, but now the heavily populated counties are turning us into a drive through county. People live here and need to be able to get around, within, our county. When all the major highways are made minimum access, it really hurts the people that live here. I know over passes are very expensive, so don't we just make the cross overs as safe as possible.

11	9/3/2022	Bike and Pedestrian, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	I believe there are too many side access roads that allow traffic to cross both lanes of US 31 without a traffic light. I suggest reducing the number of access roads and install traffic lights at the roads that can cross both lanes. Please consider closing access to US 31 at Monticello Rd and Olson road (examples) in Fulton County.
12	9/3/2022	Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	I would like to talk about the Intersection 400N and US 31 in Miami County. 400N is the Mexico Exit, straight into Mexico. We really need full access overhead to go east-west and go north-south. We include Farmers-Mexico Grain Elevator-Emergency Vehicles-Town of Mexico-Town of Hoover in Cass County and many other people and businesses. Farmers need to get equipment across to farm and also to Mexico Grain Elevator to take harvested grain. Mexico Grain Elevator needs access to US 31 to transfer grain to other places. Emergency Vehicles need to get across and on US 31 to save lives and put out fires, time is important in getting there fast to save lives and put out fires. Town of Mexico has businesses and people who use this intersection everyday. Town of Hoover has farmers and people who use this intersection too. If we lose the access to get across or on US 31 we would have to go miles out of our way. We have limited access on the west side of US 31 because of a bridge with a low weight limit and narrow iron structure. No farm equipment can go across it. Without access to get across it would be a hardship on everyone named. If we can not get an overhead then could we get a J-turn then. Witch is not very safe for farm equipment. When you travel in other states they have access to towns and for the people. Right now it is not very easy to get across with farm equipment. Holidays is very hard too. There is enough land there to do an overhead or full access to US31. We need to look forward to improvements to make roads safe for everyone involved.
13	9/4/2022	Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Miami County needs overheads every couple of miles for farmers to get across. Full access for Towns that has businesses. The less farmers are on US 31 the better with traffic going 70 miles per hour. Miami County officials are not very concerned about our access to get across. We need to move forward and improve our roads for all of the people of Miami County.
14	9/6/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	What about a passenger train line to meet up with South Shore Line for easier commute to Chicago. This would have a safe place to park your cars preferable free in Hamilton County to catch the train to either Hammond, IN or East Chicago, IN. It could even be modeled after the South Shore Line.
15	9/13/2022	Bike and Pedestrian, Economic Development, Environmental, Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Hello, I am involved with the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce Transportation Council as a co-chair. The Chamber has monitored the activity surrounding the US 31 corridor for past few years. Although US 31 is not located within Elkhart County, the corridor is vital to its business community. The Transportation Council meets monthly. Typically in attendance at our meetings are local leaders related to the transportation industry. We are looking to fill our agendas for November and throughout early 2023. We meet at 8:00 AM ET on the second Friday of each month. If possible, we would love for representatives of the ProPEL US 31 project to be guest speakers at a future meeting. We are interested in learning more about the PEL process and what some of the major considerations are for US 31 North. If this is a possibility, we would ask for a brief 15-20 minute presentation and up to 10 minutes of Q&A. We meet downtown Elkhart, but could accommodate virtual involvement, if easiest. Please put me in touch with the best person to speak with regarding this request. Thank you, C.J. Cunningham Lochmueller Group Co-Chair, Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce Transportation Council
16	9/13/2022	Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Instead of adding j-turns and stops lights on US 31, please consider closing side access roads. I feel reducing the number of access roads is the only option that will increase safety and lower capital cost. We have way to many side roads in Fulton County that allow city/rural roads access to high speed traffic on US 31.
17	9/20/2022	Environmental, Overall US 31 Corridor	Would love to see native plants, flowers, and trees in the median and roadsides. No need to mow.
18	9/22/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	13th road is a main Segway, and essentially an extension or SR 8. We are hopeful that this intersection of 13th and 31 will remain open for passing. If you close this intersection, it will cause great inconvenience in trying to get to 31. You will either have to go from sr17 all the way up to sr 10, which is very winding, or have to go all the way into Plymouth to get to 30 and then take it over to 31. Both ways are very inconvenient and out of the way. Please do NOT close the intersection at 13th road. If anything, please consider an interchange there. There are no homes that would be directly affected on those corners.
19	9/22/2022	Safety	Marshall county 11th and 31. As much as this is convenient, it is dangerous. People do not know how to use this intersection.. U Turns are the majority of the problem. I would love for either a bridge over or a right hand turn only onto 31.
