



**MID-STATES
CORRIDOR**

FINAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Mid-States Corridor Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study

Prepared for

Indiana Department of Transportation
Mid-States Regional Development Authority

JULY 14, 2020

Prepared by

Mid-States Corridor Project Consultant Public Involvement Team





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1. INTRODUCTION & GOALS

Introduction

The Mid-States Corridor Regional Development Authority (RDA) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) are conducting the required Tier 1 Environmental Study for the Mid-States Corridor Project. The project examines an improved highway connection in southern Indiana.

The Mid-States Corridor Project is anticipated to begin at SR 66 near the William H. Natcher Bridge at Rockport, continue north serving Huntingburg and Jasper and extend north to connect to Interstate 69.

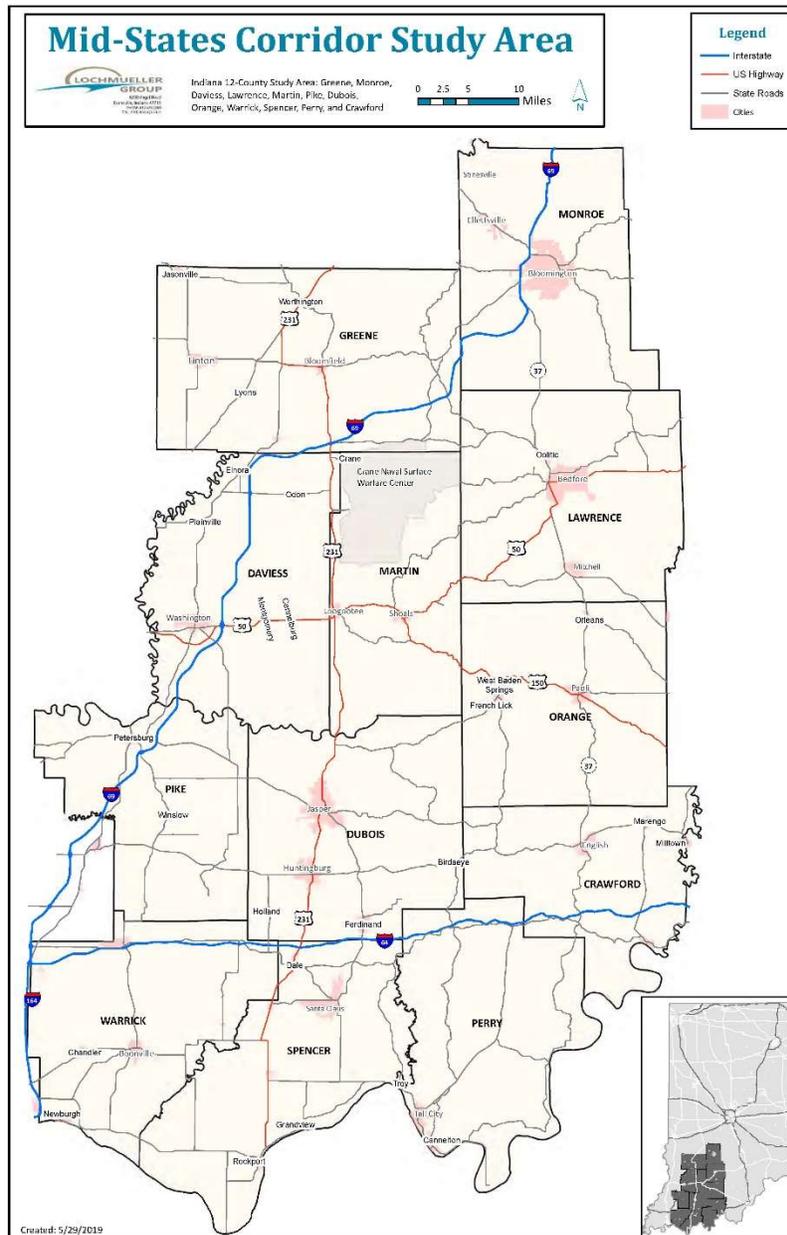
The study will include evaluation of improvements to and use of existing facilities and construction of new roadway facilities. A no-build alternative will be evaluated to serve as a baseline for comparison.

The project will include evaluating the existing 26-miles of four-lane US 231 from the Natcher Bridge in Spencer County to I-64. The study will also evaluate the US 231 corridor through Dubois, Martin, Daviess and Greene counties and corridors to the east and west to provide an improved connection to I-69/SR 37.

A preferred corridor will be identified in the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will be followed by a formal comment period. The DEIS is targeted for late 2020 or early 2021. A Record of Decision (ROD) is expected later in 2021. The Record of Decision is the Federal Highway Administration's final approval of the preferred corridor. After the ROD is approved, the required Tier 2 environmental studies can begin and will include more detailed analyses and selection of specific alignments.

The Project Study Area is the region in which corridors may be located. It also includes areas which may experience changes in traffic patterns from the project. The Mid-States Corridor Project Study Area generally is defined as those counties within the area bounded by I-69 on the west and north, SR 37 on the east and north and the Ohio River on the south. The Study Area consists of counties because many important economic and demographic data and forecasts are available on a county basis.

The Study Area includes Spencer, Dubois, Perry, Warrick, Pike, Daviess, Crawford, Orange, Martin, Lawrence, Greene and Monroe counties.



INDOT and the RDA initiated this study under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study is required for all federally-funded projects. It includes:

- Identification of Purpose and Need
- Analysis of a range of reasonable alternatives
- Public involvement, including opportunities for participation and comments
- Coordination and consultation with local, state and federal agencies
- Assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts
- Consideration of ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts



The documents for this study are being prepared pursuant to NEPA regulations issued by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (23 CFR Part 771) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR Part 1500-1508). Regulations allow NEPA studies for large, complex projects to be carried out in a two-staged, “tiered” process. In the first tier, “big picture” issues are addressed, while considering the full range of impacts. After the “big picture” issues are resolved in Tier 1, the focus shifts in the Tier 2 NEPA study to issues associated with a more exact determination of impacts and the avoidance and mitigation of adverse impacts. The difference in focus is one of degree. The Tier 1 study includes fact-based analyses that will support informed decision-making on corridor-wide issues. The Tier 2 study will include more detailed analyses.

