Categorical Exclusion

Appendix G

Public Involvement

October 21, 2016

Notice of Entry for Survey or Investigation

Sample copy of Notice of Entry Letter

Re: DES Number: 1600597
276th Street Extension Project
On 276th Street from 0.60 mile west of Gwinn Road northeast to SR 19 (approximately 1.9 miles long)
Hamilton County, Indiana

Dear Property Owner,

Hamilton County is proposing improvements to 276th Street from 0.60 mile west of Gwinn Road northeast to SR 19. RQAW Corporation has been selected to design this project and evaluate environmental resources within the project area. Certified Engineering has been contracted to complete the survey work associated with this project. These investigations will occur in the near future. Our information indicates you own property near this proposed project. It may be necessary for representatives from RQAW, or sub-consultants for RQAW including Certified Engineering, to enter your property to complete this work. This is permitted by law per Indiana Code (IC) 8-23-7-26. Anyone performing this type of work has been instructed to identify him or herself, if you are available, before they enter your property. If you no longer own this property, or it is currently occupied by someone else, please let us know the name and address of the new owner or occupant so we may contact them about the surveys.

At this stage, we generally do not know what effect, if any, the project may eventually have on your property. If it is later determined your property is involved, you will be contacted with additional information.

The survey work will include mapping the location of features such as trees, buildings, fences, drives and obtaining ground elevations. The work will also include the identification and mapping of wetlands and historic resources, archaeological investigations (which may include excavation of small shovel probes) and various other environmental studies. The information we obtain from these studies is necessary for the proper planning and design of this transportation project. It is our sincere desire to cause as little inconvenience as possible during the surveys. If any problems do occur, please contact Jaime Byerly from RQAW at jbyerly@rqaw.com, 317.815.7200 or at 10401 North Meridian Street, Suite 401, Indianapolis, Indiana 46290. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Sincerely,

Jaime Byerly

Jaime Byerly
Environmental Department
RQAW Corporation

The Indianapolis Star
130 South Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46225
Marion County, Indiana

Federal Id: 06-1032273

BYERLY

Account #:3046177621
Order #:0002957899
Total Amount of Claim:$196.38

BYERLY
ATTN Jaime Byerly
15110 HONORS CIRCLE
CARMEL, IN 46033

PUBLISHER'S AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF WISCONSIN,
County Of Brown } **SS**:

Personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county and state, the undersigned

I, being duly sworn, say that I am a clerk for THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWSPAPERS a DAILY STAR newspaper of general circulation printed and published in the English language in the city of INDIANAPOLIS in state and county aforesaid, and that the printed matter attached hereto is a true copy, which was duly published in said paper for 2 times., the dates of publication being as follows:

The insertion being on the 06/04/2018
The insertion being on the 06/11/2018

Newspaper has a website and this public notice was posted in the same day as it was published in the newspaper.

Pursuant to the provisions and penalties of Ch. 155, Acts 1953,
I hereby certify that the foregoing account is just and correct, that the amount claimed is legally due, after allowing all just credits, and that no part of the same has been paid.

Erin Oettinger

Date: 6/11, 2018 Title: **Clerk**

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 11 day of June, 2018

Vicky Felty
Notary Public

Notary Expires: 9-19-21

VICKY FELTY
NOTARY
PUBLIC
STATE OF WISCONSIN

Form Prescribed by State Board of Accounts

General Form No. 99P (Rev. 2002)

_____
(Governmental Unit)

_____ County, Indiana_____

To: **INDIANAPOLIS STAR**

Indianapolis, IN

PUBLISHER'S CLAIM

110 lines, 2 columns wide equals 220 equivalent lines at $0.45 per line @ 2 days,	$196.38
Website Publication	$0
Charge for proof(s) of publication	$0.00
TOTAL AMOUNT OF CLAIM	$196.38

Acct #:3046177621
Ad #: 0002957899

DATA FOR COMPUTING COST
Width of single column 9.5 ems
Number of insertions 2
Size of type 7 point

Claim No. _____ Warrant No. _____
IN FAVOR OF
The Indianapolis Star
Indianapolis, IN
Marion County
130 S. Meridian St. Indianapolis, IN 46225

$ _____
On Account of Appropriation For

_____

FED. ID
#06-1032273

Allowed _____, 20_____

In the sum of $_____

_____

I certify that the within claim is true and correct; that the services there-in itemized and for which charge is made were ordered by me and were necessary to the public business.

_____

_____

I have examined the within claim and hereby certify as follows:

That it is in proper form.