20	9/25/2022	Safety	I've heard it said that the State of Indiana (i.e., INDOT) doesn't want to spend the money to put a proper interchange at the intersection of US31 north and Business 31. Something like they have at US31 & US24 interchange. I have heard that is what they have planned at US 31 and Indiana 218. I have also heard that the reason the State of Indiana doesn't want to do this is that they just don't want to spend the money in Miami county. The State of Indiana wants to make US31 into an interstate highway. Something they should have thought of when they make US31 into 4 lanes. I understand that what the State of Indiana wants it to remove all the stop lights on US31. I believe the State of Indiana just looks down on Miami county as not worth spending the money to put in proper interchanges and overpasses. They just like bragging that the State has a 6-billion-dollar surplus.
21	9/26/2022	Economic Development, Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Upgrading this section of US 31 is critical to Wabash County's economic and community development goals as this is the main corridor connecting Wabash County to Chicago, traveling from US 24/IN-114 West to US 31 then north to US 30, then west to IN-49 or I-65.
22	9/28/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	I live on 500 South and some of the things that are being talked about doing on 31 are some of the dumbest ideas I've ever heard. Why should I have to go miles and miles out of my way to get to 31 to accommodate drivers on 31 going 20+mph over the speed limit with no consequences. We are a farming community and should be treated as such. We like things a little slower around here. Farmers and school buses need access to 31 and not have to go miles out of their way or have to wait 20 min to be able to cross 31 if they are even able to cross. If it ain't broke don't fix it and we seem to be getting along really well without a bazillion dollar unnecessary road reconstruction.
23	9/30/2022	Economic Development	Route 31 should become an interstate highway extending at least to the Indiana Tollway.
24	10/7/2022	Mobility, Overall US 31 Corridor	Only comment I have, make sure there are enough Interchanges in Northern Miami county and old 31 needs to be fully connected north to south. North of Mexico to just north of st rd 16 will need to be connected.
25	10/11/2022	Economic Development, Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	The area in which I live if you shut off my road to 31 and eventually 30 the only access I will have (including fire, police and EMS) is over railroad track. We have 3 gravel pits, asphalt plant and a cement business would force them to use a country road over railroad tracks. It will make my community unsafe with increased traffic. Very bad idea to shut off 11th road and many others
26	10/14/2022	Economic Development, Environmental, Safety	Not in the study area, but just north of it, is the town of Argos and Plymouth. This comment relates to US 31, so I have pasted it here. You are planning a grade separation interchange at St Rd 10 in Argos, which is good! (very dangerous) You must also include a grade separation at the intersection of the Michigan Road (Old 31) with US 31 and VERY IMPORTANT for future ED of Plymouth, ingress and egress from the Lincoln Highway (Old US 30) to US 31. Grade separation already exists. NO BiPASS.
27	10/14/2022	Safety	US 31 needs to be continued with the updates similar to the Kokomo bypass section. It needs to be concrete, I am tired of the asphalt sections wheel rutting after just a couple of years. If it is not limited access, the turn lanes need to be extended, I live just off US 31 and when I need to exit it requires hard braking if I am at traffic speed. Is there any plan to maintain/ redirect traffic so we don't see the long back-ups like the previous US 31 projects?
28	10/15/2022	Economic Development, Safety	Fulton County needs an interchange on the South end of the county to provide entry/exit from the South side of Rochester. Otherwise the only way to get on 31 from Rochester will be IN 25 interchange. Already truck traffic going through Rochester is a problem as 25 is the only corridor to Warsaw. At some point a bypass of Rochester will be needed and doing an interchange with the upgrade of 31 with that in mind is critical long term planning

29	10/27/2022	Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Wabash Avenue is a main artery for going and coming from the south. It affects approximately half the population living and working from Wabash Avenue east. In this area are over 40 businesses, including hospital, fire department, factories, golf courses, airport, restaurants, boat launches, Manitou Height's residents, Wynnfield Crossing, and residents at Lake Manitou. Lake Manitou is a great draw for the businesses in Rochester. An option to keep Wabash Avenue open would be to build a bridge (the one planned for old 31 which is a very close to the intersection of St. Rd. 25 and new 31) over new 31 at Wabash Avenue with intersections going and coming from the south only. This would close old 31 at new 31. The housing addition south of new 31 would have access to new 31 south, St. Rd.25 north and south, Wabash Av. and old 31 south. Only one short access road of approximately one-half mile would be needed going from Wabash Av. to wabash rd. This would benefit Annie's Antiques, Thompson's Auction, Shepherd's salvage yard, the nature preserve, the Nichol Plate trail, and all those living southeast of New 31. There are concerns about Semi-trucks on Wabash Av. There would be no traffic from the north entering Wabash av. and a sign from the south with tonnage limit could be posted at the entrance to Wabash Av. and enforced. At every intersection on main highways are large green signs with information about the next exit. This would inform drivers of the next exit 2 miles, to Rochester, Highway 25, Highway 14, and Highway 114 thus keeping truck traffic off of Wabash Av. Keeping the main artery of Wabash Av. open will help traffic flow, fire trucks and ambulance travel as fast or faster, and traffic will flow smoother. Downtown traffic is already a bottle neck and would be horrible with all boats and pontoons being pulled through downtown.