Tier 1 Timeline & Key Milestones

Milestone 1: Preliminary Alternatives & Purpose & Need

The first stage of the environmental process involves defining the project goals (purpose and need) and identifying potential route concepts (preliminary alternatives) – **Late 2019**

Milestone 2: Screening of Alternatives

High-level analysis of each route concept to determine performance against the purpose and need, costs and impacts to the human and natural environment. – **Early 2020**

Milestone 3: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Detailed analysis of the screened alternatives carried forward resulting in an identified preferred alternative. – **Late 2020 or early 2021**

Milestone 4: Final EIS & Record of Decision

After full consideration of comments from agencies and the public on the Draft EIS, a refined alternative is identified and selected in the Record of Decision. In this tiered study the refined alternative will be a corridor approximately 2,000 feet in width. – **Late 2021**

Public Involvement Goals

INDOT and the RDA are committed to a meaningful public involvement process. Public communications and stakeholder involvement is critically important to the overall success of this tiered environmental process. This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is designed to proactively share information about the project, educate key stakeholders and gather their input. This input in turn has a significant role in identify project needs and selecting a preferred route.

A variety of communications tools will be used to ensure stakeholders have a clear understanding of the environmental process, the work underway and the opportunities to share their feedback.

The goals of the PIP are to build awareness of the Mid-States Corridor Project, increase understanding of the work underway and gather feedback to inform decision-making throughout the study.

Through these public involvement efforts, INDOT, the RDA and the Project Team will build relationships and encourage meaningful communication throughout the project.



2. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

With a large study area that includes a dozen Indiana counties, there are a number of key stakeholders to communicate with and engage throughout the Tier 1 Environmental Study. Keeping stakeholders informed will increase project understanding, set expectations, dispel misinformation and build engagement.

A number of tools will be used to reach these stakeholders throughout the study and at key project milestones. A representative list of stakeholders includes:

Public

- Motorists
- Residents
- Citizen groups

Businesses

- Businesses that will benefit directly and indirectly from the Mid-States Corridor
- Business/trade organizations/chambers of commerce
- Economic development officials and groups

Elected officials & government agencies

- Indiana's US Congressional delegation
- State senators and representatives from the study area
- Mayors and representatives of local government (including local planning leaders)
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Regional Planning Organizations
- Office of Community and Rural Affairs

Participating & cooperating agencies

- Federal Highway Administration
- Mid-States Regional Development Authority
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Indiana State Historic Preservation Office
- US Fish and Wildlife
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Tribal Agencies



Community groups & organizations

- Civic organizations
- Advocacy groups

Reporters & members of the media (local and statewide)

- Newspapers
- Television
- Radio
- Magazines

Transportation & logistics

- Indiana Motor Truck Association
- Trucking companies
- Delivery companies
- Bus companies
- Tourism associations
- Distribution firms
- Warehousing companies

Special interest groups

- Historic preservation groups
- Environmental groups

Emergency Response Services

- Fire, law enforcement, and medical

3. DATABASE MANAGEMENT

Maintaining up-to-date project databases is a critical component of the public involvement process. They will hold contact information for key groups and individuals engaged throughout the process. They will also serve as a repository for categorizing and documenting input from these various groups. The Project Team will maintain the lists throughout the project. It will include, but not be limited to, contact information and input from the following:

- Resource agency representatives
- Public meeting attendees
- Regional Issues Involvement Team representatives
- Ad Hoc stakeholders



- Working alignment commercial/industrial contacts
- Project office visitors
- Media outlets
- Media inquiries
- Local officials
- Economic development organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Emergency responders
- Advocacy groups
- Civic organizations
- Project e-mail list
- Project text-alert list

4. MESSAGING & PROJECT MATERIALS

Key Messaging

Consistent messaging plays a key role in project understanding and success. Strategic messaging helps build public understanding and acceptance. Messaging needs to include what is said, when it's said and to what audiences. Messaging will be refined, by audience, throughout the project.

Key messages will be developed and will be updated, as needed, throughout the project (see Appendix A: Key Points). Key messages are the basis for content on the project website, project materials, presentations, social media and other needs.

Project Materials

Outreach materials build project understanding. They will be used to reinforce key messages, share project information, promote public meetings and solicit feedback. Project materials include, but are not limited to:

- Project website
- Handouts and fact sheets
- Maps
- Social media accounts
- E-newsletters



- Text messages
- Display boards
- Event signage
- Project presentations
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Follow our progress cards
- Fliers and postcards

5. OUTREACH TOOLS

Project Website

The project website (www.midstatescorridor.com) is an important one-stop repository for information about the Mid-States Corridor Project. Visitors to the site can easily find information about the project, learn about upcoming events, find answers to their questions and share input on the project.

Information on the website will include, but is not limited to:

- Project information
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Maps
- Graphics
- Meeting information
- Photographs
- Videos
- Project office location and hours
- Contact information
- Sign-up for e-newsletters and text alerts

The website will be maintained by the Public Involvement Team and updated on a regular basis. Regular reports will be provided to the Project Team.

Fact Sheets & Handouts

A branded fact sheet and handouts will be used to share information with key stakeholders, at public meetings and at the project office. The fact sheet will include a project overview, information on the work underway and contact information. It will be updated on a regular basis throughout the project.

The current version of the fact sheet will be available on the project website.



Maps & Display Boards

Maps and display boards will be produced for public meetings, presentations and stakeholder meetings, as needed. They will be produced at project milestones and visually reinforce key messages and share project information. After the meetings, they will be on display at the Project Office (**Section 7**).

E-newsletters & Text Alerts

E-newsletters and text alerts are an inexpensive way to communicate with key stakeholders on a regular basis. They require users to sign up to receive materials. This option will be available at public meetings and promoted in several locations including the project website, social media sites and project materials. Draft e-newsletters and text alerts will be submitted for Project Team approval. The frequency of e-newsletters and text alerts will be determined by project information and key milestones.

Presentations

A branded PowerPoint presentation template will serve as the basis for all Project Team presentations. The Public Involvement Team will maintain the presentation, update and share it for Project Team approval in advance of key milestones. Team members who schedule presentations will coordinate needs with the Public Involvement Team. The Public Involvement Team will maintain an up-to-date database of requests and presentations.

Photos & Videos

Project photos and video will be used to document progress on the project and support a number of communication channels. They offer strong content for the project website, electronic newsletters, social media channels, media distribution and more. Photo and video opportunities will be used to capture key meetings and increase project knowledge. Their use will be approved in advance by the Project Team.

6. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COORDINATION

Opportunities for face-to-face involvement with the public are important to building a level of trust and understanding. Public meetings and small-scale gatherings will be held throughout the project development process, and include the following:

Public Information Meetings (PIMs)

Two (2) sets of public information meetings will be held in at least two (2) locations within the project study area prior to formal public hearings on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). These meetings will occur at the first two project milestones.



The first meeting will be at the scoping phase with an emphasis on purpose and need/potential preliminary alternatives. The second will be at the end of the alternatives screening process, when some alternatives will be eliminated and others will be carried forward for detailed study.

The meetings will provide a formal opportunity for public input at critical stages in the development of the DEIS. Local officials’ briefings will be held in the afternoon in advance of each evening PIM. Meeting locations will vary for each set of meetings to promote geographically diverse participation in the project development process.

