
S.R. 51 at S.R. 130 / Cleveland Avenue

Intersection Improvement
City of Hobart, Lake County
DES-1600693

Indiana Department of Transportation

Wednesday, October 6th, 2021
6:00 p.m.

City of Hobart Community Center



Welcome

- Purpose/explanation of public hearing
- Public hearing format
- Visit our sign-in table
- Informational handouts
- Participate during public comment session
- Submit written public comments
- Project display area



S.R. 51 at S.R. 130 / Cleveland Avenue

- Introduction of INDOT project team
 - Project management
 - Public involvement
 - LaPorte District – INDOT Regional Office
 - Environmental services
 - Real estate
- Troyer Group
 - Engineering, design, and environmental analysis team
- Recognition of elected and local public officials
- Sign-in at attendance table to be added to project mailing list.
- A public hearing notice was mailed to known property owners in the project area.
- An announcement of this hearing was posted to INDOT's website.
- A copy of the presentation and project documentation is available online via INDOT's website.
- Legal notice publishing:
 - Times in Northwest Indiana
 - September 20, 2021 and September 27, 2021
 - Post-Tribune
 - September 16, 2021 and September 23, 2021

Submit Public Comments

- **Submit public comments using the options described in the first page of the information packet:**
 - Public Comment Form
 - Via e-mail (jlandry@troyergroup.com or mgrylewicz@indot.in.gov)
 - Participating during the public comment session via microphone
 - Note that verbal comments will be recorded and transcribed for inclusion into the public hearing transcript.
- **INDOT respectfully requests comments be submitted by Wednesday, October 20, 2021.**
- All comments submitted will become part of the public record, and they will be entered into a transcript, reviewed, evaluated, and given full consideration during the decision-making process.

Project Resource Locations

- **Lake County Public Library, Hobart Branch**

100 N. Main St. Hobart, IN 46342

Phone: (219) 942-2243

Visit the project web page: <https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-laporte-district/>

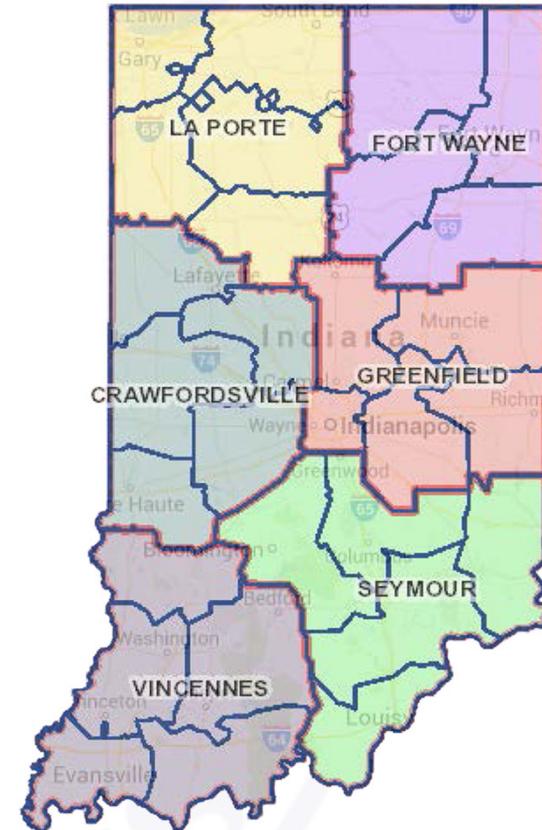
Transportation Services Call Center

Provides citizens and business customers with a single point of contact to request transportation services, obtain information, or provide feedback through multiple channels of communication.

855-463-6848 • INDOT4U.com • INDOT@indot.in.gov



855-463-6848



Project Stakeholders

- Indiana Department of Transportation
- Indiana Division Federal Highway Administration
- Lake County, City of Hobart
- Elected and Local Officials
- Residents and citizens
- Commuters
- Businesses
- Emergency services
- Schools
- Churches
- Community organizations



Project Schedule

- Public Hearing: October 6, 2021
- Public comments requested by 5:00pm CT, October 20, 2021
- INDOT review and consideration of comments (Winter 2021/2022)
 - Finalize environmental document
 - Design
 - Project decision
- Real estate acquisition phase: 2022
- Construction: 2023



Environmental Document

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Requires INDOT to analyze and evaluate the impacts of a proposed project to the natural and socio-economic environments
- NEPA is a decision-making process
 - Purpose and Need
 - Alternatives Screening
 - Preferred Alternative
- NEPA Environmental Documents are divided into categories based on impact level
 - Programmatic Categorical Exclusion (PCE) and CE Level 1 – Least impacts
 - CE Level 2-4 – Average level of impacts
 - Environmental Assessment/Impact Statement – Greatest level of impacts
- **Impacts are analyzed, evaluated, and described in an environmental document**
 - What are the impacts this project might have on the community?
 - How can impacts be avoided?
 - Can impacts be minimized?
 - Mitigation for impacts?
- **Environmental document released for public involvement**
 - CE Level 4
 - August 2021
 - Available for review via public repositories

Environmental Document Levels

Categorical Exclusion Level Thresholds

| | PCE | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4¹ |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Section 106 | Falls within guidelines of Minor Projects PA | "No Historic Properties Affected" | "No Adverse Effect" | - | "Adverse Effect" Or Historic Bridge involvement ⁴ |
| Stream Impacts | No construction in waterways or water bodies | < 300 linear feet of stream impacts | ≥ 300 linear feet of stream impacts | - | Individual 404 Permit |
| Wetland Impacts | No adverse impacts to wetlands | < 0.1 acre | - | < 1 acre | ≥ 1 acre |
| Right-of-way³ | Property acquisition for preservation only or none | < 0.5 acre | ≥ 0.5 acre | - | - |
| Relocations | None | - | - | < 5 | ≥ 5 |
| Threatened/Endangered Species (Species Specific Programmatic for Indiana bat & northern long eared bat) | "No Effect", "Not likely to Adversely Affect" (Without AMMs ⁴ or with AMMs required for all projects ⁵) | "Not likely to Adversely Affect" (With any other AMMs) | - | "Likely to Adversely Affect" | Project does not fall under Species Specific Programmatic |
| Threatened/Endangered Species (Any other species) | Falls within guidelines of USFWS 2013 Interim Policy | "No Effect", "Not likely to Adversely Affect" | - | - | "Likely to Adversely Affect" |
| Environmental Justice | No disproportionately high and adverse impacts | - | - | - | Potential ⁶ |
| Sole Source Aquifer | Detailed Assessment Not Required | - | - | - | Detailed Assessment |
| Floodplain | No Substantial Impacts | - | - | - | Substantial Impacts |
| Coastal Zone Consistency | Consistent | - | - | - | Not Consistent |
| National Wild and Scenic River | Not Present | - | - | - | Present |
| New Alignment | None | - | - | - | Any |
| Section 4(f) Impacts | None | - | - | - | Any |
| Section 6(f) Impacts | None | - | - | - | Any |
| Added Through Lane | None | - | - | - | Any |
| Permanent Traffic Alteration | None | - | - | - | Any |
| Coast Guard Permit | None | - | - | - | Any |
| Noise Analysis Required | No | - | - | - | Yes |
| Air Quality Analysis Required | No | - | - | - | Yes ⁷ |
| Approval Level | Concurrence by INDOT District Environmental or Environmental Services | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Env. Supervisor • Env. Services Division • FHWA | | | | Yes | Yes |

Environmental Document

• **Environmental Process**

- Establish purpose and need
- Develop possible alternatives
 - The “Do Nothing” alternative is a baseline for comparison
- Evaluate and screen alternatives
- Identify a preferred alternative
- Evaluate impacts of preferred alternative
- Solicit public comment on environmental document and preliminary design plan
- Address and consider public comment as part of decision-making process
- Finalize and approve environmental document



Examples of Items Evaluated

- Right-of-way
- Streams, wetlands, and other waters
- Floodplains
- Endangered species
- Farmland
- Cultural resources (historic/archaeological)
- Parks and recreational lands (trails)
- Air quality
- Noise
- Community impacts
- Environmental justice
- Hazardous materials
- Permits
- Mitigation
- Public involvement
- Commercial development



Oak Savannah Trail – Section 4(f)

- Public Recreational Facilities and Historic Properties are protected by Federal Highway Administration under *Section 4(f) Policy Paper*
- Section 4(f) protection applies to properties like Parks, Trails, and Nature Preserves, along with properties that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP).
- Impacts to these resources are evaluated during the NEPA process.
- As a public pedestrian trail, the Oak Savannah Trail qualifies as a Section 4(f) resource.

Oak Savannah Trail - Section 4(f) cont.