30	10/28/2022	Economic Development, Mobility, Safety	I do not support J turns. I believe J turns are dangerous for semi-tractor/trailers as well as school buses. We need access to the east side of Rochester as that is where most of our industry is located and semis as well as other delivery/pickups need easy access. They do not need nor want to go through Rochester City to get to the east side.
31	11/1/2022	Economic Development, Safety	Indiana EV Infrastructure Deployment Plan Collaborate and communicate with customers and stakeholders regarding EV infrastructure deployment Toby J. and Christina M. Seiler are owners of 43 acres in Fulton County that borders on an access road to US 31, at 2216 North Meridian Road, Rochester, IN 46975. Our property is zoned highway commercial, although we built a house when it was agricultural and live on the property. US 31 is becoming limited use and county plans for a North interchange for Rochester intersect with our property. Planning by INDOT is in the "listening" stages, again, on the access issues that clearly impact this EV Deployment Plan (and all other 31 communities on area where roads will be cut off). We are stakeholder landowners at a key location for considering alternative fuels in conjunction with the Fulton County proposed North highway interchange and we have come forward to work with INDOT planning of a North Rochester intersection at the earliest stages. Assess vehicle electrification needs as they evolve and update the EV plan regularly to support long-term economic competitiveness and quality of life: Seilers see the value of quality alternative vehicles infrastructure and have had many years to process the vast changes that will happen with our property and our home if an interchange is built. We have had time to think about a north interchange, used heavily by trucks for 31 access, would permanently change the habitability as our home... but increase the highway commercial potential. 3. The flexibility to include value-added offerings from private entities proposing on these activities can directly advance Indiana's economic competitiveness and quality of life. We are a potential host, private stakeholders and entrepreneurs that are willing to make early agreements for electrical infrastructure and hydrogen infrastructure and vehicle service and repair on our rural property in an otherwise alternative fuels desert. We see potential as a fleet host as well, given the proximity to US 31. 4. Proposals that highlight small business and DBE participation or incentivize and/or train site hosts and localities in the areas of O&M are examples of actions to support this goal. We can dedicate a substantial area of properly zoned Highway Commercial for alternative fuels businesses that combine on-grid rapid charging, PV charging, battery removal, replacement and battery repair and H2 production from about 2 MW of PV using electrolysis....with a potential to host a fleet location at a secure site. Thus the Seiler proposal combines site planning for a US 31 interchange and ALSO planning for the EV and alternative fuels infrastructure on the land not used for the interchange, but with ready access, at the earliest possible time.
32	11/1/2022	Mobility, Overall US 31 Corridor	I own the Green Oaks Antique store about three miles south of Rochester. We have over 43,000 followers on Facebook. We need to retain direct access from US 31. Removing it would affect lot of employees, my family and our customers.
33	11/2/2022	Mobility	I am opposed to J-turns. I've heard that there have been lights added to some J-turns because they are not effective or safe. I also saw that there might be J-turns at Gallahan's [gas station near US 31 and US 24]. Take heed that limiting access to ruin communities.
34	11/2/2022	Mobility	We need access to via SR 25 and SR 14. We need ramps at SR 14 instead of just an overpass. We need more notice for these meetings.
35	11/2/2022	Mobility	Traffic that travels north has to go out of their way to access SR 14. We need access as much as we can get it. Too much traffic has to flow through Rochester.
36	11/2/2022	Mobility, Overall US 31 Corridor	We need to preserve the route from US 31 to the co-op. Fulton County residents are frustrated by the lack of access and no interchanges in Fulton County. I am concerned about access for emergency responders.
37	11/2/2022	Mobility, Overall US 31 Corridor	We need access to Rochester at several points. I would be interested in joining the CAC.
38	11/2/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Since this meeting marks the beginning, we need to advocate for access on the north side of Rochester. There are developments planned that could add 1000s of residents and SR 25 can't handle all of that traffic. The new road at Sweetgum Road has tripled traffic and pulled from the intersections along US 31.