Regional Issues Involvement Team Meetings

With project limits extending from US 231/SR 66 near Rockport to I-69 with multiple route options, the typical approach of a single Community Advisory Committee to engage key stakeholders is not practical. Four (4) Regional Issues Involvement Teams will be formed within the project study area. These teams will represent general regions of the project study area. The geographic corridor regions are defined as southcentral (SC), northeast (NE), northcentral (NC) and northwest (NW).

Each regional team will meet four (4) times including a purpose and need/preliminary alternatives meeting, alternatives screening process meeting, prior to the public hearing and prior to the release of the combined FEIS/ROD.

In addition, two (2) special meetings of each regional team will be conducted to assist with allocating population and employment for the traffic model development. Those who participate in these special meetings will be members who have particular knowledge of growth and anticipated development patterns in the affected areas.

Regional Issues Involvement Team Invitees

Name	Affiliation	Region
Al Logsdon	Spencer County Government	SC
Gay Ann Harney	City of Rockport	SC
Chad Blessinger	Dubois County Government	SC
Elmer Brames	Dubois County Government	SC
Nick Hostetter	Dubois County Government	SC
Denny Spinner	City of Huntingburg	SC
Dean Vonderheide	City of Jasper	SC
Darla Blazey	City of Jasper	SC
Chad Huron	City of Jasper	SC
Marc Steczyk	Lincoln State Park and Amphitheatre	SC
Matt Eckert	Holiday World	SC
Kevin Manley	Dubois County Tourism	SC
John Blair	Valley Watch	SC
Nancy Eckerle	Jasper Chamber of Commerce	SC
Kathy Reinke	Spencer County Chamber of Commerce	SC
Tom Utter	Lincolnland Economic Development Corporation	SC
Lisa Gehlhausen	Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission	SC



Nathan Held	Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission	SC
Ed Cole	Dubois Strong	SC
Steve Roelle	Success Warrick County	SC
Paul Lake	City of Huntingburg	SC
Seyed Shokouhzadeh	Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization	SC
Jennifer Gish	Indiana Farm Bureau	SC
Sue Henke	Memorial Hospital Emergency Medical Service	SC
John Dillon	Memorial Hospital Emergency Medical Service	SC
Doug Bawel	Jasper Engines	SC
Raymie Eckerle	Jasper	SC
Matthew Schaick	Meyer Distributing	SC
Hank Menke	OFS Brands	SC
Ken Mulzer Jr.	Mulzer Crushed Stone	SC
Travis McQueen	Dubois County Airport	SC
Alvin Evans	Perry County Port Authority	SC
Kelli Reinke	Spencer County Sheriff's Department	SC
Tom Kleinhelter	Dubois County Sheriff's Department	SC
Tracy Lorey	Greater Jasper Schools	SC
Jamie Pund	Southeast Dubois School Corporation	SC
Bill Hochgesang	Northeast Dubois School Corporation	SC
Tim LaGrange	Southwest Dubois School Corporation	SC
Dan Scherry	North Spencer School Corporation	SC
Marc Schum	North Spencer School Corporation	SC
Richard Rutherford	South Spencer School Corporation	SC
Brent Wendholt	Dubois County Engineer	SC
Tyler Rosser	Bingham Greenebaum Doll LLP	SC
Ryan Coleman	Pike County Government	NW
Mark Flint	Pike County Government	NW
Jeff Nelson	Pike County Government	NW
RC Klipsch	City of Petersburg	NW
Joe Wellman	City of Washington	NW
Nathan Gabhart	Daviess County Government	NW
Tom McCracken	Daviess County Government	NW
Michael Taylor	Daviess County Government	NW
Chad Blessinger	Dubois County Government	NW
Elmer Brames	Dubois County Government	NW
Nick Hostetter	Dubois County Government	NW
Robert Sullender	Glendale Fish and Wildlife	NW
Mark Sullivan	Pike County Citizen	NW
Jon Craig	Pike County Citizen	NW



Matt Clarke	Pike County Citizen	NW
Joe Dedman	Pike County Citizen	NW
Ron Arnold	Daviess County Citizen	NW
Samantha Bobbitt	Daviess County Chamber of Commerce	NW
Ashley Willis	Pike County Growth Council	NW
Bryant Niehoff	Daviess County Economic Development Corporation	NW
Tracy Conroy	Daviess Community Hospital	NW
John Dudenhoeffer	Grain Processing Corporation	NW
Brett Fehrenbacher	M&C Tech	NW
Jim Truelove	Perdue Agribusiness	NW
Gary Allison	Daviess County Sheriff's Department	NW
Kent Johnson	Pike County Sheriff's Department	NW
Tom Kleinhelter	Dubois County Sheriff's Department	NW
Suzanne Blake	Pike County School Corporation	NW
Robert Bell	North Daviess School Corporation	NW
Dan Roach	Washington Community Schools	NW
Phil Cornelius	Daviess County Highway Department	NW
Chad Blessinger	Dubois County Government	NC
Noel Harty	City of Loogootee/Martin County Chamber of Commerce	NC
Kevin Boyd	Martin County Commissioner	NC
Nathan Abrams	Greene County Commissioner	NC
Nathan Gabhart	Daviess County Commissioner	NC
Debbie Crays	West Boggs Park	NC
Jameson Hibbs	West Boggs Park	NC
Cheryl Hamilton	Linton-Stockton Chamber of Commerce	NC
Greg Jones	Southern Indiana Development Corporation	NC
Rex Knight	Southern Indiana Development Corporation	NC
Brianne Jerrels	Greene County Economic Development Corporation	NC
Tim Kinder	Martin County Alliance for Economic Growth	NC
Misty McCammack	Duke Energy Economic Development	NC
Brian Gildea	Vectren Economic Development	NC
Samantha Nelson	WestGate @ Crane	NC
E.B. Rawles	Indiana Farm Bureau	NC
Todd Woods	Crane NSWC/NSA	NC
Travis Roush	Martin County Sheriff's Department	NC
Mike Branham	Lawrence County Sheriff's Department	NC
Michael Hasler	Greene County Sheriff's Department	NC
Chip Mehaffey	Loogootee Community Schools	NC
Chris Walker	Loogootee Community Schools	NC
Phil Cornelius	Daviess County Highway Department	NC