This it is duly authenticated as required by law.

That it is based upon statutory authority.

That it is apparently (correct)
(incorrect)

_____

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Hamilton Co. will conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed 276th St. Extension & Realignment Project (Phase II) (Des. # 1600597) located in Hamilton Co., IN. The hearing will convene on Tues., June 19, 2018. The hearing will be held in the Media Room of the Hamilton Heights High School at 25802 SR 19, Arcadia, IN 46030. The informal open house will start at 5:00 pm and the formal hearing will start at 5:30 pm. The hearing will offer all interested persons an opportunity to comment on the draft environmental document & preliminary design plans.

The project will tie into the eastern portion of the 276th St. Extension & Rehabilitation Project (Phase I) (Des. #1383334). The project involves realigning & extending a portion of 276th St. to connect to SR 19 to the east via 281st St. for a total length of approximately 1.9 mi. Most of the alignment will be on new terrain; however, a portion of the alignment will follow the existing 281st St.

The project will consist of a 12' travel lane & a 4' usable shoulder in each direction. The western project terminus will include constructing a single lane roundabout. An at-grade railroad crossing will be improved. Roadside ditches will be constructed and drainage improvements will be made.

The need is due to the deteriorating condition of the existing 276th St. pavement, lack of efficient connectivity between 276th St. & SR 19 & expected increase of large truck traffic. The purpose is to provide a structurally sufficient & efficient route between 276th St. & SR19. Approximately 27.1 ac. of permanent & 1.02 ac. of temporary right-of-way (ROW) will be needed. No relocations are involved. The total estimated project cost is $6,200,000 (FY 2019) with both federal & local dollars to be used. The project will be constructed in 3 phases and 2 phases will require a detour. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction.

The hearing will allow the opportunity for the public to make formal statements to be recorded as part of the official hearing transcript. Tentative timetables for ROW acquisition & construction will be discussed. Representatives from Hamilton Co. will be available to address specific questions during the informal open house & after the formal hearing. Please note general conversations are not considered part of the official record. All verbal statements recorded during the public hearing & all written comments collected before, during & for a period of 2 weeks after the hearing date ending on July 3, 2018, will be evaluated & addressed in the final environmental document. Written comments may be submitted prior to the hearing & within the comment period to the following address: Lisa Casler, 8770 North St., Suite 110, Fishers, IN 46038 or at lcasler@rqaw.com.

The project falls within the guidelines of a Categorical Exclusion Level 4 Environmental Document. No significant adverse impacts to the human & natural environment were found during the creation of this document. All interested parties are hereby notified of the availability of the environmental document & preliminary design plans for review at these locations:

1. Hamilton Co. Highway Dept., 1700 S. 10th St., Noblesville, IN 46060. Please contact Joel Thurman at 317-773-7770 or at joel.thurman@hamiltoncounty.in.gov.
2. Hamilton North Public Library, 209 W. Brinton St., Cicero, IN 46034
3. RQAW, 8770 North St., Suite 110, Fishers, IN 46038. Please contact Lisa Casler at 317-588-1798 or at lcasler@rqaw.com.

In accordance with the "Americans with Disabilities Act," Hamilton County can provide special accommodations for persons with disabilities &/or limited English-speaking ability & person needing auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters, signers, readers or large print. Should special accommodations be needed for attendance & participation during the public involvement process, please contact Joel Thurman at 317-773-7770 or at joel.thurman@hamiltoncounty.in.gov if possible by June 12, 2018.

This notice is published in compliance with the (1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR771.111(h)(1) stating, "Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a publicinvolvement/public hearing program;" (2) 23 CFR

public involvement/public hearing program; (2) 23 CFR 450.210(a)(1)(ix) stating, "Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full & open access to all interested parties & revise the process, as appropriate;" & (3) the INDOT Public Involvement Policies & Procedures approved by the Federal Highway Administration on August 16, 2012.

