



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Eric Holcomb, Governor
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NOTICE OF PROJECT ADVANCEMENT – U.S. 41 Roadway Widening with Center Turn Lane in the Town of St. John, Lake County (DES# 1383695)

December 2018

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) held a public hearing in August of this year for a proposed roadway widening project with an added center turn lane on U.S. 41 in St. John, Lake County. This public hearing was held as part of an environmental analysis phase as required per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public involvement is an important element of a comprehensive decision-making process.

The purpose of the U.S. 41 roadway widening and added center turn lane project is to enhance safety and provide storage space for vehicles to stop safely while waiting to make turning movements.

INDOT Preferred Alternative: the existing U.S. 41 roadway will be modified and widened to include a 14 foot wide auxiliary center left-turn lane throughout the length of the project area (approximately 1.5 miles). Exceptions will be at intersections where left turns already exist and at bridge or culvert structures where widening would require modifications of the existing structures. The auxiliary lane will allow vehicles traveling in both north and south directions the ability to have a safe place to stop (outside of the through lanes) while waiting for an opening in oncoming traffic. North and south bound traffic in the through lanes will be able to continue unimpeded. Due to widening of the roadway, existing driveway culverts will be replaced as needed. Visit the INDOT LaPorte District webpage at <https://www.in.gov/indot/2705.htm> for additional information regarding the project.

The purpose of this notice is two-fold. Firstly, this is an opportunity for INDOT to communicate with project stakeholders regarding the status of this project. As part of INDOT's commitment to public involvement, it is important to keep the community informed of project developments. Secondly, this is an opportunity to formally announce the conclusion of the environmental analysis phase and transition to the next phase of development, real estate acquisition.

Subsequent to reviewing and considering all comments and materials received as a result of the INDOT public hearing held at the St. John Town Hall on Thursday, August 2, 2018, **INDOT will advance this project to the next phase of development (real estate acquisition) with construction anticipated to take place in 2020.** Environmental analysis documentation, will remain available for public inspection during normal office hours at the St. John Branch of the Lake County Public Library, 9450 Wicker Avenue, St. John, IN 4637; Phone (219) 365-5379; INDOT LaPorte District Office, 315 East Blvd., LaPorte, IN; Phone 1-855-463-6848; INDOT Office of Public Involvement, IGCN Room N642, 100 North Senate Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46204 Phone 1-855-463-6848 and on-line at: <https://www.in.gov/indot/2705.htm>.

Indiana Department of Transportation

County Lake Route US 41 Des. No. 1383695

**FHWA-Indiana Environmental Document
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION / ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM
GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION**

Road No./County:	US 41, Lake County
Designation Number:	1383695
Project Description/Termini:	Auxiliary Lanes, Two-Way Left-Turn Lanes

After completing this form, I conclude that this project qualifies for the following type of Categorical Exclusion (FHWA must review/approve if Level 4 CE):

X	Categorical Exclusion, Level 2 – The proposed action meets the criteria for Categorical Exclusion Manual Level 2 - table 1, CE Level Thresholds. Required Signatories: ESM (Environmental Scoping Manager)
	Categorical Exclusion, Level 3 – The proposed action meets the criteria for Categorical Exclusion Manual Level 3 - table 1, CE Level Thresholds. Required Signatories: ESM, ES (Environmental Services Division)
	Categorical Exclusion, Level 4 – The proposed action meets the criteria for Categorical Exclusion Manual Level 4 - table 1, CE Level Thresholds. Required Signatories: ESM, ES, FHWA
	Environmental Assessment (EA) – EAs require a separate FONSI. Additional research and documentation is necessary to determine the effects on the environment. Required Signatories: ES, FHWA

Note: For documents prepared by or for Environmental Services Division, it is not necessary for the ESM of the district in which the project is located to release for public involvement or sign for approval.

Approval Lisa Vale 9/21/2018
 ESM Signature Date ES Signature Date

 FHWA Signature Date

Release for Public Involvement

Ashley Sharkey 06/05/18
 ESM Initials Date ES Initials Date

8-28-18 Certification of Public Involvement Michael Clark 8-28-18
 Office of Public Involvement Date

Note: Do not approve until after Section 106 public involvement and all other environmental requirements have been satisfied.

