**DES # 2200047**

**LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING****Proposed Intersection Improvement Project in Newton County**

**The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will host a public hearing on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at North Newton Jr./Sr. High School at 1641 W 250 N, Morocco, IN 47963. The open house portion of the hearing will begin at 5 p.m. CT and the presentation will begin at 6 p.m. CT.** The purpose of the public hearing is to offer all interested persons an opportunity to comment on current preliminary design plans for the proposed intersection improvement project in Newton County (DES # 2200047). The project is located on U.S. 41 at State Road (S.R.) 14/County Road (C.R.) 100 in McClellan Township near Morocco, in Newton County, Indiana.

The need for the proposed intersection improvement project stems from the higher-than-expected number of severe crashes at the intersection. Vehicles crossing U.S. 41, either S.R. 14/C.R. 100 through traffic or S.R. 14/C.R. 100 vehicles turning left onto U.S. 41, have been involved in numerous right-angle crashes. The purpose of this project is to improve safety at U.S. 41 and S.R. 14/C.R. 100 by decreasing the likelihood of severe crashes and achieving an Index of Crash Cost and an Index of Crash Frequency less than one.

The current preferred alternative is a reduced conflict intersection (RCI) that will remove the U.S. 41 cross movements and left turns from S.R. 14 and C.R. 100. Motorists wishing to travel straight across U.S. 41 or turn left from S.R. 14 or C.R. 100 will be required to turn right onto U.S. 41 and then make a U-turn at the median U-turn area. Left turns from U.S. 41 onto S.R. 14 and C.R. 100 will be maintained. Subsurface stormwater drainage pipes and inlets will also be installed or replaced along the median and the roadside ditches. New signage and permanent overhead lighting will be installed. This project will occur within existing right-of-way. No permanent or temporary right-of-way will be required. A total of 0.054 acre of wetlands will be permanently impacted due to placement of riprap, and 0.033 acre of wetlands will be temporarily impacted due to construction access. Impacts do not meet the threshold requiring mitigation.

The maintenance of traffic for the intersection improvement project will include phased closures, closing one lane at a time along northbound and southbound U.S. 41. Traffic on S.R. 14 and C.R. 100 will be maintained during construction with only short-duration closures varying from a few hours to up to an overnight period during the transition of construction phases. No official detour will be provided during those short closures. Flaggers and signboards will be used to alert the public of the closures. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction. INDOT will coordinate with emergency services, local school corporation officials, and project stakeholders to ensure potential disruptions and impacts are minimized as much as possible. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2025.

Federal and state funds are proposed to be used for construction of this project. INDOT and the Federal Highway Administration have agreed that this project poses minimal impact to natural environment. A Categorical Exclusion (CE) environmental document has been prepared for the project. The environmental documentation and preliminary design information is available to view prior to the hearing at the following locations:

1. Morocco Community Library – 205 S. West Street, Morocco, IN 47963
2. INDOT project webpage – [www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-
laporte-district/us-41-at-sr-14-intersection-improvement-project/](http://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-%20%20%20%20%20%20laporte-district/us-41-at-sr-14-intersection-improvement-project/)
3. INDOT LaPorte District Office – 315 Boyd Boulevard, LaPorte, IN 46350
(855) 463-6848

Public statements for the record will be taken as part of the public hearing procedure. All verbal statements recorded during the public hearing and all written comments submitted prior to, during, and for a period of two (2) weeks following the hearing date will be evaluated, considered, and addressed in subsequent environmental documentation. Written comments may be submitted prior to the public hearing and within the comment period to Cassidy Hunter, HNTB, 111 Monument Circle, Suite 1200, Indianapolis IN 46204 or cahunter@HNTB.com. INDOT respectfully requests comments be submitted by **Wednesday, October 23, 2024**.

With advance notice, INDOT will provide accommodations for persons with disabilities with regards to participation and access to project information as part of the public information process including arranging auxiliary aids, interpretation services for the hearing impaired, services for the sight impaired, and other services as needed. In addition, INDOT will provide accommodations for persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requiring auxiliary aids including language interpretation services and document conversion. Should accommodations be required, please contact Cassidy Hunter, HNTB, 111 Monument Circle, Suite 1200, Indianapolis IN 46204, 317-636-4682, or cahunter@HNTB.com by **October 2, 2024**.

This notice is published in compliance with: 1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 CFR 771.111(h)(1) stating: “Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program.” 2) 23 CFR 450.212(a)(7) stating: “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.” 3) The INDOT Public Involvement Policies and Procedures approved by the FHWA, U.S. Department of Transportation, on July 7, 2021.