(S - 6/4/18, 6/11/18 - 0002957899) hspaxlp

Des. No. 1600597: 276th Street Extension & Realignment, Hamilton Co.
List of Adjacent Property Owners

DeededOwner1	DeededOwner2	Or Current Property Owner	Address1	Address2	City	State	Zip
Bio-Energetic Harmonics Inc.		Or Current Property Owner	26715 Devaney Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Mary Jo Shaw and Sally A. Beck		Or Current Property Owner	PO Box 661		Frankfurt	IN	46041
Sylvia K.	Hartley	Or Current Property Owner	PO Box 476		Arcadia	IN	46030
Michael J. and Robin R.	Hartley	Or Current Property Owner	6340 East 266th Street		Arcadia	IN	46030
Arcadia Arrows Real Estate Company LLC		Or Current Property Owner	PO Box 542		Arcadia	IN	46030
Aubry L. and Brandon R.	Allen	Or Current Property Owner	6610 East 266th Street		Arcadia	IN	46030
Terence R. and Susan T.	Garrity	Or Current Property Owner	6620 East 266th Street		Arcadia	IN	46030
Robert P. McGill and Kathy B. Laugheed		Or Current Property Owner	6908 East 266th Street		Arcadia	IN	46030
James R. and Anita D.	Reveal	Or Current Property Owner	7002 East 266th Street		Arcadia	IN	46030
Donald E. and Dorothy E.	Knapp	Or Current Property Owner	7170 East 266th Street		Arcadia	IN	46030
Becks Superior Hybrids Inc.		Or Current Property Owner	6767 East 276th Street		Atlanta	IN	46031
Daniel R. and Beverly J.	Crook	Or Current Property Owner	26890 Gwinn Road		Arcadia	IN	46030
David P. and Nicole L.	Dowden	Or Current Property Owner	26950 Gwinn Road		Arcadia	IN	46031
James E.	Powers	Or Current Property Owner	26970 Gwinn Road		Arcadia	IN	46032
Stephen E. and Amy S.	Zachary	Or Current Property Owner	27070 Gwinn Road		Arcadia	IN	46033
Virgil C. and Barbara D.	Sowers	Or Current Property Owner	27010 Gwinn Road		Arcadia	IN	46034
Samuel E. and Joyce Y.	Zacharias	Or Current Property Owner	26990 Gwinn Road		Arcadia	IN	46035
Marietta P.	Pickett	Or Current Property Owner	26715 Devaney Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Scott C. and Shantel R.	Beck	Or Current Property Owner	6645 276th Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Lawrence C. and Glendia K.	Beck	Or Current Property Owner	6401 276th Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Robert L. and Diana K.	Davis	Or Current Property Owner	27071 Gwinn Road		Arcadia	IN	46030
Keith L. and Susann E.	Miller	Or Current Property Owner	24040 Twilight Hills Drive		Cicero	IN	46034
Shawn D. and Angela D.	O'Bryhim	Or Current Property Owner	831 Columbia Avenue		Lancester	PA	17603
Marissa D.	O'Bryhim	Or Current Property Owner	1719 Mustang Chase Drive		Westfield	IN	46074
Christopher S. and Mar Dee J.	O'Bryhim	Or Current Property Owner	20971 Shoreline Court	Unit 214	Noblesville	IN	46062
Philip N. and Lavonne M.	Etchison	Or Current Property Owner	8303 274th Street East		Arcadia	IN	46030
Tony E.	Forsythe	Or Current Property Owner	1611 Kingston Road		Kokomo	IN	46901
Beck Family LP		Or Current Property Owner	6767 276th Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Brad A.	Moon	Or Current Property Owner	8121 274th Street East		Arcadia	IN	46030
Don E. Jr	Moon	Or Current Property Owner	27395 Arcadia Road		Arcadia	IN	46030
Donald K. Morehead and Mary E. Roseberry		Or Current Property Owner	8303 274th Street East		Arcadia	IN	46030
Anthony and Toby	Etchison	Or Current Property Owner	7373 East 274th Street East		Arcadia	IN	46030
Todd and Kimberly	Marschand	Or Current Property Owner	27745 Webster Pit Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Neal A. and Cherly	Whelchel	Or Current Property Owner	7110 276th Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Larry	Butcher	Or Current Property Owner	7280 276th Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Claude A. and Debra S.	Spurgeon	Or Current Property Owner	27649 Gwinn Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Raymond M. and Katherine A.	Adler	Or Current Property Owner	28011 Gwinn Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Thomas E. and Lee Ann	Lockwood	Or Current Property Owner	7851 281st Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Paul A.	Parker	Or Current Property Owner	28090 Whetson Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Jerry E. and Peggy S.	Lockwood	Or Current Property Owner	27990 Whetson Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Joe R. and Virginia L. Swing/Robert D. and Nancy A. Whisler/Debra L. Dekeuster	Swing	Or Current Property Owner	6543 Salem Court		Long Grove	IL	60047
Robert E. and Mary L.	Hayes	Or Current Property Owner	8140 East 279th Street East		Arcadia	IN	46030
Alice M. and Alice A.	Allen	Or Current Property Owner	8145 281st Street East		Arcadia	IN	46030
Steven E. and Lisa L.	Lorenz	Or Current Property Owner	27848 Webster Pit Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Kevin E. and Marcia L.	Bridgewater	Or Current Property Owner	290 Muessing Road South		Indianapolis	IN	46229
Robert and Gayle A.	Jordan	Or Current Property Owner	27990 Webster Pit Road		Atlanta	IN	46031