Richard Burch	Martin County Citizen	NC
Rodney Fish	Lawrence County Government	NE
Dustin Gabhart	Lawrence County Government	NE
Eugene McCracken	Lawrence County Government	NE
Shawna Girgis	City of Bedford	NE
J.D. England	City of Mitchell	NE
Lee Jones	Monroe County Government	NE
Julie Thomas	Monroe County Government	NE
Richard Dixon	Orange County Commissioner	NE
Barry Winger	Town of French Lick	NE
Billy Shipman	Town of West Baden	NE
Kevin Boyd	Martin County Government	NE
Andrea Crain	Hoosier National Forest	NE
Mark Young	Spring Mill State Park	NE
Jesse Kharbanda	Hoosier Environmental Council	NE
Steve Ferguson	French Lick Resort	NE
Shance Sizemore	Bedford Chamber- Empower	NE
Trace Yates	Greater Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce	NE
Kristal Painter	Visit French Lick West Baden	NE
Jeff Quyle	Radius Indiana	NE
Zachary Brown	Orange County Economic Development Corporation	NE
Joe Timbrook	Lawrence County Economic Growth Council	NE
Shance Sizemore	Lawrence County Economic Growth Council	NE
Jen Pearl	Bloomington Economic Development Corporation	NE
Brian Gildea	Vectren Economic Development	NE
Tonya Chastain	Lawrence County Tourism (Limestone County)	NE
Michael Thissen	Crawford County Economic Development Corporation	NE
Patrick Martin	Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization	NE
Trevor Craig	Indiana Farm Bureau	NE
Trent Todd	Bedford North Lawrence School Corporation	NE
Mike Wilcox	Mitchell Community Schools	NE
Trevor Apple	Springs Valley Community Schools	NE
Ryan Griffith	IU Health Bedford	NE
Debbie Bauer	St. Vincent Dunn Hospital	NE
Brad Swain	Monroe County Sheriff's Department	NE
Mike Branham	Lawrence County Sheriff's Department	NE
Josh Babcock	Orange County Sheriff's Department	NE
Craig Knies	Knies Construction	NE



Ad Hoc Stakeholder Meetings

Over the past several years, many groups have developed an interest in this project. There will be requests for special meetings that cannot be anticipated at the project outset. It's important to be responsive to these requests. When appropriate, the consultant team will proactively invite stakeholder groups to meet and share their concerns as well. This would include periodic meetings with the RDA, which are anticipated, but not necessarily at specific milestones.

Working Alignment Meetings

Although this Tier 1 EIS will not identify the exact alignment but rather a corridor, "working alignments" will be developed for each alternative carried forward for detailed study. The primary purpose of these working alignments will be to estimate the environmental, social and economic impacts that would be likely to occur if the project was constructed in the corridor.

These meetings include project planners and engineers proactively communicating with major commercial/industrial property owners that might be directly impacted by a working alignment either through property taking or access/traffic re-routing.

Public Hearings

Following appropriate public notice, public hearings on the DEIS will be held in two (2) well-known and easily-accessible locations in the study area. Local officials' briefings will be held in the afternoon in advance of each evening public hearing.

In addition to the usual efforts associated with preparing for a round of public hearings on a major project, this task will include the creation of appropriate enhanced 3D imagery. Computer-enhanced slides and/or graphic displays will be created which depict "before" and "after" views of the project. Versions of these displays will be included in the DEIS. Particular attention will be given to critical locations where there is likely to be concern about the degree of disruption that the project would cause (e.g., major interchanges and abutting land uses; juxtaposition of the project to sensitive areas, etc.). Other uses of enhanced 3D design are anticipated, such as virtual fly-thru videos.

7. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Project Team is committed to be a resource for two-way communication with the communities that will be affected by this project. As such, components of this effort will support a productive exchange of information. Team members will initiate and maintain contact with local officials, business leaders, community leaders and members of the general public to invite them to share their feedback and to help them become a part of the planning/NEPA process. Activities in this category include:

Local Project Office

The Project Team has established a local project office in Jasper with regular office hours three days a week. The project office has a conference room meeting space, office space for at least one staff member and a display area for project information and maps.



Information about the local project office will be disseminated through various channels including local media outlets, the project website, social media channels and at each public meeting opportunity. The project office will facilitate individual communications between the Project Team and interested community members. The office's location is

Mid-States Corridor Project Office

Vincennes University Jasper Campus
Administration Building, Room 216
850 College Avenue
Jasper, IN 47546
Phone Number (TBD)

Civic Organization Presentations (Speakers Bureau)

Local civic organizations are a great resource for information dissemination. Key project team members will be available to provide project status update presentations for local civic organizations throughout the project study area. Potential speakers include:

- Kyanna Moon, INDOT project manager
- Mark Schroeder, RDA chair
- Jason DuPont, project manager
- David Goffinet, public involvement

The Public Information Team will maintain a database of presentation requests and presentations made in the community.

Environmental Justice

The public outreach program to be implemented for this project will include specific efforts to engage potentially affected environmental justice communities in this tiered-environmental study. The first round of PIMs provides an opportunity for the public to contribute in identifying potential preliminary alternatives.

Additionally, a "meeting in a box" will be developed and hosted at public libraries throughout the project study area, with an emphasis on those closer to likely alternatives. These "meetings" will include all PIM materials along with directions on how to provide general comments or comments on potential preliminary alternatives. It will also allow for submitting additional alternatives (line(s) on a map) for consideration. Comments and potential preliminary alternatives will be collected from each library thirty days after the PIM.

A similar process of utilizing "meetings in a box" will be followed to coincide with the second round of PIMs.

Targeted meetings will be held after the preliminary alternatives have been screened to a reduced number of reasonable alternatives that will be carried forward. Project team members utilizing resources and input from local officials, churches and social service organizations will arrange for up to four meetings proximate to areas with identified environmental justice communities.



Although not an identified community, special efforts will be made to engage members of the Amish and Mennonite communities within the project study area as well.

The project team will identify meeting locations that are accessible to all stakeholders including those with physical disabilities, minorities, low-income, elderly, and transit dependent. Using resources available through INDOT's Office Public Involvement/Communications, accommodations for Limited English Proficiency individuals will be made as well.

8. MEDIA RELATIONS

Media relations includes building relationships with local media representatives and managing media releases and requests for information. The Project Team will be responsible for disseminating accurate and timely information to share project milestones and promote public meetings. This will be delivered via media events and press releases.

A media contact list will include local and regional outlets for print, radio and television and will be updated throughout the project. C2 will serve as the initial point of contact for media inquiries and will share all inquiries with the Project Team for an approved response. Key points will be developed for approval, as needed.

The Public Involvement Team will work closely with reporters and media outlets to provide project information, share important updates and ensure accurate coverage. Monthly reports will capture inquiries and coverage and will be shared with the Project Team.

Media coverage is an effective way to reach many key audiences and stakeholders including residents, business leaders and community leaders. Media coverage will be used to promote project milestones and publicize public meetings.

Project Spokesperson

A project spokesperson ensures a clear, consistent and trusted voice for the project. A dedicated spokesperson helps to ensure continuity, develop trust and build relationships with members of the media and community stakeholders.