SECTION E – SECTION 4(f) RESOURCES/ SECTION 6(f) RESOURCES

| | Presence | Use | |
|--|----------|-----|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| Parks and Other Recreational Land | | | |
| Publicly owned park | | | |
| Publicly owned recreation area | x | x | |
| Other (school, state/national forest, bikeway, etc.) | | | |
| Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges | | | |
| National Wildlife Refuge | | | |
| National Natural Landmark | | | |
| State Wildlife Area | | | |
| State Nature Preserve | | | |
| Historic Properties | | | |
| Site eligible and/or listed on the NRHP | | | |
| Evaluations Prepared | | | |
| Programmatic Section 4(f) | | | |
| "De minimis" Impact | x | | |
| Individual Section 4(f) | | | |
| Any exception included in 23 CFR 774.13 | x | | |

Discuss Programmatic Section 4(f) and "de minimis" Section 4(f) impacts in the discussion below. Individual Section 4(f) documentation must be included in the appendix and summarized below. Discuss proposed alternatives that satisfy the requirements of Section 4(f). FHWA has identified various exceptions to the requirement for Section 4(f) approval. Refer to 23 CFR § 774.13 - Exceptions.

Presence, impact, use

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the use of certain public and historic lands for federally funded transportation facilities unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. The law applies to significant publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife / waterfowl refuges, and NRHP eligible or listed historic properties. Lands subject to this law are considered Section 4(f) resources.

Based on a desktop review, a site visit on September 17, 2020, by Troyer Group, the aerial map of the project area (Appendix B-3), and the RFI report (Appendix E) there are nine Section 4(f) resources located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The RFI identifies three trail segments within the project area. However, based on the September 2020 site visit only two segments present within the project area, and both are associated with one actual trail, the Oak Savannah Trail. This trail is a 10-mile asphalt trail through Lake County that is open to the public for pedestrian use. Ownership of this trail within the project area is divided across two jurisdictions. Southwest of the intersection, the trail is managed by the City of Hobart Parks Department, while the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department oversees the portion northeast of the intersection. Therefore, while both of these portions make up one continuous trail, it is being treated as two separate resources. Impacts to the trail are illustrated in Appendix I-25.

The southwestern portion of the Oak Savannah Trail will be partially reconfigured to improve connectivity with the northeastern portion. This meets the 4(f) exemption requirement for a transportation enhancement, in agreement with the Director of the City of Hobart Parks and Recreation Department, which is the Owner with Jurisdiction (OWJ) over the Section 4(f) resource, in accordance with 23 CFR 774.13(g).

(1) The use of the Section 4(f) property is solely for the purpose of preserving or enhancing an activity, feature, or attribute that qualifies the property for Section 4(f) protection; and

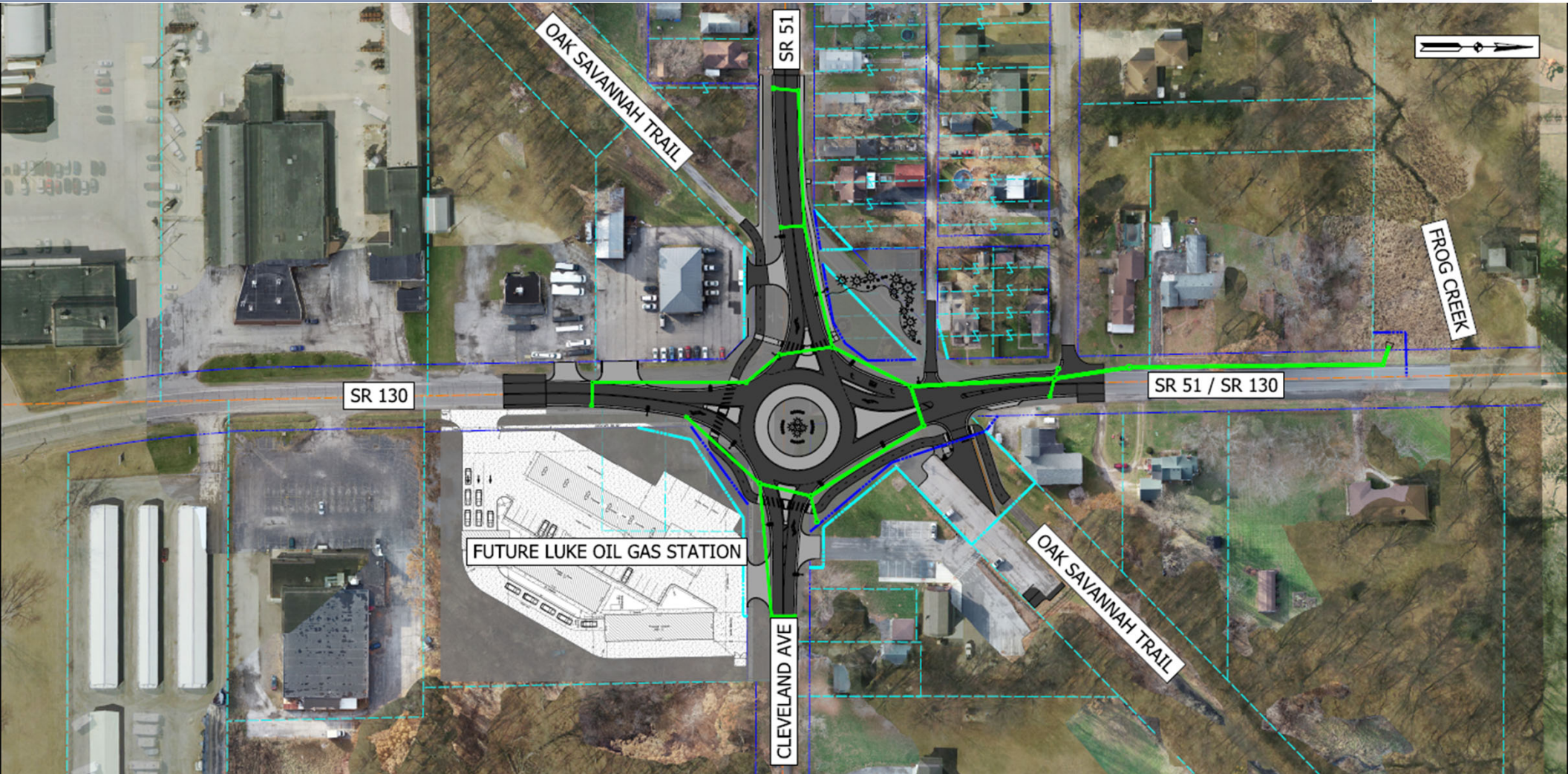
(2) The official(s) with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) resource agrees in writing to paragraph (g)(1) of this section.

The trail reconfiguration will improve connectivity and safety for pedestrian use of the trail by clearly delineating a path to the next trail segment and providing safe crossing locations. Therefore, it has been determined that the project will enhance the function of the trail. The OWJ for this section of the trail was contacted on September 24, 2020 (Appendix I-23). Their response, dated September 25, 2020, concurred with paragraph (g)(1) of the 4(f) exemption (Appendix I-26).

The northeastern portion of the Oak Savannah Trail and an associated trailhead will also be partly reconfigured to improve connectivity through the intersection. This will require the acquisition of permanent ROW from the OWJ for this trail segment and will

- Despite being part of one overall trail, Troyer treated each segment as individual resources.
- Troyer determined that the SW segment meets the criteria for an exemption from full 4(f) analysis, and the NE portion will have a minimal level of impacts.
- Both owners were notified of and concurred with the findings.
- 4(f) impacts are fully documented in corresponding section of NEPA document, which was released for Public Involvement in August.
- FHWA approval of the NEPA document constitutes approval of the 4(f) analysis and impacts.

Proposed Roundabout Drainage



S.R. 51 at S.R. 130 – Project Purpose and Need

Purpose

- Increase operational safety at the intersection by reducing the frequency of severe accidents
- Eliminate turning movements that lead to right-angle crashes
- Provide safe pedestrian navigation around the intersection

Need

- A high proportion of the accidents at this intersection are severe crashes
 - Accident data:
 - 23 total accidents involving 47 vehicles from August 2012 to July 2015
 - 13 (57%) resulted in a total of 22 injuries, including one fatal injury
 - Of these 13, 10 involved some combination of left-turn movements, failure to yield, and disregarding traffic signals.

S.R. 51 at S.R. 130 – Project Purpose and Need (cont.)

Need (cont.)