Steven A. and Vickie S.	Dial	Or Current Property Owner	PO Box 166		Atlanta	IN	46031
Nancy E.	Lacy	Or Current Property Owner	28080 Webster Pit Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Graham Properties and Investments LLC		Or Current Property Owner	1427 West 86th Street	Suite 321	Indianapolis	IN	46260
Brian S.	Hunter	Or Current Property Owner	27911 Devaney Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Randall S.	Gasho	Or Current Property Owner	28381 Devaney Road		Atlanta	IN	46031
Dennis D. and Myrna R.	Thompson	Or Current Property Owner	8171 286th Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Larry J. and Laura L.	Tishner	Or Current Property Owner	8301 286th Street East		Atlanta	IN	46031
Sherlin	Endicott	Or Current Property Owner	28212 South SR 19		Atlanta	IN	46031
Waltz Ena Farms LLC		Or Current Property Owner	197 Fisher Road		Benton	KY	42025
Elisa D.	Garcia	Or Current Property Owner	8364 281st Street East		Arcadia	IN	46030
Carolyn J.	Endicott	Or Current Property Owner	28015 SR 19		Arcadia	IN	46030
Larry L. Jr. and Jennifer L. Endicott/Larry J. and Laura L. Tishner	Endicott	Or Current Property Owner	28212 SR 19		Atlanta	IN	46031
Dean and Teresa	Burtner	Or Current Property Owner	107 East Michelle Lane		Pendleton	IN	46064
Patricia F.	Griffen	Or Current Property Owner	1025 Seaport Drive		Cicero	IN	46034
Donald Jr. and Janette	Adams	Or Current Property Owner	27990 Millersburg Road		Arcadia	IN	46030
Roxsanne J.	Ashby	Or Current Property Owner	27940 Millersburg Road		Arcadia	IN	46030
Harold G.	Morgan	Or Current Property Owner	27920 Millersburg Road		Arcadia	IN	46031
Iva G. King/Pamela S. Ireland/Freda J. King/Jeffrey L. King/Debra K. Provence/Bonnie L. Akers		Or Current Property Owner	9355 East 266th Street East		Arcadia	IN	46032
Gregory A.	Pasalich	Or Current Property Owner	869 Iron Bridge Road		Cicero	IN	46034
Robert L. and Billiann	Wilhan	Or Current Property Owner	338 Park Road		Tipton	IN	46072
LeAnie	(Collins) Johnson	Or Current Property Owner	P.O. Box 186		Atlanta	IN	46031
LeAnie	(Collins) Johnson	Or Current Property Owner	28210 Whetstone Road		Atlanta	IN	46031

June 11, 2018

Example copy of Notice of Public Hearing letter

«DeededOwner1» «DeededOwner2»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Re: Notice of Public Hearing
Des. Number 1600597
276th Street Extension and Realignment Project (Phase II)
Hamilton County, Indiana

Dear Property Owner,

Hamilton County will conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed 276th Street Extension and Realignment Project (Phase II) (Des. Number 1600597) located in Hamilton County, Indiana. The hearing will convene on Tuesday, June 19, 2018. The hearing will be held in the Media Room of the Hamilton Heights High School at 25802 SR 19, Arcadia, IN 46030. The informal open house will start at 5:00 pm and the formal hearing will start at 5:30 pm. The hearing will offer all interested persons an opportunity to comment on the draft environmental document and preliminary design plans for the project.

The project will tie into the eastern portion of the 276th Street Extension and Rehabilitation Project (Phase I) (Des. Number 1383334). The project involves realigning and extending a portion of 276th Street to connect to SR 19 to the east via 281st Street for a total length of approximately 1.9 miles. Most of the alignment will be on new terrain; however, a portion of the alignment will follow the existing 281st Street. The project includes realigning 276th Street beginning approximately 0.6 mile west of Gwinn Road; the new alignment will then head in a northeasterly direction on new terrain for approximately 0.9 mile to the 281st Street/Gwinn Road intersection, then head east for approximately 0.5 mile along the existing 281st Street alignment to the intersection with Whetston Road; the new alignment will then head east from the 281st Street/Whetston Road intersection on new terrain for approximately 0.5 mile and terminate at the 281st Street/SR 19 intersection.

