

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

For

Indiana Project
Des. Number 2401424 (Lead), 2401505, & 2401506
State Road (SR) 2 at Larrison Blvd./Strawberry Rd. Intersection Improvement Project
St. Joseph County, Indiana

The approved Environmental Assessment (EA) was released for public involvement by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on March 4, 2026. The public comment period was from March 15, 2026, to April 14, 2026, and an in-person public hearing was held on March 30, 2026. Twenty-five (25) members of the public attended the meeting. During the public comment period and hearing, verbal and written comments were received from fourteen (14) members of the public and one (1) elected official. These comments provided no new substantive information or previously unconsidered environmental impacts requiring additional analysis. The Notice of Approved EA was provided to the resource agencies for a 30-day comment period on March 12, 2026 and one (1) agency (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)) responded. USEPA did not provide any new substantive information requiring additional analysis.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) proposes to convert the existing stop-controlled intersection at SR 2 and Larrison Blvd./Strawberry Rd. to a grade separated Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) in St. Joseph County, Indiana. Traffic operations and safety at the existing intersection are expected to worsen because of current and future industrial developments, referred to as the Indiana Enterprise Center (IEC), a portion of which is located near the intersection of Larrison Blvd./Strawberry Rd. The project will increase or maintain the operational efficiency of the SR 2 at Larrison Blvd./Strawberry Rd. intersection at a Level of Service (LOS) C or better, both in the construction year and the Horizon Year of 2037, and will reduce anticipated crash potential by maintaining the free-flow conditions on SR 2. Level of service is a term used to refer to a collection of measures of automobile congestion and travel time delay that is intended to represent a traveler's perception of the quality of service provided by the transportation infrastructure. It is a letter grad scale from A to F with A being free flow condition and F being a failure in the flow with unacceptable congestion. The current intersection is expected to operate at LOS F by 2037 due to the development and build out of the IEC.

The Selected Alternative includes conversion of the existing stop-controlled intersection of Larrison Blvd./Strawberry Rd. and SR 2 to a grade-separated diverging diamond interchange (DDI). Below is a summary of the scope of the project, but a full project description is identified as the "Preferred Alternative" in the EA document:

- Construction of a grade-separated diverging diamond interchange at the intersection of Larrison Blvd./Strawberry Rd. and SR 2

- Construct four new interchange ramps and two new grade-separated bridges along Larrison Blvd.
- Remove direct access between Snowberry Rd. and SR 2
- Widen Larrison Blvd. and Strawberry Rd. within the construction limits with an additional travel lane in each direction to support interchange traffic
- Install new traffic signals to control intersecting traffic along Larrison Blvd./Strawberry Rd. and new streetlights atop the new bridges
- Lengthen, replace, or modify as needed drainage structures along SR 2, Larrison Blvd., and Strawberry Rd.

After the EA was released for the public hearing, the design for the proposed bridges was changed from continuous composite beam bridges to prestressed composite continuous bulb-tee beam bridges, and the proposed cross sections were modified in order to reduce project cost, shorten construction time, and better accommodate expected traffic. The bridges will now include concrete slope walls at the bents rather than vertical MSE walls. In addition, the proposed interchange alignments were reconfigured to reduce the overall footprint of the interchange. The ramp connections to SR 2 will be located closer to the new bridges and the overall size of the interchange has been condensed. Construction phasing has changed from three major construction phases to six. Detour routes have been established. Construction is expected to begin in Summer of 2026 and completed in late 2027.

As a result of these design changes, the project will require 47.54 acres of fee-simple new permanent right-of-way (ROW), 31.81 acres of excess new permanent ROW, and 0.27 acre of temporary ROW. Fee simple new ROW was reduced from two parcels and excess ROW acreage increased from one parcel. The revised total of new permanent ROW and excess ROW is 79.35 acres, increased from 78.52 acres in the approved EA. No work will occur within excess ROW areas that are to remain under ownership of St. Joseph County. All ROW purchased to date has used 100% local and/or private dollars, as will all ROW yet to be purchased. There will be five (5) residential relocations because of this project.

The project has been designed to minimize stream and wetland impacts where possible within the project area. Stream and wetland impacts will be mitigated through the waterway permitting process in compliance with federal and state regulations. There will be two (2) streams with a total of 197.9 linear feet (0.021 acre) permanently impacted by the project, reduced from 336.5 linear feet (0.053 acre) in the approved EA. There will be 12 linear feet (0.002 acre) temporarily impacted. Approximately 0.08 acre of wetlands will be permanently impacted, reduced from 0.09 acre identified in the approved EA. No temporary impacts to wetlands are anticipated.

Terrestrial habitats impacted by the project include approximately 63.1 acres. Terrestrial impacts include removal of vegetarian and earth grading of roadside vegetation, lawn

areas, recently cleared agricultural fields, and active agricultural fields, as well as tree clearing of individual trees, overgrown areas, and wooded areas. Approximately 2.68 acres of trees will be removed for the project, which is documented in the EA.

The project is within range of the federally endangered Indiana Bat. The project effect finding for this species is “May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect”. On January 29, 2026, USFWS concurred and agreed on site-specific Avoidance and Mitigation Measures. The project revisions will not result in additional species impacts.

There are no properties listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places within the area of potential effect for the project. Therefore, the finding for the project under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is “no historic properties affected.” The Indiana State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the finding on September 9, 2025. The finding was published with a comment period ending on September 12, 2025, and no other consulting parties or the public objected to the finding.

This project is in St. Joseph County, which is currently a maintenance area for Ozone (1997 Standard). The project’s design concept and scope are accurately reflected in both the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) 2050 Transportation Plan (TP) and the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which both conform to the State Implementation Program. The FY 2026-2030 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) includes this project by reference to the FY 2026-2030 MACOG TIP. Therefore, the conformity requirements of 40 CFR 93 have been met.

This project is considered a Type 1 project in terms of analyzing traffic noise impacts. Therefore, in accordance with 23 CFR 772 and the INDOT Traffic Noise Analysis Procedures (2022), this action requires a formal noise analysis. Based on the studies completed, three (3) impacted receptors will have noise impacts. However, according to the 2022 INDOT noise procedures, noise abatement is not likely and has not been found to be feasible and reasonable based on property access considerations and the inability to meet the square footage per benefited receptor criteria. A reevaluation of the Noise Analysis will occur during final design.

There are fourteen (14) firm commitments and twenty-one (21) included for further consideration in the approved EA. Since the approval of the EA, two “firm” commitments have been added to the project by INDOT Environmental Services Division:

- Best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented, as applicable, during work within and adjacent to waters to minimize in-stream impacts and maintain water quality, in accordance with applicable permits and INDOT Standard Specifications.

- Construction-related emission reduction measures, including equipment maintenance, minimization of unnecessary idling, and dust control, will be implemented, as applicable, in accordance with INDOT Standard Specifications.

The FHWA has determined that this project, as identified in the Environmental Assessment (EA) 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, public hearing transcript, public and agency comments received. They have been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the project adequately and accurately. These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that significant impacts will not occur, and an environmental impact statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of these documents.

July 15, 2026

Date

For: Christopher J. Hall
Interim Division Administrator