

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

For

Indiana Project
Des. Numbers 1592385 and 1600808
I-65/I-70 North Split Interchange Project
Indianapolis, Indiana

The approved Environmental Assessment (EA) was released for public involvement by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on July 17, 2020. A virtual public information meeting was held on July 30, 2020 and an in-person public hearing was held on August 3, 2020.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) proposes to proceed with an interchange reconstruction project in Marion County, Indiana. The project will improve deteriorated pavement and bridge conditions and correct safety and operational problems within the North Split interchange project area. The project limits include the North Split interchange; south along I-65/I-70 to the Washington Street interchange; the portion of I-65 west of the North Split interchange to Alabama Street (to Illinois Street along 11th and 12th Streets); and the portion of I-70 east of the North Split interchange to the bridge over Valley Avenue (west of the Keystone Avenue/Rural Street interchange) in downtown Indianapolis. The project area is in a developed area surrounded by residential and commercial properties.

The preferred alternative includes the following project elements (a full project description is included in the Environmental Assessment Document):

- Replacement or rehabilitation of the bridges throughout the project area and replacement of the interstate pavement throughout the project area.
- Reconstruction of the Pennsylvania Street exit ramp
- Reconstruction of the Delaware Street entrance ramp
- Modification of the Pine Street entrance to I-65 northbound
- Construction of retaining walls or vegetated slopes (or a combination of the two) along the interstate.
- Landscaping within the existing right-of-way
- Relocation and construction of drainage systems, utilities, sidewalk widening, and lighting additions and changes.
- Reconstruction of a portion of the Old Northside Trail and widening of the Monon Trail

The project will not require any permanent right of way. All work will occur within the paved boundaries of the interchange. No relocations of people, businesses, or farms will take place because of this project.

The project is within range of the federally endangered Indiana bat and the federally threatened northern long-eared bat (NLEB). The project qualifies for the Range-wide Programmatic Informal Consultation for the Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat (NLEB), dated May 2016 (revised February 2018). The project was found to have “no effect” on the Indiana bat and/or the NLEB.

No surface streams, rivers, watercourses, or jurisdictional ditches are present within the project area; therefore, no impacts are expected. Wetlands totaling 0.038 acre are anticipated to be impacted by construction of the project, however, mitigation is not anticipated because impacts do not exceed the mitigation threshold of 0.1 acre.

FHWA issued a Section 106 ‘Adverse Effect’ finding for the project on December 19, 2019. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the Adverse Effect finding in a letter dated January 17, 2020. The final Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was executed on May 29, 2020, and concludes the Section 106 process.

The project will not require acquisition of right-of-way from any historic or recreational Section 4(f) properties. Therefore, no Section 4(f) resources will be altered or permanently incorporated into the transportation project and an individual Section 4(f) evaluation is not required. Pogues Run Trail will be temporarily closed during project construction and meets the Section 4(f) Temporary Occupancy criteria. Closure of the Monon Trail will be intermittent for up to two years. Because of the length of time that the Monon Trail will be closed, a *de minimis* impact determination was proposed. FHWA and INDOT have coordinated with the City of Indianapolis, and they have concurred in writing with both the Temporary Occupancy and *de minimis* findings. Therefore, by signature on this document, FHWA is approving a *de minimis* determination for the Monon Trail closure.

This project is located in Marion County, which is currently in attainment for PM2.5 and a maintenance area for Ozone (O3). Marion County includes a small maintenance area for Carbon Monoxide (CO). The project’s design concept and scope are accurately reflected in both the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan and TIP and both conform to the State Implementation Plan. Therefore, the conformity requirements of 40 CFR 93 have been met. Additionally, FHWA, USEPA, IDEM, and the Indianapolis MPO concurred that a CO hot spot analysis would not be required for the project. USEPA and FHWA also concurred that the traffic changes were not significant and a quantitative MSAT analysis was not required.

An Environmental Justice Subcommittee was developed for the project, and surveys were sent to the community to determine impacts associated with the project. It was determined that the impacts associated with this project are not a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority and/or low-income populations of EJ concern relative to non EJ populations in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23a. Additional outreach will continue with the EJ Subcommittee throughout project development and construction.

Because this project involves changes to the vertical alignment of I-65, I-70, and the North Split interchange, it is considered a Type 1 project. Therefore, in accordance with 23 CFR 772 and the INDOT Traffic Noise Analysis Procedure (2017), this action required a formal noise analysis. Based on the studies completed to date, INDOT has identified 259 impacted receptors and has determined that noise abatement is likely, but not guaranteed, at two locations. A reevaluation of the noise analysis will occur during final design.

The FHWA has determined that this project, as identified in the Environmental Assessment and supplemental project information, will have no significant impact on the natural and human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the environmental assessment and public hearing transcript that have been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an environmental impact statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of these documents.

September 25, 2020

Date

for Mayela Sosa
Division Administrator