The project will consist of one 12-foot wide travel lane and one 4-foot wide usable (3-foot wide paved) shoulder in each direction. To minimize impacts to the residence in the southwest quadrant of the 281st Street/SR 19 intersection, the roadway will consist of one 12-foot wide travel lane in each direction bordered by curb with one 2-foot offset on the south side and one 4-foot wide usable (3-foot wide paved) shoulder on the north side. To avoid impacts to the farm located north and south of 281st Street, and approximately 0.2 mile west of the 281st/SR 19 intersection, the roadway will be shifted north. The western project terminus will include constructing a single lane roundabout to accommodate the expected truck traffic generated by the expansion of Beck's Superior Hybrids. A detention pond may be constructed in the northeast quadrant of the roundabout to accommodate roadside drainage. The at-grade railroad crossing located approximately 0.1 mile west of the 281st Street/SR 19 intersection will be improved with

gates, signals and new signage. Roadside ditches will be constructed on both sides of the roadway to accommodate the drainage of the new roadway alignment and will outlet at various locations. An existing pipe will be replaced with a reinforced concrete box (RCB) structure which will impact an UNT to Little Cicero Creek, aka H.A. McMullen Ditch. Three new RCB structures will be installed along the new roadway to convey roadside drainage. Two of the existing legal drain tiles along the new roadway will be replaced. The project will also install and/or replace several small storm water drain pipes.

Phase II will also include a portion of the eastern terminus of Phase I which extends east of the bridge over Little Cicero Creek to Gwinn Road. Work here will consist of resurfacing the existing pavement, reconstructing a portion of Gwinn Road to provide vertical stopping sight distance and reconstructing the 276th Street/Gwinn Road intersection to provide intersection sight distance.

The need for the project is due to the deteriorating condition of the existing 276th Street pavement and lack of efficient connectivity between 276th Street and SR 19. The existing narrow travel lane widths of 276th Street and the local roadway system increases the risk of head-on collisions between large trucks and smaller passenger vehicles traveling in opposing directions. The proposed expansion of Beck's Superior Hybrids is expected to increase large truck traffic in the area, thus causing the existing pavement conditions of 276th Street to further deteriorate, as well as increase the volume of large trucks traveling on the narrow local routes to reach SR 19.

The purpose of the project is to provide a structurally sufficient and efficient route between 276th Street and SR 19 to accommodate the expected increase in large truck traffic volume associated with Beck's Superior Hybrids, alleviate large truck traffic on the nearby narrow local routes and improve the deteriorating condition of the existing 276th Street pavement from east of Little Cicero Creek to Gwinn Road.

Approximately 27.1 acres of permanent and approximately 1.02 acres of temporary right-of-way will be needed. Of the permanent right-of-way, approximately 15.11 acres will be donated from Beck's Superior Hybrids. No relocations are involved. The total estimated project cost is $6,200,000 (FY 2019) with both federal and local dollars to be used. The project will be constructed in three phases: Phase I will close 276th Street during construction and use a detour (Devaney Road, 266th Street, Gwinn Road and 274th Street); Phase II will construct the new roadway and will not involve roadway closures; Phase III will close 281st Street/Railroad Street and use a detour (Gwinn Road, 286th Street, SR 19, 274th Street and 276th Street). Access to all properties will be maintained during construction.

The hearing will allow the opportunity for the public to make formal statements to be recorded as part of the official hearing transcript. Tentative timetables for right-of-way acquisition and construction will be discussed. Representatives from Hamilton County will be available to address specific questions during the initial open house and after the formal hearing process. Please note general conversations are not considered part of the official record. All verbal statements recorded during the public hearing and all written comments collected before, during and for a period of two weeks after the hearing date ending on July 3, 2018, will be evaluated and addressed in the final environmental document. Written comments may be submitted prior to the hearing and within the comment period to the following address: Lisa Casler, 8770 North Street, Suite 110, Fishers, IN 46038 or at lcasler@rqaw.com.

The project falls within the guidelines of a Categorical Exclusion Level 4 Environmental Document. No significant adverse impacts to the human and natural environment were found during the creation of this document; the project will impact approximately 530 linear feet of streams and approximately 0.03 acre of wetlands and result in a "No Adverse Effect" Section 106 finding. All interested parties are hereby notified of the availability of the environmental document and preliminary design plans for review at these locations:

1. Hamilton County Highway Department, 1700 South 10th Street, Noblesville, IN 46060. Please contact Joel Thurman at 317-773-7770 or at joel.thurman@hamiltoncounty.in.gov.
2. Hamilton North Public Library, 209 W. Brinton St., Cicero, IN 46034
3. RQAW, 8770 North Street, Suite 110, Fishers, IN 46038. Please contact Lisa Casler at 317-588-1798 or at lcasler@rqaw.com.