- Pedestrian Facilities exist in the area but have gaps that lead to safety issues.
 - Oak Savannah Trail runs northeast-southwest through the project area, but is bisected by the intersection.
 - No direct connection between the two segments
 - Sidewalks and crosswalks exist, but are not optimized to fully and safely carry pedestrian traffic around intersection.
 - At least one accident involving pedestrians occurred during three-year study period

Other Alternatives Considered

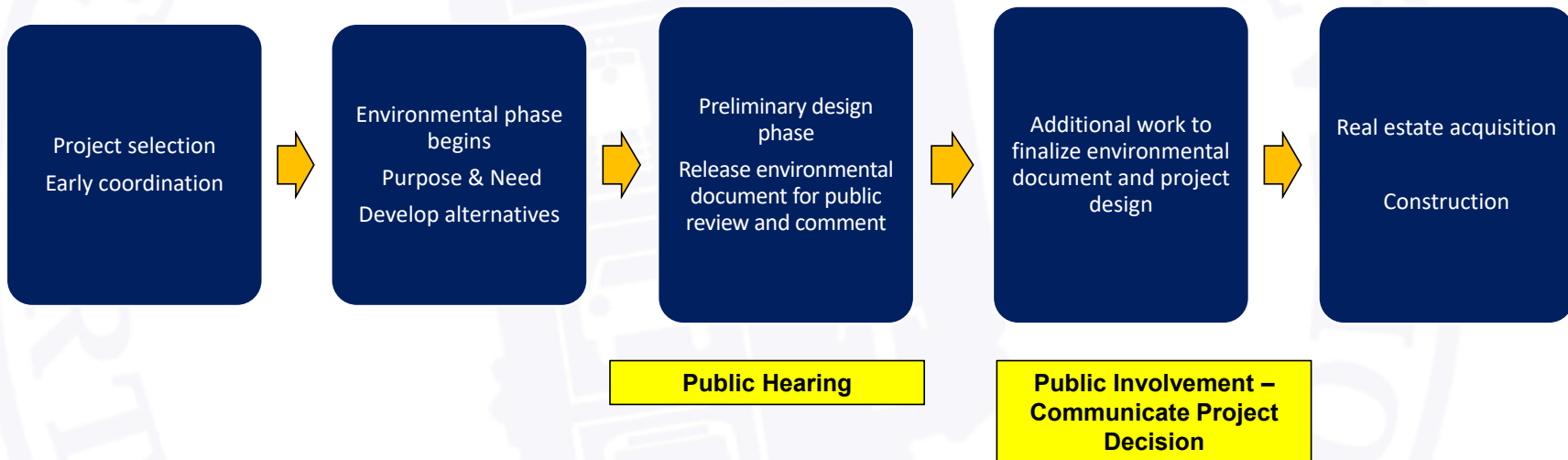
- **No Build (Signalized Intersection)**
 - Baseline for comparison of build alternatives
 - Does not meet purpose and need, does not enhance safety at the intersection, which is likely to decline with traffic growth.
- **Roadway Widening with Traffic Signal & Designated Turn Lanes**
 - **Would reduce number of severe accidents**
 - Uncertainty exists due to lack of clear turn-lane markings at some approaches
 - Eliminating this uncertainty and improving intersection geometry would likely reduce the overall number of severe accidents.
 - **Would not eliminate the possibility for dangerous turning movements**
 - Drivers will still be able to make dangerous left turns and disregard traffic signals.
 - **Therefore, while this alternative meets the purpose of increasing safety, it does not offer the same degree of improvement as the preferred alternative.**

Preferred Alternative – Roundabout Intersection

- Meets purpose and need of project
- Enhances safety by:
 - Reducing the number of potential vehicle conflict points
 - Significantly reducing the severity of traffic accidents
- Pedestrian Improvements will increase safety for those utilizing Oak Savannah Trail and other pedestrian facilities at the intersection.
 - The two segments of the trail will be fully connected
 - Clear markings directing pedestrians through the trail and around the intersection will be installed to eliminate confusion
 - Pedestrian islands will be added to facilitate pedestrian movements across the roundabout approaches.
- Estimated Construction Cost:
 - \$1,658,000



Project Development



Existing Intersection



Roundabout – INDOT Preferred Alternative

- One-way circular intersection
- Traffic flows counter-clockwise around a center island
- Yield at entrance
- No parking
- No “activity” in center island



Roundabouts Enhance Safety

U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration
Statistics

Traditional intersections account for:

- 45% of all crashes - *FHWA*
- 33% of all traffic fatalities - *FHWA*

Compared to traditional intersections,
roundabouts:

- Reduce fatalities and injuries by 82% - *FHWA*
- Reduce total crashes by 44% - *FHWA*
- Require vehicles to travel at lower speeds

For more information:

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/innovative/roundabouts/>

• Collisions at traditional intersections are severe because of:

- High speed
- Angle of impact

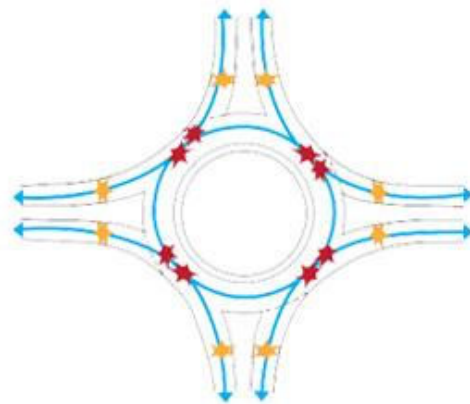
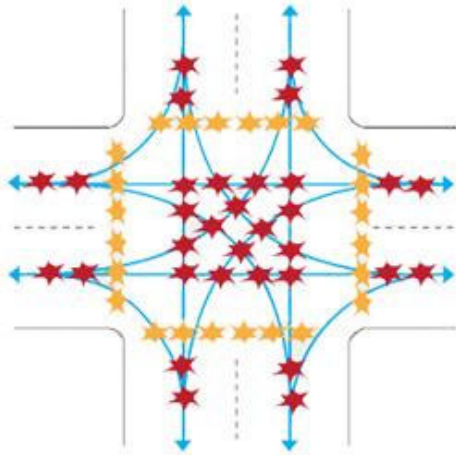


Benefits of Roundabouts

- Conflict points are dramatically reduced because all vehicles travel in the same direction.

REGULAR INTERSECTION MODERN ROUNDABOUT

32 Vehicle to Vehicle Conflicts 8 Vehicle to Vehicle Conflicts



• Enhances Safety

- Roundabouts reduce the number of potential accident points within an intersection.
- 75% fewer conflict points than four-way intersections.

