

Legal Notice of Planned Improvement

Wells County, with oversight by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is planning a bridge project located in western Wells County along CR 200 North, 0.5 mile west of North CR 400 West (Des. No. 1902843). Work is anticipated to begin in 2024.

The need for the project stems from the deteriorated condition of the existing Wells County Bridge No. 105 (Bridge No. 90-00105). According to the routine INDOT Bridge Inspection report all of the existing box beams are cracked longitudinally or transversely with seepage and rust stains. The northwest and southwest wingwalls are cracked at the guardrail post connections. The streambank is eroding at the northeast corner. This erosion has undercut end bent 2, exposing the piles, which show surface rust. This undercutting has since been temporarily repaired with plywood. The bridge was given a superstructure condition rating of 5 out of 9 which is considered to be "fair condition". Condition ratings range from 0, which represents a failed structure, to 9, which represents a new structure with no deficiencies. The purpose of the project is to improve the condition of the structure components to a condition rating of 7 or greater which would represent structure components in "good" condition.

As proposed, the project involves the removal and replacement of the existing Bridge No. 90-00105. The new structure will be a single span continuous prestressed concrete bulb-tee beam bridge. The structure will have one span that is 90 feet in length. Field entrances will be replaced in the northeast and southeast quadrants of the structure. Riprap drainage turnouts will be constructed in the northwest and southwest quadrants of the bridge. Channel clearing and excavation will occur along Rock Creek within the project area. Riprap will be placed along the excavated channel banks. Channel excavation will occur along the streambanks above the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). The construction will require a temporary crossing and cofferdams which will result in 57 linear feet in temporary impacts to Rock Creek below the OHWM. Full depth pavement replacement will occur on the approach east and west of the new structure. The existing roadside ditches on the southwest, southeast, and northeast quadrants of the project area will be reconstructed and the existing pipes under the field entrances will be replaced. New concrete bridge rails and guardrails will be constructed as a part of the new bridge construction.

The project will require 0.79 acre of new permanent right-of-way (ROW). Tree removal totaling 0.095 acre will occur. No wetlands will be impacted.

The maintenance of traffic (MOT) during construction will require the closure of CR 200 North within the project area. The road carries an average of 100 vehicles per day. Therefore, an official signed detour will not be established for the closure. The closure is expected to begin in the Spring of 2024 and continue for approximately 8 months. School corporations and emergency services will be notified of closures prior to construction.

The cost associated with this project is approximately \$1,584,500 which includes preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction with both federal and local funds anticipated to be used. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and INDOT have agreed this project falls within the guidelines of a Categorical Exclusion Level 2 (CE-2) environmental document. Preliminary design plans along with the draft CE are available for review at the following locations:

- Wells County Website: <https://wellscounty.org/county-road-200n-ce-release-for-project-information/>
- Wells County Highway Department: 1600 W. Washington St. Bluffton, IN 46714
- Wells County Public Library: 200 W. Washington St. Bluffton, IN 46714

In accordance with the “Americans with Disabilities Act”, persons and/or groups requiring project information be made available in alternative formats or persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are encouraged to contact Nate Rumschlag at (260) 824-6430 or ADA@wellscounty.org to provide accommodations pertaining to the accessibility to the above documents.

All interested persons may request a public hearing or submit comments to Lochmueller Group, attention to Samantha Beaupre at SBeaupre@lochgroup.com or at (317) 334-6828 on or before April 16, 2022. Any person with limited internet access may request a hard copy of the project information and can contact Samantha Beaupre using the contact information above. If a hearing is determined to be in the best interest of the public, additional notification will be prepared, and the public notified. Otherwise, any comments or materials received will be considered in the decision-making process.

This notice is published in compliance with: 1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1); 2) 23 CFR 450.210(a)(1)(ix); and 3) The INDOT Project Development Public Involvement Procedures Manual approved by the Federal Highway Administration on July 7, 2021.