C2 Strategic Communications (Mindy Peterson) serves as the primary spokesperson to share project information and to respond to media inquiries and requests.

Media Protocol

Media requests will be directed to C2 (Mindy Peterson) to ensure all inquiries are tracked and responded to in a timely fashion. C2 will identify the appropriate member of the Project Team to respond and coordinate key points, needed interviews and responses.

INDOT Project Manager Kyanna Moon, RDA Chair Mark Schroeder and Project Manager Jason DuPont will serve as resources to assist in answering and responding to media inquiries.

INDOT Innovative Delivery Communications Director, Andy Dietrick will be the main point of contact for INDOT Central Office. Andy will receive a copy of monthly media reports and will be engaged in developing broader media messages as needed.



Inquiries are responded to with approved messaging. All requests and responses are shared with Project Team leaders and INDOT communications leaders for awareness and approval of the response, if needed. The Public Involvement team will maintain a log of all media requests and inquiries and provide monthly reports to the Project Team.

Media Opportunities

Media opportunities focus on sharing information surrounding project milestones and public engagement opportunities. News releases, media availabilities, interviews and story pitches will be used to share the progress of the Project Team and to promote public meetings.

Media Messaging

Media messaging includes writing letters to the editor or op-eds for submission to regional media. It also includes informational briefings to establish lines of communication between project staff and editorial boards at major media (radio, television and newspaper) outlets in the project corridor.

The meetings are designed to ensure that these media are familiar with direct sources for factual information about the project. Relationship meetings will be established with these groups early in the process to bring people up-to-date with the purpose and direction of the planning process. The Project Team will identify key people in the media and establish open doors and positive lines of communication.

9. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an important tool to share project information and build public acceptance. It will be a key forum to disseminate project updates, promote public meetings, drive people to the website and encourage residents and community leaders to sign up for text messaging and e-newsletters. A strategic social media campaign will keep stakeholders informed and engaged. They will quickly and easily receive key project updates in a format that is fast and easy for community and business leaders to share with their followers.

Deliverables include:

- Monthly content calendars
- Regular posts for Facebook and Twitter
- Graphics for social media
- Daily monitoring
- Photos and videos for use on social media
- Strategy to build followers
- Monthly reports

Facebook and Twitter accounts will be managed and monitored through delivery of the Tier 1 Record of Decision.



In consultation with INDOT and the RDA, social media strategies will be finalized as part of this Public Involvement Plan. Comments will be acknowledged, input captured as part of the project record and incorporated into the Public Involvement Database. Follow-up posts will be provided, as needed, to address factual misstatements received through social media outlets. Responses will be based on approved messaging. During the formal comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), social media users will be directed to all appropriate channels to make sure their comments are included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Responses will not be provided on social media during the formal comment period. Responses to substantive comments provided via social media will be provided in the FEIS.

10. COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

The Mid-States Corridor RDA will be an active participant in the delivery of this project serving as both a Participating Agency and a member of the Project Management Team. The typical communications protocol is adjusted to account for this additional level of participation. The NEPA process requires clear and concise communication of project elements both internally within the project team as well as externally with the regulatory agencies and the public.

Internal Communications

Project Manager Jason DuPont will utilize the key technical leads to assure that communication is clear and effective throughout the process. Technical leads will make sure that each technical task maintains a consistent approach for evaluation of alternatives throughout the process and that information regarding technical issues will funnel back to Jason throughout the process.

External Communications

Public Involvement Task Lead David Goffinet will assure that critical data is accurately conveyed to regulatory agencies, local officials and the public and to assure that the valuable feedback from these communications are incorporated into the project decision-making process. Mindy Peterson will serve as the Project Team media spokesperson and point of contact throughout the project and will collaborate with Project Team leaders.

Overall Communications

As the central point of contact, Jason DuPont will be the conduit to distill and provide key information to the INDOT/RDA management team for key project decisions and to assure that key decisions and directives are clearly and consistently delivered to the technical project team to assure their incorporation into the process. Critical communication elements incorporated to this plan include:

- Monthly project management team meetings
- Weekly communications with each technical lead
- Public official briefings at key project milestones
- Multiple meetings with Regional Issues Involvement Teams
- Public meetings (public information meetings, public hearings) at key project milestones



- Resource agency meetings at key project milestones
- Develop and maintain project website with comment portal

Questions & Responses to Public & Public Officials' Inquiries

The Project Public Involvement Team will address questions and responses to public and public officials' inquiries. These will be documented and incorporated in the Public Involvement Database which will be incorporated into the Administrative Record.

Key Contacts

Kyanna Moon, INDOT Project Manager
kmooon@midstatescorridor.com
812-830-2300

Jason DuPont, Project Manager Lochmueller Group
jdupont@midstatescorridor.com
812-459-4403

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11. APPENDICES



MID-STATES CORRIDOR

APPENDIX A KEY MESSAGES





MID-STATES CORRIDOR

Key Points

- The Mid-States Corridor Project examines the concept of an improved highway connection in southern Indiana.
- The Mid-States Corridor Project is anticipated to begin at SR 66 near the William H. Natcher Bridge crossing the Ohio River at Rockport, continue generally through Huntingburg and Jasper and extend north to connect to Interstate 69.
- The study will include evaluation of improvements to and use of existing facilities and construction of new roadway facilities. A no-build alternative will be evaluated to serve as a baseline for comparison.
- The project will include evaluation of the existing 26-miles of four-lane US 231 from the Natcher Bridge in Spencer County to I-64.
- The study will also evaluate the US 231 corridor through Dubois, Martin and Daviess counties and corridors to the east and west to provide an improved connection to I-69/SR 37.
- The Mid-States Corridor Regional Development Authority (RDA) and Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) are conducting the required Tier 1 Environmental Study for the project to determine a preferred corridor.
- The environmental study is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for large, federally-funded projects.
- The Project Team will analyze and compare the benefits, impacts and costs of a range of reasonable options to identify a preferred corridor for the proposed facility.
- The study will include assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of each corridor, along with consideration of ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate those impacts.

- Public involvement is a key part of the process with a number of opportunities for members of the public to learn more about the project and share their feedback.
- A preferred corridor will be identified in the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will be followed by a formal comment period.
- The DEIS is targeted for late 2020 or early 2021. A record of Decision (ROD) is expected later in 2021.
- The Record of Decision is the Federal Highway Administration's final approval of the preferred corridor.
- After the ROD is approved, the required Tier 2 environmental studies can begin and will include more detailed analyses and selection of specific alignments.



MID-STATES CORRIDOR

APPENDIX B

FAQs





Frequently Asked Questions –

What is the Mid-States Corridor Project?

