



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

[Docket No. FHWA-2026-0562]

### Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for Section 2 of the Mid-States Corridor Project: Tier 2 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in coordination with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is issuing this Notice of Intent (NOI) to solicit comment and advise the public, agencies, tribal nations, and stakeholders that a Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for the Mid-States Corridor (MSC), Section 2. This will be a new highway connection between Interstate 64 (I-64) at Dale and State Road (SR) 56 in Haysville in Dubois County, Indiana. FHWA and INDOT completed the Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) in September 2023. The Tier 1 EIS process addressed needs for improved business and personal regional connectivity in Dubois County and Southern Indiana, and for improved highway connections to existing major multi-modal locations in Southern Indiana. The Tier 1 FEIS and ROD identified Refined Preferred Alternative P (RPA P) as the selected corridor and divided it into five Sections of Independent Utility. This Tier 2 EIS will address Section of Independent Utility 2 and builds on the Tier 1 EIS and ROD.

**DATES:** Comments on the NOI or the NOI Additional Project Information Document must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** This NOI and the NOI Additional Project Information Document are available in the docket referenced above at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and on the project website located at

www.midstatescorridor.com/Notice-of-Intent-Resources. The NOI Additional Project Information Document will be mailed upon request. All interested parties are invited to submit comments or requests for mailed documents by any of the following methods:

- *Website:* For access to the documents, or to request mailed documents, go to the docket referenced above at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).
- *Address for U.S. Mail, delivery service, or hand delivery:* Mid-States Corridor Project Office, Vincennes University Jasper Campus Administration Building, Room 216, 850 College Avenue, Jasper, IN 47546.

All comment submissions should include the agency, public, tribal nation, or stakeholder name. It also should include the agency name and docket number that appears in the heading of this notice. All comments received by the comment period end date will be posted without change to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), including any personal information provided. A summary of the comments received will be included in the Draft EIS (DEIS).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

FHWA: Erica Tait, Interim Deputy Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, Indiana Division; 575 N. Pennsylvania Street, Suite 254, Indianapolis, IN 46204. *Telephone* (317) 226-7481. *Email:* [erica.tait@dot.gov](mailto:erica.tait@dot.gov). INDOT: Kyanna Wheeler, Major Project Delivery Project Manager, Indiana Department of Transportation; Indiana Government Center North, 100 N. Senate Ave., Room N758 –MPD, Indianapolis, IN 46204. *Telephone* (812) 830-2300. *Email:* [kwheeler@indot.in.gov](mailto:kwheeler@indot.in.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Additional Project Information:**

Persons and agencies who may be interested in or affected by the proposed project are encouraged to comment on the information in this NOI and the NOI Additional Project Information Document. All comments received in response to this NOI document will be considered in preparation of the EIS for this project.

The EIS will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.*), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR part 771), recent USDOT Guidance and all other applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

## **Project Background**

Tier 2 activities in Section 2 began in July 2024. These have featured extensive agency and public involvement activities, including formal Cooperating and Participating Agency meetings in October 2024, April 2025, and October 2025, and formal public information meetings in September 2024, April 2025, and October 2025. Formal meetings with local officials and the project's Community Advisory Committee were held in conjunction with the public information meetings.

Additional meetings also occurred with project stakeholders and members of the public and agencies. Many of these meetings occurred at the project office at the Vincennes University Jasper Campus.

Input from agencies, elected officials, stakeholders, and the public informed the development of preliminary project documents, including a Project Coordination Plan, Public Involvement Plan, Purpose and Need, and Screening of Preliminary Alternatives. These documents are summarized in this NOI. Please refer to the Additional Project Information Document for detailed information.

## **Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action**

The Purpose and Need of the MSC, as established in Tier 1, is to improve business and personal regional connectivity in Dubois County and Southern Indiana and to improve highway connections to existing major multi-modal locations in Southern Indiana. The Tier 2 Purpose and Need for the project in Section 2 refines the Purpose and Need established in Tier 1. The Tier 2 Purpose and Need describes the project purpose as providing improved system linkages from Dubois County to major business destinations and freight intermodal centers, improving employee access to Dubois County businesses, increasing the efficiency of freight operations, and completing

Section 2 of the MSC, consistent with the Tier 1 Record of Decision. It provides goals and performance measures which refine those in the Tier 1 Purpose and Need, focusing on accessibility and transportation needs in Dubois County.

