



Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study Report

12/15/25



Prepared By:



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I Introduction

I.1 Background and Study Objectives

ProPEL is an Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) initiative for transportation planning using collaborative Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) studies to consider environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning process. ProPEL studies use collaboration, data-driven analysis, and public engagement to help shape the future of transportation infrastructure.

INDOT completed ProPEL Indy, a PEL study on I-65 and I-70 within I-465 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Analysis and planning activities were conducted in coordination with resource agencies, stakeholders, and the public. Transportation planning documents from the PEL study will shape and inform subsequent project-specific environmental reviews conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

ProPEL Indy was a unique opportunity for Indianapolis residents to envision the future of the urban interstates. This process informs the next 20 years of investment in I-65 and I-70 as INDOT identifies ways to modernize these roads and improve the region's overall mobility, equity, economic opportunity, and quality of life.

The ProPEL Indy study identified a reasonable range of alternatives for the study area. The following actions were taken to achieve this goal:

- Engage the public, stakeholders, and resource agencies throughout the study.
- Identify community goals for the study area.
- Identify transportation needs and purposes.
- Identify and develop alternatives that meet the identified needs and consider community goals.
- Evaluate and eliminate unreasonable alternatives on I-65 and I-70 to carry forward a smaller set of reasonable alternatives into NEPA.
- Document the study process.

This PEL Study Report summarizes the ProPEL Indy study.

I.2 ProPEL Indy Study Area

The ProPEL Indy study limits include approximately 11 miles of I-65, 14 miles of I-70, and 1 mile where I-65 and I-70 overlap. The study limits are broken into the following four “spokes” as an organizational tool. These spokes are shown in **Figure 1** and summarized below:

- **65 Spoke** – From the I-465/I-65 interchange on the northwest side to the 21st Street interchange.
- **65/70 Downtown Spoke** – I-65 from the 21st Street interchange south to Alabama Street (west end of North Split project), I-65/I-70 from Washington Street (south end of North Split project) south to the South Split interchange, and I-70 from just west of the West Street interchange east to the South Split interchange.
- **70 West (W) Spoke** – From the I-465/I-70 interchange on the west side to just west of the West Street interchange.
- **70 East (E) Spoke** – From just west of the Keystone Avenue/Rural Street interchange (east end of North Split project) to the I-465/I-70 interchange on the east side.

The study area includes I-65 and I-70 within the study limits described above and local road segments and intersections that directly influence or are influenced by the interstates.

The study limits extend slightly beyond I-465 and the I-65/I-70 South Split interchange to consider the potential influence of those system interchanges. Otherwise, two federally funded projects recently constructed (I-65/I-70 North Split) or in construction (I-65 Safety and Efficiency) are largely excluded from the study limits.

ProPEL Indy overlaps the I-65 Safety and Efficiency project on the southeast side of Indianapolis, from north of Fletcher Avenue on I-65/I-70 to the South Split interchange ending south of Morris Street along I-65. The remainder of the I-65 Safety and Efficiency project area, which extends south on I-65 to I-465, is excluded from the study limits.

INDOT does not intend to reconstruct I-65 and I-70 within the North Split project area; however, some changes within that area may be necessary to address needs within the adjacent portions of the interstate. The I-65 Safety and Efficiency project will address immediate needs but would not preclude recommendations for future improvements within the ProPEL Indy study area.

I.3 INDOT Study Team

The ProPEL Indy study team included subject matter experts from several INDOT groups, including Major Projects, Traffic Engineering, Environmental Services, Asset Management, and Technical Planning.

I.4 FHWA Coordination

The ProPEL Indy study team coordinated with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on a regular basis throughout the study. Coordination included meetings with FHWA to discuss study progress, recap activities, discuss technical approaches, and address any potential questions or concerns identified by FHWA. FHWA also reviewed and commented on the following technical reports developed during the study:

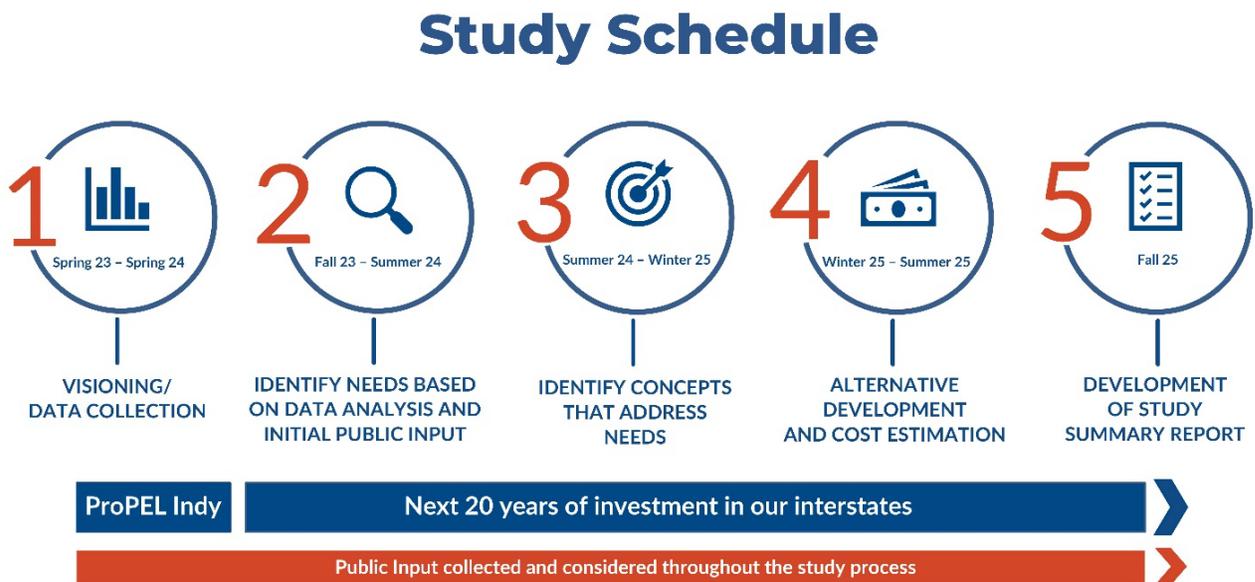
I.5 PEL Study Process Framework

ProPEL Indy included five distinct steps, which are identified in **Table 1** along with a summary of work tasks included in each step. **Figure 2** shows the study steps and schedule.

Table 1. ProPEL Indy Study Steps

| PROCESS | PROCESS STEPS |
|---|---|
| 1. VISION/DATA COLLECTION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify project stakeholders • Review previous studies in corridor • Identify baseline environmental conditions • Identify baseline transportation conditions • Public/stakeholder involvement |
| 2. PURPOSE AND NEED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the transportation needs and draft purpose • Identify community goals • Public/stakeholder involvement |
| 3. UNIVERSE OF CONCEPTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop universe of alternative concepts • Develop screening criteria to evaluate concepts; screening at this step was based on the ability to meet purpose and need and a fatal flaw analysis • Evaluate and screen alternative concepts • Public/stakeholder involvement |
| 4. ALTERNATIVES IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify alternatives • Develop screening criteria to evaluate alternatives; screening at this step was based on the ability to meet purpose and need, environmental impacts, cost, constructability, and ability to meet community goals • Evaluate and screen alternatives • Identify potential environmental impacts • Document the evaluation process • Public/stakeholder involvement |
| 5. PEL STUDY REPORT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop report to summarize and document the process (includes the PEL questionnaire) |

Figure 2. ProPEL Indy Study Process and Schedule



1.6 Planning Context

1.6.1 PEL Process Authority

ProPEL Indy was conducted in accordance with the regulations found at 23 CFR Part 450 (i.e., the Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Regulations). The ProPEL Indy study process was intentionally structured to meet these requirements. See **Table 2** for further information regarding the requirements and where they are addressed in the PEL study report.

Table 2. PEL Indy Study Requirements and Relevant PEL Study Sections

| Requirement | Addressed by the PEL Study? | How was it addressed? | Where to find further information? |
|---|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Involvement of interested state, local, tribal, and federal agencies | YES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource agency coordination meetings held at two points during study. Draft technical reports distributed via email for agency and tribal review. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1.6.4 Section 2.5 Section 3.9 Chapter 5 Appendix H Appendix I Appendix J Appendix K |
| 2. Public review | YES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft technical reports, including purpose and need and alternatives screening reports published for public review and comment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 2.5 Section 3.9 Chapter 5 Appendix H |

| Requirement | Addressed by the PEL Study? | How was it addressed? | Where to find further information? |
|---|-----------------------------|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive public involvement and stakeholder coordination efforts throughout study to keep stakeholders informed and to discuss their questions and concerns. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix I • Appendix J • Appendix K |
| <p>3. Reasonable opportunity to comment during the development of the planning study</p> | <p>YES</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A robust public involvement program was implemented during the study. These efforts included eblasts, social media platforms, Community Office Hours events, attendance at local community fairs and festivals, attendance at neighborhood meetings, Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings, individual stakeholder meetings, as well as in-person and virtual public meetings. • A minimum 30-day comment period was provided on all draft technical reports published for public review and comment. • Draft technical reports published in electronic and hard copy format. Hard copies were placed at public venues within or near the study area during the public comment periods. • Individual responses to public comments were provided as part of the Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summaries. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 2.5 • Section 3.9 • Chapter 5 • Appendix H • Appendix I • Appendix J • Appendix K |
| <p>4. Documentation of relevant decisions in a form that is identifiable and available for review during the NEPA scoping process and can be appended to or referenced in the NEPA document (future step)</p> | <p>YES</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All planning analyses and relevant decisions were published in multiple technical reports and included in PEL study appendices as supporting documentation. These reports were available on the study website, as well as at multiple locations within or near the study area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2 • Chapter 3 • Chapter 4 • Chapter 5 • Chapter 6 |
| <p>5. Review by the FHWA</p> | <p>YES</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination meetings held with FHWA during the duration of the study. • Draft technical reports provided to FHWA for review and comment (see Section 1.4). • Updates made to the technical reports to address FHWA review comments, including responses to all FHWA comments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.4 • Section 5.2 |

I.6.2 Study Area Planning Context

ProPEL Indy relies on information and data from current and previous planning efforts, and the intent is to integrate any future projects or improvements identified by this study into the metropolitan and statewide transportation processes. Coordination with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (IMPO), City of Indianapolis Department of Public Works (DPW), and IndyGo occurred throughout this study.

The *ProPEL Indy Summary of Previous Studies Report* (May 20, 2024) documents previously completed land use plans, transportation plans, and planned transportation projects that influence the study. It summarizes 45 transportation and land use planning documents developed by INDOT, IndyGo, Indy Connect, IMPO, City of Indianapolis/Marion County, neighborhoods, stakeholders, businesses, and universities. The report is available on the ProPEL Indy website: <https://propelindy.com/resources>.

The purpose of the *ProPEL Indy Summary of Previous Studies Report* was to:

- Inform and establish a planning context for the corridor.
- Inform the public and stakeholder outreach process.
- Support the development of the purpose and need for the ProPEL Indy study.
- Inform ProPEL Indy transportation modeling efforts.
- Inform the development of community goals.
- Inform the early phases of the alternative development and screening process.

I.6.3 Regional and Statewide Transportation Plans

I.6.3.1 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The IMPO is responsible for long-range transportation planning for the Indianapolis urbanized area. IMPO's Circle 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) was adopted in December 2024. Regionally significant projects, such as capacity-adding projects, must be identified in the MTP. One project in the MTP overlaps the ProPEL Indy study area — the I-65 Safety & Efficiency project (from I-465 to I-70 SE side). One completed project in the MTP is adjacent to the ProPEL Indy study area — the North Split Interchange Modification. Recommendations from this study will be provided to IMPO to inform future updates/amendments to the MTP. Regionally significant projects that move forward into project development will be proposed for IMPO inclusion in the MTP once funding has been identified.

I.6.3.2 INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan

INDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) (2018-2045 Transportation Needs Report) was adopted in June 2019. This plan is not project specific, rather it identifies priorities over the next 30 years. The LRTP identifies goals to guide improvements to Indiana's transportation system. These goals are safe and secure travel, system preservation, economic vitality, multimodal mobility, environmental responsibility, new technology, and strategic policy actions. The ProPEL Indy purpose and need and community goals are consistent with these LRTP goals. The LRTP includes reconstructing and widening

of I-65 and I-70 from four to six lanes across the state. This is due to deteriorating assets as well as safety and mobility concerns along these major corridors. Both I-65 and I-70 are critical to mobility and economic activity in Indiana. The ProPEL Indy study team will coordinate with the INDOT planning section regarding the next LRTP update and the potential inclusion of the results of this study. The INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan is currently being updated to guide transportation investments through 2050.