The Mid-States Corridor Project examines an improved highway connection in southern Indiana. It would begin at SR 66 near the William H. Natcher Bridge crossing the Ohio River at Rockport, continue generally through the Huntingburg and Jasper area and extend north to connect to Interstate 69.

What is happening now?

The Mid-States Corridor Regional Development Authority (RDA) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) are conducting the required Tier 1 Environmental Study for the Mid-States Corridor Project. The study will determine a preferred corridor.

Why is this study necessary?

The RDA and INDOT initiated a study of the corridor under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study is required for all federally-funded projects to assess environmental effects before making decisions concerning the construction of highways and other publicly-owned facilities.

What does the study and NEPA process include?

The NEPA process includes:

- Analysis and comparison of the benefits, impacts and costs of a range or reasonable options to identify a preferred corridor for the proposed facility
- Assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of each corridor, along with consideration of ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts
- Identification of the project's purpose and need, and consideration of a variety of options to meet both including improvements to and use of existing facilities and construction of new roadway facilities
- Analysis of a no-build alternative to serve as a baseline for comparison
- Public involvement, including opportunities to participate and comment
- Coordination and consultation with local, state and federal agencies

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will identify a preferred corridor. Final approval of the preferred corridor will come from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD).

What is a Tier 1 Environmental Study?

Regulations allow NEPA studies for large, complex projects to be carried out in a two-staged, "tiered" process. During this Tier 1 study, "big picture" issues are addressed, while taking into

account the full range of impacts. It includes fact-based analyses that will support informed decision-making on corridor-wide issues.

What is the Project Study Area?

The Project Study Area is the region in which project alternatives may be located. It also includes areas which may experience changes in traffic patterns from the project. The Study Area includes Spencer, Dubois, Perry, Warrick, Pike, Daviess, Crawford, Orange, Martin, Lawrence, Greene and Monroe counties.

What is the project's proposed Purpose and Need?

The proposed purpose and need for the Mid-States Corridor project is to provide an improved transportation link between the US 231/Natcher Bridge and I-69 which:

- Improves regional connectivity for businesses in Dubois County and southern Indiana;
- Improves regional traffic safety in southern Indiana;
- Supports economic development in southern Indiana; and
- Improves connections to major multi-modal locations from southern Indiana.

The [Draft Purpose and Need Statement](#) includes detailed analysis supporting this proposed Purpose and Need.

Why is the Mid-States Corridor being examined as improved connectivity for the area?

This is a large area and there have been multiple studies (four in the past five years) examining major north-south transportation enhancements, centering on the US 231 corridor. These studies have determined such projects have significant potential to improve north-south connectivity and regional economic development. The [Draft Purpose and Need Statement](#) includes more detailed information.

How can the public and other stakeholders get involved during the environmental process?

Meaningful public involvement is a key part of the environmental study process, and there are many ways for members of the public to stay informed and share their opinions. A set of public meetings is held at key project milestones and a set of public hearings will follow publication of the DEIS and include a formal comment period.

The Project Team meets with key stakeholder groups to share information and gather feedback throughout the NEPA process. These groups include elected officials, the project's Regional Issues Involvement Teams and coordinating agencies. The Project Team is also available to meet with community groups and business organizations.

Project information is available on the project website (www.midstatescorridor.com) and will be shared on social media channels:

Facebook: @MidStatesCorridor

Twitter: @MidStatesStudy

Comments can also be shared by email, info@midstatescorridor.com.

Ten alternatives on five routes are moving forward for detailed study. What did the screening process include?

The Project Team considered impacts, costs and performance of preliminary alternatives during the screening process. Impacts to both natural resources and the community were considered, including impacts to the natural environment, residences, businesses, managed lands and cultural resources. Comparative preliminary construction costs were determined for each alternative. Costs take into account facility type and terrain. Performance of each preliminary alternative was evaluated against the core goals of the project including increased accessibility to major business markets, more efficient truck/freight travel to southern Indiana, reduced crashes in southern Indiana and increased access to major rail and air intermodal centers. The full [screening report](#) is available for review on the [project website](#).

The maps of the routes moving forward for detailed study include shaded lines and lines marking 2,000-foot corridors. What do these lines represent?

The shaded lines on the map represent two-mile wide study bands for each route. The lines within each shaded portion are representative of a 2,000-foot corridor for scale reference only. The corridors are expected to shift as the Project Team continues its engineering analyses. When a preferred corridor is identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in fall 2020, it's expected to be a 2,000-foot corridor. After receiving and reviewing input from the public and resource agencies, the Project Team will refine the preferred corridor in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and request a Record of Decision (ROD) from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) later in 2021. More detailed Tier 2 studies will identify 300 to 600-foot alignments for the highway within the selected Tier 1 corridor.

The Screening of Alternatives Report recommended alternatives from each geographic region (Northwest, North Central, and Northeast) to be carried forward for detailed analysis. Why weren't any regions eliminated at this point?

The Project Team followed a "Best in the Geographic Family" approach to the screening process to ensure a geographically diverse range of alternatives was carried forward for detailed study. This helps ensure finding an alternative that meets the project goals while addressing environmental issues and minimizing project costs. It also provides the opportunity to consider the interests and hear the viewpoints of all potentially affected communities in southern Indiana as a decision is made on which towns, cities and counties will be directly served by the improved highway connection.

How long is the study expected to take?

A preferred corridor will be identified in the Tier 1 DEIS which will be followed by a formal comment period. The DEIS is targeted for late 2020 or early 2021. The Record of Decision (ROD) is expected later in 2021.

What are next steps in the project?

After the FHWA issues the ROD, the Tier 2 studies can begin. The Tier 1 EIS will specify the sections for Tier 2 studies. Those studies will include more detailed analyses, and the focus will

shift to a more exact determination of impacts and the avoidance and mitigation of adverse impacts. Specific alignments will be determined in Tier 2 studies.

What is the earliest construction could begin on the project?

The start of construction will depend on several items, including the completion of the federally-required environmental studies and the availability of funding for the project. The Project Team is in the midst of a Tier 1 environmental study, with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement targeted for late 2020 or early 2021. A Record of Decision is expected later in 2021. Tier 2 studies can then begin. A timetable has not been determined for Tier 2 studies, but they're expected to take about two years to complete, depending on how they're scheduled and the requirements of the studies. After Tier 2 studies, available funding will determine the start of pre-construction activities and the timing of construction. Pre-construction activities include the development of detailed construction contracts and right-of-way acquisition.

When can I expect to find out if my home or business is affected and what is the process for right-of-way acquisition?

