



# INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Greenfield District  
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**Michael R. Pence, Governor**  
**Karl B. Browning, Commissioner**



The I-65/I-70 South Split Project on the east side of downtown Indianapolis was essentially completed in October 2013. The remaining component, the East Street bridge over I-70, opened to four lanes of traffic in October 2014 after a six-month deck reconstruction project that increased the clearance over the interstate by more than a foot.

Raising the East Street Bridge was the final component of a project to increase clearances on eight bridges over I-65/I-70 in downtown Indianapolis. In Fall 2013, the pavement beneath seven South Split bridges was reconstructed and lowered to allow for increased bridge clearances and reduced potential for collisions from unpermitted and off-route trucks with oversize and unsecure loads. Since the lowered pavement was opened to traffic in October 2013, to date there have been no such bridge strikes.

## Project Overview

Governor Mike Pence announced I-65 and I-70 between the north and south split were opened to traffic on Oct. 16, more than two weeks ahead of the aggressive 59-day schedule bid by Milestone Contractors.

“Closing interstate highways is hard on everybody, and Hoosiers are to be commended for their patience and cooperation during the I-65/I-70 South Split Project,” Governor Pence said. “On behalf of the people of Indiana, I express my appreciation for the hard work and professionalism of the Indiana Department of Transportation and its contractors for completing these needed public safety improvements ahead of schedule and under budget.”

INDOT has posted a brief message from [District Deputy Commissioner Brandye Hendrickson](#) thanking the public for their patience and support during the interstate closure.

“A shared sense of urgency among the City of Indianapolis, the Federal Highway Administration and our contractors expedited project development and construction,” Hendrickson said. “INDOT recognizes and appreciates the swift work of Milestone Contractors, Parsons Transportation Group, United Consultants, Cardno TBE, Continental Mapping and Earth Exploration.”

Even with the increased clearances at the South Split, INDOT reminds all drivers to follow safety requirements by securing and measuring all loads, obtaining permits for loads higher than 13 feet 6 inches and following designated routes for oversize vehicles.

INDOT launched an accelerated project to close I-65 and I-70 between the north and south split on the east side of downtown Indianapolis for approximately 59 days in Fall 2013 to reconstruct and lower one-half mile of pavement beneath seven bridges. The project was necessary to increase bridge clearances and reduce the potential for collisions from unpermitted and off-route trucks with oversize and unsecure loads. Repeated bridge strikes from these trucks posed a safety concern.

By closing the interstate through the work zone, INDOT was able to accelerate construction and expedite completion of the project while providing a safer environment for workers and motorists

INDOT partnered with the City of Indianapolis to maintain traffic flow and access to downtown businesses, neighborhoods, and cultural districts using techniques that were applied successfully during the 2003 Hyperfix project. Message boards and signage directed I-65 and I-70 through traffic to use the south and west legs of I-465.

Temporary traffic improvements also were completed before the interstate closure to optimize traffic flow. These improvements included:

- Widening the Pine Street entrance ramp to eastbound I-70 to accommodate two lanes
- Restriping New York Street and restricting some parking to allow for an additional traffic lane
- Building a temporary eastbound I-70 to southbound I-65 ramp configuration with a 30 mph speed limit

Four Indiana contractors competed over construction cost and closure days using an innovative INDOT bidding techniques. Private sector competition and innovations reduced the expected interstate closure from 90 to 59 days and construction costs to \$12.4 million. Incentives of \$60,000 per day encouraged Milestone Contractors to beat their already aggressive schedule.

## Previous Conditions

More than 400 collisions have been recorded at South Split bridges over I-65/I-70 since 1999 and the frequency of vehicle bridge strikes has increased in recent years.

The most severe incident occurred on Feb. 22, 2013, when an oversize vehicle struck the Virginia Avenue Bridge, requiring a weekend-long closure of northbound I-65 and eastbound I-70 for emergency repairs to the bridge.



The bridges at Virginia, Fletcher, Calvary and Morris had vertical clearances ranging from 13'11" to 14'6". This project increased the vertical clearance of each structure to at least 14'9" by reconstructing and lowering the pavement. The new pavement is built of continuously reinforced concrete, which is held tightly together with reinforcing steel and does not require contraction joints. This pavement will withstand traffic loads and adverse environmental conditions, decrease maintenance and user delays, and remain in service well into the next generation.

View the South Split [Project Area Map](#) to review mainline interstate and ramp closures. Visit the [Detour Routes Map](#) to Review I-65 and I-70 detour routes.

## **Meetings and Hearings**

- [August 8, 2013 Fountain Square Merchants Presentation](#)
- [July 11, 2013 Open House Presentation](#)
- [July 1, 2013 Contract Pre-Bid Presentation](#)

## **More Information**

Motorists, residents and businesses are encouraged to sign up for the project's email list by clicking on the red GovDelivery envelope icon in the left navigation pane. Updates will also be provided on the [Indiana Department of Transportation East Central](#) Facebook page and on Twitter [@INDOT\\_ECentral](#).

## **Contact Information**

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