INDOT ES/District Env. Reviewer Signature: Lisa Vale Date: 9/21/2018

Name and Organization of CE/EA Preparer: Jessica Spiess, INDOT-LaPorte District Environmental Section

Project name: Auxiliary Lanes, Two-Way Left-Turn Lanes Date: May 25, 2018

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Fourteen written comments were received during the 15-day comment period following the public hearing. The comments received centered primarily around a few topics. One such topic was the public's preference for extending the project from Standard Dr. north to 93rd Avenue. The public also expressed preference for a stop light at the intersection of Joliet St. and not at 96th Place. Inquiries were also made for the addition of more crosswalks and sidewalks within the project area and beyond. The community input and feedback was considered and evaluated throughout the progression of the project development process. See Appendix G116-G155 for the written comments. INDOT reviewed all comments and provided responses. See Appendix G156-G163 for the INDOT responses to all comments.

The INDOT Public Hearings Section certified the public involvement requirements on August 28, 2018. See Appendix G3-G163 for all public hearing files.

Public Controversy on Environmental Grounds

Will the project involve substantial controversy concerning community and/or natural resource impacts?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Remarks: This project is not expected to result in substantial controversy concerning community and/or natural resource impacts.

Part II - General Project Identification, Description, and Design Information

Sponsor of the Project: Indiana Department of Transportation INDOT District: La Porte
Local Name of the Facility: US 41

Funding Source (mark all that apply): Federal State Local Other*

*If other is selected, please identify the funding source: _____

PURPOSE AND NEED:

Describe the transportation problem that the project will address. The solution to the traffic problem should NOT be discussed in this section. (Refer to the CE Manual, Section IV.B.2. Purpose and Need)

The purpose of this project is to improve safety throughout the town of St. John on the US 41 roadway especially for left-turning vehicles.

The project is needed to reduce the amount of crashes on the US 41 roadway, by allowing space for vehicles to safely stop outside of the through travel lanes.

Project name: Auxiliary Lanes, Two-Way Left-Turn Lanes Date: September 7, 2018

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE):

County: Lake County Municipality: St. John

Limits of Proposed Work: US 41 from US 231 to 1.52 miles north of US 231 (Standard Dr.)

Total Work Length: 1.52 Mile(s) Total Work Area: 20.88 Acre(s)

Is an Interchange Modification Study / Interchange Justification Study (IMS/IJS) required?
If yes, when did the FHWA grant a conditional approval for this project?

Yes ¹	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date: <input type="text"/>	

¹If an IMS or IJS is required; a copy of the approved CE/EA document must be submitted to the FHWA with a request for final approval of the IMS/IJS.

In the remarks box below, describe existing conditions, provide in detail the scope of work for the project, including the preferred alternative. Include a discussion of logical termini. Discuss any major issues for the project and how the project will improve safety or roadway deficiencies if these are issues.

The project is located on US 41 from US 231 to 1.52 miles north of US 231 at Standard Dr., in the town of St. John, Lake County, Indiana. The project is located in the St. John Quadrangle, Sections 4, 5, 32, and 33, Townships 34N and 35N, and Range 9W. The project is in an urban area. US 41 is classified as an other principal arterial roadway and handles four through lanes of traffic, two northbound and two southbound, with right turn lanes located sporadically throughout the project area. The lanes are 12 feet wide with varied amounts of paved shoulders. See Appendix B for Project Location Maps.

The existing US 41 roadway will be modified and widened to include a 14 foot wide auxiliary center left-turn lane throughout the length of the project area. Exceptions will be at intersections where left turns already exist and at bridge or culvert structures where widening would require modifications of the existing structures. Turn lanes are also not needed at these structures due to the lack of business or residential properties located at the structures. The auxiliary lane will allow vehicles traveling in both north and south directions to ability to have a safe place to stop outside of the through lanes while waiting for an opening in oncoming traffic. North and south bound traffic in the through lanes will be able to continue unimpeded. Due to widening of the roadway, existing driveway culverts will be replaced in-kind in a new location as needed. Twin drainage structures smaller than 36 inches will be added to allow water to equalize under the US 41 roadway into new drainage basins along the edge of US 41 south of 101st Place and north of the entrance to Alsip Nursery. See Appendix B118 for location of structures on plans. A large detention basin is being coordinated with the Town of St. John, the Lake County Drainage Board, United States Army Corps of Engineers – Chicago District (USACE), and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). One curb ramp will also be updated as part of this project at the southeast corner of 97th Lane and US 41 (Wicker Ave.). All other curb ramps within the project area are compliant.