39	11/2/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	You should contact the Mexico Fire Department to see if they will host office hours.
40	12/1/2022	Economic Development	Olson rd is a major access for not only the town of Leiters Ford, but also a gateway for industry. I work at a business that uses 31 daily on olson, and to cut it off and not have any near interchange would be a true pain for us.
41	12/1/2022	Economic Development, Safety	Access to farm ground on both sides of 31. County road 450 south in Fulton, and 1550 North in Miami County.
42	12/1/2022	Mobility, Safety	First, I appreciate the opportunity to comment. Thank you. Indiana is mostly a state that consists of small cities and towns. Our children most often leave Indiana for job opportunities in other states. This is obviously a drain on our population. The only way we're going to change the net migration to a positive in this north central part of the state is by attracting large employers. We can only do that by improving U.S. 31 so that it is near freeway quality. If we don't make it a freeway, our small cities and towns will continue to suffer population loss -- the entire state will. Let's make U.S. 31 a freeway and give employers a reason to stay -- a reason to move here and a reason to hire our hardworking Hoosiers.
43	12/1/2022	Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	I use 31/30 to Kokomo when I-65 has a lot of construction or when 26 is closed. There is no where to really stop for bathroom break or just to pull over, like a rest area. Only take it to Merrillville when I have to. Roads in general not real bad, but need gas stations & food businesses so route will be easier & more willing to use.
44	12/1/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	we need a overpass at old 31 and new 31 in fulton county. there should be ramps to get on and off the overpass. cars are coming so fast it hard to cross. i cross every day to work or to town. to come home i get on us 25 come up the south bond ramp to us 31. I live in the housing area called bellwood acres. south on old us 31.
45	12/1/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	As a fulton county resident I still haven't heard how the changes are effecting our county. Like just turns at 110. With Amish and farmers landfill seem more dangerous than what we have now.
46	12/1/2022	Safety	Obviously the more exits through the county the better. Everything mentioned in the comprehensive plan and more. Something has to be done at this point because the other improvements along 31 have increased traffic to the point that it is not safe a lot of times to enter or cross 31.
47	12/1/2022	Safety	Horse and buggies need a safe way to cross 31 - an overpass at 31 and 700 N would benefit cars, semi, and anyone that needs to cross 31 safely.
48	12/1/2022	Safety	We own a trucking company where you have to cross 31 to get into town with semis and our personal vehicles. An overpass at 700 N would benefit us and help with safety.
49	12/1/2022	Safety	We have property on road 300 south in Fulton County. We have some ground east of a ditch that runs north and south, that we have to get on 31 southbound lane to access this ground. Can a culvert be put in so we will be able to access this property?
50	12/1/2022	Safety	J turns will not be safe for semi's or any vehicles; please don't put one in.
51	12/1/2022	Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	I would like someone to answer the question; is it legal for vehicles to stack or share the center at the interchanges? It appears to be the number one reason for accidents but I cannot even find if it is legal or not.

52	12/2/2022	Economic Development	Economic development SAC along corridor - things they may know that isn't public information. I do envision long-term a freeway along US 31 as for how long that takes, I don't know. Funding will dictate a lot of that. How do we work to eliminated traffic lights and look for priority interchanges? All the items begin the process of becoming freeway. A long-term plan will help people figure out priority projects and partner with INDOT for frontage roads and access for other businesses. North Kokomo by the north plant is new battery plant. Suppliers at Grisom are looking. Product is developed in Kokomo need to get to the plants to the north or suppliers to supply as they travel US 31. US 31 will continue to become a major thoroughfare.
53	12/2/2022	Mobility	There used to be an underpass of 31 at about 300 north in Fulton county. I think a railroad might have gone under there. Couldn't that be opened up again for a road to go under the highway?
54	12/2/2022	Mobility, Overall US 31 Corridor	Concern in this section about bulldozing houses in this section like US 31 south. Concerns that way of life folks have been used to will go way (like south of Kokomo). Farming community has major concerns about how to access and not having to go 5-10 miles out of the way for a big turn.