1.6.3.3 Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program

IMPO also develops the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP), which is the short-term programming document for the Indianapolis metropolitan planning area. All federally funded transportation projects and regionally significant transportation projects, regardless of funding source, within this area are required to be included in the IRTIP. Projects included in the IRTIP must be consistent with the MTP, which outlines the region's long-term transportation goals and priorities. The IRTIP serves as the short-term implementation tool for advancing those priorities. The most current version of the IRTIP for 2026-2029 was approved on August 28, 2025, as part of the 2026-2029 INDOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The IRTIP is kept current with amendments that add new projects or adjust changing schedules and costs of existing projects. The IRTIP is formally amended up to six times a year to reflect these changes. Large or significant amendments require the approval of the IMPO Transportation Policy Committee. The ProPEL Indy study team is providing periodic briefings to this committee during the study. Any projects recommended from the ProPEL Indy study that move forward into project development will require coordination with IMPO to include in the IRTIP once funding has been identified.

1.6.3.4 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

INDOT's STIP is a five-year planning document that lists all projects to be financed in whole or in part with federal funds and all state-funded projects that are regionally significant. The STIP reflects near-term funding priorities and aligns with the goals outlined in the Long-Range Transportation Plan. The current STIP document covers fiscal years 2026-2029 and was approved on August 25, 2025. The current STIP and the last two previous STIP documents (2022-2026 and 2024-2028) were reviewed for this study. STIP projects address study needs including bridge repair and pavement rehabilitation in addition to capacity and other corridor improvements (lighting, drainage, fiber optics, etc.). All federally funded projects programmed in the IRTIP are also incorporated into the INDOT STIP by reference.

As with the IRTIP, the STIP is used in the ProPEL Indy study to define the future existing roadway network. Since projects listed in the STIP are expected to be completed within five years, they are considered existing in the future conditions analysis of this PEL study. Projects included in the 2024-2028 STIP that fall within the study area are shown in **Appendix E** of the *ProPEL Indy Existing Transportation Conditions Report*. This report also is available on the ProPEL Indy website:

<https://propelindy.com/resources>. The updated 2026–2029 STIP includes several new projects along the study spokes that were not in the previous STIP cycle, which are indicated in **Table 3** below.

Any projects recommended from the ProPEL Indy study that move forward into project development will be included in the STIP once funding has been identified.

1.6.3.5 Programmed Projects

The IRTIP details several committed improvements to the Indianapolis interstate system or cross-streets that will be completed prior to the horizon year of 2050, regardless of the outcome of this study. It is possible some of the programmed projects may address short-term infrastructure condition needs. **Table 3** lists the programmed projects and if ProPEL Indy study needs will be addressed.

Table 3. Programmed Projects along the ProPEL Indy Study Area

| Spoke | Project ID | Sponsor | Project Location | Project Description | Study Needs Addressed |
|--------------------|----------------|---|---|--|--|
| I-65 | 2002581 | INDOT | I-65/I-465 interchange, from 0.35 mile south of I-465 north junction to I-465 north junction | Interchange modification, reconstructing northbound I-65 ramp to northbound I-465 | Improve Mobility |
| | 2002333 | INDOT | I-65, from 5.77 miles south of I-465 south junction to 0.34 mile north of I-865 | Drainage ditch corrections | None |
| | 2200745 et al. | INDOT | I-65, from Crooked Creek to 56 th Street | Bridge deck overlays at the I-65 bridges over Crooked Creek, 38 th Street/Industrial Boulevard, and 56 th Street | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2000050 | INDOT | I-65 at Lafayette Road interchange | Interchange modification | Improve Mobility and Safety |
| | 2400524 | INDOT | Kessler Boulevard bridge over I-65 and 38 th Street, 4.70 miles south of I-465 | Bridge rehabilitation | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2001871 | INDOT | I-65, from 4.17 miles north of I-70 north junction (MLK Jr Street) to 4.54 miles south of I-465 north leg (Kessler Boulevard) | Concrete pavement restoration | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2200883 | INDOT | I-65 bridge over White River, North White River Parkway East Drive, and Central Canal | Bridge rehabilitation | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2201274 | INDOT | I-65 northbound exit ramp and West 30 th Street | Traffic signal modernization | Improve Safety |
| | 2101774 | INDOT | I-65 southbound and 21 st Street entrance and exit ramps | Traffic signal modernization as part of the statewide wrong-way ramp entry initiative | Improve Safety |
| | 2201697 | Indy DPW | 11 th Street, from North Meridian Street to North Delaware Street (entrance ramp to eastbound I-70) | Asphalt resurfacing | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2300852* | INDOT | I-65 northbound bridge over Lafayette Road, 0.48 mile south of I-865 | Bridge deck overlay | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2301687* | INDOT | I-65 from I-65 southbound to 21 st Street, 0.13 mile east of MLK Jr Street exit ramp | Signs, lighting, signals, and markings | None |
| 2400671* | INDOT | I-65/I-465 Interchange, Old US 52 over I-465 | Bridge replacement | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions | |
| I-65/I-70 Downtown | 2101625 | INDOT | CSX railroad bridge over I-65/I-70, 0.3 mile south of East Washington Street | Removal of abandoned bridge | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 1901498 et al. | INDOT | I-65/I-70, from Fletcher Avenue to East Washington Street | Pavement replacement | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 1801413 | IndyGo | East Washington Street | Blue Line corridor construction | Limited Multimodal and Neighborhood Connections |
| | 2201697 | Indy DPW | East Washington Street, from North East Street to Southeastern Avenue | Asphalt resurfacing | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 1400073 | INDOT | I-65 Safety & Efficiency, from 0.20 mile north of I-465 to 0.10 mile north of I-70/I-65 south junction | I-65 Safety & Efficiency, added travel lanes, pavement patching and overlay, and bridge replacement/rehabilitation | Improve Mobility and Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2301223 | INDOT | Morris Street/Prospect Street bridge over I-65 southbound and I-70 eastbound to I-65 southbound ramp | Bridge rehabilitation, including rigid deck overlay and 10-foot sidewalk construction | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2200722 | INDOT | I-65 northbound ramp to westbound I-70, and I-70 eastbound ramp to northbound I-65 | Bridge deck replacements | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2002365* | INDOT | East Street over I-70, 0.38 mile west of I-65 | Bridge thin deck overlay | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2301702* | | I-70, 0.13 mile north of East Morris Street exit ramp from I-70 westbound to Madison Avenue/Meridian Street | Signs, lighting, signals, and markings | Improve Safety |
| 2401269 et al.* | INDOT | I-65, Calvary Street bridge over I-65 southbound and northbound, 0.29 mile north of I-70 | Bridge painting | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions | |
| I-70 West | 2100214 et al. | INDOT | I-70 Eastbound and Westbound, from Reference Post 72 to Reference Post 78 | Concrete pavement restoration including all bridge structures | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2206FFE | Indy DPW | Madison Avenue, from Pleasant Run Parkway North to Ray Street/Eli Lilly | Road diet, remove inside lanes, widen median, and construct 10-foot walkway along the east side | Improve Safety |
| | 2101774 | INDOT | I-70 eastbound and westbound exit ramps to East McCarty Street | Traffic signal modernization as part of the statewide wrong-way ramp entry initiative | Improve Safety |
| | 2201697 | INDOT & Indy DPW | West Street and South Missouri Street, from Morris Street to 11 th Street | Asphalt resurfacing | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2101774 | INDOT | I-70 eastbound and westbound exit ramps to South Harding Street | Traffic signal modernization as part of the statewide wrong-way ramp entry initiative | Improve Safety |
| | 1901481 et al. | INDOT | I-465, from 1.15 miles south of I-70 west junction to 0.77 mile north of I-74 west junction | Concrete pavement restoration and bridge thin deck overlays | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 1801413 | IndyGo | From the Town of Cumberland to the Indianapolis International Airport | Blue Line corridor construction | Limited Multimodal and Neighborhood Connections |
| | 2101072 | INDOT | I-70, from 2.5 miles east of SR 267 (Reagan Parkway/Ameriplex Parkway) to I-465 west leg | Fiber optic replacement | None |
| | 2002365* | INDOT | East Street over I-70, 0.38 mile west of I-65 | Bridge thin deck overlay | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2400811* | INDOT | I-70, from I-465 west leg to the I-65 North Split | Fiber optic replacement | None |
| 2300197 et al.* | INDOT | I-70, 0.22 mile east of I-465 west junction to 5.16 miles east of I-465 west junction | Concrete pavement restoration, bridge paintings, and bridge overlays | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions | |
| I-70 East | 2101070 | INDOT | I-70, from 1.5 miles east of Rural Street/Keystone Avenue to 1 mile east of I-465 | Fiber optic replacement | None |
| | 2201274 | INDOT | I-70 eastbound exit ramp to Rural Street/Keystone Avenue | Traffic signal modernization | Improve Safety |
| | 2100778 | INDOT | I-70, 4.47 miles east of eastbound I-65 split | Small structure replacement | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2101774 | INDOT | I-70 eastbound and westbound exit ramps to Shadeland Avenue | Traffic signal modernization as part of the statewide wrong-way ramp entry initiative | Improve Safety |
| | 2002966 | INDOT | I-465, from I-69 northeast junction to I-65 southeast junction | Final signing along new interstate I-69 | None |
| | 2001925 | INDOT | I-465, from US 31 North to I-70 east junction | Concrete pavement restoration | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 1593135* | INDOT | I-70 Eastbound over Roosevelt Avenue and Commercial Avenue | Bridge thin deck overlay | Deteriorated Bridge and Pavement Conditions |
| | 2401689* | INDOT | I-70 and Roosevelt Avenue, 0.7 mile east of I-65/I-70 interchange | Storm sewer repair or replacement | None |
| 2301689* | INDOT | I-70, 0.18 mile north of East 21 st Street exit ramps from both I-70 eastbound and westbound to Shadeland Avenue | Signs, lighting, signals, and markings | None | |

* Indicates programmed projects included in the 2026-2029 STIP and not previously included in the 2022-2026 or 2024-2028 STIP.

I.6.4 Coordination with Local Planning Agencies

Regular coordination with the IMPO, City of Indianapolis DPW, and IndyGo occurred throughout ProPEL Indy. Coordination meetings to date with these local planning agencies include:

- March 28, 2023 – IMPO Staff
- April 18, 2023 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- April 18, 2023 – IMPO Staff
- June 7, 2023 – IndyGo
- August 7, 2023 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- September 13, 2023 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- January 30, 2024 – IMPO Staff
- February 14, 2024 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- June 5, 2024 – IMPO Technical and Transportation Policy Committees
- July 10, 2024 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- August 2, 2024 – IMPO Staff
- August 29, 2024 – IMPO, City of Indianapolis DPW, Rethink 65/70 Coalition
- September 11, 2024 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- January 8, 2025 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- March 12, 2025 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- July 9, 2025 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- September 10, 2025 – City of Indianapolis DPW
- September 12, 2025 – City of Indianapolis DPW, Rethink 65/70 Coalition
- October 1, 2025 – IMPO Technical Committee
- October 15, 2025 – IMPO Transportation Policy Committee

2 Purpose and Need

2.1 Introduction

The purpose and need statement identifies the transportation problems within the study area and sets the foundation for the development and screening of alternatives. Consistent with the NEPA process, alternatives not meeting the purpose and need were considered unreasonable and not carried forward in this study.

The ProPEL Indy study was data driven and fueled by feedback. A detailed analysis of transportation needs was conducted for the ProPEL Indy study area and is documented in the *ProPEL Indy Existing Transportation Conditions Report*. Feedback from residents, neighborhood groups, commuters, businesses, stakeholders, and local planning agencies helped to identify, confirm, and clarify transportation needs within the study area.

The information contained in this section is summarized from the following documents, which are included as appendices to the PEL study report:

- Appendix D: *ProPEL Indy Existing Transportation Conditions Report*
- Appendix E: *ProPEL Indy Final Purpose and Need Report*
- Appendix H: *Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #1*
- Appendix I: *Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #2*

2.2 Purpose and Need

Table 4 shows the purposes and needs identified for the ProPEL Indy study area.

Table 4. ProPEL Indy Study Purposes and Needs

| Study Need | Study Purpose |
|---|---|
| Deteriorated bridge and pavement condition | Improve bridge and pavement condition |
| Roadway Safety | Improve safety along the interstates by reducing the number and severity of crashes within the study area |
| Roadway Mobility | Improve mobility by reducing congestion or eliminating geometric deficiencies that contribute to congestion |
| Limited Multimodal and Neighborhood Connections | Improve multimodal connectivity across and near the interstates |

2.3 Performance Measures

Performance measures are quantifiable criteria used to measure how well an alternative functions with respect to planning objectives. The study team identified the performance measures shown in **Table 5** to guide the development and evaluation of alternatives.

