

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - Des. No. 1802955

County Home Road, CR 450 East and CR 200 South, Wells County

The Wells County Highway Department will host a public hearing on Wednesday, March 9, 2022. There will be an open house from 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm, then a presentation from 6:00 pm – 6:30 pm followed by the opportunity to provide public comment. The hearing will be held at the Wells County Public Library, located at 200 W. Washington Street, Bluffton, Indiana. Parking is available at the library parking lot located north of the library along Washington Street in addition to limited on-street parking along Washington Street.

The purpose of the public hearing is to offer all interested persons an opportunity to comment on the environmental document, the 800.11(d) documentation for Section 106, and the current preliminary design plans for the County Home Road Realignment and Extension Project in Wells County. The purpose of this project is to address the deteriorated pavement condition, inadequate lane and shoulder widths for this functional class of roadway and to correct the sight distance limitations created by the 90-degree road curve from CR 200 South and County Home Road.

Attendees are advised that adherence to CDC and Wells County Health Department guidelines as related to COVID-19 are required. A limited supply of face coverings will be available for use upon entry.

The project proposes to realign County Home Road (CR 450 East) a maximum of 750 feet to the west, eliminating the 90-degree turn at CR 200 South. The current center point of the existing intersection of CR 200 South and CR 450 East will be moved 90 feet southeast to accommodate the realignment of County Home Road. This intersection will be improved, and roadways will have typical sections consisting of two (2) 11-foot-wide asphalt travel lanes and 6-foot-wide usable shoulders. CR 450 East will be converted into a cul-de-sac south of the proposed realignment, approximately 0.07 mile north of the existing 90-degree curve to provide continued access to two residential properties. Drainage improvements will include the removal of the road from the Sixmile Creek floodway, new roadside ditches, storm water pipes, and erosion protection.

The proposed project area is approximately 1.08 miles long. The project will require approximately 18.5 acres of permanent right-of-way. No potential temporary right-of-way or relocations are anticipated.

The Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) plan for the project will utilize phased construction and be constructed under traffic. During construction, the plan to maintain traffic flow along County Home Road, CR 450 East, and CR 200 South includes the use of closures and detour routes. Traffic traveling east on CR 200 South will be rerouted north on CR 350 East to turn east on SR 116. Traffic traveling west on SR 116 will be rerouted to CR 350 East to CR 200 South and County Home Road (Appendix B, B14). Traffic will reach the end of the detour at the intersection of County Home Road and CR 300 South. The length of the proposed detour is approximately 4.5 miles and will be in place approximately 3 to 6 months. Access to all adjacent properties will be maintained during construction. The MOT will follow all requirements listed in the INDOT Design Manual. Initial stages of construction expected to begin in Spring 2024. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction. Wells County will coordinate with emergency services, local school corporation officials and project stakeholders to ensure potential disruptions and impacts are minimized as much as possible.

Federal and local funds are proposed to be used for construction of this project. A Categorical Exclusion document has been prepared for the project. The environmental documentation is available to view at the following locations:

1. Wells County Highway Dept. Website <https://wellscounty.org/highway-department/>
2. Butler, Fairman and Seufert, Inc. – 8450 Westfield Boulevard, Suite 300, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240
3. Wells County Public Library – 200 W. Washington Street, Bluffton, Indiana 46714
4. Wells County Highway Department, 1600 W. Washington Street, Bluffton, IN 46714

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 in the following ways

1. BF&S Office, ATTN: Neal Bennett, 8450 Westfield Blvd., Suite 300, Indianapolis, IN 46240, or bfsenviro@bfsengr.com
2. Wells County Highway Department, ATTN. Nate Rumschlag, 1600 W. Washington Street, Bluffton, IN 46714, or highway@wellscounty.org

The public comment period began on February 17, 2022, and will end on March 24, 2022. INDOT respectfully requests comments be submitted utilizing the options noted above by March 24, 2022.

Persons with limited internet access may request project information be mailed. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and with advance notice, Wells County will coordinate accommodations for persons with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids including, but not limited to sign language interpretation, alternative format documents and other ADA supportive services. In addition, and in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Wells County will coordinate accommodation for persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requiring auxiliary aids and/or supportive services including, but not limited to alternative format documents and other services as needed. Should accommodation be required please contact Nate Rumschlag of the Wells County Highway Department at highway@wellscounty.org, 1600 W. Washington Street, Bluffton, IN, (260) 824-6430.

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