

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS),
PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)
has published the Tier 1 DEIS for the Mid-States Corridor project between
SR 66/US 231 and I-69 (DES#1801941)

DEIS AND PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

INDOT has published the Tier 1 DEIS, which identifies Alternative P as the preferred route for the proposed Mid-States Corridor.

Improvements for Alternative P extend 54 miles from I-64/US 231 to I-69 at the existing US 231 interchange. It uses existing US 231 between SR 66 and I-64. Construction will begin at the I-64/US 231 interchange continuing east of Huntingburg and Jasper, avoiding developed areas near these cities. From Haysville to the north, Alternative P generally parallels the existing US 231 alignment with a bypass west of Loogootee. This alternative ends at the existing I-69 interchange at US 231. These highway improvements may include a 2-lane or 4-lane facility to be determined during Tier 2. A total of nine illustrative local improvements on existing US 231 are also part of Alternative P, which may include passing lanes, turn lanes and/or other safety/access improvements to be determined during Tier 2.

Regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and FHWA allow studies under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for large, complex projects to be carried out in a two-stage, "tiered" process. In the first tier, the "big picture" issues are addressed, while considering the full range of impacts. These "big picture" decisions include a build/no-build decision and (in the case of a build decision) identifying a corridor for Tier 2 studies. After the "big picture" issues are resolved in Tier 1, the focus shifts in Tier 2 NEPA studies to issues associated with a more exact determination of impacts and the avoidance and mitigation of adverse impacts. Because the Mid-States Corridor is a very large undertaking with a 12-county Study Area, the NEPA process and accompanying environmental reviews, including Section 106 reviews of cultural resources, also follow a tiered process.

Tier 1 Section 106 Review identifies aboveground and previously recorded belowground resources within all the alternatives, which are documented in the DEIS for review and comment. Based on the Tiered development of this corridor a draft Programmatic Agreement (PA) is also included in the DEIS. The PA, being developed in accordance with 36 CFR 800.14(b), will guide the Tier 2 Section 106 Review, including determinations of final effect findings and development of any needed mitigation. Tier 2 studies will focus only on the preferred alternative selected in Tier 1. The views of the public on the draft Programmatic Agreement are being sought as a part of this DEIS comment period.

The DEIS, including the draft Programmatic Agreement pursuant to 36 CFR 800.14(b), is available online at <https://midstatescorridor.com/DEIS>. Copies of the DEIS will be available for review on April 15 at:

- Mid-States Corridor Project Office: Vincennes University Jasper Campus, Administration Building, Room 216, 850 College Ave., Jasper, IN
- Bedford Public Library: 1323 K St., Bedford, IN
- Bloomfield-Eastern Greene County Public Library: 125 S. Franklin St., Bloomfield, IN
- Dubois Branch Library: 5506 E. Main St., Evansville, IN
- Ferdinand Branch Library: 112 E. 16th St., Ferdinand, IN
- Huntingburg Public Library: 419 N. Jackson St., Huntingburg, IN
- Jasper-Dubois County Public Library: 100 3rd Ave., Jasper, IN
- Lincoln Heritage Public Library: 105 Wallace St., Dale, IN
- Loogootee Public Library: 504 Park St., Loogootee, IN
- Melton Public Library: 8496 W. College St., French Lick, IN
- Mitchell Community Public Library: 804 W. Main St., Mitchell, IN
- Monroe County Public Library: 303 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington, IN
- Orleans Town and Township Public Library: 174 N. Maple St., Orleans, IN
- Otwell Town Library: 2301 N. Spring St., Otwell, IN
- Pike County Public Library: 1008 E. Maple St., Petersburg, IN
- Shoals Public Library: 404 High St., Shoals, IN
- Spencer County Public Library: 210 Walnut St., Rockport, IN
- Washington Carnegie Public Library: 300 W. Main St., Washington, IN
- INDOT Central Office: 100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN
- INDOT Vincennes District Office: 3560 S. US 41, Vincennes, IN

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The first hearing will be held Tuesday, April 26, 2022, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Eastern time at WestGate Academy, 13598 E. WestGate Dr., Odon, IN 47562. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m.

A second hearing will be held Thursday, April 28, 2022, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Eastern time at the Jasper Arts Center (Vincennes University Jasper Campus), 951 College Ave., Jasper, IN 47546. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m.

Each hearing will include a presentation from the Project Team at 6 p.m. followed by a formal public comment session. Spoken comments will be limited to two minutes per person to allow opportunities to all who wish to speak. The team will be on hand to address questions and comments before and after the presentations.

Attendees may make an oral public comment at the hearing, provide verbal comments to a court reporter or may return, mail or email a comment form available at the public hearings and online. With advance notice, special accommodations will be made for individuals needing auxiliary aids, accessibility, or services of interpreters, signers, readers, or large print. Anyone with such needs should contact David Goffinet with Lochmueller Group at 812-759-4120 or dgoffinet@lochgroup.com.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

In addition to providing written or verbal comments at the public hearings, the public may submit written comments on the DEIS, including the draft Programmatic Agreement through May 31, 2022, via the comment form at <https://midstatescorridor.com>, via email to info@midstatescorridor.com or by mail to the project office. During the public comment period the Mid-States Corridor project office (Vincennes University Jasper Campus, Administration Building, Room 216, 850 College Ave., Jasper, IN 47546) will be open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern time. The Project Team is available outside of the office hours by appointment. Those requesting appointments should call (812) 482-3116 or email info@midstatescorridor.com.

This notice is published in compliance with Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1)) states: "Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program." 23 CFR 450.212(a)(7) states: "Public involvement procedures shall provide for periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all and revision of the process as necessary." Approved by the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation on July 7, 2021.