US 41 will have phased lane closures occurring throughout construction. See Appendix B72-B101 for Maintenance of Traffic Plans.

The surrounding area includes wetlands, forest, commercial, and residential properties. The proposed alternative will require the purchasing of approximately 2.99 acres of permanent right-of-way and 0.07 acres of temporary right-of-way. The permanent right-of-way will be purchased from 36 parcels. See Appendix B57-B148 for Stage 2 Plans.

The preferred alternative will impact St. John Ditch, likely a jurisdictional waterway. There will be temporary

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and permanent impacts to St. John Ditch. St. John Ditch is located within a floodplain. Due to impacts to the ditch, a construction in a floodway permit will be required for this project. See Appendix F for Waters Report and floodplain maps.
Six wetlands will be impacted by this project. Impacts were reduced to as small as possible, but without impacting wetlands the project would have incurred adverse impacts to adjacent properties, substantially increased project costs, not addressed engineering, traffic, maintenance and safety issues, caused adverse social and economic impacts, and would no longer be able to meet the project's identified need. Because of impacts to wetlands greater than 0.1 acres, mitigation will be required for this project. See Appendix F for Waters Report and wetland maps.
Due to waterway and wetland impacts, 401 and 404 permits will be required for this project.
Due to the widening of the roadway, approximately 11.75 acres will be disturbed. Because of this, a Rule 5 permit will be required for this project.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Describe all discarded alternatives, including the Do-Nothing Alternative and an explanation of why each discarded alternative was not selected.

One other alternative was considered:
1) No Build
Alternative 1 - No Build (A): The no build alternative would do nothing to address the deficiencies of this roadway. The roadway would remain without auxiliary lanes and accidents related to left turns will continue to occur. This alternative does not meet the purpose and need for this project. Therefore, it was not chosen.
No other alternatives could address the purpose and need for this project.

The Do Nothing Alternative is not feasible, prudent or practicable because (Mark all that apply):
It would not correct existing capacity deficiencies;
It would not correct existing safety hazards;
It would not correct the existing roadway geometric deficiencies;
It would not correct existing deteriorated conditions and maintenance problems; or
It would result in serious impacts to the motoring public and general welfare of the economy.
Other (Describe)

Table with 4 rows and 1 column. Row 2 and Row 4 contain 'X'.

Project name: Auxiliary Lanes, Two-Way Left-Turn Lanes Date: September 7, 2018

Response to Public Comments - US 41 from Standard Drive to US 231 (Des. 1383695)

Commenter Name:	General Nature of Comment:	Response to Comment:	Comment Location in Document
Theresa Birlson	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G66-G68
	- Why is INDOT choosing not to include 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr.?	The town of St. John is developing the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	
Bryan Blazak	- Recommends a traffic signal should be installed at Joliet St.	This project does not include the Joliet St. intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	G29-G30
	- Recommends more crosswalks across US 41	The crosswalk at US 41 and W 97th Lane from the southeast corner to the southwest corner will be improved with ADA compliant curb ramps and markings. No other crosswalks are proposed as part of this project. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	

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Maura Carpenter	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G69-G70
	- Supports the project	Thank you for your comment.	
Anthony Casboni	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G71-G74
Kathleen Fox	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G75-G77
	- Why is INDOT choosing not to include 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr.?	The town of St. John is developing the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	
	- Recommends a traffic signal should be installed at Joliet St.	This project does not include the Joliet St. intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	

Response to Public Comments - US 41 from Standard Drive to US 231 (Des. 1383695)

Joseph Hero	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G27-G28, G30
	- Recommends going all the way to 85th Ave.	The section north of 93rd to 85th Ave. has many areas for turning that decrease the need to add center turn lanes. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
	- A new traffic signal should not be installed at 96th Place	This project does not include the 96th Place intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
	- Recommends a traffic signal should be installed at Joliet St.	This project does not include the Joliet St. intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
	- Recommends making US 41 six lanes from Lake Central High School to US 231.	The US 41 corridor does not warrant six lanes at this time. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
Kim Krull	- Supports the project	Thank you for your comment.	G78-G79
Karl Madsen	- What is the safe distance the ditch will be moved away from US 41?	The project will utilize the criteria set by FHWA for these distances. The project team will ensure that the project is designed to meet these widths.	G26
	- Concerned about property prices and fair market value for The homeowners property being purchased as part of the project	INDOT follows the FHWA guidelines that are stipulated by Federal Law, specifically 49 CFR 24. Property values are determined based on the federal guidelines.	