Tier 2 studies won't begin until a Tier 1 ROD. The DEIS, which will identify a preferred corridor, is targeted for late 2020 or early 2021. The ROD is expected later in 2021. A timetable has not been determined for Tier 2 studies, but they're expected to take about two years to complete, depending on how they're scheduled and the requirements of the studies. Tier 2 studies will define the right of way. Available funding will then determine next steps. Right-of-way acquisition must comply with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act. The Act ensures fair compensation and assistance for those whose property is acquired for public use. [Click here](#) for additional information from INDOT's Real Estate Division.

I've been considering selling my home or property, but it could be impacted by this project. What should I do?

Detailed information about right of way and right-of-way acquisition is still multiple years away. The NEPA study is required by the federal government for large projects that will include federal funding. The study helps to ensure informed decisions are made, but the prescribed study process takes time. Tier 2 studies won't begin until a Tier 1 ROD. The DEIS, which will identify a preferred corridor, is targeted for late 2020 or early 2021. The ROD is expected later in 2021. A timetable has not been determined for Tier 2 studies, but they're expected to take about two years to complete, depending on how they're scheduled and the requirements of the studies. Tier 2 studies will define the right of way. Available funding will then determine next steps. Right-of-way acquisition must comply with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act. The Act ensures fair compensation and assistance for those whose property is acquired for public use.

I'm considering making improvements to my property, but it could be impacted by this project. What should I do?

Decisions to make improvements to a property should not be affected by the Mid-States study. Right of way won't be defined until Tier 2 studies, which won't begin until after the Tier 1 ROD.

The DEIS, which will identify a preferred corridor, is targeted for late 2020 or early 2021. The ROD is expected later in 2021. Tier 2 studies are expected to take about two years to complete and availability of funding will determine pre-construction activities such as right-of-way acquisition. If a property is acquired for right of way, its purchase price is based on a fair market appraisal during the acquisition process.

Could the Mid-States Corridor impact the Hoosier National Forest?

Six of the ten alternatives moving forward for additional study (B2, C1, C2, P1, P2 and P3) have no potential to impact the Hoosier National Forest (HNF). Four alternatives (M1, M2, M3 and O2) pass through the “acquisition boundary” of the HNF. The acquisition boundary represents land which the HNF might acquire if funding is available and the land were available for purchase. It is not clear at this stage of the study whether any property owned by the HNF would be impacted by any of these four alternatives. Every effort is being made to avoid impacting land now owned by the HNF.

What portion of the Indiana Department of Transportation’s (INDOT) budget is spent on road upkeep and preservation?

About 50% of INDOT’s budget is spent preserving existing roads and facilities. The 20-year Next Level Roads plan fully funds INDOT’s asset management plan for existing state-maintained highways, funds projects to improve safety along the state highway system and projects that increase mobility. The Next Level Roads plan enhances Indiana’s economic competitiveness and job creation by improving road conditions, making highways safer, reducing congestion and increasing mobility.

Is the Mid-States Corridor Project a continuation of the I-67 project?

No. Neither the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) nor the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has ever studied or designated an I-67 project in Indiana. Several years ago, private business interests funded a consultant study for a project they called “I-67.” The previous study is not connected to the Mid-States Corridor Project.



MID-STATES CORRIDOR

APPENDIX C

COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL





External Communications -- Stakeholder inquiries and comments

Collecting and maintaining a record of public inquiries and comments is important throughout the environmental process. Inquiries can be made in a number of ways including the “Contact Us” link on the project website, comment cards, in writing, through social media channels, at public meetings and hearings, by phone and in person at the project office.

Inquiry information will be gathered and submitted on an electronic template completed by Project Team members. Information collected includes:

- Name
- Date of correspondence
- Email (if available)
- Category of question asked
- Channel where the inquiry was submitted
- Response
- Team member who responded

All written requests and comments (letters, comment cards and emails) will be forwarded to Public Involvement Task Lead David Goffinet to be included in the Public Involvement Database. All written and documented correspondence will be filed according to Administrative Record procedures.

Internally sharing answers to frequently asked questions will streamline responses and assure that everyone is receiving the same answers to their questions, especially when questions are asked in person. Frequently asked questions will be updated throughout the project.

If necessary, inquiries will be routed to appropriate team members to coordinate drafting a response and sharing for team approval.

When David Goffinet is unavailable for more than two business days, another team member will assume the role of tracking and managing inquiry responses.

A summary of comments received will be provided in the monthly Public Involvement Report.

Written inquiries: All written inquiries requiring a response will be acknowledged within two business days, when possible, with either an answer or an estimate on when an answer will be provided. The team will make an effort to respond to all inquiries within three business days. Comments received by mail may require a longer response time. All responses will be copied to

Jason DuPont, Kyanna Moon (INDOT project manager) and Mark Schroeder (RDA chair), with additional team members copied according to subject matter.

Phone inquiries: Any Project Team member who fields a question about the project should complete a public inquiry form and send it to David Goffinet or direct the call to David for response. When possible, the team will respond in writing. The team will make an effort to respond to all inquiries within three business days.

Comments at public meetings: Individuals who share comments or requests with Project Team members at public meetings or hearings will be encouraged to complete a comment card. All comment cards are routed to David Goffinet for inclusion in the Public Involvement Database. When possible, the team will respond in writing. The team will make an effort to respond to all inquiries within three business days.

Media inquiries: All inquiries and requests from members of the media should be directed to Mindy Peterson, C2 Communications. All inquiries will be responded to the same or next business day with an answer or estimated timeline for an answer.

Inquiries are responded to with approved messaging. All requests and responses are shared with Jason DuPont (project manager), Kyanna Moon (INDOT project manager), Mark Schroeder (RDA chair) and David Goffinet (public involvement lead), with additional team members copied according to subject matter. Andy Dietrick (INDOT public affairs manager) and Scott Manning (INDOT communications director) will also be included in the response and approval process.

Interviews are only scheduled with Project Team approval. Monthly media reports will be shared with the Project Team.

Social media inquiries: It's important to capture social media comments and input as part of the NEPA process. Social media sites are monitored daily. Comments are acknowledged, input is captured and remarks are added to the Public Involvement Database. Follow-up posts will be provided, as needed, to address factual misstatements received through social media outlets.

DEIS Comments: There is separate communications protocol in place for comments received during the formal comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). All feedback received during the formal comment period is considered a comment on the DEIS. Responses to these comments will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

No responses or acknowledgements are prepared in real time, with the exception of an automatic response to comments received through the "Contact Us" page on the project website. The response will acknowledge receipt of the comment during the formal comment period, and it will indicate that responses to all comments will be included in the FEIS.