• Slower vehicle speeds

- Reduces the severity of crashes

• Efficient traffic flow

- Reduces need for turn lanes
- Improves traffic flow

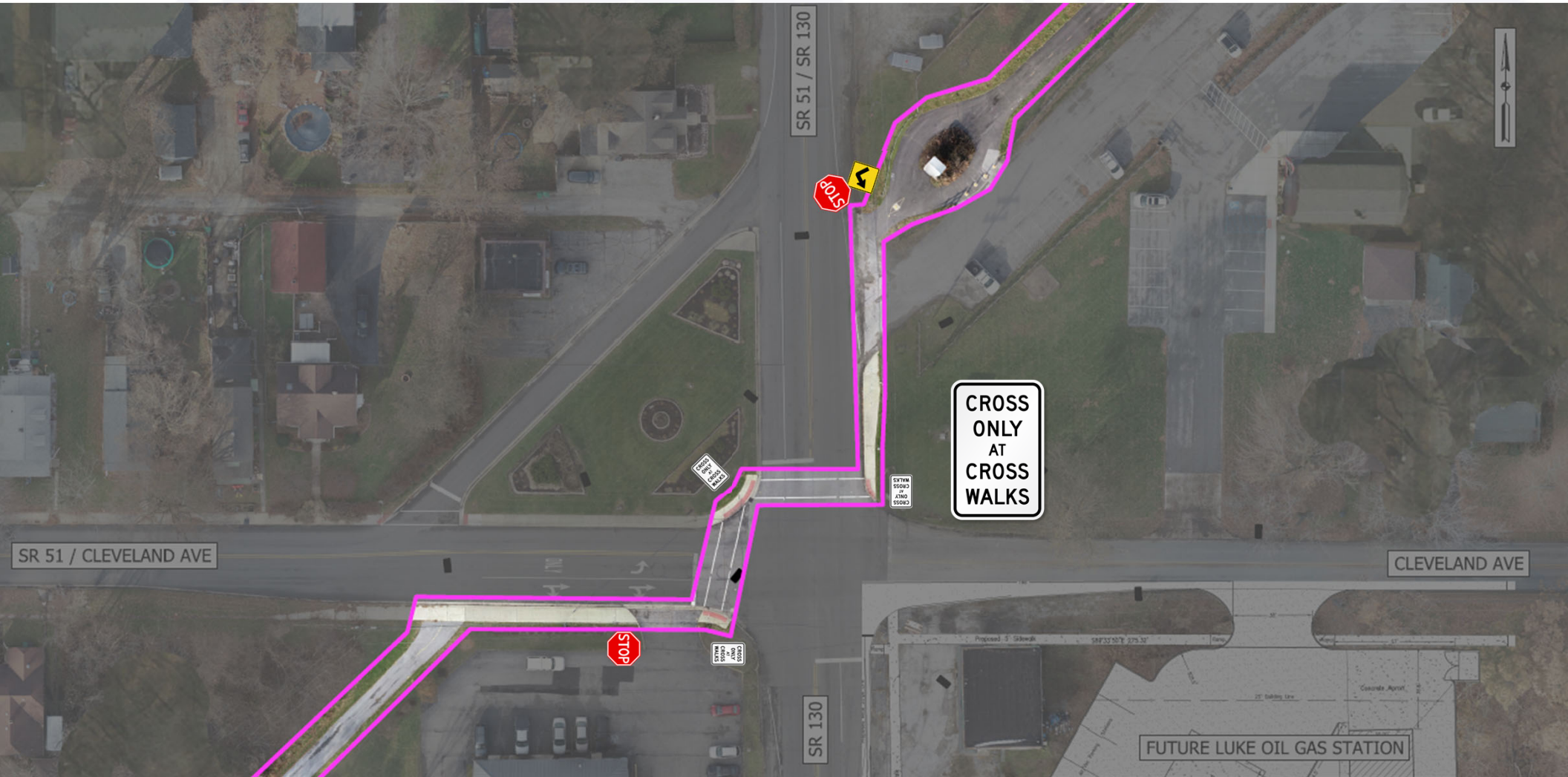
• Community benefits

- Reduces congestion
- Aesthetically pleasing landscaping

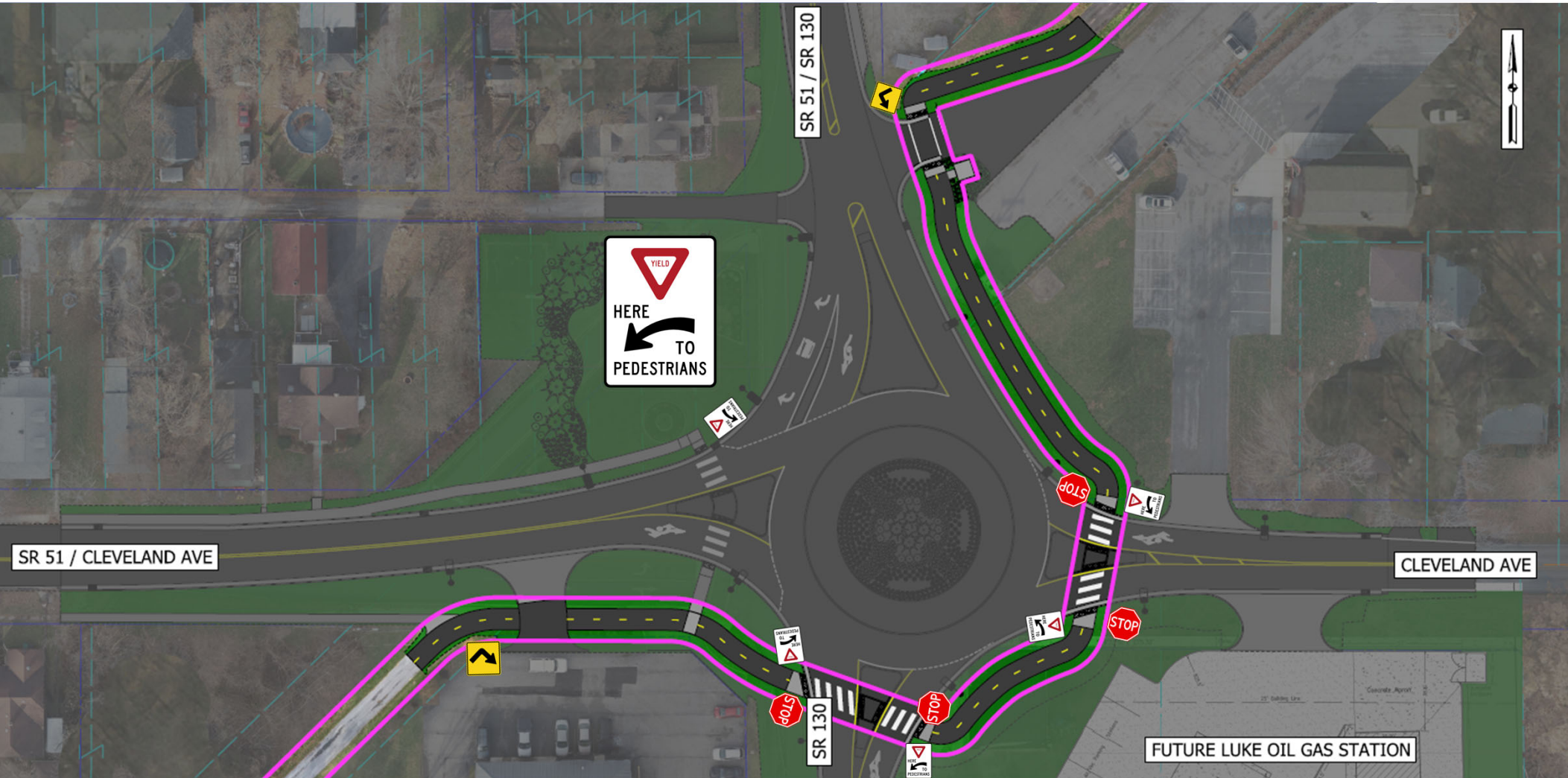
Proposed Roundabout Layout



Oak Savannah Trail – Existing Facility



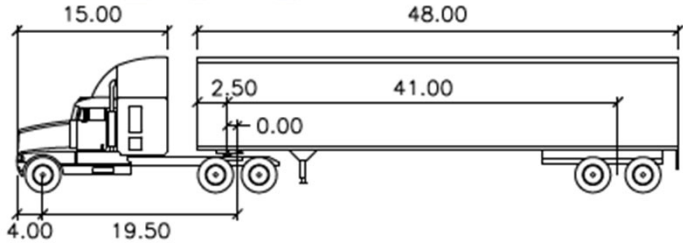
Oak Savannah Trail – Proposed Improvements