Table 5. ProPEL Indy Study Purpose and Need Performance Measures

| Study Purpose | Performance Measure |
|---|--|
| STUDY NEED: DETERIORATED BRIDGE AND PAVEMENT CONDITION | |
| Improve bridge and pavement condition | Improve deficient pavement condition |
| | Improve deficient bridge condition |
| STUDY NEED: ROADWAY SAFETY | |
| Improve safety along the interstates by reducing the number and severity of crashes within the study area | Eliminate or improve geometric deficiencies contributing to higher crash rates |
| | Reduce crash rates and/or severity |
| | Reduce congestion and reduce congestion-related crashes* |

| Study Purpose | Performance Measure |
|---|---|
| STUDY NEED: ROADWAY MOBILITY | |
| Improve mobility by reducing congestion or eliminating geometric deficiencies that contribute to congestion | Improve interstate operations over No-Build condition |
| | Provide interstate access for visitors and commuters* |
| STUDY NEED: LIMITED MULTIMODAL AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS | |
| Improve multimodal connectivity across and near the interstates | Improve existing pedestrian/bicycle connectivity across or near the interstates |
| | Accommodate future planned pedestrian/bicycle connections |
| | Provide new pedestrian/bicycle connectivity across or near the interstates |
| | Improve connectivity to existing bus stop locations near the interstates |

*Performance measure added after publication of the *ProPEL Indy Final Purpose and Need Report*.

2.4 Community Goals

Community goals guide the development and screening of potential alternatives along with other factors that are more quantifiable, such as transportation performance, environmental impacts, benefits, and cost.

The term “needs” has special meaning in PEL and in NEPA, referring to conditions that must be addressed for an alternative to be carried forward and implemented. Community goals represent overarching outcomes that are desirable but not specifically required of a study or project.

Community goals were identified primarily through public and stakeholder feedback and are grouped within four study pillars: quality of life and livability, economic growth and opportunity, transportation and mobility, and transportation for all. Community goals are shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6. ProPEL Indy Study Pillars and Community Goals

| Pillar | Community Goal |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Quality of Life and Livability | Goal #1 - Identify community enhancements that improve the quality of life of adjacent neighborhoods. This could include improving or adding lighting; reducing visual, noise, and air pollution impacts; providing wayfinding and points of interest signage; landscaping; and considering placemaking opportunities. |
| | Goal #2 - Avoid and/or minimize impacts to the natural and human environment. |

| Pillar | Community Goal |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Economic Growth and Opportunity | Goal #1 - Provide transportation infrastructure to support local, regional, and statewide economic development goals. |
| | Goal #2 - Ensure efficient and reliable transportation to support the visitor experience, enhancing Indianapolis as a world-class destination for economic and cultural activities. |
| Transportation and Mobility | Goal #1 - Support emerging technologies and related infrastructure, such as electric and autonomous vehicles, and consider the role technology could play in incident management, speed enforcement, and emergency response. |
| | Goal #2 - Consider the Indianapolis MPO's Central Indiana Regional Resiliency Snapshot, and transportation goals in the Indianapolis THRIVE plan. This should include highly vulnerable transportation assets during alternative development. |
| Transportation for All | Goal #1 - Actively engage stakeholders who use, cross, work, or live near the interstates throughout the study to provide input into decision-making. |
| | Goal #2 - Provide accessible, fair, safe, affordable, reliable, and sustainable mobility along and across the interstates for community members based on identified needs and input received. This includes consideration of pedestrian, bicycle, transit, ride-hailing apps, or other modes of transportation. |

2.5 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

Nine Community Conversations (public information meetings), 24 stakeholder meetings, and one Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting were held during the Visioning and Data Collection phase of the study. A virtual, on-demand meeting was also available on the study website during the Visioning and Data Collection phase. These meetings were used to solicit input from the public regarding the interstate corridors, including location-specific concerns regarding safety and/or operations and connectivity. The input collected from these meetings was used to develop the study area purpose and need statement and community goals.

The study team published the *ProPEL Indy Draft Purpose and Need Report* for public and agency review on May 20, 2024, and the public comment period extended through June 30, 2024. Additionally, the report was distributed to federal, state, and local resources agencies as well as the tribal nations for review and comment. Four Community Conversations, 14 stakeholder meetings, and one Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting were held in the study area during the public comment period. A virtual, on-demand meeting was also available on the study website during the purpose and need comment period.

A virtual resource agency meeting was held on June 14, 2024. Comments from resource agencies were requested on or before June 30, 2024.

After considering the comments received from the public, agencies, and tribes, the *ProPEL Indy Final Purpose and Need Report* was published December 6, 2024.

Please see **Chapter 5** for further information regarding public involvement and agency coordination efforts related to purpose and need development.

3 Existing Environment

3.1 Introduction

This section summarizes the likely environmental resources within the ProPEL Indy study area. An *Environmental Constraints Report* was prepared early in the study to identify key resources, avoid fatal flaws, and account for sensitive environmental areas during alternatives development and evaluation. To identify social, economic, and environmental constraints within the study area, information was collected through online database searches, imagery analysis, Google maps (<http://maps.google.com>), desktop geographic information analysis (GIS), limited field reconnaissance of the study area, and coordination with local planning agencies. The GIS data utilized was from various agencies affiliated with the State of Indiana, the Indiana Geographic Information Office (IGIO), the City of Indianapolis and Marion County, the HNTB Community Intelligence Toolkit, and the US Department of Homeland Security HIFLD GeoPlatform, each of which collect data from a myriad of sources. Information was also obtained from the public involvement, stakeholder input, and resource agency coordination conducted as part of the ProPEL Indy study.

A study area of 0.5 mile from the corridor centerline in all directions was utilized to identify environmental constraints, and demographic data was collected within a 1-mile buffer of the spoke centerlines. Exceptions to the half-mile study area are airports (20,000-foot (or 3.8-mile) buffer); sensitive populations (Marion County); and noise sensitive areas (500 feet from the edge of travel lanes per INDOT noise policy).

The information contained in this section is summarized from the *ProPEL Indy Final Environmental Constraints Report* (**Appendix C**). Additional details and mapping of environmental resources can be found in **Appendix C**. All resources identified in the report will be revisited during subsequent NEPA reviews for any future project(s) that may result from ProPEL Indy.

3.2 Land Use and Socioeconomics

The ProPEL Indy study area is within an urban area, and it is mostly contained within the City of Indianapolis incorporated limits. The built environment along the ProPEL Indy corridor consists of urban development with mixed residential, commercial, and industrial uses, but it also includes suburban areas as well as very limited agricultural uses.

Within the study area, the 65, 65/70, 70 E, and 70 W Spokes are classified as “Interstate” roadways. These freeway facilities are characterized by full control of access and high design speeds. All four spokes are part of the National Highway System (NHS) and the National Truck Network (NTN) and

therefore have a national significance, as defined by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The 65, 65/70 Downtown, and 70 W Spokes are primarily six-lane urban highways with paved shoulders separated by a concrete median barrier. A three-lane collector-distributor parallels I-65 in each direction at the 38th Street/West Kessler Boulevard interchange. A similar collector-distributor system exists parallel to I-70 at the Shadeland Avenue and I-465 interchange on the east side. The 70 E Spoke is primarily an eight-lane urban highway with paved shoulders also separated by a concrete median barrier. An in-depth summarization and analysis of the existing transportation conditions are provided in the *ProPEL Indy Existing Transportation Conditions Report*.

Socioeconomic considerations and constraints were analyzed using a variety of tools to identify potential sensitive populations throughout the study area. This data was used by the study team to adapt its outreach methods and ensure meaningful engagement.

Demographic data was also analyzed to give an overall picture of the populations within and traveling through the region. Information was obtained from the US Census Bureau's (USCB's) American Community Survey (ACS) 2010 and 2020 five-year estimates to identify recent and future population trends. Total population in the state of Indiana has grown and is projected to continue to do so. Populations within Marion County have grown at a comparable rate, but slightly higher, to the overall state growth between 2000 and 2020, and the future projected growth is about 2.67% higher than the projected growth for the state.

The total populations in Central Indiana, which includes Marion County and the eight surrounding counties, have generally increased, with some counties seeing nominal growth, while others, such as Hamilton and Hendricks counties, have seen substantial growth. All of these surrounding counties are projected to see population growth from 2020 to 2050 except for Shelby County. Of the Central Indiana counties, Marion County is the only county projected to have consistent future population growth projections as seen historically through population trends, changing from 11.26% to 10.59%. The remaining counties are projected to have a more substantial decrease in total population growth over the coming decades. According to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the surrounding counties provide almost a quarter of the workforce in Marion County, which is determined through commuting patterns. Overall, the growth in the Central Indiana region has tended to be Hoosier transplants versus out-of-state transplants and largely consists of young adults. The substantial population growth projections in Hamilton and Hendricks counties are largely attributed to suburban sprawl, with Marion County residents moving to these areas.

Aerial photography, GIS data (including US Geological Survey (USGS) Topographic Maps), and information from publicly available community plans were utilized to identify types of land use, infrastructure, and community facilities that currently exist within the study area. Infrastructure in the study area is summarized in **Table 7**.

Table 7. Infrastructure - Study Area

| Infrastructure | Study Spoke | | | | Total |
|---|-------------|----------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 65 | 65/70 Downtown | 70 W | 70 E | |
| Major Utilities: Underground Pipelines | 9 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 17 ¹ |
| Major Utilities: Electric Transmission Line | 10 | 14 | 13 | 5 | 37 ¹ |
| Railroads | 3 | 8 | 15 | 6 | 28 ¹ |
| Airports ² | 13 | 11 | 13 | 11 | 19 ¹ |

Source: US Department of Homeland Security HIFLD GeoPlatform, INDOT & Federal Railroad Administration GIS Data, IGIO

¹The total shown does not sum from the spoke columns because several resources are located within the limits of the buffer at more than one spoke and are reported accurately in each spoke column.

²Airport data is reported within a 3.8-mile (20,000-foot) buffer of each spoke.

There are 355 community facilities in the study area. These facilities include schools, places of worship, cemeteries, public services, and recreational facilities that serve the residents and businesses in the study area. Infrastructure in the study area is summarized in **Table 8**.

Table 8. Community Facilities - Study Area

| Infrastructure | | Study Spoke | | | | Study Area Total |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|------|------|------------------|
| | | 65 | 65/70 Downtown | 70 W | 70 E | |
| Education Facilities | | 13 | 14 | 6 | 10 | 43 |
| Places of Worship | | 50 | 39 | 23 | 34 | 146 |
| Cemeteries | | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Public Services | Hospitals | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | Fire Stations/EMS | 3 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 10 |
| | Police Stations | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| | Libraries | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| Recreation | Managed Lands | 15 | 17 | 6 | 10 | 48 |
| | Recreational Facilities | 15 | 15 | 9 | 10 | 49 |
| | Trails | 25 | 12 | 3 | 3 | 43 |

Source: US Department of Homeland Security HIFLD GeoPlatform, State of Indiana, IGIO, and City of Indianapolis & Marion County GIS Data

3.3 Natural Resources

The natural environment within the study area is characterized by surface waters (e.g., rivers, lakes, wetlands), floodplains, and various natural habitats. Data was gathered from aerial imagery, field surveys, and various federal and state environmental and geospatial databases, including from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the USGS. Because many natural resources are regulated, project activities may require coordination with resource agencies, including agency approvals or permits. This coordination will be part of the NEPA review process for any proposed projects advanced from the ProPEL Indy study.

Water resources near the study area were identified using a 150-foot buffer around the spokes. These resources are summarized in **Table 9**.

Table 9. Water Resources - Study Area

| Water Resources | Study Spoke | | | | Total |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|------|------|----------------|
| | 65 | 65/70 Downtown | 70 W | 70 E | |
| Wetlands | 65 | 3 | 14 | 16 | 98 |
| INDOT Mitigation Sites | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Streams and Rivers | 127 | 12 | 95 | 102 | 336 |
| IDEM 303(d) Impaired Streams | 17 | 8 | 15 | 12 | 52 |
| Special Status Stream/River | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 ¹ |
| Historic Canal Route | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 ¹ |
| Floodplains | 89 | 12 | 31 | 40 | 172 |
| Lakes | 65 | 3 | 14 | 16 | 98 |
| Source Water Assessment Area | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Wellhead Protection Area | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 ¹ |

Source: State of Indiana, IGIO, USFWS, USGS, and National Park Service (NPS)

Within the ProPEL Indy study area, the landscape is a blend of dense wildlife habitat and urban environments. Natural habitats primarily consist of maintained grasslands, forested areas, and various water bodies. The most ecologically rich zones are found along forested riparian corridors, including those surrounding the White River, Fall Creek, Pleasant Run, Eagle Creek, Pogue’s Run, and Brookside Creek. These corridors, along with wetlands, support a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic species. Large, forested areas such as Eagle Creek Park, the Nina Mason Pulliam EcoLab, Crown Point Cemetery,

¹The Total shown does not sum from the spoke because several resources are located within the limits of the buffer at more than one spoke and are reported accurately in each spoke column.

Seerley Creek Park, Brookside Park, and Pogue’s Run Art and Nature Park offer particularly robust habitats. Beyond these denser natural areas, wildlife also thrives in smaller parks, wooded patches, and residential neighborhoods throughout the city, demonstrating the adaptability of species to both natural and urbanized settings.

The Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center identifies a range of endangered, threatened, or rare (ETR) species and high-quality natural communities in Marion County, with detailed listings available online. According to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), 13 federally listed species may occur in the county, including mollusks, an insect, and mammals. Additionally, 35 state-listed species are documented, along with 27 others considered extirpated, of special concern, or on watch lists.