55	12/2/2022	Mobility, Safety	Lots of congestion at Blair Ridge, coming off US 31 bridge, south of 24. Division road on one side. If there are cars too close to continue onto Broadway with Clover Leaf. Several folks agreed. No bubble to turn or decrease speed in Fulton co. north of Rochester when going to Fulton County fairgrounds. There is turning bubble and crossing that. IN 16 and US 31 has a lot of traffic - much more in the last three years than before that. Milk trucks from 12-mile they're in and out a couple of times/day. Needs bigger merge lanesSeveral folks own property on both sides of US 31.J-turn was really slick with snow - so issues with that. Not sure how the trucks can make those turns. The intersection at Blair Pike has possible hospital/EMS access.Lot of people from south bend or south that want to go to McClure's that causes back ups and people not paying attention Are j-turns problems for trucks and buses?
56	12/2/2022	Mobility, Safety	J-turns aren't able to be put in with roadbed space at because depth of the ditch. No access across the Eel river. Fire protection limited by Eel river to the south if trying to go east. Need some connectors across and over the top.
57	12/2/2022	Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Can't get across bypass - lots of traffic and high speeds with farm equipment. 100 cars of more that go by my house every day on 400N can't go south because Iron Road bridge isn't suitable for heavy vehicles. 400N also issues with plowing during the snow.Semis from grain elevator and farmers transferring it in and out - we need that bypass access for farm equipment. Summer is the worst time - everyone on vacation. At nighttime you can see repeated lights north and south â€“ and Notre Dame games.Is there going to be a map of what's going to happen? Why even study if there are no stoplights? People on Blair Pike will stay on the road to avoid the rumble strips . At 550NCluster of 3 houses got bought and torn down for the road. I think US 31N is going to be the next I-65 - people drive so quickly and there's so much. People will start taking US 31 as an alternate to I-65. Big thing I want to know sort of what they're thinking to help with planning for their farms and access.
58	12/2/2022	Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Have a property along 400N going toward bypass - what will happen to that intersection? Would prefer no intersection that would cut off semi-traffic and would give some peace and quiet. Where would the semi-trucks turn around and have access? Limiting EMS and such access. Funeral home at 16 and 31N would be access point - would like that reserved. River access - access point for folks that need parking - and park off 31 for recreation. 400N has two churches - that's another issue if there is access point or not. Not impressed with the roundabouts at Tipton, and 25 into Lafayette. 550N and US 31 - pulled out and the curve makes it difficult - there was rear end collisions. Traffic along US 31 is not well monitored - because of light timing can make turns difficult. People become impatient and try to accelerate through. Timing is impacted with changes in roadway and access.
59	12/2/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	They're going to do whatever they want - they're going to do what they're going to do. It's going to be limited access here. People form Miami Schools at 1000 or 800.
60	12/2/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Don't like getting the stoplights out.
61	12/2/2022	Safety	Several county roads that cross US 31 have de acceleration lanes for vehicles turning to the right onto the intersecting county road. However, none of these county roads have an acceleration lane for vehicle turning right onto US 31. An acceleration lane would give these vehicles time to get up to speed before entering the right line and the cost of adding these lanes would be very minimal.
62	12/2/2022	Safety	Would have to go miles out of the way for emergency vehicles if they cut off access to 400N - would have to go 20 miles out of the way. I'll take a j-turn over closing access to the road.
63	12/2/2022	Safety	Needs guardrail up on 400 east.
64	12/2/2022	Safety	Macy Fire Department protects lake on side of US 31N.
65	12/2/2022	Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Why listen - you didn't listen before. You had unanimous opposition to US 24 j-turns. August of 2019 and 2021 - hearing on US 21 j-turns. Between august of this year and may of this year, went ahead and put in j-turns. Spending the state's money but it's a joke. People that know how to drive know that J-turns are a joke. You host these "meetings" at inconvenient times. 400N and Mexico Road likely most used from 24 and 31. I live in this community, and between EMS and grain elevator on Mexico Road - whether overpass or N Mexico Road and 31 interchange put on 400N. Intentionally causing traffic infractions by turning from turn lane into farther lane. Dangerous intersections at 18 and 218. Suggest flashing light that gives warning up from traffic signal that's going to turn before reaching it. Preemptive lights would be helpful. These would be low cost for a current improvement to prevent accidents. Business 31 (by McDonald's) - dangerous intersection.
66	12/2/2022		Commenter expressed concerns about INDOT's public involvement process based on his experience at a recent hearing in Peru for US 24.