Turning Movement – Semitruck

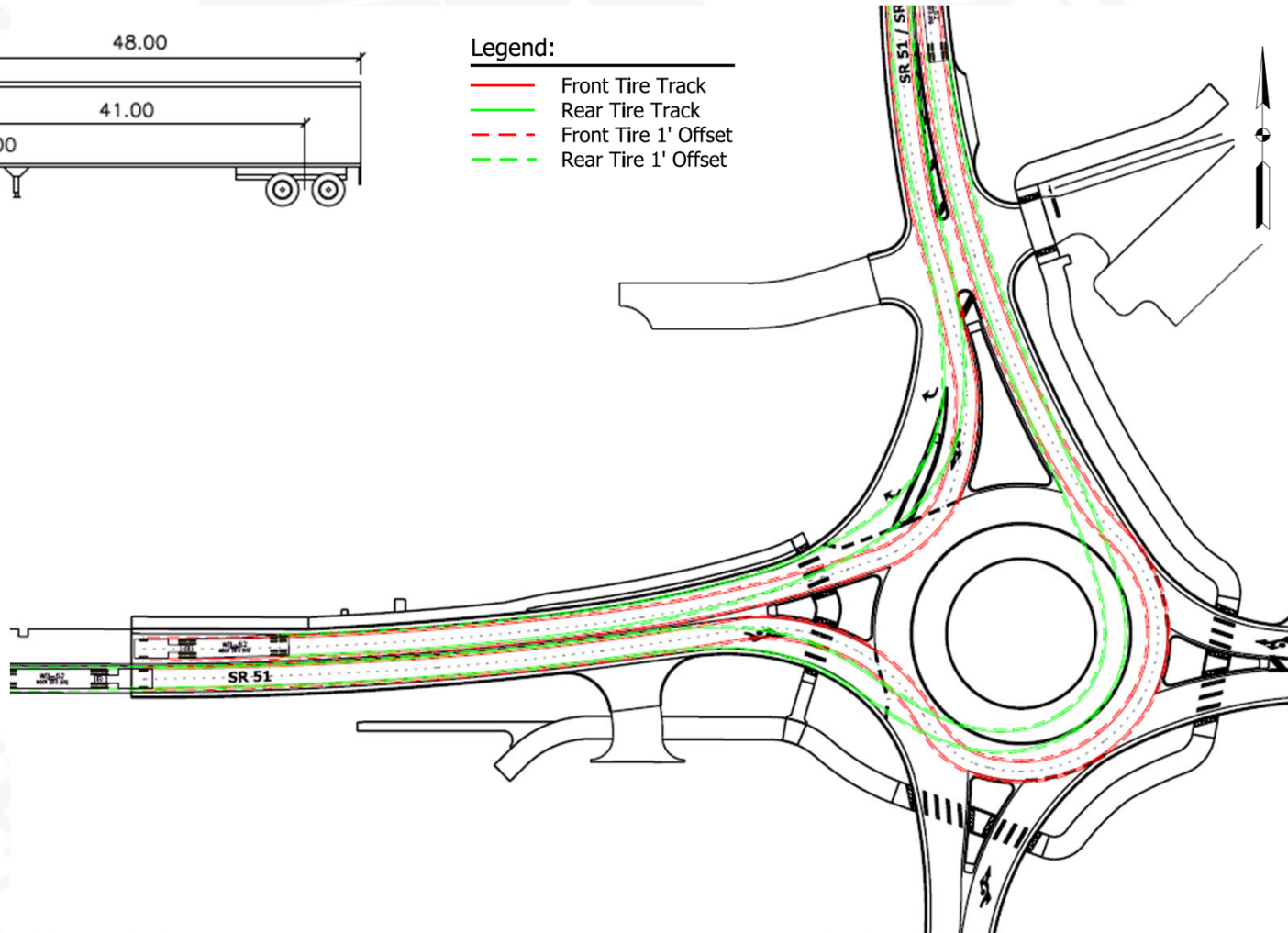


Turning Movement – Semitruck

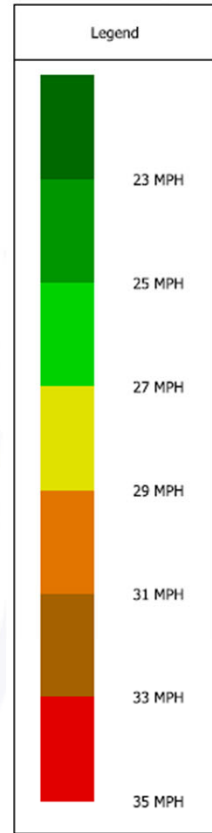
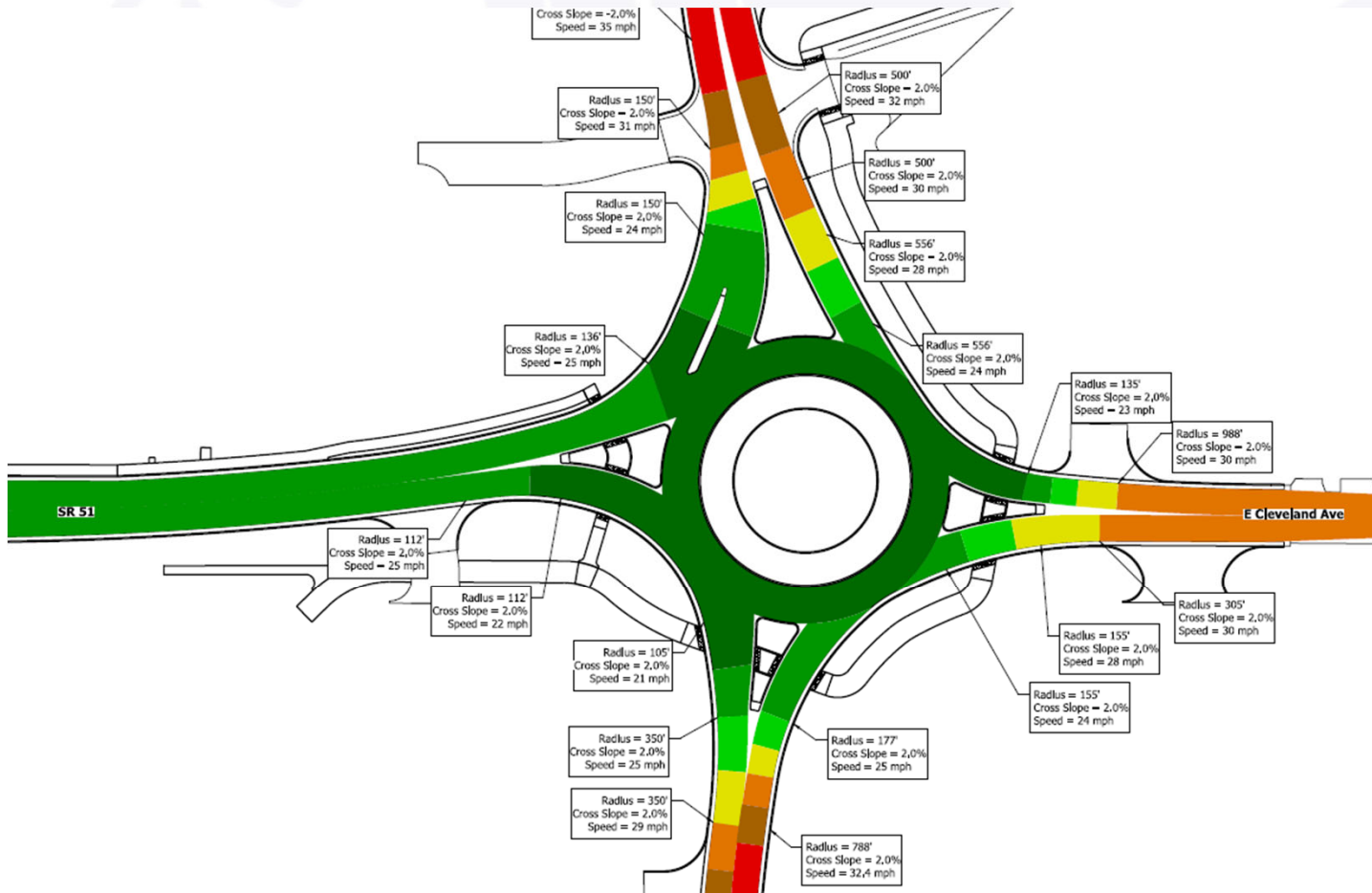


WB-62

- Legend:
- Front Tire Track
 - Rear Tire Track
 - - - Front Tire 1' Offset
 - - - Rear Tire 1' Offset



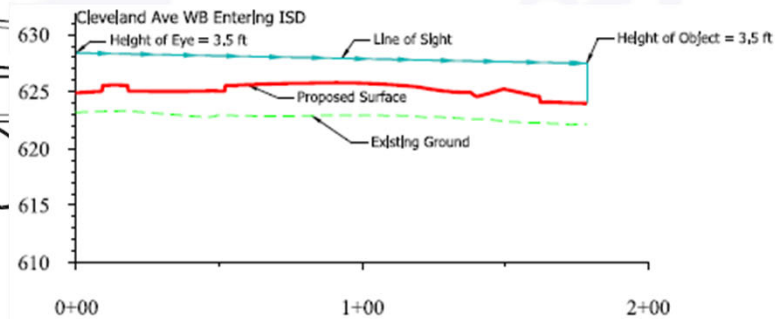
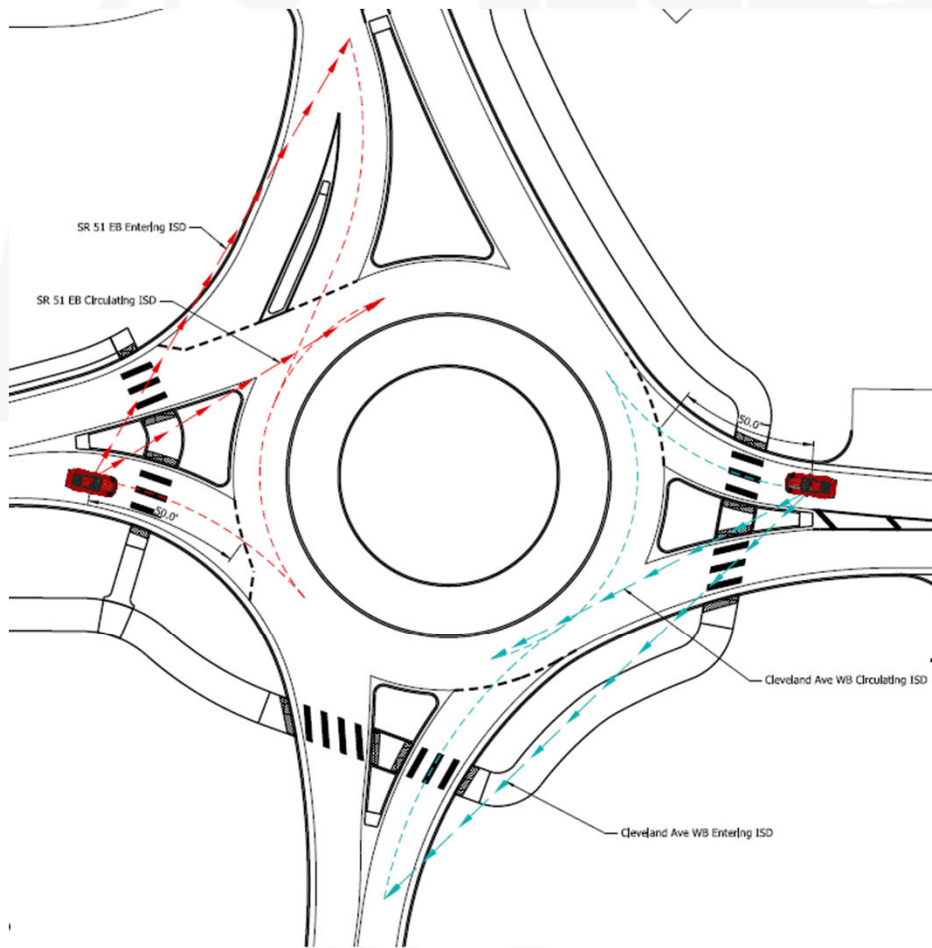
Speed Profile