A 2024 environmental assessment by IDNR noted 19 state-listed species within a half-mile of the ProPEL Indy spokes, including reptiles, birds, mussels, a mammal, and an insect, with special attention recommended for Kirtland’s snakes near the 65 and 70 W spokes.

A half-mile bat review, which looks at confidential USFWS GIS layers for potential records for both the northern long-eared bat and the Indiana bat, was conducted by INDOT for the ProPEL Indy study area. No reports within the database indicated the presence of any endangered bat species in or within a half-mile of the study area. However, the USFWS IPaC tool identified eight federally protected species potentially present, including the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, tricolored bat, whooping crane, and monarch butterfly. While not all are currently protected under the Endangered Species Act, their status could change. The IPaC tool also flagged 17 migratory bird species of concern, including bald and golden eagles, which are protected under additional federal laws. Any future projects advancing from the ProPEL Indy study will require further coordination with the USFWS during the NEPA review process.

3.4 Cultural Resources

Information on previously identified above-ground and archaeological cultural resources that are listed in or potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) was collected from previous studies. Further consideration of cultural resources will occur, as needed, as part of the subsequent NEPA review for any reasonable alternatives for programmed projects advanced from the ProPEL Indy study. Formal determinations of National Register eligibility would occur in the future during the Section 106 process, and additional properties that may be eligible could be identified at that time.

Above-ground cultural resources were identified using the Indiana Historic Buildings, Bridges, and Cemeteries (IHBBC) Map and the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory (IHSSI), along with INDOT’s Cultural Resources Office data. These include properties listed in the NRHP, the Indiana Register, and those rated as “Outstanding” or “Notable” in the IHSSI. A total of 402 above-ground resources were identified, including three National Historic Landmarks, 104 NRHP-listed properties,

and numerous others potentially eligible for listing. Most are concentrated in the 65/70 Downtown Spoke area.

Local historic designations were provided by the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC), which identified 13 locally designated properties and districts, all within the 65/70 Downtown Spoke.

The Central Canal, a historic route originally intended to connect major waterways, is also recognized as an Outstanding-rated resource.

The results of the ProPEL Indy study above-ground resources identification are shown in **Table 10** and the *Above-Ground Cultural Resources Identification Memorandum*, which is included as a part of the *ProPEL Indy Final Environmental Constraints Report (Appendix C)*.

Table 10. Above-Ground Resources - Study Area

| Above-Ground Resources | Study Spoke | | | | Total |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------|------|------|-------|
| | 65 | 65/70 Downtown | 70 W | 70 E | |
| National Historic Landmarks | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| NRHP and Indiana Register Listed | 19 | 76 | 2 | 1 | 98 |
| Outstanding in IHSSI | 28 | 106 | 1 | 0 | 135 |
| Notable in IHSSI | 36 | 95 | 1 | 3 | 135 |
| Historic Bridges | 5 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 12 |
| IHPC Designations | 0 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 13 |

Source: INDOT-CRO Public Web Map, IHSSI, NRHP, and IHPC

Additionally, there are 21 Hoosier Homestead farms in Marion County, recognized for continuous family ownership of over 100 years.

Archaeological resources were identified through a records check, revealing 47 previously recorded sites within the study area. Most have not been formally assessed for NRHP eligibility. These findings are intended for planning purposes, with formal evaluations to occur during future Section 106 reviews under NEPA.

3.5 Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Resources

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the use of certain public and historic lands for federally funded transportation facilities unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. The law applies to significant public owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges, and NRHP-eligible or listed historic properties regardless of ownership. Lands subject to this law are considered Section 4(f) resources. Forty-eight managed lands, 49 recreational facilities (including playgrounds and schoolyards), and 43 trails are potential Section 4(f) properties identified within the study area. Note, several of the managed lands and recreational facilities coincide with the same resources, and several of the managed lands coincide with school properties. Additionally, Section 4(f) protects historic sites either listed in the NRHP, eligible to be listed in the NRHP, or of state and local significance, regardless of public ownership. These resources are described in the Cultural Resources section above.

The US Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 established the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which was created to preserve, develop, and assure accessibility to outdoor recreation resources. Section 6(f) of this act prohibits conversion of lands purchased with LWCF monies to a non-recreational use. A review of the Section 6(f) properties on the INDOT Environmental Services Division website revealed a total of 24 properties in Marion County. There are three lands with LWCF funding adjacent to the 65 Spoke, including two program grants associated with Eagle Creek Park and one associated with the Major Taylor Velodrome and Lake Sullivan.

3.6 Air Quality

The ProPEL Indy study area, located within Marion County, Indiana, intersects several air quality maintenance zones. Specifically:

- **Ozone:** Marion County is designated as a maintenance area under the 1997 8-hour Ozone standard. Although this standard was revoked in 2015, conformity evaluations are still required due to the 2018 *South Coast Air Quality Management District v. EPA* decision.
- **Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂):** Center and Wayne townships within Marion County are maintenance areas for the 1-hour SO₂ standard.
- **Carbon Monoxide (CO):** A limited maintenance area for CO exists in downtown Indianapolis, bounded by 11th Street (north), Capitol Avenue (west), Georgia Street (south), and Delaware Street (east).

Further air quality analysis will be conducted during subsequent NEPA reviews for any reasonable alternatives advanced from the ProPEL Indy study. This will include determining whether exemptions from air quality analysis apply under 40 CFR Part 93.126.

3.7 Noise

A preliminary analysis was conducted for the ProPEL Indy study to identify potential noise-sensitive areas along the I-65 and I-70 corridors. The study identified:

- 59 Common Noise Environments (CNEs) within the study area.
- 39 CNEs were flagged for further investigation due to sufficient residential or community density, indicating that noise abatement measures may be feasible and reasonable in future projects.

This initial screening was based on proximity to the interstate and land use characteristics. However, formal noise modeling and analysis in accordance with 23 CFR 772 will not be completed during the PEL study. Instead, it will be conducted during subsequent NEPA reviews for any reasonable alternatives advanced from the ProPEL Indy study.

The findings will help guide future planning and community engagement, especially in areas where noise impacts may be a concern.

3.8 Hazardous Materials and Regulated Substances

The federal government regulates hazardous materials under multiple statutes including the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) and their respective amendments. The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) maintains an online database of regulated sites and facilities; resource information was additionally derived from the IDEM Virtual File Cabinet (VFC). Hazardous materials include substances or materials determined by the USEPA to be capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, or property, such as asbestos, lead-based paint, heavy metals, dry-cleaning solvents, and common fuels. Typically, sites with potential for hazardous materials exist at or near facilities that generate, store, or dispose of these substances, or at locations of past releases or leaks of these substances, such as gas stations or industrial sites.

An evaluation of GIS data and publicly available records identified approximately 1,347 sites within the study area that may involve hazardous materials or regulated substances. These sites are distributed throughout the corridor, with a notably higher concentration in the 65/70 Downtown Spoke and in areas characterized by heavy commercial and industrial activity along the 65, 70 West, and 70 East Spokes. **Table 11** outlines the types of resources and the number of facilities that could potentially affect the study area.

Table II. Hazardous Materials and Regulated Substances - Study Area

| Hazardous Material Resources | Study Spoke | | | | Total |
|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|------|------|-------|
| | 65 | 65/70 Downtown | 70 W | 70 E | |
| RCRA Generator/TSD | 17 | 37 | 25 | 21 | 100 |
| State Cleanup Sites | 7 | 22 | 6 | 6 | 41 |
| Superfund | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| USTs | 25 | 84 | 44 | 39 | 192 |
| LUSTs | 37 | 57 | 55 | 49 | 198 |
| Voluntary Remediation Program | 4 | 8 | 11 | 5 | 28 |
| Manufactured Gas Plant | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Waste Transfer Station | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Infectious/Medical Waste Site | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Tire Waste Site | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Institutional Controls | 62 | 140 | 54 | 69 | 325 |
| NPDES Facilities | 29 | 82 | 60 | 44 | 215 |
| NPDES Pipe Locations | 14 | 22 | 20 | 16 | 72 |
| Landfill Boundaries | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Brownfields | 26 | 109 | 10 | 24 | 169 |

Source: US Department of Homeland Security HIFLD GeoPlatform

A total of 95 hazardous material resources, which includes underground storage tanks (USTs), leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs), an infectious/medical waste site, institutional controls, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Services (NPDES) facilities, NPDES pipe locations, landfills, and brownfield sites, are mapped directly adjacent to the interstates. Any transportation improvements recommended as part of the study would require further investigation into IDEM’s VFC to determine potential impacts.

3.9 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

The study team published the *ProPEL Indy Draft Environmental Constraints Report* to the study website on May 20, 2024. Additionally, the report was distributed to federal, state, and local resource agencies for review and comment. A virtual resource agency and cultural resources stakeholder coordination

meeting was held on June 14, 2024. Comments from resource agencies were requested on or before June 30, 2024. After considering the comments received, the *ProPEL Indy Final Environmental Constraints Report* was published December 6, 2024.

As a result of this coordination, the final report was updated to include additional data on threatened and endangered species, new information on Source Water Assessment and Wellhead Protection Areas, and expanded details on local historic resource designations. This collaborative process ensured that the report reflects community concerns and agency input, laying the groundwork for future NEPA reviews and project development.

Please see **Chapter 5** for further information regarding public involvement and agency coordination efforts related to the development of the environmental constraints report.

4 Alternatives and Development

4.1 Introduction

The ProPEL Indy study used a two-step screening process to identify reasonable alternatives that address the identified transportation needs and goals of the study area.

Step 1: The *ProPEL Indy Universe of Concepts Report* documented the first step of the alternatives development and screening process. In this step, concepts that may address the transportation needs identified in the *ProPEL Indy Purpose and Need Report* were defined at a broad level of detail. These transportation improvement concepts were not location-specific and could potentially be implemented throughout the study limits. The concepts were reviewed to confirm their potential to meet study needs and determine if there were known fatal flaws. Concepts not satisfying screening criteria were eliminated.

Step 2: The *ProPEL Indy Alternatives Identification and Screening Report* documented the second step of the alternatives development and screening process. In this step, concepts from the *ProPEL Indy Universe of Concepts Report* are pieced together to form planning-level alternatives along each spoke. These alternatives are quantitatively and qualitatively evaluated based on their ability to meet the study purpose and need, environmental impacts, cost, constructability, and ability to meet community goals.

The planning-level alternatives carried forward from the alternatives screening may be reasonable alternatives to be advanced into subsequent NEPA studies. It is not INDOT's intention to advance alternatives eliminated from further consideration in this study into subsequent NEPA studies.

The following subsections summarize each screening report, including alternatives considered, evaluation process, results, as well as the associated public involvement and agency coordination

completed with each screening step. The information contained in these subsections is summarized from the following documents, which are included as appendices to the PEL study report:

- Appendix F: *ProPEL Indy Final Universe of Concepts Report*
- Appendix G: *ProPEL Indy Final Alternatives Identification and Screening Report*
- Appendix H: *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #1 (Visioning)*
- Appendix I: *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #2 (Purpose and Need)*
- Appendix J: *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #3 (Universe of Concepts)*
- Appendix K: *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #4 (Alternatives Identification and Screening)*

4.2 Summary of Universe of Concepts Screening

As part of the Universe of Concepts screening, 24 transportation improvement concepts, including the No-Build concept, were considered for the ProPEL Indy study area. These concepts were derived from previous studies, agency and public input received to date, and study needs documented in the *ProPEL Indy Final Purpose and Need Report*. These concepts were qualitatively evaluated against the study area purpose and need, as well as evaluated against fatal flaw screening criteria.

In addition to transportation improvement concepts, potential design toolbox improvements that address quality of life concerns were identified through coordination with the public and stakeholders. Design toolbox improvements are not considered as stand-alone concepts; instead, they may be used in conjunction with concepts and include elements such as wayfinding signage, gateway elements, lighting improvement, pavement markings, landscaping, and aesthetic design packages. Design toolbox improvements could address community goals and were carried forward for further consideration.

Ten concepts that did not meet any of the study area needs and/or were determined to fail one or more of the fatal flaw criteria were eliminated from further consideration.

Fourteen concepts were found to meet one or more of the study area needs with no fatal flaws identified at that stage of screening. These concepts were advanced into the *ProPEL Indy Alternatives Identification and Screening Report* and the next level of screening for further refinement and evaluation. These 14 concepts may be implemented individually at a specific location or used in combinations to meet the identified transportation needs or community goals.

Table 12 summarizes the Universe of Concepts screening results.