In accordance with the "Americans with Disabilities Act," Hamilton County can provide special accommodations for persons with disabilities and/or limited English-speaking ability and person needing auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters, signers, readers or large print. Should special accommodations be needed for attendance and participation during the public involvement process, please contact Joel Thurman at 317-773-7770 or at joel.thurman@hamiltoncounty.in.gov if possible by June 12, 2018.

Sincerely,

Jaime Byerly

Jaime Byerly
RQAW | Environmental Department

HAMILTON COUNTY
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Tuesday, June 19, 2018

Dear Local Resident, Concerned Citizen, and Elected Public Official:

Welcome to the Hamilton County Highway Department's Public Hearing for the proposed 276th Street Phase II Project (Des. Number 1600597). The project includes realigning 276th Street beginning approximately 0.6 mile west of Gwinn Road; the new alignment will then head in a northeasterly direction on new terrain for approximately 0.9 mile to the 281st Street/Gwinn Road intersection, then head east for approximately 0.5 mile along existing 281st Street to Whetston Road; the new alignment will then head east new terrain for approximately 0.5 mile and terminate at the 281st Street/SR 19 Intersection.

The purpose of this public hearing is to offer all interested persons an opportunity to meet with County officials, review the project proposal including environmental document and preliminary design plans, and provide input and public comment regarding the proposal.

There are several ways your comments may be presented this evening. You may submit comments in the following manner:

1. Complete one of the comment forms and return it to any of the County representatives attending the public hearing. Comment forms are attached to this page and additional forms are available at the sign-in table.

2. Mail your comments to the Hamilton County Highway Department, 1700 South 10th Street, Noblesville, Indiana 46060; Phone (317) 773-7770 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) **The Hamilton County Highway Department respectfully requests comments be submitted by Tuesday, July 3, 2018**.

3. Participate during the Public Comment Session and have your comments recorded for inclusion into the official hearings transcript/public record.

4. Comments may be emailed to the Hamilton County Highway Department at: county.highway@hamiltoncounty.in.gov. Or Joe Dabkowski (RQAW) at: Jdabkowski@RQAW.com.

All public comments submitted during the comment session or during the public comment period will be included in the official hearing transcript (public record) and will be reviewed, evaluated and given full consideration by Hamilton County Highway Department officials during the decision-making process. Hamilton County Highway Department sincerely appreciates your attendance this evening.

Joel Thurman, P.E., Acting County Engineer, Hamilton County Highway Department

HAMILTON COUNTY
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Thank you for attending this public hearing for the proposed 276th Street Phase II Project. Please submit comments by using the space provided below. The Hamilton County Highway Department appreciates your attendance and participation this evening. **The Hamilton County Highway Department respectfully requests comments be submitted by Tuesday, July 3, 2018 for inclusion into the official hearings transcript/public record.**

TODAY'S DATE:

COMMENT:

_____

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_____

SIGNATURE: _____

PRINTED NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

Public Hearing Sign-in Sheet

Des. Number 1600597, 276th Street Improvement Project

Hamilton County, Indiana **June 19, 2018**

No.	Name (Please print)	Address, City, State, Zip	Email Address
✓* 1	LEE ANN RICHARDS	14279 MOONLIGHT PATH 46038	LAWRICHARDS7@AOL.COM
✓ 2	Claude & Debbie Spurgeon	27649 Gwinn Rd - Atlanta, IN 46031	—
✓ 3	RAY & KATHY Adler	28011 N. Gwinn Rd. - Atlanta, IN 46031	Ray@Noblesville atty.com kabaitz@aol.com
4	Mary Wright	INDOT	
✓ 5	Kathy Langhead	6908 E. 266th St. Arcadia	
✓ 6	Sherrie Endicott	28212 ST Rd 19 Atlanta	
✓ 7	LARRY ENDICOTT	" "	
✓ 8	Sonny Beck	6401 E 276 ST Atlanta IN	
9	BRADLEY DAVIS	1700 S 10th Noblesville, IN	bradley.davis@hamiltoncounty.in.gov
✓ 10	Tom, Lee Ann & Bradlee Lockwood	7851 E. 281st St Atlanta, IN	
✓ 11	Michael Hartley	6340 E. 266th ARCADIA IN	mjrrhartley@hughs.net
✓ 12	DON & DOTTIE KNAPP	7170 E 266th ST ARCADIA, IN	—
✓ 13	Joe Laura Tishner	8301 E 286th Atlanta	
✓ 14	Scott Beck	6645 E 276th ST Atlanta, 46031	scbeck@beckshybrids.com
✓ 15	Tony Etchison	7373 E. 274th St Arcadia 46030	anthony.etchison@infarm
✓ 16	Paul Parker	28090 Whetstone Rd Atlanta	
✓ 17	LeAnnie (Collins) Johnson	28210 Whetstone Rd Atlanta	peppi2bme@yahoo.com