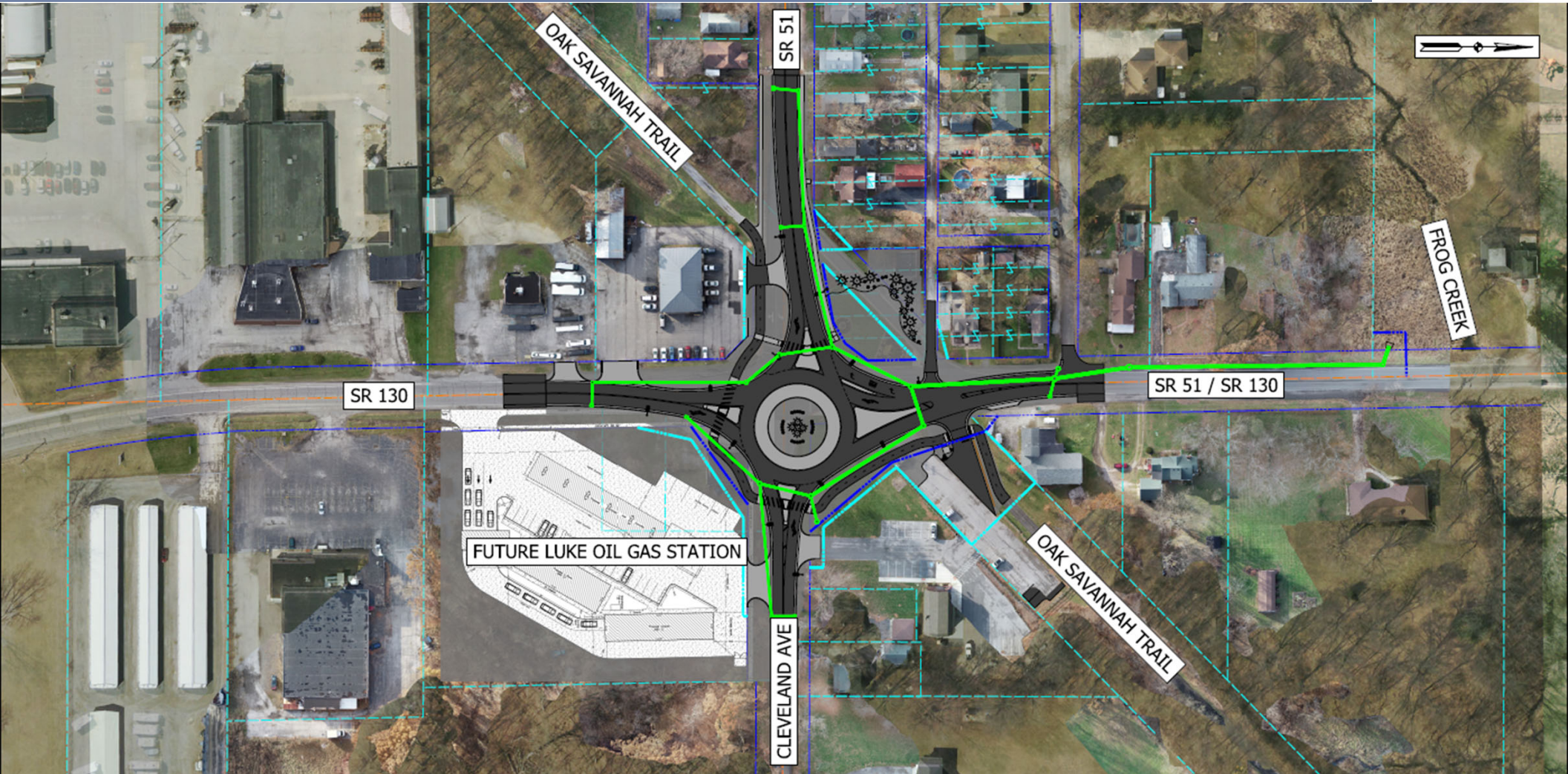
Sight Distance

Entering Sight Distance Calculated from R1 Fastest Path Speed
 Circulating Sight Distance Calculated from R4 Fastest Path Speed

| Approach | Entering Sight Distance Feet | Circulating Sight Distance Feet |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Cleveland Rd WB | 187 | 110 |
| SR 51 EB | 178 | 110 |
| SR 130 NB | 161 | 110 |
| SR 130 SB | 168 | 110 |

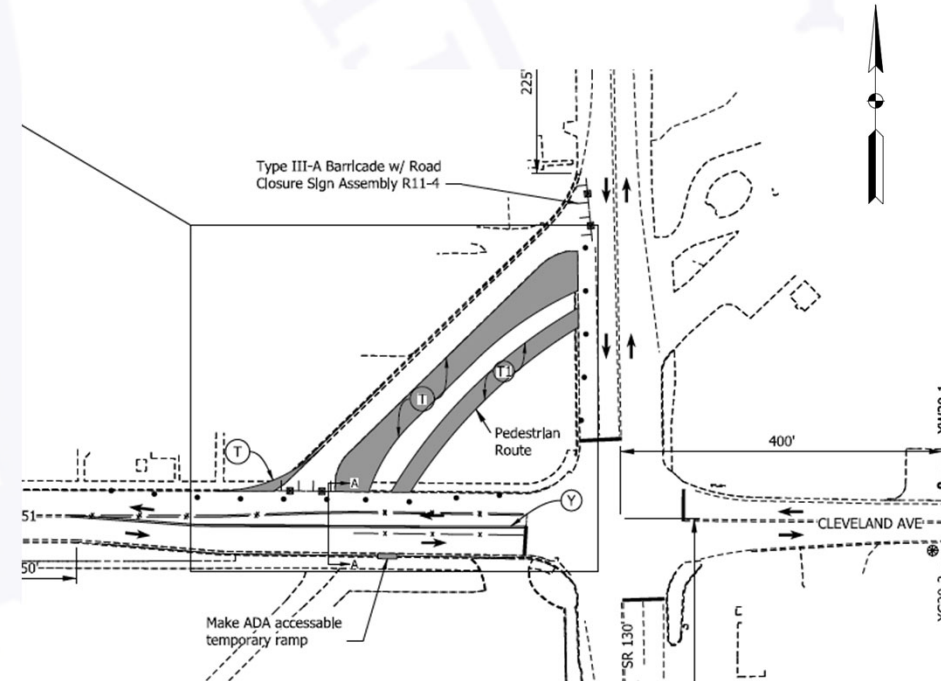


Proposed Roundabout Drainage



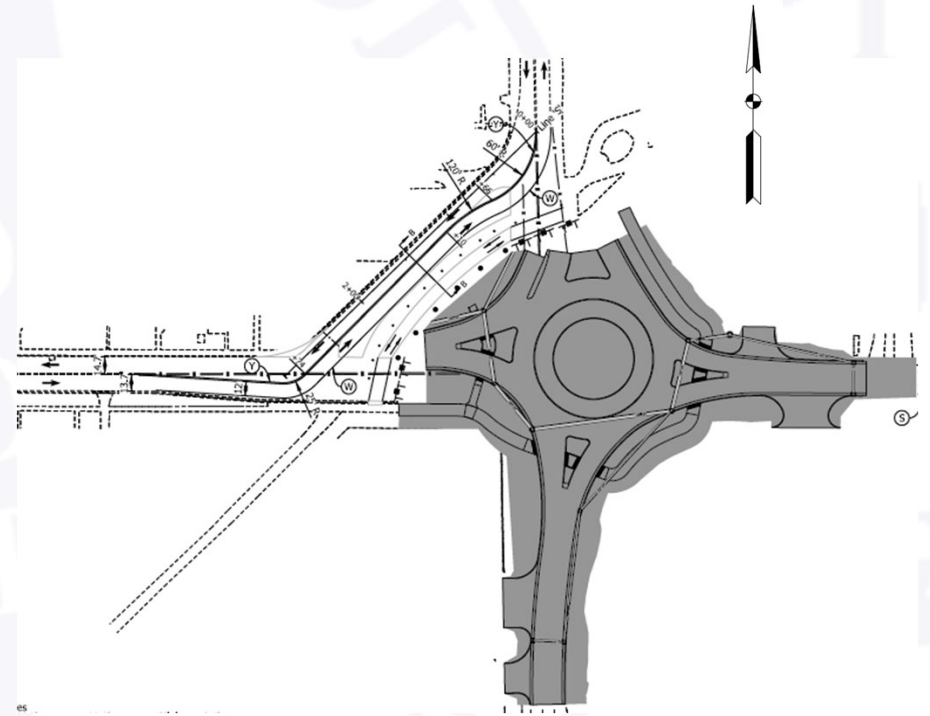
Maintenance of Traffic

- Phased MOT: will decrease the time required for a full intersection closure.
 - Phase 1:
 - Closing the right turn bypass lane on the north approach to the intersection.
 - Construction consists of widening the existing right turn bypass lane with temporary pavement to allow for two-way traffic in Phase 2.
 - Temporary pavement will also be placed to re-route pedestrian traffic along the Oak Savannah Trail.