Table 12. Universe of Concepts Screening Results

| Concept Type | # | Concept | Advance to Next Level of Screening |
|--|----|--|------------------------------------|
| Interstate Modification Concepts | 1 | No-Build | ✓ |
| | 2 | Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials | ✓ |
| | 3 | Address Geometric Deficiencies | ✓ |
| | 4 | Auxiliary/C-D Lanes | ✓ |
| | 5 | Interstate Access Modifications | ✓ |
| | 6 | Interchange Improvements | ✓ |
| | 7 | Added Travel Lanes | ✓ |
| Major Interstate Reconstruction Concepts | 8 | Viaduct | ✓ |
| | 9 | Recessed Roadway | ✓ |
| | 10 | Tunnel | ✗ |
| | 11 | Signature Bridge | ✓ |
| Traffic Management Concepts | 12 | Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) | ✓ |
| | 13 | Managed Lanes | ✓ |
| | 14 | Reroute Through Traffic to I-465 | ✗ |
| System-Level Interstate Concepts | 15 | Remove Segment(s) of Interstate | ✗ |
| | 16 | Add Interstate Spur | ✗ |
| | 17 | Parallel Route | ✗ |
| Local System Roadway Concepts | 18 | Local Mobility/Connectivity Improvements | ✓ |
| | 19 | Local Road Intersection Improvements | ✓ |
| | 20 | Railroad Crossing Improvements | ✗ |
| Strategies Independent of INDOT | 21 | Bus Transit | ✗ |
| | 22 | Passenger Rail | ✗ |
| | 23 | On-Demand Transportation Service | ✗ |
| | 24 | Increased Freight Rail Service | ✗ |

4.3 Summary of Alternatives Identification and Screening

4.3.1 Alternatives Identification

Fourteen concepts from the Universe of Concepts screening were carried forward for evaluation. These concepts may be implemented individually at specific locations or combined to form alternatives to meet the identified transportation needs or community goals.

The alternatives identification was a three-step process:

- Apply decision trees to both interstate segments and interchanges to identify concepts to address identified needs.
- Group the concepts into alternatives using the output from Step 1.
- Develop and refine conceptual layouts for each alternative.

Concepts identified through the decision tree process were combined to create planning-level alternatives for each spoke. Generally, alternatives are developed by selecting a concept that is expected to address most of the needs for a specific location on the spoke, then pairing it with other concepts to address the remaining needs of the spoke.

The following considerations were used to develop the alternatives:

- **No-Build:** All spokes include the No-Build alternative. This alternative does include preventive maintenance activities to preserve the assets. It is included as a benchmark to which all alternatives will be compared. The existing conditions regarding study needs are described in the *ProPEL Indy Existing Transportation Conditions Report*.
- **Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials:** All spokes include the Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials alternative. This alternative replaces existing bridges and pavement without altering the geometry or interstate access. Existing substandard shoulder widths, where currently present, would remain and a design exception(s) would be obtained. The cost of this alternative provides a point of comparison for alternatives that address additional study needs. Example projects could include replacing portions of a spoke or portions of infrastructure such as bridge decks.
- **Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials Plus:** This alternative includes the Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials alternative plus minor, low-impact improvements to improve safety and traffic operations.
- **Added Travel Lanes:** All spokes include the Added Travel Lanes alternative on at least portions of the spoke. The Added Travel Lanes concept adds a permanent travel lane to both directions of I-65 and I-70 in locations where design year operations are unacceptable.

- **Dynamic Shoulder Lanes:** The Dynamic Shoulder Lanes alternative is included on portions of I-65 and I-70 in locations where design year operations are unacceptable and space to add travel lanes is limited. Dynamic Shoulder Lanes use a widened roadway shoulder to provide additional capacity during peak commute periods.
- **Reversible Lane:** The Reversible Lane alternative is included on portions of I-65 and I-70 where capacity is needed to reduce congestion, but constraints and directional traffic volumes allow for a novel solution. This would be like the reversible lanes on Fall Creek Parkway on the northeast side of Indianapolis but with a concrete barrier between opposing lanes of traffic.
- **Recessed Interstate:** The Recessed Interstate alternative is included in specific areas along the spokes to separate interstate traffic from the at-grade street network. Where the interstate is fully recessed, sight lines and connectivity would be improved across the interstate. The Recessed alternative can be paired with other concepts to also address safety and traffic operational needs.
- **Viaduct:** The Viaduct alternative is included in specific areas along the spokes to separate interstate traffic from the at-grade street network. This structure would rise approximately 45 to 65 feet above street level—significantly higher than typical bridge elevations of 20 to 25 feet. This increased height strikes a balance between design functionality and visual appeal, allowing for a more open and connected environment beneath the structure. The added clearance provides opportunities for green space, natural light, and enhanced pedestrian access—features often lacking under standard-height bridges, which can cast dark shadows and create visual and physical barriers between opposite sides of the freeway. The Viaduct alternative can be paired with other concepts to also address safety and traffic operational needs.
- **Interchange Improvements and Interstate Access Changes:** Interchange improvements and interstate access changes are included with multiple alternatives.
- **Adjacent Spokes:** Alternatives in adjacent spokes will ultimately need to be designed to tie into the existing conditions. This is generally considered during alternative development but will need to be considered further during future project development.
- **Downtown Spoke:** The Downtown Spoke is divided into three sub-spokes: 65 Downtown, which includes I-65 from the 21st Street interchange to Alabama Street (west end of North Split project); 65/70 Downtown, which includes I-65/I-70 from Washington Street south and the South Split interchange; and 70 Downtown, which includes I-70 from just west of the West Street interchange east to the South Split interchange. This division allows a comparison of different alternatives in those areas.

- **North Split Interchange:** The North Split interchange project area is excluded from the ProPEL Indy study; however, some alternatives may include slight changes to the interchange to connect with adjacent improvements or to enhance safety and traffic operations.

Development of the alternatives was an interactive process involving traffic analysis and conceptual design. These two processes informed each other to refine each alternative. Operational traffic analysis of the study area was used to inform the conceptual layouts by establishing design parameters such as the number of lanes required for interstates, ramps, and local streets; traffic signal locations and operations; and turn-lane needs at intersections. Conceptual layouts for each alternative were used to establish a high-level estimation of the improvement limits, determine potential impacts, and provide approximate material quantities to determine a cost estimate. Conceptual layouts were developed from a combination of existing aerial photography and available LiDAR data for the State of Indiana. This information was used in CAD software to produce conceptual layouts of each alternative. The design process was guided by INDOT design criteria and preferences.

Alternatives were identified for each spoke, with the 65 Spoke having the most at seven alternatives. These alternatives are listed below.

65 Spoke

- Alternative 0: No-Build
- Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials (RMM)
- Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials Plus (RMM Plus)
- Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes (ATL)
- Alternative 4: Dynamic Shoulder Lanes (DSL)
- Alternative 5: Reversible Lane (Reversible)
- Alternative 6: Recessed Lanes (Recessed)
- Alternative 7: Viaduct (Viaduct)

65 Downtown Spoke

- Alternative 0: No-Build
- Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials (RMM)
- Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials with I-65 and West Street Interchange Improvements (RMM + I-65/West St)
- Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes (ATL)
- Alternative 4: Recessed with I-65 and West Street Interchange Improvements (Recessed + I-65/West St)
- Alternative 5: Viaduct with I-65 and West Street Interchange Improvements (Viaduct + I-

65/West St)

65/70 Downtown Spoke

- Alternative 0: No-Build
- Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials (RMM)
- Alternative 2: Rebuild Modern Design/Materials with Low Impact South Split Interchange Improvements (Low Impact South Split)
- Alternative 3: South Split Interchange Improvements (South Split)

70 Downtown Spoke

- Alternative 0: No-Build
- Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials (RMM)
- Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials Plus (RMM Plus)
- Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes (ATL)
- Alternative 4: Added Travel Lanes and Local Roads (ATL + Local Roads)
- Alternative 5: Recessed (Recessed)
- Alternative 6: Viaduct (Viaduct)

70 West Spoke

- Alternative 0: No-Build
- Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials (RMM)
- Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials Plus (RMM Plus)
- Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes (ATL)
- Alternative 4: Viaduct and Dynamic Shoulder Lanes (Viaduct + DSL)
- Alternative 5: Reversible Lane (Reversible)

70 East Spoke

- Alternative 0: No-Build
- Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials (RMM)
- Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials Plus (RMM Plus)
- Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes (ATL)
- Alternative 4: Dynamic Shoulder Lanes (DSL)

4.3.2 Planning Principles and Design Toolbox

Some future project components cannot be fully defined at this stage of planning but will be important to optimize the achievement of project purpose and need and to meet community goals. Establishing planning principles for connectivity and placemaking and a design toolbox at the outset allows these factors to be considered in future projects.

4.3.2.1 Neighborhood and Connectivity Planning Principles

Planning principles are proposed to help inform future design decisions in projects along I-65 and I-70 within the study limits. Potential planning principles to improve multimodal connectivity across and near I-65 and I-70 include:

- **Appropriate Design and Consideration of Local Plans** – Incorporate appropriate-scaled sidewalks, crosswalks, and on-street bicycle facilities (where existing or are planned) at all interchanges, underpasses, and bridges. Project design should consider planned connections in the following City, IndyGo, and IMPO plans:
 - Indy Greenways Full Circle Master Plan
 - Central Indiana Transit Plan
 - Indy Moves Transportation Plan
 - IMPO Regional Active Transportation Plan
- **Greenway System** - Indianapolis has an extensive system of nearly 250 miles of constructed or planned greenway trails, with eight of these greenways crossing I-65 and I-70 within the study area. One is in the planning stage, and the rest have been constructed. Future local connections are currently being planned in the update of the Greenways Master Plan. Three considerations should go into any new design or construction of interstates affecting greenways:
 - For interstate rehabilitation or replacement over an existing built greenway, maintain connectivity and improve the trail within interstate right-of-way to meet the most current state and national trail standards.
 - Include lighting and proper drainage for any pedestrian underpass.
 - Coordinate with local officials to provide appropriate opportunities for connecting existing and planned greenways over/under the interstates.
- **Underpass/Overpass Design** – Interstate underpasses and overpasses exist throughout the study area and provide the most direct connections between neighborhoods. Of the 72 grade separations within the study area, 21 do not have existing pedestrian facilities. Potential improvements include wider openings, wider sidewalks, lighting, and proper drainage to reduce mud and debris.
 - **Underpasses:** Develop a wider opening and wider sidewalks to safely accommodate pedestrians. Include on-street bicycle facilities where feasible. Include lighting at all

underpass locations to improve safety and security. Uplighting should be considered to extend the overall brightness of the underpasses. Sidewalk widths should be consistent with or larger than existing neighborhood walks.

- **Overpasses:** Provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity on all bridges over the interstate. If possible, overpasses should incorporate a minimum 6-foot-wide sidewalk and include on-street bicycle facilities. Consider sight distance during design of the bicycle lane. Lighting should be incorporated into bridge designs.
 - **Vegetation Selection and Management:** Vegetation planted near underpasses and overpasses should be low maintenance and not grow very large. It should also be maintained to eliminate overgrowth and improve sight lines for safety.
- **Viewshed Consideration** – Indianapolis has the opportunity to create appealing viewsheds from its urban interstates. Views from the interstate can be used to promote local culture and economy, assist in wayfinding, and highlight specific portions of the community. They can highlight regional character and unique areas, provide glimpses into adjoining neighborhoods, and provide regional identifiers for the city. Attention should be paid to protecting and preserving viewsheds during interstate reconstruction, including but not limited to:
 - Share visual impacts of potential noise barriers with neighborhoods as they are considered. Consider other noise reducing methods such as quiet pavement as an alternative to noise barriers where they may not be feasible or desired by adjacent neighborhoods. A noise analysis and evaluation of noise barriers is required for Type I projects, which add lanes or substantially change horizontal or vertical alignment.
 - For bridges over rivers or other natural scenic areas, use reinforced railings that allow views through the railing to the sights beyond, if feasible.
 - Be cognizant of significant views coming into downtown. Reinforce open views and reduce visual impacts with bridges, overpasses, or other infrastructure improvements.
 - In coordination with adjacent neighborhoods and businesses, identify any areas for placemaking elements such as public art, landscaping, signage, or other focal areas along the interstates. The improvements must allow for the safety and mobility of the road and comply with INDOT’s Policy for Public Art and Landscaping on INDOT right-of-way.

