

PROJECT FACT SHEET

I-69: The Evansville-to-Indy Study

Why Connect Evansville to Indy?

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has commissioned a new study to look for an environmentally responsible way to construct a major transportation project connecting Evansville and Indianapolis. The proposed project would improve the transportation network and remove barriers to new economic opportunities for the citizens of Southwestern Indiana.

The new study will look at a broad range of alternatives, including new-terrain routes, upgrading U.S. 41 and Interstate 70, and not building a new highway at all.

Southwestern Indiana. A major component of this process is public input. In addition to four rounds of public involvement meetings (each held in three locations), there will be ongoing opportunities for individuals and groups to share opinions.

The Tier 1 study is scheduled to produce a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. This draft statement will be the subject of formal public hearings and will be revised based on public input. A Final Environmental

Impact Statement should be issued in late 2002.

If it is completed, the Evansville-to-Indianapolis highway may become part of an extended Interstate 69 from the Michigan border with Canada to the Texas border with Mexico.

What is the Study?

The National Environmental Policy Act requires environmental studies on any action in which there is a federal role.

This study will produce a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement about a highway linking Indianapolis and Evansville. The statement will be the basis of the Federal Highway Administration's recommendation on a potential highway.

The Tier 1 study will include an unbiased analysis of all reasonable alternatives. If the Tier 1 study determines a highway should be built, it will recommend a corridor. Then, a Tier 2 study (or studies) would be conducted to determine the exact alignment of the highway within that corridor.

What's the Timeline for the Study?

Biologists, transportation engineers, economists and other experts will spend approximately 18 months studying the positive and negative effects of the various alternatives on the 26 counties in

Milestone	Estimated Completion Date
Determine Purpose & Need	Winter 2001
Reduce Alternatives to 5 or less	Summer 2001
Environmental Screening	Winter-Spring 2002
Draft EIS	mid-2002
Final EIS	Late 2002

How is this Related to Previous Studies?

A series of studies begun in the 1980s analyzed the feasibility of a highway in southwestern Indiana between Indianapolis and Evansville. Most recently, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared in 1996 for a highway between Evansville and Bloomington.

As a result of federal review and public comments, the Draft EIS has been withdrawn. The major criticism dealt with the scope of the study. It considered alternative routes only between Bloomington and Evansville. The new study will look at a potential Evansville-to-Indianapolis highway. With a northern end at Indianapolis instead of Bloomington, the new study will examine many new corridors that the old study did not.

While the new study will make use of some of the previous study's data and analysis, the present study is, *in every respect*, a brand new undertaking.

How Can I Get Involved?

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is eager to hear from you. To get involved, you can:

- **Attend Public Meetings.** In addition to formal hearings on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, there will be four rounds of public involvement meetings. Each round will be held in three locations in the study area. At each location, there will be both an afternoon and evening meeting. The first round of meetings is scheduled:

March 16
Terre Haute North High School
4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

April 6
Bloomington Unitarian Church
4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

April 13
Evansville Central High School
4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Subsequent public meetings will be held elsewhere in the study region.

- **Subscribe to the Newsletter.** A project newsletter will provide information on key findings and activities, as well as publicize upcoming meetings. Sign up to receive it via e-mail or U.S. mail, by visiting our Web site or calling our 24-hour toll-free hotline.

- **Visit the Web Site.** Check out www.I69indyevn.org to obtain progress reports, view project newsletters, leave comments and find out about public meeting dates.
- **Call the 24-Hour Toll-free Hotline.** Call the toll-free hotline at 1-877-INDY-EVN (1-877-463-9386) to find out about upcoming project meetings, to ask to be put on the mailing list for the newsletter or to leave comments.
- **Write a Letter.** Send your thoughts to the Indiana Department of Transportation at 100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204-2218.
- **Meet with Project Officials.** If you have a group that is interested in meeting with project staff, please send your request in writing to INDOT project manager Lyle Sadler at Indiana Department of Transportation, 100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204-2218.

All comments, whether received via telephone, in writing or via our Web site, will be documented and given full consideration in the analysis. Comments received in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will become an official part of the public record.

Every effort is being made to ensure that the public has the widest possible opportunity to provide input from the earliest stages of the study. Your input is critical.