### **Preliminary Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives the Environmental Impact Statement will Consider**

The proposed project would construct a new south-to-north arterial road between I-64 at Dale and SR 56 at Haysville in Dubois County, Indiana. The EIS will evaluate a range of Build alternatives, consistent with the decision of the Tier 1 ROD. These alternatives are discussed in the Screening of Preliminary Alternatives in the Additional Project Information Document. In this Tier 2 study, INDOT developed 12 preliminary build alternatives, approximately 23 miles in length. They are designated Alternative 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, and 3B with each including two highway type options. These are located within a 2,000-foot corridor established in Tier 1. From these, the Screening of Preliminary Alternatives identified Alternatives 2B and 3B as alternatives to be carried forward into the Draft EIS (DEIS). It is anticipated that the DEIS preferred alternative will contain elements and modifications of both Alternative 2B and Alternative 3B. The DEIS will identify the location and type of access for the preferred alternative.

### **Brief Summary of Expected Effects**

The Tier 2 EIS will evaluate the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the build alternatives. The following resources are anticipated to be evaluated in detail during the environmental review process: waters of the United States, biological resources, hydrology, floodplains, cultural and historic resources, land use, forests, managed lands, socioeconomics, and farmlands. Additionally, the EIS will also investigate impacts to the following resources: wildlife and habitat connectivity, Section 4(f), noise, economy, groundwater, air quality, hazardous waste sites, and mineral resources. Details regarding key resources are provided in the Screening of Preliminary Alternatives Report. The Screening of Preliminary Alternatives Report describes the anticipated levels of impacts to these resources.

Alternatives evaluated in the Report showed the following ranges of major resource impacts:

- **Right-of-way.** 1,462 to 1,596 acres
- **Agricultural Land.** 869 to 935 acres
- **Total Relocations.** 41 to 82 buildings (Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Agricultural, and Public Use)
- **Wetlands.** 55 to 90 acres
- **Non-Wetland Forests.** 327 to 362 acres

The Impact Calculation Appendix to the Screening of Preliminary Alternatives Report describes impact calculation methodologies as well as field survey activities to identify and confirm the extent of resources.

#### **Anticipated Permits, Other Authorizations and Cooperating and Participating Agencies**

Anticipated permits and authorizations that will be required prior to the commencement of construction include the following. The schedule for these activities is shown below, which is also reflected in the Project Coordination Plan. All references are to the Tier 2 ROD for Section 2:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) approval under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (Received following approval of ROD)
- State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Completed prior to ROD)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) approvals under the Endangered Species Act, the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act (Received prior to ROD)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) approval under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (Received prior to DEIS; confirmed in FEIS)
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) approval under the Indiana Flood Control Act (Received within 15 days of ROD)
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) under the Indiana Isolated

Wetlands Act (Completed after ROD)

- IDEM under Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification (Completed after ROD) and
- IDEM National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit under Section 402 (Received within 15 days of ROD)

Cooperating Agencies include USFWS, USACE, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. A number of Federal, State, and local agencies are serving as Participating Agencies. INDOT and FHWA will confer with them at key project milestones and as required between these milestones.

The Project Coordination Plan accompanying the Additional Project Information Document outlines the process the FHWA and the INDOT will follow to complete the Mid-States Corridor Tier 2 EIS for Section 2 in Dubois County. This plan will satisfy 23 U.S.C. 139 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 which requires a plan for this purpose.

### **Scoping and Public Review**

The Public Involvement Plan accompanying the Additional Project Information Document describes public involvement goals, methods for stakeholder communications, public information database management, messaging, and outreach tools. It describes the public involvement coordination process, including community and media outreach.

Since June 2024 there has been extensive public and agency outreach regarding the scope of the project, its purpose and need and potential alternatives. There have been three general public information meetings. A Draft Purpose and Need Statement and Draft Screening of Preliminary Alternative Reports have been circulated. Extensive public and agency comments were received on both documents.

### **Schedule for the Decision-Making Process**

Based on project activities conducted to date, a Draft EIS is anticipated to be released in the fall of 2026, with a combined FEIS and Record of Decision approved in the summer of 2027.

## **Request for Identification of Potential Alternatives, Information, and Analyses Relevant to the**

### **Proposed Action**

All public comments received in response to this notice will be considered, and potential revisions will be made to the information presented herein as appropriate. Comments must be received by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action, including the comments relating to the Tier 2 EIS alternatives, information and analyses, should be provided to FHWA or INDOT at the addresses provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

### **Authority**

42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*; 23 U.S.C. 139; 23 CFR part 771.

**Christopher J. Hall,**  
*Interim Division Administrator,*  
*Federal Highway Administration.*