Response to Public Comments - US 41 from Standard Drive to US 231 (Des. 1383695)

Robin McHugh	- The current project will aid in safety	Thank you for your comment.	G80-G81
	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	
Thomas Mestrovich	- Supports the safety effort of the project	Thank you for your comment.	G82-G84
Maryann O'Neill	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G85-G86
Paul Panczuk (Chairman of the St. John Board of Zoning Appeals) Verbal Comment	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G28-G29
	- Recommends sidewalks be installed all the way to 101st	No new sidewalk is proposed within this project.	
	- Recommends all new traffic signals should include a crosswalk	There are no new traffic signals included with this project.	

Response to Public Comments - US 41 from Standard Drive to US 231 (Des. 1383695)

<p>Paul Panczuk (Chairman of the St. John Board of Zoning Appeals) Written Comment</p>	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	<p align="center">G87-G91</p>
	- Does not believe the town plans to widen US 41 north of Standard Dr.	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	
	- Recommends installing sidewalk from 93rd Ave to 97th Lane	This project does not include the areas from 93rd Ave to 96th Place intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
	- Recommends installing sidewalk from 97th Lane to 101st	No new sidewalk is proposed within this project.	
	- Recommends installing a crosswalk at 96th	This project does not include the intersection at 96th Place. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
	- Recommends relocating utilities underground rather than overhead	Utility coordination is ongoing. Locations of relocations are not known at this time.	
<p>Greg Reilly</p>	-Recommends the southbound turn lane add extra capacity for turning at the US 231 intersection	The intersection of US 41 and US 231 will remain the same configuration. No extra capacity will be added to the turn lane.	<p align="center">G92</p>
	- Recommends traffic signal modernization upgrades at 97th Lane intersection	The intersection of US 41 and 97th Lane will remain the same configuration and will reuse the existing signal equipment.	
	- Recommends lighting should be added to the 97th Lane intersection	No lighting will be added at the 97th Lane intersection.	

Response to Public Comments - US 41 from Standard Drive to US 231 (Des. 1383695)

Chip Sanders	- What is the total area (acres) of the proposed taking for each of my properties?	0.06 acres from Parcel 9903 & 0.07 acres from Parcel 9939	G93-G96
	- Is it possible to know the exact increase from the current curb to the proposed curb?	The existing curb fluctuates so worst case scenario from back of existing curb to back of proposed curb is 8 feet. Generally a little less than 8 feet though.	
	- Are there any new traffic signals on the section of US 41 near my lots?	No new traffic signals are currently being proposed near your lots.	
	- Recommends the concrete island at the entrances between 9903 and 9939 be altered to allow northbound and southbound access	The project team has discussed this and will modify these two drives to allow left turn movements from southbound US 41. Left turn movements from these two drives onto US 41 will still not be permitted.	
Carmen Shafer	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G97-G100
	- Why is INDOT choosing not to include 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr.?	The town of St. John is developing the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	
	- Recommends a traffic signal should be installed at Joliet St.	This project does not include the Joliet St. intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	

Response to Public Comments - US 41 from Standard Drive to US 231 (Des. 1383695)

Roger D. Stokes	- Recommends a traffic signal should be installed at Joliet St.	This project does not include the Joliet St. intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	G101-G102
	- A new traffic signal should not be installed at 96th Place	This project does not include the 96th Place intersection. This section of US 41 will be reviewed by INDOT in future projects.	
Joe Suppes	- Is the flooding south of town nearing US 231 going to be addressed as part of this project?	The project will follow hydraulic design requirements to meet local, state, and federal standards. Drainage is being looked at as part of the project.	G30
Gerald Swets	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G27
Julie Zasada	- 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. should be included in the project	Through coordination with the town of St. John, the town has informed INDOT that they intend to improve the US 41 corridor from 93rd Ave. to Standard Dr. The project is anticipated to start construction in the summer of 2019.	G103-G104