

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

For

Indiana Project
Des. Number 1702149
US31 and 236th Street, New Interchange
Hamilton County, Indiana

The approved Environmental Assessment (EA) was released for public involvement by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on March 8, 2021. A virtual public information meeting was held on March 25, 2021 and an in-person public hearing was held on March 30, 2021. Members from the public at the meetings totaled 31 at the virtual meeting and 18 at the public hearing. Comments were received from 10 members of the public and three (3) agencies (US Environmental Protection Agency, US Department of Interior and Indiana Department of Environmental Management). These comments provided no new substantive information requiring additional analysis.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) proposes to convert the existing US31 and 236th Street intersection into an interchange in northern Hamilton County, Indiana. The project will reduce congestion and improve safety at the intersection of these two roadways.

The project extends from approximately 3,281 feet south of 236th Street to 252 feet north of 241st Street, and 1,335 feet east and 1,552 feet west from the project intersection along 236th Street.

The Selected Alternative includes the construction of an interchange at US 31 and 236th Street. Below is a summary of the scope of the project, but a full project description is identified as the “Preferred Alternative” in the Environmental Assessment Document:

- The proposed project will grade separate 236th Street over US 31 in a “tight diamond” type of interchange configuration. The ramp terminals will be single-lane roundabouts with single lane exits.
- On US 31, the route will remain at the same elevation. Four (4) through lanes will be provided with a shoulder width of four (4) feet inside and 10 feet outside and a pavement width of 24 feet, which is the same as existing. The proposed median will be widened from the existing 54 feet to 55 feet.
- For 236th Street, the two (2) existing through lanes will be maintained but the shoulders will be widened from the existing range of zero (0) to two (2) feet wide to a range of three (3) to eight (8) feet wide and the pavement width will be widened from

the existing 22 feet to 24 feet. The project will also include a 10 feet wide shared use path on both sides of 236th Street through the project limits.

- For 241st Street, the two (2) existing through lanes will be maintained with a shoulder width of zero (0) to one (1) feet wide and a pavement width of 18 feet, which is the same as existing. Access from 241st Street to US 31 will be removed, and a cul-de-sac will provide turnaround access for properties along 241st Street.
- To provide access for property owners and businesses, several access roads will be constructed in the southeast and southwest quadrants of the intersection. Also, the project includes the construction of several new structures or the extension/lengthening of existing structures.

This project will require approximately 103 acres of permanent right-of-way and 5.94 acres of temporary right-of-way, mostly from residential properties and undeveloped land. A total of 22 properties will require full acquisition, including 21 residences and one (1) commercial business.

Three (3) streams (1,654 linear feet total) will be impacted by the project. The project has been designed to minimize stream impacts by providing open channel where possible within the project area.

A total of 0.4389 acres of wetlands will be impacted. There are four types of terrestrial habitats impacted by the project – temperate deciduous woodland (12.4 acres), mowed lawn (16 acres), cropland (19.9 acres), and fallowed fields (1.1 acres).

The project is within range of the federally endangered Indiana bat and the federally threatened Northern long-eared bat (NLEB). The project effect finding for these species is “Not Likely to Adversely Affect”. On June 10, 2020, USFWS concurred and agreed on site-specific Avoidance and Mitigation Measures.

The project will require acquisition of right-of-way from one historic resource determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places: the Baker-Johnson-Pickett Farmstead. A Section 106 ‘Adverse Effect’ finding for the project was issued on November 10, 2020. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the Adverse Effect finding in a letter dated December 8, 2020. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was approved on January 27, 2021, then subsequently amended on May 28, 2021 in response to the Department of Interior’s comments on the Section 4(f) evaluation.

This undertaking will convert property from the Baker-Johnson-Pickett Farmstead, a Section 4(f) historic property, to a transportation use. As discussed above, FHWA issued an Adverse Effect finding and was required to prepare a Section 4(f) evaluation for the Baker-Johnson-Pickett Farmstead. The Section 4(f) evaluation concluded that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the Baker-Johnson-Pickett

Farmstead and the proposed action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the farmstead resulting from such use. The issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will constitute FHWA approval of the 4(f) use.

This project is located in Hamilton County, which is currently a maintenance area for Ozone (1997 Standard). The project's design concept and scope are accurately reflected in both the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan, and both conform to the State Implementation Plan. Therefore, the conformity requirements of 40 CFR 93 have been met.

It was determined that the impacts associated with this project will not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority and/or low-income populations of Environmental Justice (EJ) concern relative to non EJ populations in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23a.

This project is considered a Type 1 project in terms of analyzing traffic noise impacts. Therefore, in accordance with 23 CFR 772 and the INDOT Traffic Noise Analysis Procedures (2017), this action required a formal noise analysis. Based on the studies completed, 2 impacted receptors will have noise impacts. However, according to the 2017 INDOT noise procedures, noise abatement is not reasonable. Therefore, the project will not include noise abatement.

There are 31 commitments listed as firm commitments and 17 included for further consideration.

The FHWA has determined that this project, as identified in the Environmental Assessment and supplemental project information, will have no significant impact on the natural and human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the environmental assessment, public hearing transcript, public and agency comments received. They have been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the project. These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that significant impacts will not occur and an environmental impact statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of these documents.

June 9, 2021

Date

**MICHELLE B
ALLEN**

for: Jermaine R. Hannon
Division Administrator

Digitally signed by MICHELLE B
ALLEN
Date: 2021.06.09 06:54:01
-04'00'