67	12/6/2022	Economic Development, Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	Thank you for allowing the residents of Fulton County to express their opinion on US 31 North. I would ask the following: That IDOT provide help to Fulton County to develop service roads that would go from County Road 300 S. to Wabash Ave. This would allow easy access to Rochester and Lake Manitou. Service roads will be needed throughout US 31 North on both East/West sides of the Highway to allow access to Rochester and the next available US 31 interchange. By having the service roads this would help facilitate safety (fire dept., Ambulance etc.) and provide access to US 31 N. and US 31 S. and of course access to the city of Rochester. I feel US 31 definitely needs to be limited access due to the amount of traffic and speed that the traffic travels at. However, in order to it provide an improvement to those affected, the access points have to be thoughtfully considered and service roads need to be constructed for the above mentioned reasons. Please no J Turns. LETS DO IT RIGHT ONCE!!!! Further, I feel Monticello Rd. would make a poor choice for an access point, as the continuation of a road to US 25 would have to go over terrain that will require major expense and NOT be cost effective. In closing, please realize that this could be an opportunity for Fulton County if the access interchanges are choose wisely and service roads are put in place to provide access for emergency vehicles. Also this would provide a better quality of life for Fulton County residents when it comes to travel to and from Rochester and accessing US31 for work and travel purpose. Thank you for your consideration.
68	12/6/2022	Environmental, Safety	I live on the corner of 31 Northbound and E 350 S in Rochester, IN (Fulton County). Approximate address is 4061 E 350 S. I have 10 acres of farmland that run along 31 N and my house's back yard nudges up along the county wire/metal fence of 31 N and E 350 S. The noise of traffic has become an issue and needs addressed. I am exploring at ways I can help solve the issue but I also hope INDOT can help address the issue in some way/shape/form as the amount of traffic on 31 N and S will only, I am sure, continue to grow. Not only for me but for anyone else who will live here at this house....and in the future
69	12/7/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Travel everyday on this road all I ask is to make it safer is to truly make it a highway no J turns only overpasses because in today society and cell phone use nobody knows how to drive and this road is very dangerous when people are not paying attention so make it just like north of Plymouth and let's do it right the first time instead of wasting money and lives

70	12/11/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Put 4 lanes down the middle of existing road, one way roads along each side for access to properties.
71	12/12/2022	Economic Development	Business 31 - what's planned for there?
72	12/12/2022	Economic Development, Environmental, Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter shared input on a North interchange for Rochester for DOT and DOE siting of alternative fuels vehicle infrastructure that is happening NOW.
73	12/12/2022	Economic Development, Environmental, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	How disheartening. No decisions on a north interchange for Rochester "for a few years". After we paid for the US 31 corridor planning, Fulton County finished in 2015, we are now to act as if that planning did not exist and that all planning is starting from scratch...again....with no decisions for "a few years". Meanwhile the uncertainty of this major change hangs over those who paid taxes to build US 31 (no fed interstate money) and we are seeing our access taken away. Now 2 has stretched to 3 years for this planning and 3 will probably stretch into 5 years of threatening to close off our access and divide further our community. I have NO CONFIDENCE that timely solutions will be forthcoming from redundant planning for a few years and believe INDOT is avoiding key economic decisions and that avoidance, uncertainty about commercial access, is doing stakeholder's economic harm.
74	12/12/2022	Mobility	Lot of kids are getting on bus at 6:50 -- going to add more length to bus rides which is a hardship.
75	12/12/2022	Mobility	Southbound traffic isn't used to stopping and it's often thick traffic that doesn't slow - northbound is used to stopping from
76	12/12/2022	Mobility, Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter noted not only changing access to 31 -- updating county roads for semis and other vehicles adding traffic length on farms and etc.
77	12/12/2022	Mobility, Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter would rather an overpass than j-turns.
78	12/12/2022	Mobility, Safety	1350N in Macy - lots of emergency vehicles use that access and a grain elevator
79	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter feels it's too late - decisions have already been made.
80	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Those other than live on 31 - why not let us turn right only?
81	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	So, you're turning US 31 into a freeway?
82	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Everything that's done the last 10 years is out the window?
83	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Is there a change this is like the 25 corridor with overpasses? Can still access the little towns?
84	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Miami County students are going across US 31.
85	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter thinks this is a waste of time because the state is going to do whatever they want to do.
#REF!	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	The state is going to do what they want to do. State pays for the overpass not the city/county and is responsible for maintaining the overpass. City just is responsible for the connections leading to it. Likely end up in county hands - if it's just overpass 28 and 31 has smaller format interchange that people like.
87	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Be like other states - with overpasses and limited access and major cities
88	12/12/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Cul-de-sacs are needed when closing access to the road.
89	12/12/2022	Safety	Fire Department concerned with losing access to 31 - if someone gets hurt on 31 they're going to have to come from Denver or Rochester to get to them. Usually don't have that kind of time to get to them. Fire Department covers east of 31 to 200E in Fulton County. And access to 31 itself - 1350N or 16 - to get to the accident on 31.