mail: P.O. Box 186 Atlanta 46031

RQAW Project No. 17-500-029-1

Public Hearing Sign-in Sheet

Public Comment/Statement Speaker Sign-in

Des. Number 1600597, 276th Street Extension and Realignment Project

Hamilton County, Indiana **June 19, 2018**

No.	Name (Please print)	Address, City, State, Zip	Email Address
1	Sonny Beck	6401 E 276th ST Atlanta In	
2	Michael Hartley	6340 E. 246th ST. ARCADIA IN.	
3	Scott Beck	6645 E 276th ST Atlanta IN	scbeck@beckshybrids.com
4	LARRY ENDICOTT	28212 JR 19	
5	[illegible]	[illegible]	
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RQAW

INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

276th Street Phase II

HAMILTON COUNTY
INDIANA

Welcome

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- Meeting format – presentation, public comments
- Purpose of meeting
- Informal Q & A in project display area with project engineers and project officials
- Information packet

Introductions

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- Hamilton County Representatives
- Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) Project Management
- INDOT Office of Public Involvement
- Elected Public Officials
- Design Team

Project Stakeholders

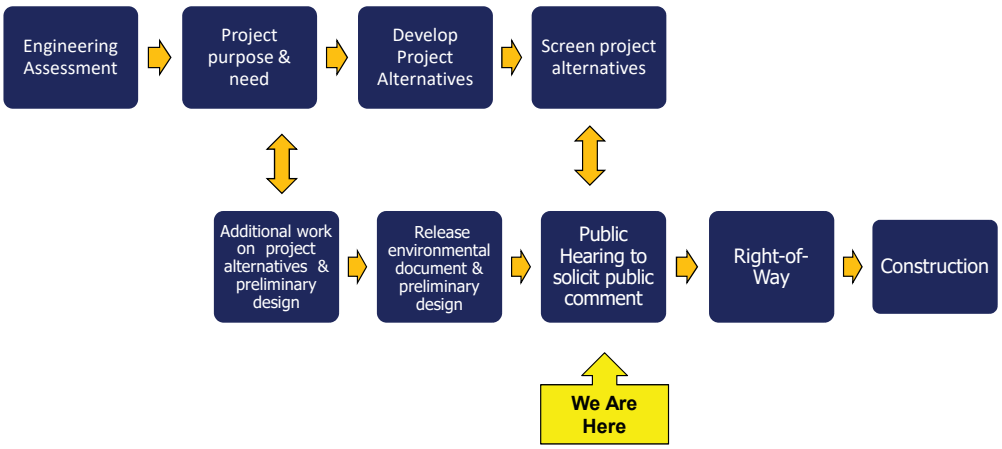
RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- Hamilton County Highway Department
- INDOT
- Indiana Division Federal Highway Administration
- Elected public officials
- Community residents and citizens
- Property owners
- Commuters
- Schools
- Emergency responders

Purpose of Hearing

- Introduce project to the community
- Discuss project purpose and need
- Present a preliminary proposal for consideration
- Solicit input from the community
- Discuss public involvement for the project
- Address questions and concerns

Project Development Process



Why a Public Hearing?

