Appendix I

Consistency with FHWA Policy

- FHWA Policy Points

1.0 CONSISTENCY WITH FHWA POLICY

While this study is not an official Interchange Access Document (IAD), it is intended to guide decision making to plan for a future interstate access point and need for an IAD. The project was evaluated against FHWA's New Interstate Access policy points as a guide for the future IAD.

Policy Point #1:

The need being addressed by the request cannot be adequately satisfied by existing interchanges to the Interstate, and/or local roads and streets in the corridor can neither provide the desired access, nor can they be reasonably improved (such as access control along surface streets, improving traffic control, modifying ramp terminals and intersections, adding turn bays or lengthening storage) to satisfactorily accommodate the design-year traffic demands.

The existing interchanges on I-70 at SR 39 and SR 267 have been seeing growing traffic volumes and congestion as Plainfield and the area around Indianapolis International Airport continue to grow, as had the Town of Plainfield roadway network. The two I-70 interchanges are 7 miles apart. An interchange modification is under construction at I-70 and SR 39 to alleviate congestion from rapid growth in industrial/logistics development around the interchange, and planning has begun on interchange modifications for I-70 and SR 267 to anticipated continued traffic growth at that interchange.

While the modifications at the existing interchanges on I-70 will improve operations at both interchanges, Plainfield continues to see sustained growth both south of I-70 at SR 267 and all along the western town limits. With Plainfield's proximity to downtown Indianapolis, there will be a continued attraction to those seeking a short commute to relocate to Plainfield. Because I-70 angles southwest away from Indianapolis, most of the traffic generated as Plainfield continues to grow will be drawn to the I-70/SR 267 interchange for the shorter travel route, burdening local roads leading to the interchange and the interchange itself. Providing a future intermediate interchange between SR 267 and SR 39 would provide an access point that can connect with a future regional connector corridor, benefitting other communities on the west and southwest sides of the Indianapolis metropolitan area.

Policy Point #2:

The need being addressed by the request cannot be adequately satisfied by reasonable transportation system management (such as ramp metering, mass transit, and HOV facilities), geometric design, and alternative improvements to the Interstate without the proposed change(s) in access.

As shown in the capacity analysis, additional capacity is available on I-70. The congestion is occurring on the local road network and the access points to the interstate. INDOT has not applied High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane strategies on Indiana's

freeway system. HOV and ramp metering are intended to improve mainline operations, which would not address the congestion on the local road network and ramp termini.

The regional bus service provider (IndyGO) is currently in development of bus rapid transit (BRT) lines, one of which would terminate at Indianapolis International Airport called the Blue Line. Design of the Blue Line has been temporarily paused and at the time of this report, there were no immediate plans to extend the Blue Line into Plainfield.

Specific geometric improvements were outside the scope of this study and should be analyzed in a future Interchange Access Document (IAD).

Policy Point #3:

An operational and safety analysis has concluded that the proposed change in access does not have a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation of the Interstate facility (which includes mainline lanes, existing, new, or modified ramps, ramp intersections with crossroad) or on the local street network based on both the current and the planned future traffic projections.

All potential Build corridors analyzed showed an increase in predicted crashes (9.5% - 24%). Some of the increase in predicted crashes over a No Build alternative is additional traffic growth predicted by the travel demand model that increased traffic volumes over No Build volumes. The study was also not able to analyze the effects to all affected routes, so changes in crash prediction are focused on mostly higher volume intersections and segments. The analysis also does not incorporate all the facility expansion included in the Town's comprehensive plan.

Interstate operations see some minor decrease in travel speeds and increase in travel time eastbound. Westbound I-70 sees traffic flow is still far below the speed limit, but the reduction is due to spillback queuing from congestion on northbound SR 267. If intersection improvements at SR 267 and Hadley Road reduced queuing and/or reduced/eliminated weaving traffic, I-70 operations would likely see only a minor reduction in average travel speed over the No Build alternative. The new interchange is not predicted to cause significant operational performance reduction.

Policy Point #4:

The proposed access connects to a public road only and will provide for all traffic movements. Less than "full interchanges" may be considered on a case-by-case basis for applications requiring special access for managed lanes (e.g., transit, HOVs, HOT lanes) or park and ride lots. The proposed access will be designed to meet or exceed current standards.

A new access interchange to I-70 would be a full-access interchange allowing all traffic movements. It would connect a future primary arterial regional corridor to I-70 for enhanced regional mobility. The proposed interchange would be designed to meet or exceed current design standards.

Policy Point #5:

The proposal considers and is consistent with local and regional land use and transportation plans. Prior to receiving final approval, all requests for new or revised access must be included in an adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan, in the adopted Statewide or Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (STIP or TIP), and the Congestion Management Process within transportation management areas, as appropriate, and as specified in 23 CFR part 450, and the transportation conformity requirements of 40 CFR parts 51 and 93.

The Town of Plainfield completed a Thoroughfare Plan update in 2019. In both the current and previous Plainfield Thoroughfare Plans and the most recent Plainfield Comprehensive Plan, a new I-70 to US 40 connector corridor and interchange at I-70 was indicated as a way to provide significant improvements to congestion within the Town of Plainfield. This study was charged with building off the Thoroughfare Plan to better define a recommended corridor alignment and interchange location to allow the Town to plan for future improvements. No parts of the corridor or interchange are currently in a TIP or STIP.

Policy Point #6:

In corridors where the potential exists for future multiple interchange additions, a comprehensive corridor or network study must accompany all requests for new or revised access with recommendations that address all of the proposed and desired access changes within the context of a longer-range system or network plan.

Other than the future interchange at the north-south regional connector corridor, currently there are no identified plans from state or local agencies for additional interstate access points between SR 39 and SR 267.

INDOT has planned for an Added Travel Lane (ATL) project on I-70 from where the interstate transitions from 4 to 6 lanes at SR 267 headed west, but exact project limits and/or a detailed project scope are not available at this time. It is anticipated that the ATL project will mimic similar projects along I-65 and add lanes within the median with no major modifications to existing interchanges.

Policy Point #7:

When a new or revised access point is due to a new, expanded, or substantial change in current or planned future development or land use, requests must demonstrate appropriate coordination has occurred between the development and any proposed transportation system improvements.

The need for a future interchange at I-70 and a new north-south regional corridor is not due solely to the planned land use planning west of the current Plainfield town limits. It is a part of the Town's comprehensive plan for accommodating future town growth in both population, land area and local transportation network. A new north-south corridor

connected to I-70 at a new interchange are a part of Plainfield's future transportation system planning.

Policy Point #8:

The proposal can be expected to be included as an alternative in the required environmental evaluation, review and processing. The proposal should include supporting information and current status of the environmental processing.

This study was conducted at a planning level. A detailed alternatives analysis and environmental study will need to be conducted at a future date once funding is secured to recommend a preferred interchange configuration, defined corridor alignment, and assess environmental impacts.