LEGAL NOTICE

OF

PLANNED IMPROVEMENT

INDOT Des. No. 1600470

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) intends to utilize Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds for a portion of the cost for the replacement of Bridge (Structure No. 033-92-03945 B, National Bridge Inventory No. 010920) on US 33 over Blue River, 3.6 miles northwest of SR 205, in Whitley County, Indiana (Des. No. 1600470).

The need for this project is based on the various stages of section loss on the deck, wearing surface, superstructure, and substructure. Based on the *Bridge Inspection Report* dated October 9, 2019, the deck, wearing surface, superstructure and substructure were all observed to have minor section loss and given an overall rating of “5”, indicating fair condition.

The second need for this project is based on the existing roadway, including the bridge, contains a horizontal curve with a substandard superelevation and shoulders varying from 1 foot (ft.) to 8 ft.

The purpose of this project is to provide a structurally sufficient crossing of Blue River on U.S. 33, with a condition rating greater than 7, an anticipated service life of 75 years, and to address the substandard superelevation and shoulder deficiencies in the roadway corridor to meet current design standards.

The project includes replacing the existing bridge with a new structure having a design life of 75 years. The new bridge will be a single span, composite steel beam bridge, 73 ft. long, with a clear roadway width of 45 ft. – 4 inches and skewed 10 degrees right. Although the proposed structure will have a smaller hydraulic opening, the hydraulic performance will not be impacted, and scour countermeasures will be properly designed. Additionally, the smaller structure will eliminate the need for piers in the water which can collect debris. This project will be accelerated by casting the concrete deck on top of the superstructure beams in a shop environment, and then transported as a single unit to the project site. Alternatively, the deck could be cast on the beams at the site, ideally in the agricultural field immediately northwest of the bridge. The superstructure will be set on 14 inches in diameter steel encased concrete piles driven into the existing ground. New guardrail and end treatments will be installed. Riprap will be placed along the slopes to provide erosion protection. A riprap drainage turnout will be constructed in the northeast quadrant of the bridge from the end of the barrier rail transition down the side slope. Approximately 0.31 acre of trees will be removed to remove and replace the bridge. The US 33 superelevation throughout the roadway horizontal curve will be corrected followed by asphalt shoulders, compacted aggregate, and seeding on both sides of the roadway. Four mailboxes will be replaced.

Maintenance of traffic (MOT) will consist of a detour utilizing SR 205, US 30, SR 9 and US 33, which will add 27 miles for the traveling public.

Due to the required length of the detour, and in accordance with the FHWA Every Day Counts initiative, Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) techniques was investigated. ABC is an approach intended to minimize the duration of a road closure to accommodate bridge construction. This project will be accelerated as described in the Preferred Alternative above.

The closures/lane restrictions will pose a temporary inconvenience to traveling motorists (including school buses and emergency services); however, no significant delays are anticipated and all inconveniences will cease upon project completion. Delays may occur during construction but will cease with project completion.

The existing right-of-way (ROW) through the project area varies from the edge of pavement to 75 ft. north of US 33 and from the edge of pavement to 65 ft. south of US 33.

The project requires approximately 0.664 acre of permanent ROW from 11 residential grass parcels of which 8 parcels are located north of US 33 and 3 parcels are located south of US 33. The project also requires approximately 0.598 acre of temporary ROW from 2 parcels of which 0.579 acre consists of agricultural land, located north of US 33 west of the bridge, that will be used for construction staging and 0.019 acre consisting of grass, located south of US 33 east of the bridge, for construction of a driveway. Approximately 0.418 acre of ROW will be reacquired along the west portion of the project area, consisting of gravel and asphalt pavement.

The FHWA and the INDOT have agreed that this project falls within the guidelines of a Level 2 Categorical Exclusion (CE-2). No significant adverse impacts to the human or natural environment were identified as part of this environmental documentation process.

Approximately 136 linear ft. (0.016 acre) of Blue River will be permanently impacted by this project to install 63 cubic yards of riprap. Approximately 160.5 linear ft. (0.008 acre) of unnamed tributary (UNT) 1 to Blue River will be permanently impacted by this project by moving UNT 1 approximately 2 ft. south of its existing location, grade and apply 7 cubic yards of earthen fill. No mitigation is anticipated No mitigation is anticipated.

One Wetland, 0.008 acre, will be impacted by this project by grading and earthen fill. No mitigation is anticipated.

An Indiana Department of Environmental Management Section 401 Regional General Permit (RGP), a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 RGP permit, and a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Erosion Control (Rule 5) will be required.

This project meets the rural bridge exemption; therefore, a construction in a floodway permit will not be required. However, based on coordination with Columbia City/Whitley County Joint Planning & Building Department, an administrative permit will be required for the work.

During construction, approximately 0.31 acre of trees will be removed in the northeast and southeast quadrants of the bridge. The trees are planned to be removed in March 2023. Approximately 0.683 acre of maintained grass will be impacted during this project.

Design plans and the CE-2 environmental document are being made available for review on-line at [www.](http://www.DearbornCounty.org) Hard copies of the documents may also be viewed at the Churubusco Public Library, located at 116 N. Mulberry St., Churubusco, Indiana 46723. The Churubusco Public Library hours are Monday – Thursday 11 am to 7 pm, Friday 11 am to 6 pm, and Saturday 9 am to 2 pm. Masks and social distancing are required.

Persons with limited internet access may request that the project information be mailed. Please contact Ms. Susan Castle at (317) 608-2730 or [Susanc@Metricenv.com](mailto:Susanc@Metricenv.com) to request hard copies of project documents. Furthermore, accommodations for persons with Limited English Proficiency can be requested, if necessary. In accordance with the “Americans with Disabilities Act”, if you have a disability for which Dearborn County needs to provide accessibility to the above documents such as interpreters or readers, please contact Susan Castle at the phone number or email address provided above.

All interested persons may request a public hearing or express their concerns by submitting written comments to the attention of Susan Castle at Metric Environmental, LLC, 6971 Hillsdale Court, Indianapolis, IN 46250 or [Susanc@Metricenv.com](mailto:Susanc@Metricenv.com) on or by Month XX, 2021. If a hearing is determined to be in the best interest of the public, the community will be notified. Otherwise, any comments or materials received as a result of this legal notice will be considered in the decision-making process. The CE-2 will be updated to reflect all public comments and inquiries.

This notice is published in compliance with: 1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1) stating, “Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program.”; 2) 23 CFR 450.210(a)(1)(ix) stating, “Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate.”; and 3) The INDOT *Public Involvement Policies and Procedures* approved by the Federal Highway Administration on August 16, 2012.