



I-65/I-70 North Split Project: Fact Sheet

Updated May 2018

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is preparing to rehabilitate the I-65/I-70 North Split interchange to address bridge and pavement conditions and improve safety in the project area. In addition to the interchange itself, the project stretches approximately one mile south to Washington Street, a half-mile east to just west of Rural/Keystone, and a half-mile west to Meridian Street. The work outside the interchange is only on the I-65/I-70 mainline, not the city streets underneath.

Need for the project: Public safety

Public safety is the number one driver for this project. The frequent merges, weaves and lane changes over short distances within the interchange increase the potential for crashes, cause driver confusion and disrupt traffic flow. There were over 1,600 recorded crashes in the North Split project area during the 5-year period from 2012 to 2016. The primary type of crash was “rear-ends” which may be attributed to congestion conditions on the interstate. The secondary type of crash was “sideswipes” which may be attributed to congested interstates and challenging weaving movements. By rehabilitating the North Split Interchange to address these safety concerns, INDOT can reconfigure the interchange to provide fewer points of conflict.

Deteriorated bridge conditions are another safety concern. Each of the 32 bridges has deteriorating components, and 11 have only two to five years of remaining service life. To keep the interstates functional, bridge conditions and safety issues must be addressed.

In addition, the pavement throughout the interchange is well beyond its lifespan and needs constant repair to remain safe and functional. This project will replace all pavement within the project limits.

Use of the interchange: Traffic patterns

The North Split interchange is the second-most-heavily-traveled interchange in Indiana, accommodating more than 214,000 vehicles per day. In fact, of the total vehicles that travel the interchange in the morning and evening peaks, only about 10 percent is traveling through (outside I-465 to outside I-465). This is based on traffic modeling and has been confirmed by real-world location based services data from smart phones.

While in the planning phase, the Project Team is working with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization, public transit agencies and others to examine and understand the impacts transit and other traffic diversion methods may have on traffic through the interchange.



Many bridges in the project area show age-related wear such as rust and damage from leaking water. Photo Source: HNTB

Beyond the interchange: System-Level Analysis

When the project began its federally-required Environmental Assessment (EA) process as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in September 2017, several community groups asked INDOT to consider broader concepts before defining alternatives to be evaluated in the EA for the North Split Project. Their concern was the North Split Project would limit future system-level options.

INDOT listened, expanded its scope beyond the NEPA requirements, and will release a System-Level Analysis in May 2018.

This review analyzes performance, cost, and impacts of system-level alternative concepts. The purpose is to define the scope of the North Split Project and inform current public dialogue regarding the interstate system in downtown Indianapolis. The downtown interstate system is the “backwards C-shape” of I-65 and I-70, from the I-65/Martin Luther King Boulevard/West Street interchange at the northwest corner of downtown, across I-65 to the North Split interchange, down I-65/I-70 to the South Split, and across I-70 to the I-70/West Street interchange at the southwest corner of downtown.

| This analysis DOES... | This analysis DOES NOT... |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inform current public dialogue regarding the downtown interstate system | Recommend a particular design for a future downtown interstate system |
| Advance the North Split project with an understanding of system-level concepts | Limit future system-level concepts |

Back to the interchange: Project-Level Screening

When the System-Level Analysis is complete, and after public feedback has been collected and evaluated, INDOT will move forward with the project-level screening process to define alternatives for the North Split Project specifically. That alternative or alternatives will then be studied in the EA.

An EA examines impacts on homes, businesses and the natural environment. It will also consider noise, connectivity and air quality. The project-level screening study will review a range of potential alternatives based on the project purpose and need, potential cost, and potential community impact. The public and agencies will have the opportunity to comment on the project-level screening report.

Project funding: INDOT’s Next Level Roads Program

The current budget to repair/replace 32 bridges and reconstruct the North Split interchange is between \$250-\$300 million, funded through INDOT’s Next Level Roads Program. About 90 percent will come from federal funding dedicated to interstate highways, while the remaining 10 percent will come from the state highway fund, comprised of funding from fuel taxes, permits, and a portion of vehicle license fees and driver’s license fees.