4.3.2.2 Connectivity and Placemaking Typologies

Although specific features of future projects will not be defined until the design stage, it is useful to recognize opportunities for connectivity and placemaking features at a planning level. Typologies reflect the characteristics of local conditions and guide the design of enhancements. They may be applied in various combinations with multiple alternatives, depending on the mix of characteristics in the corridor or as part of an integrated system of related facilities. The 12 typologies used to guide enhanced connectivity opportunities along the spokes include:

-  **Existing Underpass Facility Upgrades:** Improve existing pedestrian facilities along underpasses to include lighting, sidewalk conditions, and other enhancements.
-  **Placemaking:** Create inviting public spaces where people can gather, relax, and engage in activities. These may include seating, tables, play areas, food vendors, and public art.
-  **Existing Overpass Facility Upgrades:** Enhance pedestrian infrastructure on overpasses by improving lighting, sidewalk conditions, and overall accessibility.
-  **Signature Bridge:** Develop bridges that serve as architectural or engineering landmarks, symbolizing the identity of a city, neighborhood, or district.
-  **Existing Interchange Facility Upgrades:** Upgrade pedestrian elements at interchanges, similar to overpass improvements, to ensure safety and comfort.
-  **New Connection Opportunities:** Reconnect previously severed vehicular and pedestrian corridors to improve mobility and neighborhood access.
-  **Linear Trails:** Introduce trails with vegetation and trees along corridors to enhance livability, provide shade, and support environmental sustainability.
-  **Existing Pedestrian Crossing Improvement:** Modernize existing pedestrian bridges and tunnels to improve safety and usability for all users.
-  **Active Transportation Connections:** Support walking, bicycling, micromobility devices, or other nonmotorized modes of transportation through dedicated infrastructure that promotes non-motorized travel.
-  **Gateways:** Install visually prominent signs or structures—often with landscaping—that welcome travelers to specific areas and reinforce a sense of place.
-  **New Pedestrian Crossing:** Construct new pedestrian bridges or elevated walkways to allow safe crossings without disrupting vehicular traffic.
-  **Local Road Improvements:** Upgrade local roads affected by construction to meet current standards and serve all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

4.3.2.3 Placemaking Opportunities at Multiple Locations

Consistent with the planning principles discussed above, there are numerous opportunities for enhancements and placemaking to help create a unique identity for Indianapolis and to elevate the visitor and resident experience along the interstate corridors. Coordination with neighborhoods and stakeholders would be needed during project planning. Many of these ideas would likely require partnerships with other agencies or organizations. This section describes a few concepts that could be explored in the future.

Interstate Linear Trail/Park

In several areas, opportunities exist for connections parallel to the interstates that can lead residents and pedestrians to the designated crossings. These trails, or linear parks, would need to be outside INDOT limited access right-of-way but could be done with limited space, secure separations/barriers

from the interstate traffic lanes, and landscaping, lighting, wayfinding, or other enhancements where sufficient space exists. Maintenance of linear trails or parks will be an important consideration if these are to move forward to project development.

Signature Bridges

Opportunities along the interstate corridors for signature bridge elements include crossings of roadways and waterways, and pedestrian bridges. A comprehensive approach should be developed to determine appropriate signature bridge applications and locations.

Gateways / Public Art

Opportunities exist to identify and create gateways to serve as visually distinctive entry points. Gateways often incorporate public art, signage, and landscaping to create a sense of arrival and place. By integrating artistic elements and thoughtful design, gateways can foster civic pride, improve wayfinding, and contribute to a more engaging and memorable travel experience.

Enhanced Underpass

Opportunities exist to incorporate placemaking elements such as landscaping, seating areas, and other public amenities that could help the underpass become a vibrant connector rather than a barrier. These features not only improve aesthetics but also encourage community use, creating a safer and more engaging experience for pedestrians and cyclists.

Infrastructure as Art

The opportunity exists for designing the infrastructure itself as public art. Signature bridges or unique design treatments can help set an identity for the city. The use of common elements such as lighting can create a unifying and identifiable effect.

4.3.2.4 Design Toolbox

General design toolbox concepts were identified in the *ProPEL Indy Universe of Concepts Report*. Design toolbox improvements are not considered as stand-alone concepts; instead, they may be used in conjunction with many different alternatives. The design toolbox improvements could address community goals and are being carried forward for further consideration in this study. INDOT policies and manuals guide the application of numerous toolbox elements. Maintenance of some design toolbox elements will be an important consideration during project development. Design toolbox elements will be considered for future projects and in coordination with the community.

Table 13 identifies the toolbox elements and how each element may be included in the development of future projects.

Table 13. Design Toolbox Elements

| Design Toolbox Element | How Incorporated into Future Projects |
|---|---|
| Roadway Lighting Improvements | Lighting will be provided along all interstates and, where warranted at intersections and underpasses. Lighting will be designed to reduce light trespassing into adjacent neighborhoods. |
| Decorative Lighting improvements | Special lighting, or lighting beyond that of a general roadway lighting system, as a component of an INDOT project requires a permit in accordance with INDOT’s <i>Policy for Public Art and Landscaping on INDOT Right-of-Way</i> . |
| Quiet Pavement | Longitudinal tining or grooving of the pavement, which reduces traffic noise, was used on the North Split Project. Longitudinal tining may be applied for concrete pavement sections to reduce traffic noise. |
| Wayfinding Signage | Attraction and wayfinding signs of community interest will be provided along the corridor following Indiana Design Manual and Indiana Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices guidance. |
| Gateway elements | Neighborhood gateways within INDOT right-of-way require a permit in accordance with INDOT’s <i>Policy for Public Art and Landscaping on INDOT Right-of-Way</i> . This includes consideration of future maintenance of the features. FHWA approval is required for public art and landscaping improvements made to all interstates. Gateway elements identified as part of any future project will adhere to relevant criteria. |
| Litter removal and mowing | Litter removal and mowing is considered as part of INDOT maintenance program protocols. |
| Neighborhood signs and placemaking opportunities | Public art and landscaping within INDOT right-of-way require a permit in accordance with INDOT’s <i>Policy for Public Art and Landscaping on INDOT Right-of-Way</i> . This includes consideration of future maintenance of the features. FHWA approval is required for public art and landscaping improvements made to all interstates. Placemaking and aesthetics opportunities identified as part of any future project will adhere to relevant criteria. |
| Pavement markings | Improved pavement markings will be included in all projects and will adhere to the design criteria in Indiana Design Manual, Chapter 502. |
| Aesthetic design packages | Public art and landscaping within INDOT right-of-way require a permit in accordance with INDOT’s <i>Policy for Public Art and Landscaping on INDOT Right-of-Way</i> . This includes consideration of future maintenance of the features. FHWA approval is required for public art and landscaping improvements made to interstates. |
| Noise barriers | Per INDOT’s noise policy, INDOT considers noise barriers for Type I projects. A Type I project involves a project that can significantly impact highway noise levels, such as adding a travel lane or auxiliary lane, or substantial changes in the vertical or horizontal alignment. Noise studies will be completed for any future Type I projects within the study area. The visual impacts of noise barriers should also be considered during the noise analysis and public involvement. Traffic noise management should be considered for any project that moves forward from this study. Other noise reduction techniques such as addition of short, concrete barrier wall and quiet pavement will also be considered to reduce traffic noise for all projects that move forward. |
| Visual barriers and strategies | Opportunities to reduce visual barriers and/or strategies to mitigate visual obstruction that interstates create between neighborhoods may be considered as part of any future project. |
| Technology advancements | Development and deployment of advanced transportation technologies is identified as a goal in INDOT’s 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan. Technology enhancements will be considered in future projects as appropriate and as they align with INDOT’s long-range goals. |

4.3.3 Alternatives Evaluation

Alternatives were evaluated on their ability to meet the study purpose and need, environmental impacts, costs, constructability, and ability to address community goals. Screening criteria are both quantitative and qualitative.

Alternatives in each spoke were evaluated independently of improvements in other spokes where possible. This independent evaluation includes factors such as asset conditions, impacts to environmental resources, cost, constructability, and community goals. Alternatives are combined in various combinations to evaluate roadway safety and mobility due to the complex interaction of vehicular flow.

4.3.4 Alternatives Recommendation Summary

A summary of the recommendations for each spoke are listed in **Table 14** and **Table 15**. Alternatives or concepts determined to be unreasonable are eliminated from further consideration. Alternatives or concepts determined to be potentially reasonable are carried forward for further consideration.

Table 14. ProPEL Indy Alternative Recommendations

| 65 Spoke | 65 Downtown Spoke | 65/70 Downtown Spoke | 70 Downtown Spoke | 70 West Spoke | 70 East Spoke |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Alternative 0: No Build | Alternative 0: No Build | Alternative 0: No Build | Alternative 0: No Build | Alternative 0: No Build | Alternative 0: No Build |
| Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials | Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials | Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials | Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials | Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials | Alternative 1: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials |
| Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials Plus | Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design Materials + I-65/West Street | Alternative 2: Low Impact South Split | Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design Materials Plus | Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design Materials Plus | Alternative 2: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials Plus |
| Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes | Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes | Alternative 3: South Split | Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes | Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes | Alternative 3: Added Travel Lanes |
| Alternative 4: Dynamic Shoulder Lanes | Alternative 4: Recessed + I-65/West Street* | | Alternative 4: Added Travel Lanes + Local Roads | Alternative 4: Viaduct* + Dynamic Shoulder Lanes | Alternative 4: Dynamic Shoulder Lanes |
| Alternative 5: Reversible Lane | Alternative 5: Viaduct + I-65/West Street* | | Alternative 5: Recessed* | Alternative 5: Reversible Lane | |
| Alternative 6: Recessed* | | | Alternative 6: Viaduct* | | |
| Alternative 7: Viaduct* | | | | | |

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| CARRIED FORWARD | ELIMINATED |
|-----------------|------------|

* Transformative alternatives will be required to meet the mobility and safety needs at the location.

Table 15. ProPEL Indy Concept Recommendations

| 65 Spoke | 65 Downtown Spoke | 65/70 Downtown Spoke | 70 Downtown Spoke | 70 West Spoke | 70 East Spoke |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| Concept: Signature Bridge | Concept: ReThink 65/70 Coalition Concept for West Street Interchange | Concept: Dynamic Shoulder Lanes and Reversible Lane | Concept: Dynamic Shoulder Lanes and Reversible Lane | Concept: Recessed Interstate | Concept: Reversible Lane |
| | Concept: Removal of West Street Interchange | Concept: Viaduct | Concept: Reversible Lane | Concept: Bus-only lanes between I-465 and Holt Road | Concept: Shadeland Avenue Eastbound C-D Lanes |
| | Concept: Dynamic Shoulder Lanes and Reversible Lane | | Concept: Signature Bridge | Concept: Signature Bridge | |

CARRIED FORWARD
ELIMINATED

| Study Area Concepts for Future Planning Consideration |
|---|
| Neighborhood Connectivity Planning Principles (Section 4.3.2.1) |
| Design Toolbox Elements (Section 4.3.2.4) |
| Connectivity and Placemaking Opportunities (Section 4.3.2.1, Section 4.3.2.2, Section 4.3.2.3) |

5 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

5.1 Introduction

Public and stakeholder feedback was vital to the success of ProPEL Indy. The ProPEL Indy study team engaged with hundreds of stakeholders who either use I-65 and I-70, work or live near these interstates, or both. The study team has met with a variety of neighborhoods, businesses, and organizations to gain a greater understanding of the community's needs and ideas for improvement. Engagement efforts have included community events, stakeholder meetings, community conversations (public information meetings), Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings, mailed postcards to residents along the study spokes, the study website, and social media. The ProPEL Indy study team gathered and considered feedback throughout the study process. Outreach and formal comment periods were organized around key milestones of the study, including:

- **Visioning and Data Collection:** The purpose of this outreach was to introduce ProPEL Indy; identify the specific goals of the study; introduce the study's four pillars; help people understand how to participate in ProPEL Indy; and solicit ideas, comments, and suggestions from the community to inform future phases of the study.
- **Purpose and Need:** Engagement efforts in this phase reported on insights gained from the public during the Visioning and Data Collection phase; shared additional information gathered from the study team's collection and analysis of data; provided an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes) identified in the study area; and solicited input on the Draft Purpose and Need and community goals developed by the study team.
- **Universe of Concepts:** In this phase the study team introduced a wide range of potential solutions that were identified to address the transportation needs in the study area known as the Universe of Concepts; provided an overview of the study's screening process to carry forward identified concepts for further refinement and evaluation in the next phase of the study; shared the results of the study's initial evaluation and screening of the identified concepts; and requested input on the *ProPEL Indy Draft Universe of Concepts Screening Report* developed by the study team.
- **Alternatives Identification and Screening:** Outreach in this phase introduced several location-specific planning-level alternatives that were developed to address the transportation needs in the study area; highlighted neighborhood connectivity and planning principles that were developed by the study team in response to public feedback; provided an overview of the study's alternative evaluation process to eliminate or carry forward alternatives for future consideration; shared the results of the evaluation process and the study's recommendations

for the report’s identified alternatives; requested input on the *ProPEL Indy Draft Alternatives Identification and Screening Report* developed by the study team.

As a result of the study’s outreach activities, the study team received comments on topics outside of the study’s scope that have the potential to be addressed by other agencies. This feedback will be summarized by the study team and shared with the appropriate agency by INDOT.

The information contained in this section is summarized from the following documents, which are included as appendices to the PEL study report:

- **Appendix H:** *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder and Public Involvement Summary #1 (RASPI #1)*;
- **Appendix I:** *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder and Public Involvement Summary #2 (RASPI #2)*;
- **Appendix J:** *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder and Public Involvement Summary #3 (RASPI #3)*; and
- **Appendix K:** *ProPEL Indy Resource Agency, Stakeholder and Public Involvement Summary #4 (RASPI #4)*.