90	12/12/2022	Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	When removing the nearby stoplight, traffic would be wild with no way to slow folks down. Need some sort of overpass.
91	12/14/2022	Environmental	Commenter concerned about drainage from farm fields because of the riprap. The tiles along US 31 need to be reset.
92	12/14/2022	Environmental	3417 S. Old US 31 - Flooding issues at property at intersection at Old US 31 South and US 31, southeast quadrant. About nine out of 10 years it's been too flooded to plant crops, but this year he was able. (See photos) Water runs underneath the ROW fence. Has contacted INDOT's LaPorte District. Last PIM was the first time he felt something might get done. Neighbor who has lived there longer than time (more than 30 years) said that the field never flooded before the bypass was built. He worked on one of the construction crews early in his career. Need information about the subsurface drains that come from the median. INDOT believes it comes from somewhere else on the property, but it doesn't. And he's worked on construction crews on US 31 that constructed the subsurface (ex drains), so he knows they were installed when US 31 was constructed.
93	12/14/2022	Environmental	Just east of Old US 31 and current US 31, there is a white drainage pipe that is 3x3' that were installed several years. They are at a slant and has never drained properly. Less than a quarter of a mile along the west side of the highway. It needs to be a gentle slant and instead it backs up, causing mosquitoes and prevents other drainage tiles from working. You can tell where it is because cattail is growing along the highway there. (northern Miami County, but south of Nyona Lake. right around CR 1050). There's no record of where the red (red here) drainage tiles were placed in fields. A lot of farmers are replacing them with plastic. Also concerned about losing access to the farm on each side of the highway.

94	12/14/2022	Mobility	Lives in the southeast quad of 350 S and US 31. He owns 10 acres of farmland and several people use his "frontage road" along the east side of US 31. Farmers want continued access directly off US 31. Moved in about three months ago, but plans to continue using the property as a residence.
95	12/14/2022	Mobility, Safety	Commenter is concerned because all of the schools and emergency responders are on the east side of US 31 while there are a lot of residents who live on the west. We need to be sure to provide overpasses at key locations to ensure timely responses. 1350, specifically, is an area of concern to provide fire coverage for the people who live on the lake.
96	12/14/2022	Mobility, Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	People are opposed to J-turns because of access for emergency equipment and snow removal. Commenter has a trucking business along SR 16 and he is having trouble navigating the existing J-turns along US 24, even in a pickup truck. He said in snow, rain and fog, there's no way his drivers can make a turn into one lane when sight visibility is low. It's an accident waiting to happen. He has 13 trucks in his fleet that come and go every day. Also, there are too many drivers staying in the passing lane, even when there's no one in the right lane. People who are turning are taught to turn into the closest lane, but people won't move to the right lane to let them merge. He also wanted to know if the study will be based on current traffic counts or future growth plans. He believes there are a lot of people who will travel to South Bend to Evansville now that I-69 is almost complete. And he sometimes has trouble pulling out at current levels. He also believes access needs to be maintained at SR 16 no matter what. He appreciates the local police enforcing the speed limit along SR 16 and US 31. People also want to know how they can access Peru if US 31 becomes a limited-access highway.
97	12/14/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter asked about the overall timeline and when residents might know what will happen in the future.
98	12/14/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	When will residents along US 31 be notified that their home may be acquired? It's especially an area of concern for those in Peru. He is familiar with some people who live in Bakers Corner who had their home acquired. Alex explained the difference in the phasing - that this is a study and that was a NEPA project that advanced into construction.
99	12/14/2022	Safety	If there's an accident at 800 N and US 31 and 800 N isn't accessible, we would come in off of SR 16. Would INDOT consider having special turnarounds for emergency vehicles that need to cross US 31 to help with accidents in the SB lanes? He's also concerned about blowback to the fire departments because it takes longer to get to them.
100	12/14/2022	Safety, Overall US 31 Corridor	What will happen at SR 16? People need access for all three fire dpmts (Macy, Denver, Mexico). 1000N is the main way people get to the school. Randy is also an employee of the county highway department and they need continued access to repair/maintain roads on each side of US 31. There is also a concern to access homes on each side, especially with the restraint that the river provides. There are also some historic bridges in the area that will need to be preserved. Many of these have weight limits.
101	12/16/2022	Safety	Please cut off access to E 350 S from 31 N & S. The amount of traffic is atrocious and the speeding, loud cars and trucks going to and from this road needs to be eliminated to allow the residents to enjoy the peace and quiet living on this road. It is also not safe for anyone traveling 31 S to turn onto this country road.