MID-STATES CORRIDOR

APPENDIX D PUBLIC INQUIRY FORMS

Phone Call, Office Visit





MID-STATES CORRIDOR

Public Inquiry Form

Phone Inquiry/Office Visitor

Date:

Time:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Summary of discussion: _____

Follow-up: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



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Public Outreach Coordination Meeting

Date: _____

Time: _____

Conference Line: _____

Access Code: _____

Attendees: _____

Purpose: _____

Summary by topic:



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Visitor's Log

Date: _____

Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____



MID-STATES CORRIDOR

APPENDIX E

SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN





Social Media Plan

Social Media Overview

Social media is a key public involvement tool to share project news and information with members of the public and stakeholders. Social media channels will be used to increase public understanding and build public acceptance.

Key Benefits of Social Media for Mid-States

- Provides unmatched, direct connection with the audience
- Keeps stakeholders informed
- Builds project understanding and engagement
- Allows the Project Team to frame the conversation
- Highlights positive news and updates
- Reaches people who are not engaged with traditional news outlets
- Provides a forum to quickly and easily share project information
- Offers a cost-effective tool for promoting public meetings
- Serves as an outlet to leverage positive media coverage
- Promotes and boosts website traffic
- Provides messaging that is fast and easy for community and business leaders to share
- Provides an environment to gauge public concerns before they escalate
- Offers results that are easy to track and measure

Social Media Channels

Facebook

Facebook was specifically chosen as a channel to disperse messaging on the Mid-States Project for its community reach, its affordable advertising capabilities and its ability to disseminate news while driving traffic to a website.

Handle: @MidStatesCorridor

Page name: Mid-States Corridor

Category of page: Community

Email for people to contact: info@midstatescorridor.com

Website to link: www.midstatescorridor.com

About

The Mid-States Corridor Project examines the concept of an improved highway connection in southwest Indiana. The required Tier 1 Environmental Study that's underway will determine a preferred corridor.

Story

The Mid-States Corridor is anticipated to begin at the William H. Natcher Bridge crossing of Ohio River near Rockport, continue generally through the Huntingburg and Jasper area and extend north to connect to Interstate 69 (either directly or via SR 37).

The Project Team will analyze and compare the benefits, impacts and costs of a range of reasonable options to identify a preferred corridor for the proposed facility. The study will include assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of each corridor, along with consideration of ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts.

The study will include evaluation of improvements to and use of existing facilities and construction of new roadway facilities. A no-build alternative will be evaluated to serve as a baseline for comparison.

The Mid-States Corridor Regional Development Team and Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) are conducting the Tier 1 Environmental Study required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study will identify a preferred corridor, with approval of the preferred corridor coming from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD is expected later in 2021.

The Mid-States Corridor project office is at Vincennes University Jasper Campus. The office is in the Administration Building, room 216, and is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and by appointment. The office number is 812-482-3116.

Terms of Use

The Mid-States Corridor Facebook page is intended to provide general information about the project. To foster positive discussion and sharing of information, we allow public posts and comments on our page. However, we may occasionally remove content that does not comply with our community guidelines. We do not allow:

- Commercial advertisements or solicitations
- Spam
- Directives to non-Mid-States Corridor sites or contacts, including links, email addresses, or phone numbers
- Threats of violence
- Inappropriate language, graphics, pictures, etc.
- Content that may violate copyright/trademark law
- Content that may suggest or encourage illegal activity

Keep in mind this page is public, so anyone can see your posts here – even if the privacy settings for your Facebook page are different.

Twitter

Twitter was specifically chosen as a channel to disperse messaging on the Mid-States Project for its ability to spread news quickly and in a consumable format. This platform will be used in unison with Facebook, but also to share timely project updates quickly to the audience when needed. The page is searchable by both the Twitter handle and page name.

Handle: @MidStatesStudy

Page name: Mid-States Corridor

Hashtag: #MidStates

Email: info@midstatescorridor.com

Website: www.midstatescorridor.com

About (Max: 120 characters)

The Mid-States Corridor Project examines the concept of an improved highway connection in southwest Indiana.

Timing and Procedures

Social media channels for the Mid-States Corridor Project are expected to launch July 8. This will help introduce the Mid-States project, gain interest, build a following and engage followers before public meetings in August. Social media channels will be used to promote the public meetings.

Social Media Deliverables

- Monthly content calendars (pre-approved each month)
- Regular posts for Facebook and Twitter (1-2x per week, or as events warrant)
- Graphics, photos and videos
- Daily monitoring of social media channels
- Engagement with other accounts (stakeholders, community, public, etc.)
- Advertisements and boosted posts as needed (on Facebook)
- Monthly analytics reports

Early Messaging

- An overview of the project
- An overview of the EIS/Tier 1 process
- Publicize public meetings – dates, times and locations
- Share and drive traffic to the website
- Share contact information/ways for people to stay in touch
- Share frequently asked questions (FAQs)
- Graphics and timelines

Social Media Protocol

C2 Strategic Communications (C2) oversees the social media team in consultation with the Project Team. Monthly content calendars are shared in advance for Project Team approval and monthly social media reports and analytics are provided.

This ensures the Project Team is aware of social media content before it posts and is informed of social media activity and engagement on a regular basis.

Pages, posts and comments are closely monitored by the social media team at C2 with responses provided, if needed, within 48 hours. Direct messages to the Mid-States Corridor Facebook page will receive the following, automatic response:

Thanks for messaging us. Expect a response, if needed, within 48 hours. It may be longer on weekends or holidays. Please check our website for additional project information, www.midstatescorridor.com.

Social Media Comments

It's important to capture social media comments and input as part of the NEPA process. Social media sites are monitored daily. Comments are acknowledged, input is captured and remarks are added to the Public Involvement Database. Follow-up responses will be provided, as needed, to address factual misstatements. Responses will be based on approved messaging.

If needed, INDOT Project Manager Kyanna Moon, RDA Chair Mark Schroeder and Project Manager Jason DuPont will serve as resources to assist in answering inquiries.

During the formal comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), social media users will be directed to all appropriate channels to make sure their comments are included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Key Stakeholders to Follow

The social media team will identify key influencers in the area and follow their social media channels. Following someone on social media means you're choosing to see all of the user's posts in your content feed. By following key stakeholders, you increase the chance that they'll follow the project page and share informational posts. The social media team will also "like" appropriate posts to build engagement and a local following.

Strategic following will include:

Key Areas (Counties): Spencer, Dubois, Perry, Warrick, Pike, Daviess, Crawford, Orange, Martin Lawrence, Greene and Monroe

Elected Officials and Government Agencies: Indiana's US Congressional delegation, state senators/representatives from the study area, mayors and representatives of the local governments (including local planning leaders), INDOT, etc.

Businesses: Businesses in the area that will directly or indirectly benefit from the Mid-States Corridor, business organizations, chambers of commerce, etc.

Community Groups and Organizations: Neighborhood groups, community organizations, etc.

Media outlets and members of the media: newspapers, TV, radio, magazines, etc.

Transportation and Logistics: Indiana Motor Truck Association, trucking companies, etc.