



MEETING SUMMARY

Date: October 18, 2018
Time: 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Meeting: Emergency Management Services Meeting
Location: Indianapolis Traffic Management Center
Attendees: See page 5

Meeting officially began at 10:05 a.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kia Gillette from HNTB started off the meeting with introductions. Emergency responder representatives and members of the project team introduced themselves by name and organization.

2. Purpose of Meeting

This meeting is focused on the problems and needs for the North Split interchange, as well as possible solutions and the preliminary preferred alternative.

3. Alternatives Screening Report

Kia Gillette from HTNB discussed the problems with the North Split interchange and the process for identifying context and gathering input. High-level points included:

Problems

- The North Split interchange was constructed in the 1960s and 1970s, the pavement is past its life expectancy.
- The interchange is constantly in need of maintenance and repairs due to its condition.
- Bridge conditions are getting worse and there are 11 bridges with a service life of less than five years and 16 bridges with a service life of 5-10 years.
- The North Split interchange has crash rates higher than other Indiana urban interstates.
- Fatalities are almost two times higher, injuries are almost three times higher, and property damage crashes are more than two times higher in the North Split interchange.
- There are four top crash locations within the North Split interchange:
 - #1 Pennsylvania Ramp Weave Section
 - #2 Delaware Ramp Weave Section
 - #3 I-65/I-70 Merge/Lane Drop
 - #4 I-70 Curve/Merge

- Highest number of crashes occur on the west leg of the interchange in weaving areas at the Pennsylvania Street exit and Delaware Street entrance ramps.

Purpose and Need/Context

- The purpose and need of the North Split project is to correct deteriorated bridge and pavement conditions, improve safety, and improve interchange operations to reduce congestion.
- The North Split project area is surrounded by environmental resources such as historic districts, a park, the Monon Greenway, the Cultural Trail, and the CSX Railroad.
- INDOT and the project team have spent numerous hours meeting and talking with the public at public meetings, community and neighborhood group meetings, advisory committees, and through social media, email and phone calls.
- INDOT has listened to public input and significantly changed the scope of the North Split project – the preliminary preferred alternative does not include added through lanes or large retaining walls.

Alternatives

Seth Schickel with HNTB walked through the alternatives from the Alternative Screening Report. High level points included:

- Three alternatives considered are low/cost or minimal and have been eliminated because they did not meet the purpose and need:
 - #1 No-build
 - #2 Transportation System Management
 - #3 Bridge and Pavement Replacement in Kind
- One alternative was eliminated due to impacts:
 - #5 Full Interchange Reconstruction
- Alternative 4 includes three options that address the purpose and need with trade-offs between access and level of impacts.
 - 4a - Pennsylvania and Delaware ramps closed
 - 4b - Pennsylvania and Delaware ramps open with all current access
 - 4c - Selected ramp access restrictions

Alternative 4c improves safety, removes the worst bottlenecks, does not add through lanes, is more compact, is within the existing right-of-way, has minimal walls, and meets the project purpose and need. It has been identified by INDOT as the preliminary preferred alternative, subject to public and agency feedback.

4. Next Steps

Next steps will be to gather feedback on the preliminary preferred alternative and the Alternative Screening Report through October 29. The project team will then refine the preliminary preferred alternative, as well as analyze environmental impacts. The project team anticipates publishing the Environmental Assessment in early 2020.

The next time we anticipate meeting with this group is spring 2019. We'll have more specifics about preliminary maintenance of traffic plans then. In the meantime, please submit comments or concerns to us.

5. Discussion and Questions

Questions (Q) & Answers (A):

Q: Does the ramp from West Street to I-65 contribute to the congestion and weaves near Pennsylvania and Delaware streets?

A: Yes, it likely contributes to it but its effects are reduced by distance. West Street is just outside of the project area.

Q: How much space does I-65 traffic have before motorists take the Keystone Avenue exit from I-70? Will I-70 change east of the project area?

A: It will look the same as it does today. Technically, exiting onto Keystone isn't considered a weave because all traffic is on I-70 east of the North Split.

Q: How do you prohibit I-70 westbound traffic from weaving into the Pennsylvania Street exit?

A: The exit lane will be separated from I-70 traffic merging onto I-65 northbound by a concrete barrier to prohibit people from crossing the lanes.

Q: How did the Mayor react to closing the I-65 traffic's access to the C-D road?

A: INDOT presented this alternative to the Mayor's office and the Department of Public Works and they support it. We had to balance the trade-offs with requests from the businesses and neighborhoods that asked us to stay within the existing right-of-way, not add through lanes, and not build large retaining walls.

Q: Can I-65 traffic exit at Meridian and then jump back on Delaware to access the C-D road?

A: Yes, based on current concepts, that movement will be allowed and the traffic model shows people doing that during the AM peak hour. We have not fully defined local traffic impacts or potential changes.

Q: Ambulances usually avoid the downtown streets because of traffic lights and use the interstate instead.

A: They will still be able to use the Delaware Street entrance ramp to access the C-D road. You just won't be able to access it from I-65 southbound.

Q: Have you factored in the loss of capacity on the local streets south of I-65 to bike lanes?

A: We use the Indy Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)'s traffic model that includes those projects. We're not done with design and the environmental study that will look closer at potential changes to traffic on local streets.

Q: For I-65 northbound traffic to exit onto Pennsylvania, where does the ramp begin?

A: Traffic will have to make that decision somewhere around Michigan Street.

Q: When will construction start and how long would it last?

A: The earliest it would start is mid-2020, which we recognize is in the middle of a lot of tournaments and conferences that require access to downtown. It could be two or three construction seasons, but it could also be shorter if the interchange is completely closed.

Q: Would a full closure have to be done in segments?

A: Yes, it could be done by the west, south and east/interchange segments. We know INDOT has had similar closures to these in the past.

Q: Ambulances have trouble with the sharp curves. Will those radii be improved with this project?

A: Making those curves smoother is one of the first things the project team will look at as we start refining the design. The ramp for northbound I-65 traffic to continue north will be similar, but motorists will no longer have a decision to make after that curve, so people will stay in their lanes.

Q: When you consider closures, do you consider emergency evacuation routes for hazmat incidents?

A: That is something the project team will consider.

Q: Are you communicating with convention and sports organizations about the maintenance of traffic plans?

A: Yes, those organizations are members of our Community Advisory Committee. We met with them last week about the screening report and will continue to meet with them.

Q: Will you eliminate access from 11th Street to the interstate?

A: Not under Alternative 4c. Alternative 4a would have done that.

Q: If there's a complete shut down, would it be one-and-a-half or two years? What does that do to I-465?

A: It's likely, but we'll look at a variety of phasing options and everything is very preliminary right now. We've found that there's not a lot of through traffic during the peak hours who might redirect to I-465.

6. Adjourn

Meeting concluded at 11 a.m.

Attendees:

Project Team Members	
Eryn Fletcher	FHWA
Dave Cleveland	Corradino
Kia Gillette	HNTB
Ali Hernandez	Borshoff
Erin Pipkin	Compass Outreach Solutions
Seth Schickel	HNTB

Emergency Responders	
Andrew Bowes	Indianapolis Emergency Medical Services
Kassandra Buster	IMPD Homeland Security Bureau
Adarius Gardner	IU Methodist Hospital
Fred Ilnicki	Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department
Joseph Krebsbach	Indianapolis Fire Department
Kim Peters	Indianapolis Traffic Management Center