

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

For

Indiana Project
Des. No. 1173374

US 50 North Vernon Bypass- East Project
North Vernon, Jennings County, Indiana

An environmental assessment was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on December 2, 2013 and a Public Hearing was held on December 18, 2013. Several comments were received from the public, local businesses, local government agencies, and resource agencies. Portions of the project scope were revised to address some of the comments received. Due to the changes of scope, new and revised environmental commitments, and the need to address comments that were received at the hearing, an Additional Information (AI) addendum was prepared to validate the EA and reflect the current scope of the project. The AI was approved by FHWA on July 7, 2014.

This project will construct the eastern half of a northern bypass around North Vernon. The new roadway will start at SR 3 north of North Vernon and connect to existing U.S. 50 east of town.

The Preferred Alternative, Alternative 6D, begins at SR 3, directly east from where the West Bypass roadway ends. From SR 3, the route travels due east for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to CR 75 W. East of CR 75 W, the bypass would curve to the south and run parallel to CR 20 W. The bypass would cross CR 250 N about 0.15 mile west of CR 20 W, but there would be no access at this location. Instead, CR 250 N would be closed in both directions via cul-de-sacs where the bypass crosses. South of CR 250 N, the bypass would turn towards the southeast to pass through the northeast corner of the Berry Materials quarry and intersect CR 20 W with an at-grade intersection (2-way stop for CR 20 traffic). The bypass would continue southeast and cross over the Vernon Fork via a new bridge. East of the river, the bypass would cross Base Road, where the southern leg of Base Road would terminate at the bypass via a cul-de-sac. The short northern leg of Base Road would be left without access, which would require

acquisition/relocation of all parcels at the north end of Base Road. Continuing southeast, Alternative 6D would cross the CSX Railroad line via a new bridge. As the bypass approaches the CR 75 E (Deer Creek Road)/U.S. 50 intersection, it would turn towards the east to tie into the existing U.S. 50 roadway. The tie-in would occur west of the CR 75 E (Deer Creek Road) intersection, so it would not need to be rebuilt as part of this project. The total length of Alternative 6D is approximately 3.2 miles.

After review, discussion, and careful consideration, several "Practical Design" alternatives were selected for implementation as part of the project. These alternatives include reducing the paved shoulder width, modifying side slopes, eliminating the CR 20 Overpass and replacing it with an at-grade intersection (2-way stop for CR 20 traffic); and eliminating the roundabout at CR 175 / CR 160 by replacing it with a two-way stop-controlled intersection. Meetings were held on April 29, 2014 with Harold Campbell, Mayor of North Vernon and on May 8, 2014 with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to discuss these changes.

The project supports the planning and economic development goals of North Vernon and Jennings County. The proposed project will provide an efficient, safe and less congested link between the existing and growing industrial area on the north side of North Vernon to US 50 east of town.

Karst features have been identified that may be directly impacted by roadway runoff/ drainage. The 1993 INDOT-Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Department of Environmental Management and US Fish and Wildlife Service KARST Memorandum of Understanding during all phases of the project.

The project currently stands at 5.87 acres of emergent and 3.4 acres of forested wetland impacts (based on construction limits) and 2950 linear feet of stream impacts, which will be mitigated through the USACE and IDEM permitting process. An 800.11(e) document was signed by FHWA on May 17, 2013, which issued an "Adverse Effect" finding for the proposed project for potential impacts to archaeological sites. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was approved on September 17, 2013 to mitigate for these adverse effects, which completed the Section 106 process. Implementation of Alternative 6D would result in the acquisition of thirteen residences and one business. This project is not likely to adversely affect threatened or endangered species. No impacts to 4(f) resources are anticipated.

The FHWA has determined that this project, as identified in the Environmental Assessment, 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.

July 29, 2014

Date

for Richard J. Marquis
Division Administrator