5.2 INDOT and FHWA Coordination

The ProPEL Indy study team coordinated with the FHWA on a regular basis throughout the study. Coordination included monthly meetings with FHWA to discuss study progress, recap activities, discuss technical approaches, and address any potential questions or concerns identified by FHWA. FHWA also reviewed and provided comments for study team consideration on the following technical reports developed during the ProPEL Indy study:

- *ProPEL Indy Environmental Constraints Report*
- *ProPEL Indy Purpose and Need Report*
- *ProPEL Indy Universe of Concepts Report*
- *ProPEL Indy Alternatives Identification and Screening Report*

5.3 Resource Agency and Tribal Coordination

As part of the Purpose and Need phase of the study, one coordination meeting was held with resource agencies from February 1 to June 30, 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the ProPEL Indy study, report on insights gained during the study’s Visioning and Data Collection phase, provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes) identified in the study area, preview next steps, and solicit input and feedback. Meeting materials and summary are included in **Appendix I**.

This meeting included:

- June 14, 2024: Resource Agency Meeting #1 (Virtual): Transmitted an invitation letter to ProPEL Indy, a link to the *ProPEL Indy Draft Purpose and Need Report*, and a link to the *ProPEL Indy Draft Environmental Constraints Report* via email on May 20, 2024.

An invitation letter to ProPEL Indy, the *Archaeological Cultural Resources Identification Memorandum*, a link to the *ProPEL Indy Draft Purpose and Need Report*, and a link to the *ProPEL Indy Draft Environmental Constraints Report* were emailed to Tribal Nations on May 21, 2024. The invitation letter is included in **Appendix I**.

During the Universe of Concepts phase of the study, coordination with resource agencies and cultural resources stakeholders was completed via email. The following summarizes these coordination efforts:

- An invitation letter to ProPEL Indy and a link to the *Draft Universe of Concepts Screening Report* were emailed to resource agencies on December 9, 2024, for review and comment.
- An invitation letter to ProPEL Indy and a link to the *Draft Universe of Concepts Screening Report* were emailed to Tribal Nations on December 9, 2024, for review and comment.

The invitation letters are included in **Appendix J**.

From January 6 to October 5, 2025, one coordination meeting was held with resource agencies as part of the Alternatives Identification and Screening phase of the study. The purpose of the meeting was to report on the study's progress to date, provide an overview of the planning-level alternatives developed to address the transportation needs at specific locations in the study area, highlight neighborhood connectivity and planning principles that were developed by the study team in response to public feedback, share insights on how the alternatives were evaluated by the study team, review the results of the evaluation process and the study's recommendations, preview next steps, and solicit input and feedback. Meeting materials and summary are included in **Appendix K**.

This meeting included:

- September 25, 2025: Resource Agency Meeting #2 (Virtual): Transmitted an invitation letter to ProPEL Indy, a link to the *ProPEL Indy Draft Alternatives Identification and Screening Report* via email on September 5, 2025.

An invitation letter to ProPEL Indy and a link to the *ProPEL Indy Draft Alternatives Identification and Screening Report* were emailed to Tribal Nations on September 10, 2025. The invitation letter is included in **Appendix K**.

5.4 Stakeholder Advisory Committee

The ProPEL Indy study team established four Stakeholder Advisory Committees, each representing one of the study's four pillars: Quality of Life, Economic Growth and Opportunity, Transportation and

Mobility, and Transportation for All. Each committee included representatives from a broad collection of neighborhoods, businesses, and organizations.

Members of all committees gathered for an in-person meeting during each phase of the study:

- **Vision and Data Collection Meeting:** January 25, 2024: The purpose of this meeting was to introduce committee members to the study, discuss expected roles, and facilitate feedback from the stakeholders. The study team also encouraged the committee members to assist in raising awareness about the study and its feedback opportunities. Meeting materials and summary are included in **Appendix H**.
- **Purpose and Need Meeting:** June 3, 2024: The purpose of this meeting was to provide updates on the study, report on insights gained during the Vision and Data Collection phase, share data gathered from engineering and technical assessments, provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes), and community goal identified in the study area, preview next steps, and solicit input and feedback. The study team also encouraged the committee members to assist in raising awareness about the study and its feedback opportunities. Meeting materials and a summary are included in **Appendix I**.
- **Universe of Concepts Meeting:** December 11, 2024: The purpose of this meeting was to report on the study's progress to date; provide an overview of the identification and screening of concepts to address the transportation needs in the study area; preview next steps; and solicit input and feedback. The study team also encouraged committee members to assist in raising awareness about the study and its feedback opportunities. Meeting materials and a summary are included in **Appendix J**.
- **Alternatives Identification and Screening Meeting:** September 17, 2025: The purpose of this meeting was to provide an overview of the planning-level alternatives developed to address the transportation needs at specific locations in the study area; share insights on how the alternatives were evaluated by the study team; review the results of the evaluation process and the study's recommendations; preview next steps in the study process; and answer any questions from attendees. Meeting materials and a summary are included in **Appendix K**.

5.5 Stakeholder Coordination

The ProPEL Indy study team identified and met with a wide range of stakeholder groups throughout the study. These groups included the ReThink 65/70 Coalition, neighborhood associations, businesses, local agencies, elected officials, and community organizations.

The study team identified and attended more than 35 different neighborhood association meetings throughout the study process. The purpose of this outreach was to make a concerted effort to meet residents where they are to share information about the study, encourage participation, and capture feedback directly from the neighborhood.



The study team held regular coordination meetings with the president and CEO of the ReThink 65/70 Coalition throughout the study process. In general, the purposes of these meetings were to provide regular updates about the study process, facilitate coordination with the coalition’s study within ProPEL Indy’s study limits, and answer questions. A total of 12 coordination meetings took place during the study.

In addition, the study team coordinated and participated in informational meetings and briefings with members of the ReThink Coalition at specific milestones during the study. These included:

- On September 19, 2023, during a three-hour hybrid workshop led by the ReThink 65/70 Coalition, members presented the study team with their organizational thinking, technical findings, and coalition goals for the ProPEL Indy study area. The study team had the opportunity to have their questions answered directly by the coalition during the workshop. The ReThink 65/70 Coalition provided the ProPEL Indy study team copies of their studies and materials for reference. Meeting materials and summary are included in **Appendix H**.
- On August 29, 2024, the ProPEL Indy study team hosted a meeting with members of the ReThink 65/70 Coalition and the IMPO in response to the coalition’s comments on the study’s *Draft Purpose and Need Report*. Meeting materials and summary are included in **Appendix J**.
- On December 18, 2024, the ProPEL Indy study team provided members of the ReThink 65/70 Coalition with a virtual briefing on the *Draft Universe of Concepts Screening Report*. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an overview of the identification and screening of concepts to address the transportation needs in the study area; preview next steps in the study process; and answer any questions from attendees.
- On September 12, 2025, the ProPEL Indy study team provided members of the ReThink 65/70 Coalition with a virtual briefing on the *Draft Alternatives Identification and Screening Report*. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an overview of the planning-level alternatives developed to address the transportation needs at specific locations in the study area; share insights on how the alternatives were evaluated by the study team; review the results of the evaluation process and the study’s recommendations; preview next steps in the study process; and answer any questions from attendees.

In addition to Stakeholder Advisory Committee and ReThink 65/70 Coalition outreach, members of the ProPEL Indy study team coordinated and/or conducted outreach with the following stakeholder groups:

- Indiana state legislators
- Local media representatives
- Local elected officials
- Local (non-resource) agencies
- Indianapolis Economic Development Organizations
- Indianapolis Mayor’s Neighborhood Advocates

- Neighborhood Associations
- Indianapolis businesses (IU Health, Eli Lilly, etc.)
- Indianapolis universities (Purdue, IU Indianapolis, etc.)

5.6 Office Hours and Community Events

The ProPEL Indy team made a concerted effort to engage with stakeholders throughout the study area to build awareness around the study, provide an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to engage with the study team, and receive public comments related to the study and study milestones. These outreach efforts included Community Office Hours and participation at fairs, festivals, and other community events. During this time, study team members engaged with community members in informal, one-on-one conversations where they could ask questions, provide input, and receive regular updates.

The study team coordinated and staffed a total of six Community Office Hours events at a variety of times and locations within the study area. In addition, the ProPEL Indy study team coordinated participation at 17 community events, such as fairs and festivals within the study area.

5.7 Public Information Meetings

The study team held public information meetings branded as Community Conversations in both in-person and virtual/on-demand formats. The in-person public information meetings took place:

- July 6, 2023, at Decatur Township School for Excellent from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 10, 2023, at Bosma Enterprises from 3 – 5 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 11, 2023, at IPL West Branch from 5 – 7 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 12, 2023, at Global Village Welcome Center from 6 – 8 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 13, 2023, at John Boner Neighborhood Center from 2 – 4 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 17, 2023, at Ivy Tech Conference Center from 6 – 8 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 19, 2023, at Far East Side Neighborhood Center from 6 – 8 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 20, 2023, at Martin University from 6 – 8 p.m. (Visioning)
- July 27, 2023, at INDOT Traffic Management Center, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Visioning)
- June 11, 2024, at Rhodius Park Family Center from 6:30 – 8 p.m. (Purpose and Need)
- June 13, 2024, at Julia M. Carson Government Center from 4 – 6 p.m. (Purpose and Need)
- June 18, 2024, at Martin University from 3 – 5 p.m. (Purpose and Need)
- June 26, 2024, at Guion Creek Middle School from 4 – 6 p.m. (Purpose and Need)
- September 11, 2025, at John Boner Neighborhood Center from 5 – 7 p.m. (Alternatives)
- September 15, 2025, at International District Community Center from 5 – 7 p.m. (Alternatives)
- September 23, 2025, at IPL West Branch from 5 – 7 p.m. (Alternatives)
- September 25, 2025, at Ivy Tech Conference Center from 5 – 7 p.m. (Alternatives)

The format of the meetings was an open house with a presentation from study team members. Informational boards, digital displays, and feedback opportunities were situated throughout the venues. Presentations were recorded and made available online on the ProPEL Indy study website.

5.8 Public Comments

5.8.1 Vision and Data Collection Phase

Public comments were received from a variety of sources. All public comments received prior to February 1, 2024, were considered as part of the first RASPI Summary report. During the first public comment period, the study team received:

- Approximately 1,100 comments from Community Conversations, community events, stakeholder meetings, and online comment form.

The study team identified 18 key themes within the content of the comments and aligned them with the study's four pillars. Key themes were aligned as follows:

- **Quality of Life and Livability:** Community Development, Health and Safety, Placemaking and Public Spaces, Wayfinding and Signage
- **Economic Development and Opportunity:** Neighborhood Revitalization, New Development Opportunities, Retail and Commercial Considerations
- **Transportation and Mobility:** Connectivity, Design Alternative/Solution, Lane Management Strategies, Pedestrian and Bike, Public Transit, Roadway Design, Technology, Traffic Safety
- **Transportation for All:** Climate Resilience and Sustainability, Neighborhood Impacts, Public Involvement
- **Other:** Topics such as project management, cost considerations, data collection, and schedule.

Individual replies were provided to all public comments received and can be found in **Appendix H**.

5.8.2 Purpose and Need Phase

All public comments received between February 1 and June 30, 2024, were considered as part of the second RASPI Summary report. During the second public comment period, outreach efforts generated:

- Approximately 200 comments from Community Conversations, community events, stakeholder meetings, and online comment form.

The study team used the key themes identified in the Visioning phase to align the contents of the comments received. Individual replies were provided to all public comments received and can be found in **Appendix I**.

5.8.3 Universe of Concepts Phase

All public comments received between July 1, 2024, and January 5, 2025, were considered as part of the third RASPI Summary report. During the third public comment period, outreach efforts generated:

- Approximately 250 comments, community events, stakeholder meetings, a virtual map tool and online comment form.

The study team analyzed the comments to align them with the study's identified transportation needs and potential solutions from the Universe of Concepts. Location specific feedback for concepts was also generated via the study's virtual map tool.

Individual replies were provided to all public comments received and can be found in **Appendix J**.

5.8.4 Alternatives Identification and Screening Phase

All public comments received between January 6 and October 5, 2025, were considered as part of the fourth RASPI Summary report. During the fourth public comment period, outreach efforts generated:

- Approximately 300 comments, from Community Conversations, community events, stakeholder meetings, and online comment form.

The study team developed a summary of the overall themes captured in the content of the comments. Individual replies were provided to all public comments received and can be found in **Appendix K**.

During the ProPEL Indy study, more than 1,000 stakeholders engaged with the study, and approximately 1,850 public comments were received.

6 Next Steps and Future Considerations

6.1 Introduction

Recommendations from the ProPEL Indy study will be evaluated for potential implementation as part of INDOT's call for projects. The call for projects is an annual process through which proposals to address transportation needs compete for funding. Proposals for projects can originate from cities, towns, Regional and/or Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). As part of the process, INDOT evaluates proposals for new projects and identifies potential priorities based on cost-effective resolution of the identified transportation needs to ensure that the correct improvements are constructed at the greatest number of locations possible. The call for projects covers a five-year period, which means that a selected project typically has at least a five-year development timeline.

The following summarizes key considerations for future project teams.

