



MEETING SUMMARY

Date: October 17, 2018
Time: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Meeting: Resource Agency Meeting #3
Location: HNTB, Indianapolis, IN

**Complete attendee list begins on page 5*

Meeting officially began at 11 a.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kia Gillette with HNTB started off the meeting with introductions. She summarized the previous Resource Agency Meeting held on May 22, 2018. This meeting focused on the System-Level Analysis (SLA). The SLA was a result of a great deal of public involvement from various groups. After the SLA, the INDOT decided to refocus on the North Split interchange. Since the project inception, the INDOT has taken public input seriously and the project scope changed because of this. The current focus centers on safety and infrastructure needs. The preliminary preferred alternative has no additional travel lanes, minimal retaining walls, a smaller interchange footprint, and stays within the existing right-of-way.

Kia explained this meeting would focus on the problems and needs for the North Split interchange as well as solutions and the preliminary preferred alternative.

2. Alternatives Screening Report

Kia Gillette from HTNB discussed the problems with the North Split interchange and the process for identifying the surrounding environmental resources 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.

Questions (Q) and Answers (A):

Q: Can you explain, generally, about how many times you've met with the public? (FHWA)

A: We've met with more than 50 neighborhood groups and community organizations. (HNTB)

Alternatives

Dave Cleveland with Corradino 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.

Q and A:

Q: It may be worth mentioning a little bit about the history of the interstate – originally to accommodate I-69. For Alternative 3, you’d be replacing it to something that was to accommodate a future design which in its current state, is not the best design. (FHWA)

A: Originally, the interchange was designed to accommodate I-69, which would have connected from the northeast side of Indianapolis. There are bridges over nothing that were to accommodate a future extension. This interchange was actually conceived to have four legs. It will never be four, therefore there are opportunities to shrink the footprint. (Corradino)

Q: When was this constructed? (USEPA)

A: The late-60s/early-70s. When it was first opened, it wasn’t as heavily populated. Now, traffic is much higher. (Corradino)

Q: Alternative 4b had a weave, on that exit ramp, if you’re on I-65 northbound and you wanted to get off on Pennsylvania, you would have to weave across to the right single lane? (USEPA)

A: No, there would be a barrier wall separating I-65 and I-70 traffic. (Corradino)

Q: Can you explain 4c again? (USEPA)

A: Yes, the only thing that differs with this alternative is the west leg of the interchange. With 4a, the Pennsylvania and Delaware ramps were totally closed. With 4b, the ramps stayed open and all movements stayed open. Alternative 4c keeps the ramps open but only allows I-65 northbound traffic to access Pennsylvania. I-70 westbound can no longer access the Pennsylvania exit ramp. From the Delaware entrance ramp, you would be able to directly access I-70 eastbound, but you have to go through that Collector-Distributor (C-D) to get on I-65 southbound. (Corradino)

Q: Because of increased traffic on West Street, will that require some additional work at that exit? (USEPA)

A: We are still working through the traffic studies to determine what the traffic changes will be. There may be a short segment that needs restriping or signal work on West Street between 10th Street and 11th Street. We’re not far enough to know for sure. (Corradino)

Q: Regarding northbound ramps to I-70 eastbound, did you say you are going to relocate it? (USEPA)

A: We’re looking at relocating the ramp within the interchange and making it smoother. It’s a safety issue. We’re looking at bringing it in on the right side where I-70 joins traffic on I-65. It works better from a traffic standpoint. (Corradino)

Q: Will it still be within the existing highway right-of-way? (USEPA)

A: Yes. (HNTB)

3. Next Steps

Kia Gillette discussed next steps for the North Split project. Next steps will be to gather feedback on the preliminary preferred alternative and the Alternative Screening Report through October 29. The project team will continue to refine the preliminary preferred alternative which will include analyzing effects to historic properties and determining mitigation measures for effects to historic properties. The project team anticipates publishing the Environmental Assessment in early 2020.

4. Q and A

Q: Will we get copies of the slides? (USEPA)

A: Yes. (*Kia Gillette emailed slides after the meeting.*) (HNTB)

Q: How much more traffic will be at West Street? Is that a residential area? Will Environmental Justice be looked at during the NEPA process? (USEPA)

A: Traffic on West Street will be looked at in the Interstate Access Document. The initial numbers were not very large. We will continue to do traffic studies to see what would be anticipated. There might be a historic district on the west border, we'll be looking at this in the Environmental Assessment, as well as Environmental Justice and other historic resources. (Corradino/HNTB)

Q: Will it answer what the effects are? We don't want problems on other ramps. (USEPA)

A: The Environmental Assessment will look at potential impacts. This is our next step. We've done enough traffic modeling to know Alternative 4a would cause some traffic issues, but we don't anticipate major concerns with Alternative 4c. We still need to refine the traffic modeling. (HNTB)

Q: After your meetings with other groups, who is not on board for Alternative 4c and what are the issues? (USEPA)

A: We released the report on Friday September 28, met with the Rethink Coalition on the morning of October 9 and the North Split Community Advisory Committee (CAC) on the afternoon of October 9. We held a public open house on October 10. We will meet with the Consulting Party members tonight and we present to the Emergency Management Services committee and the Environmental Justice Working Group tomorrow, October 18.

There was a lot of coordination between INDOT and the City prior to the release to make sure the City was comfortable. They released a statement saying they were supportive of the effort and compromise. Some of the Rethink Coalition members recognize the compromise, but some members would like to see a more dramatic change for the entire inner loop. Only 60 people attended the public open house, which is less than we expected.

Many of the comments received so far are from people who are concerns with the interstate access restrictions. We are accepting comments until October 29. (HNTB)

Q: It looks like anyone commuting into downtown Indianapolis would only be able to use West Street, is that correct? (USEPA)

A: It depends on where you are commuting from and where you are going to, if you are coming from I-70 from the east, you could use West Street and the C-D system. If you are coming from I-65 from the northwest, you could use West Street or Meridian/Illinois Streets. East Street, south of the C-D system, is still open as well. (Corradino)

Q: Have you taken bus/rapid transit routes into consideration? (USEPA)

A: The blue line will go across Washington Street. The transit lines are radial. The interstates are more circumferential. The proposed BRT lines are included in the traffic model. (Corradino)

Q: Do the buses/rapid transit systems use the interstate? (USEPA)

A: They may go under the interstate, but do not use the interstate directly. (Corradino)

Q: What about trail users? (USEPA)

A: We will consider possible detours, construction concerns and how to maintain usability during construction. (HNTB)

Q: What about existing storm water run-off? (USEPA)

A: We're still working through the storm water design. (HNTB)

Attendees:

Project Team	
Sandy Bowman (via WebEx)	INDOT
Dave Cleveland	Corradino
Kia Gillette	HNTB
Ali Hernandez	Borshoff
Brandon Miller	INDOT
Chris Poland	United Consulting
Runfa Shi	INDOT
Resource Agencies	
Robert Dirks	FHWA
Virginia Laszewski (via WebEx)	USEPA
Robin McWilliams-Munson (via WebEx)	USFWS
Deb Snyder (via WebEx)	USACE
Jim Sullivan (via WebEx)	IDEM
Jay Turner	IDEM