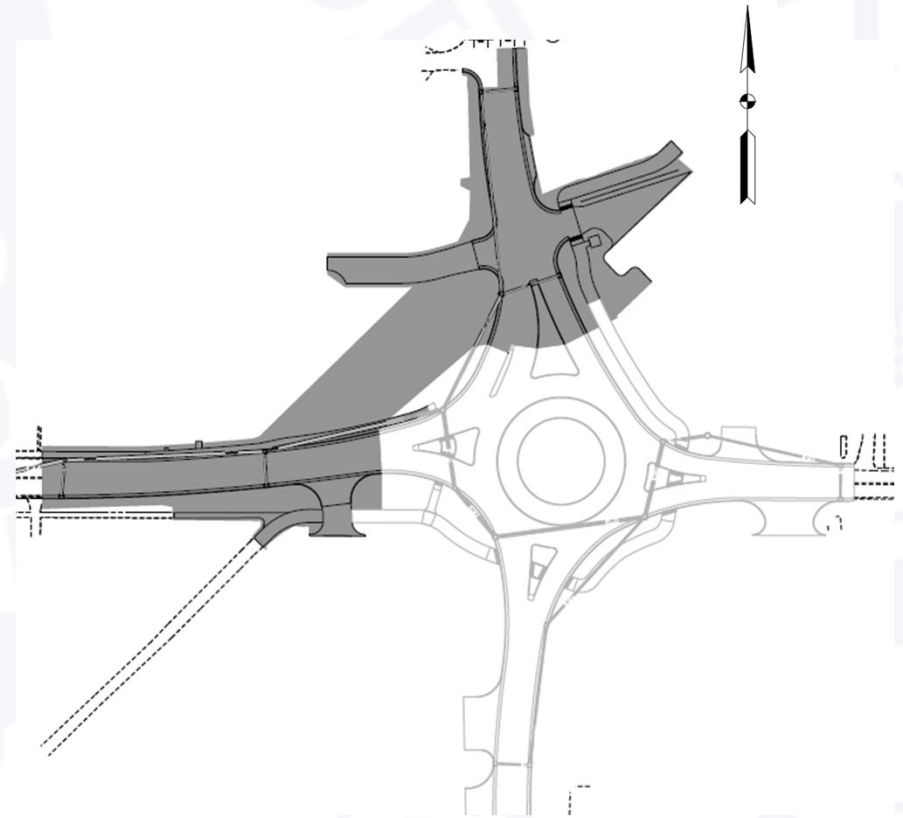
Maintenance of Traffic

- Phased MOT: will decrease the time required for a full intersection closure.
 - Phase 2:
 - Two-way traffic along S.R. 51 will be maintained.
 - Cleveland Avenue west of the intersection will be closed.
 - S.R. 130 south of the intersection will be closed.
 - Most of the roundabout will be constructed during this phase.
 - S.R. 130 and Cleveland Avenue traffic will utilize an alternate detour route.

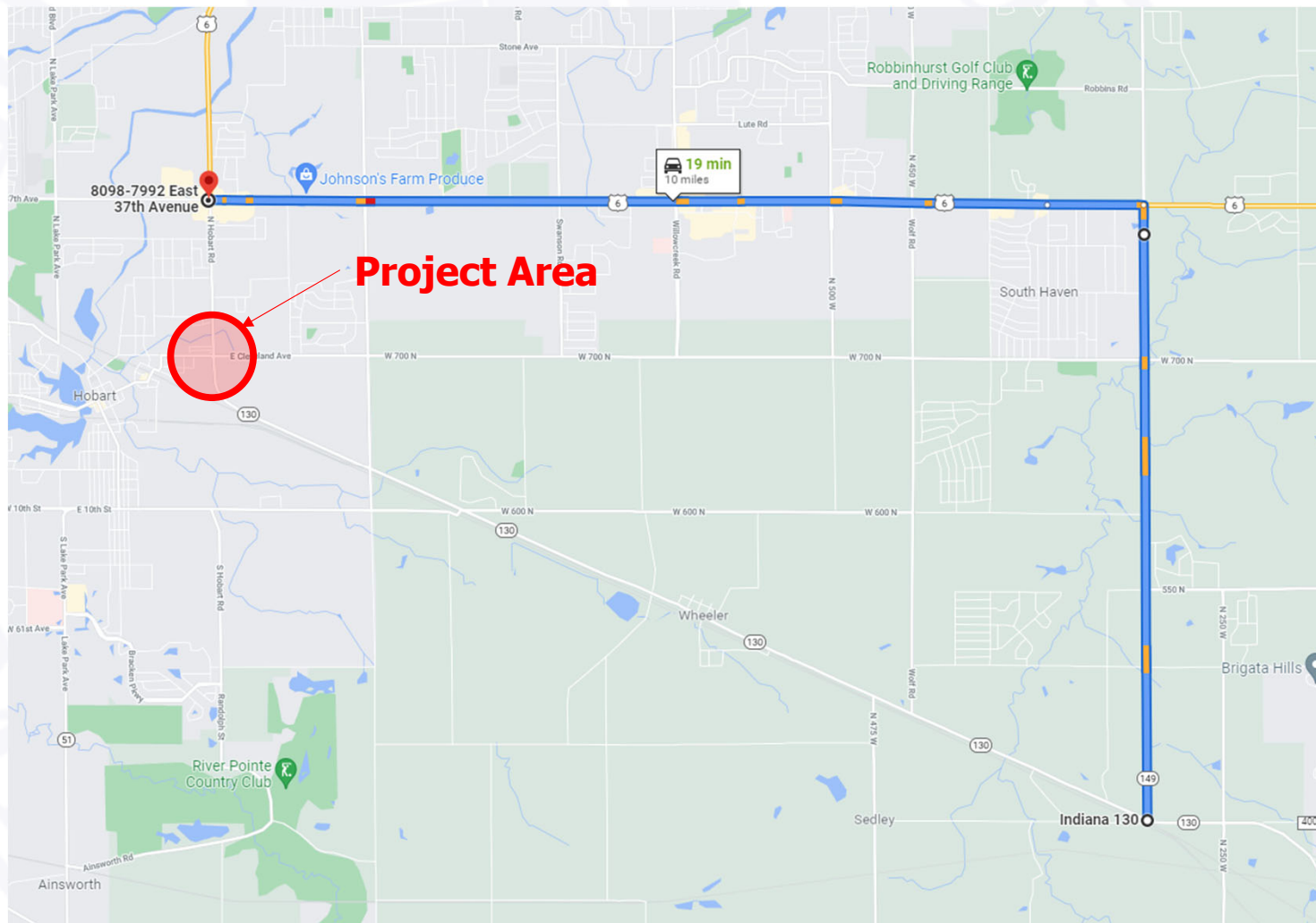


Maintenance of Traffic

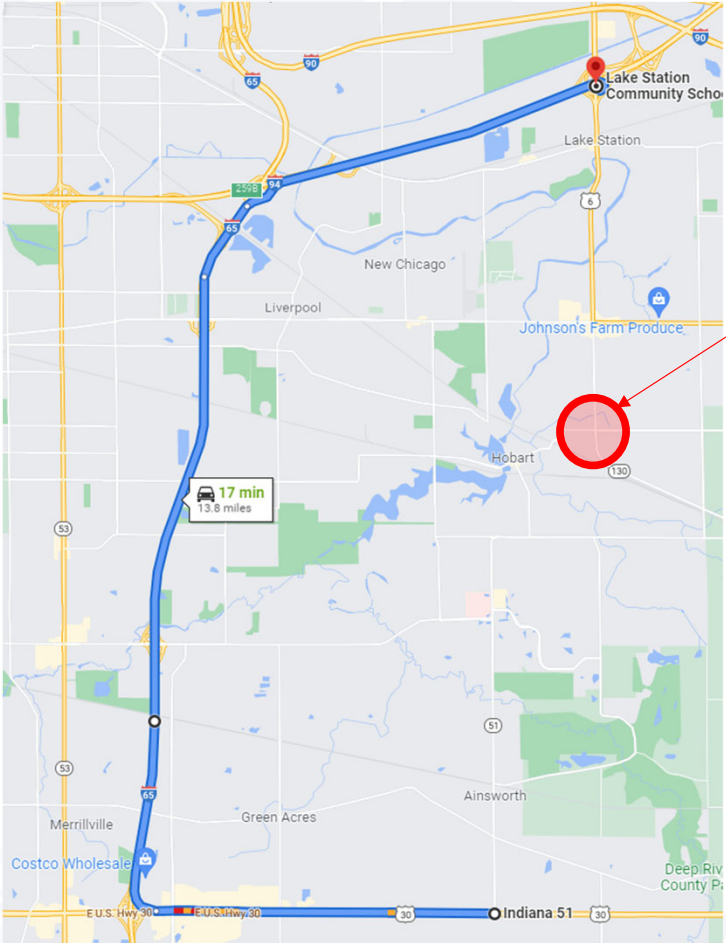
- Phased MOT: will decrease the time required for a full intersection closure.
 - Phase 3:
 - The intersection will be completely closed while the north approach and west approach are constructed.
 - S.R. 51, S.R. 130, and Cleveland Avenue will all utilize alternate detour routes.