6.2 Alternatives

A stated goal of the ProPEL Indy study is the identification of a range of reasonable alternatives. Given the needs identified within the study area, a reasonable alternative could consist of improvements along an interstate segment, or improvements at interchanges, grade separations, or local road intersections that influence the interstates. Depending on multiple factors, including statewide priorities and funding availability, improvements considered as part of this PEL study could be combined in different ways in the future to address the identified transportation needs and support the goals of the study area.

The ProPEL Indy study considered a range of improvements that provide INDOT with the flexibility needed to address the needs in the study area. The improvements could include more immediate, lower-cost improvements that address some but not all needs, as well as higher-cost improvements that require funding beyond what is currently available. Alternatives carried forward with construction or operations costs beyond INDOT's traditional funds would be contingent on additional funding being identified by other sources.

All planning-level alternatives evaluated during the ProPEL Indy study are considered preliminary and subject to change. Alternatives identified in future projects will need to meet the mobility and safety needs at that location. Future project development studies will determine the actual configuration, right-of-way acquisition needs, and impacts to resources in the study area.

6.3 Key Stakeholder Concerns

More than 1,800 comments were received from stakeholders over the course of this study. The study team carefully considered this feedback, and it informed the analysis and recommendations summarized in this PEL Study Report. There were several themes in those comments that warrant further coordination and consideration as part of any future projects in the study area, including:

All Spokes

- Multiple members of the public indicated they did not support added travel lanes.
- Multiple members of the public indicated the width of local road lanes should be less than 12 feet.
- Multiple members of the public indicated they did not support widening the interstate footprint.
- There was general support for the Recessed alternatives.
- There was support for additional connectivity across and near the interstates throughout the study area.
- There was support for improved interstate aesthetics throughout the study area.
- Multiple members of the public expressed fatigue from years of construction in the study area.

- The IMPO emphasized that all future alternatives must prioritize and enhance multimodal mobility, connectivity, and access — especially within the urban grid — to support equitable development and Central Indiana’s growth. Restoring access across all modes to jobs, education, health care, and recreation is critical, aligning with IMPO’s Metropolitan Transportation Plan goals (known as CIRCLE 2050).
- There was support for improved public transit.
- The IMPO supports including the following concepts in any alternatives that move forward: Rebuild with Modern Design/Materials, TSMO Improvements, and Address Geometric Deficiencies.
- The IMPO encouraged INDOT to coordinate with IMPO and IndyGo on transit projects involving the interstate and interchanges; consider community impacts both inside and outside the study area; and maintain or improve connectivity, minimizing or mitigating burdens on local communities.
- The Rethink 65/70 Coalition expressed support for a compact, recessed alternative.
- The Rethink 65/70 Coalition expressed support for exit ramp designs that require interstate drivers to slow down before entering local streets.
- The Rethink 65/70 Coalition expressed support for incorporating quantitative metrics that evaluate long-term return on investment in future studies. These measures should address factors such as economic development, land value appreciation, tax revenue growth, and community revitalization, particularly within and near downtown.
- The Rethink 65/70 Coalition expressed support for looking at financing options for transformative alternatives and maximizing the use of state-controlled land within the interstate footprint to generate development and revenue.
- Downtown stakeholders said maintaining sufficient access points into downtown is critical for supporting large-scale conventions. Truck access for loading and unloading plays a key role in event operations, as many facilities rely on multiple docks to handle high volumes during major events. Preserving the current circulation patterns for incoming and outgoing vehicles helps ensure smooth logistics and successful convention experiences.

65 Spoke

- Drivers find discomfort with the I-65/38th Street interchanges, with highway traffic merging quickly with slower 38th Street traffic.
- Guion Road access to 38th Street westbound is less than ideal.
- Vehicles exiting from I-65 south onto Guion Road often stop in the exit lane to merge across two lanes of 38th Street.
- Traffic from Kessler Boulevard to southbound I-65 needs to cross three lanes of high-speed traffic in a short distance.
- I-65 is highly congested between 38th Street and downtown, suggesting a potential need for more capacity.

- The 29th/30th Street exits encourage reckless speeding through neighborhoods, including around the Indianapolis Children's Museum. Traffic-calming measures are needed for safety without additional land usage. The city's planned conversion of 29th /30th streets from one-way to two-way streets is expected to address this concern.

65 Downtown Spoke

- Purdue University expressed concern regarding removing the stop condition at the southbound ramp terminals at the I-65/West Street interchange north of downtown and that traffic congestion would shift to local streets.
- Purdue University, IU Health, and other stakeholders expressed concern regarding pedestrian accessibility and connectivity at West Street and 10th and 11th streets, and they suggested recessing West Street further south.
- Purdue University and IU Health expressed concern regarding impacts to the local street network, specifically West Street south of 10th and 11th streets, and West Street intersections at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street, St. Clair Street, and Indiana Avenue. IU Health also expressed the importance of access for emergency medical services to the IU Health Campus at 21st and 16th streets.
- Purdue University requested consideration for more C-D roads or direct access connections between downtown and 16th and 21st streets.
- Purdue University and IU Health expressed concern with maintaining a left-hand exit at the I-65/West Street interchange due to safety.
- Purdue University and IU Health expressed support for the recessed and viaduct alternatives as they will offer long-term benefits to the community.
- IU Health expressed concern regarding potential right-of-way impacts near Missouri Street, adjacent to its new healthcare campus including the Neuroscience Building.
- The Rethink Coalition expressed support for a planning group to evaluate cost-efficient design strategies to deliver mobility and safety outcomes along with economic development along the West Street corridor and Inner Loop.
- The Indy Chamber indicated support for a recessed design for the I-65/I-70 corridor at West Street to improve safety, connectivity, and unlock opportunity for economic growth. They argue this approach maximizes infrastructure investment, connects key assets, and positions Indianapolis competitively for talent and development. Citing other cities' success, they urge against a like-for-like replacement and advocate for a bold, future-focused solution. The Chamber shared this message with their members encouraging them to advocate for advancing the recessed alternative.
- Daily backups occur during rush hour traffic on I-65, particularly at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street and West Street interchanges.
- The entrance ramp from West Street onto I-65 southbound is hazardous, lacks adequate merging distance, causes congestion, and needs to be reconfigured.

- The entrance ramp onto I-65 northbound from Illinois Street has a short merging distance.
- Capacity issues on I-65 through downtown during AM/PM peak periods.
- There is a lack of access to I-65 southbound from the Delaware Street/11th Street entrance ramp.
- Access is unavailable to Meridian and Pennsylvania streets from I-70 via the North Split.

65/70 Downtown Spoke

- The Rethink 65/70 Coalition expressed support for a compact, recessed alternative, particularly within the 65/70 Downtown Spoke.
- Calvary Street entrance ramp has safety concerns and causes congestion.
- There is a need for four complete lanes on I-65/I-70 through downtown.
- Improve signage at the South Split to clearly indicate lane assignments for I-70 and I-65.
- Address the short distance for merging from eastbound on I-70 to northbound I-65 to exit at Washington Street; there are safety concerns during rush hour.
- Add more lanes to the I-70 westbound exit at the South Split to reduce backups and improve safety for merging traffic.

70 Downtown Spoke

- The Indiana Rail Road Company (INRD) owns and manages the Senate Avenue Terminal (SAT) and Intermodal Facility, located at 1500 S. Senate Avenue. INRD expressed concerns that if the I-70/West Street interchange south of downtown were eliminated or restricted, trucks would be forced to reroute through residential areas, increasing safety risks and undermining the efficiency its customers depend on. This would not only impact INRD's operations but also disrupt the broader ecosystem of industries that rely on its services. INRD respectfully requests INDOT prioritize the preservation of the West Street interchange and recognize its importance to the many industries, businesses, and communities that depend on the Indiana Rail Road and the broader transportation network in Indianapolis.
- The Rethink Coalition expressed support for a planning group to evaluate cost-efficient design strategies to deliver mobility and safety outcomes along with economic development along the West Street corridor and Inner Loop.
- The number and frequency of access points on I-70 is a concern. Exit ramps for West Street, Meridian Street, and Illinois Street on westbound I-70 have short distances between them, leading to quick lane changes and potential crashes.
- The merging distance is short at the Illinois Street/Meridian Street entrance ramp onto westbound I-70.
- The areas around the I-70 exits into downtown need a facelift to create a more welcoming environment.
- Connectivity needs to be improved between neighborhoods south of I-70 and downtown.

- Ease of access into and out of downtown is important for moving traffic associated with large events.

70 West Spoke

- Several members of the public said the visual appearance of the interstate from the airport to downtown Indianapolis was poor.
- A signature bridge on I-70 over the White River could create a memorable entry point for travelers and enhance the city's image.
- Eastbound I-70 experiences bumper-to-bumper traffic starting at 1 p.m. most days, causing delays for downtown commuters.
- Safety and congestion concerns identified at the I-70/Holt Road interchange.
- The Harding Street entrance ramp to I-70 westbound needs to be longer for better traffic flow.
- There is little to no safe pedestrian access along Harding Street under the interstate from Morris Street to Oliver Avenue.

70 East Spoke

- Traffic exiting I-70 to Rural Street overwhelms the city street, causing frequent delays.
- I-70 westbound at Shadeland Avenue regularly backs up, often without incidents as a cause.
- The entrance ramp to eastbound I-70 from northbound Emerson Avenue merges abruptly, then an outside lane is added back to I-70 just downstream to serve the I-465 interchange.
- The on-ramp from Shadeland Avenue to I-465/I-70 requires merging across three lanes within half a mile to enter onto I-70, posing safety concerns.
- There are general safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists crossing I-70 at multiple interchanges and underpasses.
- Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is important and lacking across I-70 at the Rural/Keystone interchange.

6.4 Considerations for Future NEPA & Project Development

ProPEL Indy Considerations

- Alternatives carried forward with construction or operations costs beyond INDOT's traditional funds are contingent on additional funding being identified by other sources.
- Connectivity and Placemaking Opportunities – Connectivity and placemaking opportunities should be evaluated for any project that moves forward from this study.
- A potential location for a signature bridge within the study limits could be identified in future studies or projects.

- Design Toolbox – General design toolbox concepts were identified in the *ProPEL Indy Universe of Concepts Report*. Design toolbox improvements are not considered as stand-alone concepts; instead, they may be used in conjunction with many different alternatives. Design toolbox concepts are recommended for consideration as part of any future projects that result from the study.
- Local Streets – Additional traffic studies and analysis of impacts to the local roadway network may also be needed if future improvements propose to restrict or change access to/from/across I-65 or I-70.
- Planning – Any alternatives that move forward will need to be coordinated with the IMPO so that they can be incorporated into the IMPO’s MTP. As a result, these alternatives should be consistent with and support the goals of the adopted MTP. Those goals include MOVE, to provide transportation choices, PROSPER to foster shared economic vitality, MAKE SAFE to support safe travel for all users, and SUSTAIN to ensure a reliable and resilient transportation network. Moving forward, all alternatives pursued should take these goals into consideration. In addition, the IMPO has recently completed the Regional Resiliency Snapshot and is preparing updates to its Safety Action Plan and Active Transportation Plan. All of these should be considered in any alternatives moving forward.

General NEPA Considerations

- Air Quality – In order to meet transportation air quality conformity requirements and prior to approval of NEPA documents for future projects, the IMPO IRTIP and MTP, and the statewide TIP must accurately reflect anticipated project scope and cost. Coordination with IMPO and INDOT will occur during NEPA.
- Noise – A noise analysis will be required for any Type I projects. Traffic noise management should be considered for any project that moves forward from this study.
- Neighborhood Impacts – Both direct and indirect impacts to neighborhoods adjacent to and near the interstates should be considered in future NEPA environmental reviews.
- Reasonably Foreseeable Effects – The ProPEL Indy study considers potential impacts to the human and natural environment – specifically those effects that occur at the same time and place as the alternatives evaluated. During subsequent NEPA reviews, consideration may be warranted for impacts that have a reasonably foreseeable close causal relationship to the alternatives evaluated.
- Section 106 – The ProPEL Indy study included a review of existing literature and documentation related to potential above-ground and archaeological resources within the study area. Formal determinations of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility will occur, as needed, as part of the Section 106 process in future NEPA environmental reviews.
- Wetlands, Streams, and other Natural Resources – Field surveys and formal delineations of water resources will be required in all areas of potential disturbance to confirm the presence of any sensitive natural resources.

- Agency Coordination – As part of the NEPA process for any future projects resulting from the study, coordination with agencies and Section 106 consulting parties will be completed to ensure that all potential impacts and procedural requirements are addressed.

6.5 Anticipated Permitting Requirements

Permitting requirements can change over time. Projects identified and developed from this study will apply for all applicable permits required at that time. The following are current, likely permits that may be needed for any potential projects resulting from this PEL study:

- Section 404 Permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM)
- Isolated Wetlands Permit from IDEM
- Section 10 Permit from the USACE
- Section 9 Permit from the US Coast Guard (USCG)
- Construction in a Floodway Permit from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Construction Stormwater General Permit from IDEM
- Indiana Tall Structures Permit from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)
- Obstruction Evaluation/Airport Airspace Analysis from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from City of Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission