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## STATE STUDY OUTLINES 14 'ROUTE CONCEPTS' FOR EXTENDING I-69

INDIANAPOLIS – A state study team today presented 14 preliminary route concepts for the possible extension of Interstate 69 through southwest Indiana.

The Evansville-to-Indianapolis I-69 study team of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) presented the potential options to representatives of various groups interested in the project.

Those representatives all are on the I-69 Issue Involvement Team (IIT), which was meeting in Indianapolis. The IIT is the stakeholder group that was formed to facilitate communication concerning this I-69 study. A listing of organizations represented on the IIT is attached.

The route concepts indicate different, general locations for an interstate highway that could link Indianapolis with Evansville. They vary in length from 139 miles to 168 miles, depending on the exact location of any final alignment within a route concept.

“The number of potential route concepts we’ve presented for the possible extension of I-69 shows that this study is seriously considering all alternatives,” said J. Bryan Nicol, INDOT deputy commissioner. “Throughout this process, we have continually emphasized that we’re looking at a broad range of options, and the number of possible alternatives illustrates that.”

Each route concept connects a series of points between Evansville and Indianapolis. The route concepts are not yet detailed enough to enable an evaluation of their potential implications for property owners or the environment.

The development of route concepts is part of the first stage in the process of identifying and evaluating alternatives in the I-69/Evansville-to-Indianapolis study. The three major stages of this process and their time frames are:

- **Level 1: Identifying alternatives (in progress).** The study team is currently identifying a broad range of alternatives. As announced today, the study team has presented 14 potential route concepts. These route concepts may be modified, and additional route concepts may be added, based on input from the public and further analysis. In addition, the study team is developing other alternatives for consideration, including potential rail corridors, improvement of existing transportation facilities, or not building anything.

- **Level 2: Screening alternatives (to begin in early 2001).** A screening process will narrow the range of alternatives. A major consideration will be how well each alternative would achieve the project's objectives as defined in a required document known as the purpose and need statement. For that reason, before the screening process can begin the purpose and need statement must be finalized. That is expected in early 2001 after input from another round of public meetings. As in level one, the route concepts may be modified, and additional route concepts may be added, based on input from the public as well as further analysis.
- **Level 3: Detailed analysis of alternatives (2001-2002).** The study team will conduct detailed environmental studies of each alternative that is advanced from the screening process in level two. The study team will develop "working alignments," which will be used to develop specific estimates of environmental impacts and construction and right-of-way costs.

"Our goal is still to complete a fair and objective study that addresses the transportation needs of southwestern Indiana," added Nicol. "I can report that we are on schedule with the study. We are on target for a final decision on the extension of I-69 by late 2002."

INDOT commissioned the study to look at a broad range of alternatives for providing a transportation link between Indianapolis and Evansville. The alternatives include new roadways, upgrading existing roadways and not building a highway at all. Maps depicting each of the 14 preliminary routes and more information are available on the project Web site at [www.I69indyevn.org](http://www.I69indyevn.org).

To comment on the I-69 project, you may:

- Call the 24-hour toll-free hotline, 877-INDY-EVN (877-463-9386); or
- Visit the Web site: [www.I69indyevn.org](http://www.I69indyevn.org); or
- Write a letter to Lyle Sadler, project manager, Indiana Department of Transportation, 100 N. Senate Ave., Room N855, Indianapolis IN 46204-2218.

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