



Memorandum

To: Indiana Transportation Partners

From: INDOT, Traffic Engineering Division, Traffic Mobility Office

cc: INDOT, District Traffic Engineers

INDOT, Capitol Program Management Directors

Date: 6/1/2023

Re: Interstate Access Request – Outline

In compliance with FHWA guidelines, INDOT and its partners must follow a set process when proposing changes to the Interstate System in Indiana. This process starts during the Engineering Assessment phase of the project and continues through plan development. There are multiple steps to this process that are sometimes confused or misunderstood. The following outline has been prepared to assist users with a broad understanding of the process.

This outline is not exhaustive and does not cover every possible scenario but is useful as a general overview of what the Interstate Access Request process entails. The INDOT project manager, consultant and applicant (often a local public agency) should all have a general understanding of this process when the scope of work is being established for the consultant.

For all Interstate Access Requests, the Traffic Mobility Office in the Traffic Engineering Division will facilitate all communication with FHWA regarding Interstate Access and will ultimately be responsible for transmitting the official access request. A representative from the Traffic Mobility Office should be involved in any meetings or communications regarding Interstate Access.

Interstate Access Request Overview

1. What is an Interstate Access Request (Previously known as Interchange Justification)
 - a. Process through which changes in access to the Interstate System are requested
 - b. Reviewed by INDOT and FHWA
 - c. Must document two policy points:
 - i. Operational and safety analysis conclude that the proposed change does not have a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation of the Interstate System
 - ii. Provide full access connection to a public road network and follow all design standards and guidance
2. When is an Interstate Access Request (IAR) needed?
 - a. Modification to access point to the Interstate (more than just to terminal intersections)
 - b. New access point to the Interstate
 - c. Removal of access point to the Interstate
3. How an IAR is initiated
 - a. INDOT Project
 - b. Local Government (or other outside party) in coordination with INDOT
4. Funding for IAR study
 - a. Paid for by requestor (does not guarantee approval)
5. Funding for improvement
 - a. INDOT may or may not participate financially
 - b. INDOT typically will not participate unless project improves a defined need on the state system
6. IAR Timeline (*See below for more details on each step*)
 - a. Framework Document: 1 Month
 - b. Travel Demand Model Calibration (if applicable): 4-6 Months
 - c. Alternative Evaluation Report (AER): 6 Months
 - d. Draft Interstate Access Document (IAD): Submitted with Stage 1 Plans, Traffic Plans Included
 - e. Final IAD: Submitted with Stage 2 Plans and NEPA approval
7. Other documents to see:
 - a. Indiana Interstate Access Request Procedures
 - b. FHWA Interstate Access Policy
 - c. FHWA / INDOT Interstate Access Programmatic Agreement

Interstate Access Request Process

1. Initial meeting with INDOT Traffic Mobility Office to discuss proposal (*Review this Outline*)
2. Requestor brings engineering consultant under contract (Requestor is INDOT for INDOT proposed projects)
3. Framework Meeting
 - a. Invite FHWA, INDOT Traffic Mobility Office, Requestor and Consultant
 - b. Framework Document records what is decided at meeting.
4. Framework Document
 - a. Reviewed and approved by INDOT and FHWA / Concurrence from FHWA and INDOT
 - b. Outlines process that will be followed (will modeling be needed)
 - c. Documents assumptions/data sources/risks/challenges/Purpose & Need
 - d. Establishes limits (typically to next interchange in each direction and next major intersection along the S-line)
 - e. Includes alternatives & years that are likely to be evaluated
 - f. Establishes Measures of Effectiveness and analysis methods for safety and operations
 - g. Includes draft schedule / map / next steps
5. Calibration Report & Traffic Forecast Report (*if applicable, See Travel Demand Modeling Outline*)
 - a. Travel demand modeling typically needed for new access points or removed access points
 - b. Requires a detailed and calibrated travel demand model (using sub-area extract from State or MPO model; modified for additional detail)
 - c. Models traffic with and without modification/development
 - d. Report documents process/assumptions/results
 - e. Final product is projected turning movement volumes for all major intersections in build year and design year
 - f. Reviewed by INDOT and FHWA
6. Alternative Evaluation Report
 - a. Traffic analysis of existing conditions for state and local roadway network (Operations and Safety)
 - b. Evaluation of travel patterns, connectivity, accessibility
 - c. Traffic analysis of future condition with no improvement (Operations)
 - d. Describes alternatives, including existing local roadway network improvements (eliminates infeasible alternatives)
 - e. Traffic analysis of all feasible alternatives in build year and design year (20 years from build year) (Operations and Safety)
 - f. Cost estimate and impacts of all feasible alternatives
 - g. Scoping level engineering drawing of all feasible alternatives
 - h. Decision matrix & Discussion of Decisions
 - i. Recommended Alternative(s) recommended
7. FHWA Determines if IAD is required and what will be included
8. Draft Interstate Access Document (IAD) (Submitted with Stage 1 Plans)
 - a. INDOT transmits IAD to FHWA requesting determination of Safety, Operational, and Engineering Acceptability (DSOEA)
 - b. Includes, Project Description/Study Area/Purpose and Need/Alternatives & Proposal
 - c. Brief discussion of analysis results
 - d. Detailed discussion of the recommended alternative
 - e. Response to policy points #1 and #2
 - f. Attach previous documents (Framework/Calibration/AER/Design Plans/Design Exceptions etc.)
9. Final Interstate Access Request Approval (IAR)
 - a. IAR Approval can only be received as part of NEPA
 - b. After NEPA approved, submit final IAR for approval with documentation of approved NEPA and any necessary updates.