102	12/21/2022		Live west of 31 on W Eel River Rd. and operate farms on both sides of Hwy. Need access for myself and others to the east side. Also 2 Churches on 400N
103	12/22/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	US Highway 31 from 31 Freeway ramping system at highway 30 to freeway 31 ramping system just north of Kokomo must be upgraded to full freeway standards! NOT freeFLOW!! No J-intersections!! The US 31 Highway corridor serves several million people from South Bend to Indianapolis. US 31 Highway should be petitioned to convert to Interstate 67 by our INDOT.
104	12/23/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	This "project" has been in the works for several years and it has held businesses and individual homeowners in a state flux. One cannot in good conscience sell their property or business not knowing if this project is going to affect them in any way. The persons pushing this project should be considerate of these folks to get the plan done and immediately notify those people that will be impacted so that they can begin to make plans for their futures. We have a neighbor that needs to do some expensive repairs to his property but does not want to invest the monies if he is going to be losing his property.
105	12/24/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Are all county roads evaluated for change- do nothing, cul de sac or bridge? how is that decided? Specifically ... 1000 N & US 31 N Miami County; & 2 roads north of that ECounty Rd 825 S Fulton County?
106	12/25/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter and his wife are very concerned about the speeds on US 31. They suggested adding flashing beacons on speed limit signs or in advance of major intersections. He realized that most crashes are driver error and you can't, "Legislate intelligence." They believe that there should be continued access to Mexico Road.
107	12/26/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter lives off of CR 1050 N. She is concerned that if the state decides to put an interchange or overpass there, it will take her property, as well as her neighbors'.
108	12/27/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter is a member of the Macy/Mexico/Denver Volunteer Fire Departments. He is concerned about residents living on the west side of US 31 getting fire protection if access is limited and the stations on the east side can't reach them. He stated that there are many times that several stations must respond to a fire because they need more water. So there would be several trucks traveling from various directions across US 31. He is also concerned about farmers who own land on both sides of US 31. Given the cost of heavy farm equipment, he stated there's no way farmers can purchase duplicate machinery, so they will need continued access across US 31.
109	12/28/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	What factors decide where a bridge goes?
110	12/29/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter is the Rochester Township trustee. There is some fire protection west of US 31 and west of Rochester. She is concerned about fire protection for people in her township. He currently contracts with the City of Rochester for fire protection and she needs several years to budget for money to contract with one of the volunteer fire departments, or organize a new one for her township. She needs at least four years of notice to plan for budgeting people to abide by Indiana law.
111	12/30/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	She lives on 1050 N. and her sister lives on the corner. She has heard that there will be overpass there. She would prefer to lose access to US 31 completely than have an overpass or interchange there. She and her sister want a cul-de-sac there. But really she's rather have nothing done.
112	12/31/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	Commenter said that the 2013 study showed 7 combinations of interchanges and overpasses. Most counties are 20 miles square. If northern Marshall County has seven and you assume there will be similar. Fulton County should have more than 7-8 access points. Commenter would put something at Conservation Club Road (historical society), CR 700 N, 200 N/Monticello Road, 3rd St. CR 100, SR 14, Old US 31. (Commenter owns property north of the Rochester Church of God off Old US 31.) Green Oaks Antiques needs continued access, at least via a frontage road. Commenter is against J-turns because it's hard to turn trailers and large farm equipment in them.
113	12/31/2022	Overall US 31 Corridor	I would like to know what their plans are for the intersection of 1050 North and US31 in Miami County, Indiana. Do they plan on making changes to the intersection??

114	12/31/2022 Overall US 31 Corridor	I farm in Fulton County in what would be the US31 North Study. My main farm is located west of US 31 and my house is east of US31. I cross this highway multiple times a day in all types of vehicles anything from a car to semi to farm equipment. I farm on both sides of US31 and I am excited to the point that I want to see overpasses put in and get it over with. It is 100% unsafe to cross this highway anymore. Ever since upgrades were done to the south and north of us traffic is always running faster now most of the time 70mph+ and cars get spaced out to where trying to cross both lanes of traffic with Farm Equipment of Semi's is impossible. I have learned the best time of the week to cross it is usually Tuesday evening about 7pm. I would like to see overpasses placed at 450N, 100N, then an Interchange/Overpass at Olson Road. These overpasses need to be wide enough to accommodate farm machinery at 20ft wide plus room for on coming traffic. When it was first talked about going to limited access I didn't like the idea. At this point the traffic has increased so much and speeds that all I want to do is get across it without out worrying about having an accident.
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