S.R. 130 Detour Route



S.R. 51 Detour Route



Project Area

Project Schedule

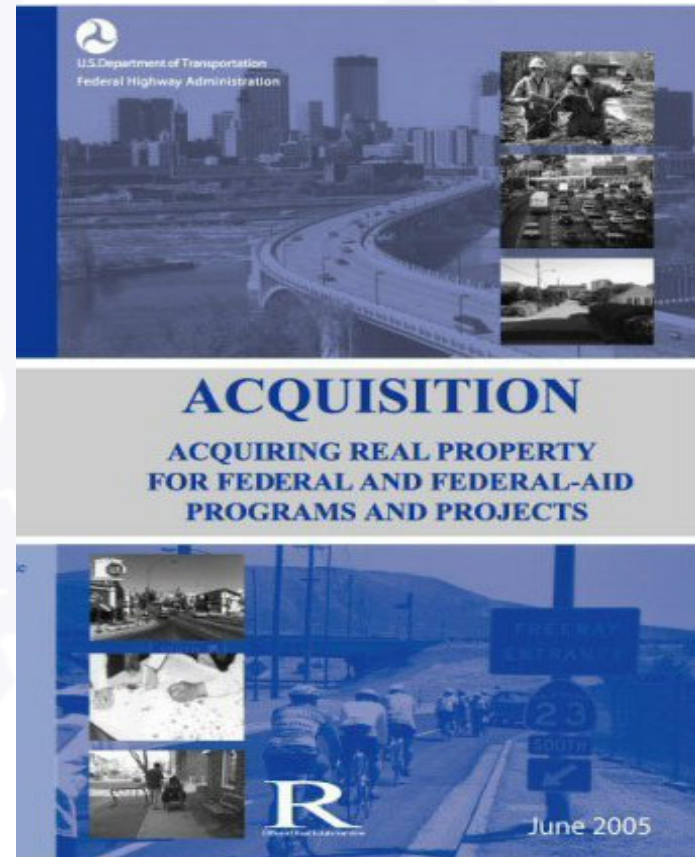
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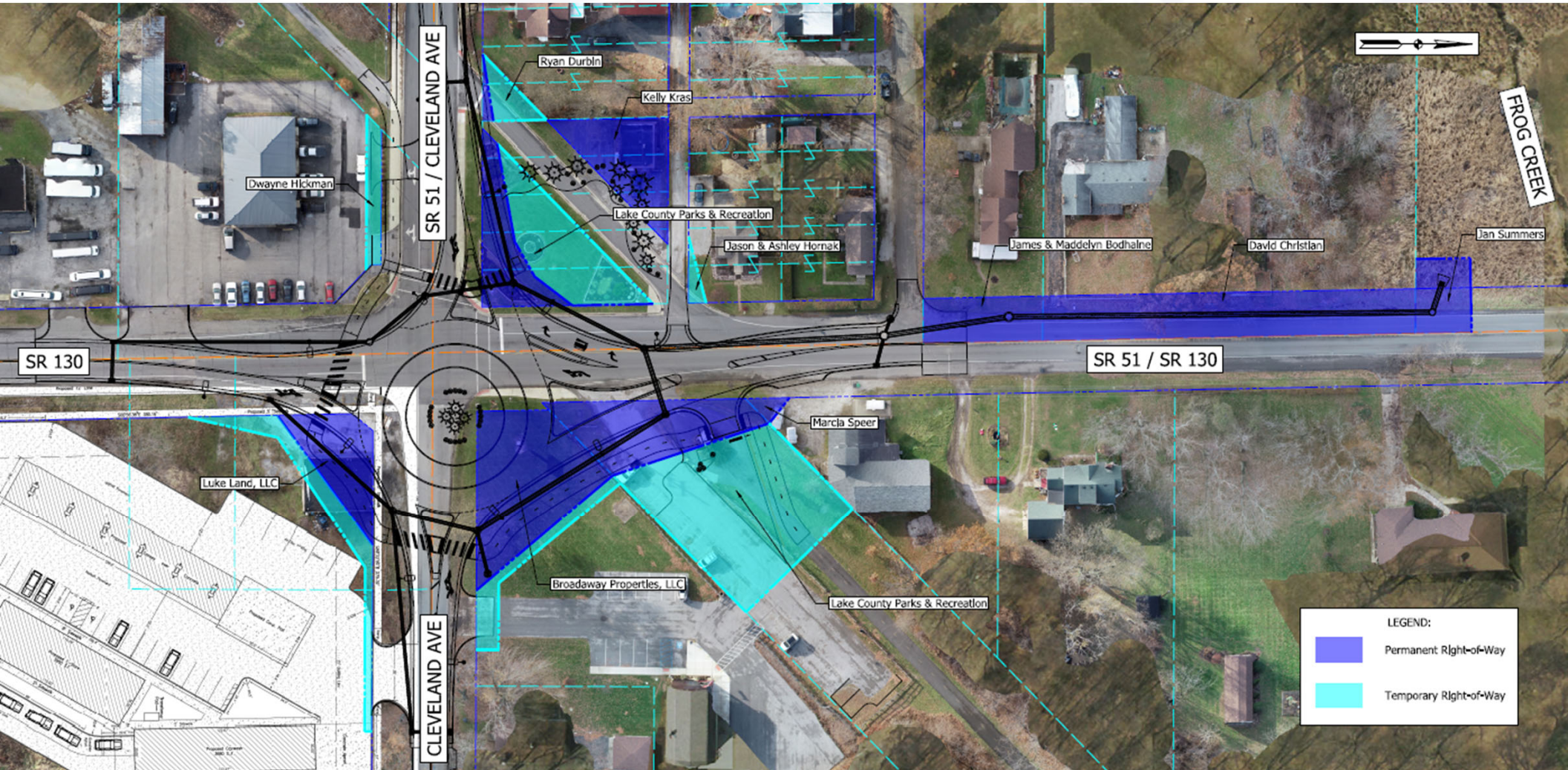
Real Estate Acquisition Process

- **"Uniform Act of 1970"**

- All federal, state, and local governments must comply.
- Requires an offer for just compensation.
- Project proposal requires approximately 0.5 acre of new permanent right-of-way.



Proposed Project Right-of-Way



Submit Public Comments

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Next Steps

- **Public and project stakeholder input**
 - Submit comments via options described in the project handout.
- **INDOT review and evaluation**
 - All comments are given full consideration during the decision-making process.
 - Address comments, finalize and approve the environmental document, and complete the project design.
- **Communicate a decision**
 - INDOT will notify project stakeholders of the decision.
 - Work through local media, social media outlets; paid legal notice.
 - Make project documents accessible via repositories.
- **Questions? Contact the Public Involvement Team.**



Project Resource Locations

- **Lake County Public Library, Hobart Branch**

100 N. Main St. Hobart, IN 46342

Phone: (219) 942-2243

Visit the project web page: <https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-laporte-district/>

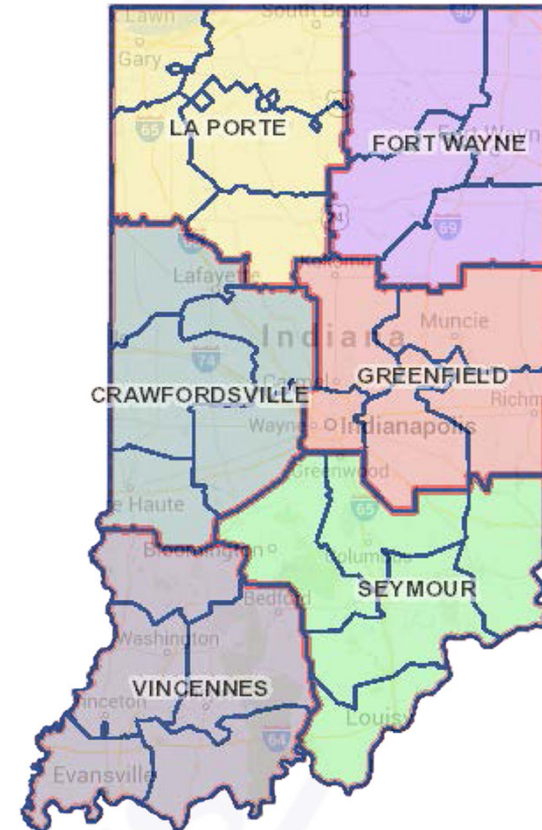
Transportation Services Call Center

Provides citizens and business customers with a single point of contact to request transportation services, obtain information, or provide feedback through multiple channels of communication.

855-463-6848 • INDOT4U.com • INDOT@indot.in.gov



855-463-6848



Public Comment Session

- **Please visit with INDOT project officials following the public comment session.**
- **Project Open House**
 - Project maps, displays, real estate acquisition table, INDOT project team, and informal Q & A
 - INDOT LaPorte District page: <http://www.in.gov/indot/4090.htm>
 - INDOT LaPorte District Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/INDOTNorthwest/>
 - LaPorteDistrictCommunications@indot.in.gov