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Conducted as a requirement to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- NEPA requires evaluation of potential impacts to surrounding natural, cultural and social environments
- Impacts are described in an environmental document
- Requires opportunity for public involvement and comment in the decision-making process of said impacts

Environmental Document

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- **Level 4 Categorical Exclusion (CE)**
  - Classification means the actions do not have a significant effect on the environment
- **CE released for public involvement on May 22, 2018**
- **Published legal notice**
  - *Indianapolis Star*
  - June 4, 2018 and June 11, 2018

- **Document available for viewing at:**
  - RQAW—8770 North Street, Suite 110, Fishers, Indiana 46038
  - Hamilton County Highway Department—1700 South 10th Street, Noblesville, Indiana, 46060
  - Hamilton North Public Library—209 West Brinton Street, Cicero, Indiana 46034

Elements of Environmental Documentation

RQAW INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- **Public involvement**
- **Right-of-way**
  - 27.1 acres of permanent and
  - 1.02 acres of temporary
- **Streams and wetlands**
  - 530 linear feet of stream impacts and 0.03 acre of wetland impacts
- Karst
- Threatened and endangered species
- Floodplains
- Farmland
- Historic and archaeological
- Section 4(f) and 6(f)
- Air quality
- Noise
- Community impacts
- Environmental Justice
- Relocations
- Hazardous materials

Environmental Document

RQAW INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- **Alternative A** was developed because Phase I and Phase II were planned concurrently. This alternative would begin within the eastern portion of Phase I, which is currently under construction.
- Would start at Devaney Road, run east on existing 276th Street to Webster Pit Road. Then head northeast on new alignment to 281st Street. From the 281st Street/Whetston Road Intersection, continue east on new terrain while crossing the railroad and Railroad Street and continues east along existing 281st Street until SR 19.
- Would require more right-of-way than the preferred alternative, require approximately seven building removals, three residential relocations, higher impacts to water resources resulting in higher costs.
- Would meet the purpose and need; however, due to increased costs, multiple relocations, and overall higher impacts, this alternative was dismissed from further consideration.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- **Alternative B (Preferred)** begins approximately 0.6 mile west of Gwinn Road, heads in a northeasterly direction on new terrain for approximately 0.9 mile to 281st Street and follows existing 281st Street to the 281st Street/Whetston Road Intersection. Then continues east on new terrain while crossing the railroad and Railroad Street and continues east along existing 281st Street until SR 19.
- This alternative would require the least amount of right of way, would not involve any residential relocations, and would have a lesser amount of water resource impacts.
- Meets the purpose and need, results in less costs, and would begin at the terminus of Phase I which is currently under construction.

Environmental Document

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- **Alternative C** was developed because Phase I and Phase II were planned concurrently. This alternative would begin within the eastern portion of Phase I, which is currently under construction.
- Would start at Devaney Road and run east on existing 276th Street to Gwinn Road, continue east on new terrain, curve north until it reaches the 279th Street/Whetston Road Intersection, curve northeast on new terrain, cross the railroad and continue east on existing 281st Street until SR 19.
- This alternative would require more right-of-way than the preferred alternative, require approximately six building removals and two residential relocations, resulting in higher costs.
- Would meet the purpose and need; however, due to increased costs and multiple relocations this alternative was dismissed from further consideration.

Environmental Document

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- **Do Nothing Alternative**: This alternative proposes that work not be completed.
  - Does not fulfill the purpose and need.
  - Alternative was dismissed from further consideration.
- **Wetland Avoidance Alternative:**
  - Similar to Alternative B, except that it would avoid wetlands.
  - Realign proposed roadway along 281st Street to the south of the existing intersection with Whetston Road.
  - This alternative meets the purpose and need; however, because it would likely result in relocation of the residential property in the southwest quadrant (and result in increased costs), this alternative was dismissed from further consideration.

Environmental Studies

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- 27.1 acres of permanent and 1.02 acres of temporary right-of-way
- 530 linear feet of stream impacts and 0.03 acre of wetland impacts
- Section 106—procedural law that requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects they carry out, approve or fund have on historic properties
- State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the *No Adverse Effect* Section 106 finding on May 19, 2017

How Can I Make a Comment?

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- **Verbally at public hearing**
  - Statements are recorded
- **Comment form**
  - Submit via mail, fax, or e-mail (contact info is on the form)
- **E-mail**
  - jdabkowski@rqaw.com
- **Hamilton County Highway Department website**
  http://www.hamiltoncounty.in.gov/233/Highway-Department
- **Comment period expires on July 3, 2018**

How Will Comments be Addressed?

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

All comments will be addressed in the final environmental document as a result of:

- Public statements recorded at the public hearing
- Written comments, concerns and suggestions such as letters, faxes and e-mails received during the comment period (expires on July 3, 2018)
- **Informal comments are always welcome; however, please note general conversations are not part of the official record**.

Purpose and Need

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NEED

- Deteriorating condition of existing 276th Street pavement
- Lack of efficient connectivity between SR 19 and US 31 via 276th Street
- Proposed business expansion is expected to increase large truck traffic across the 276th Street corridor

PURPOSE

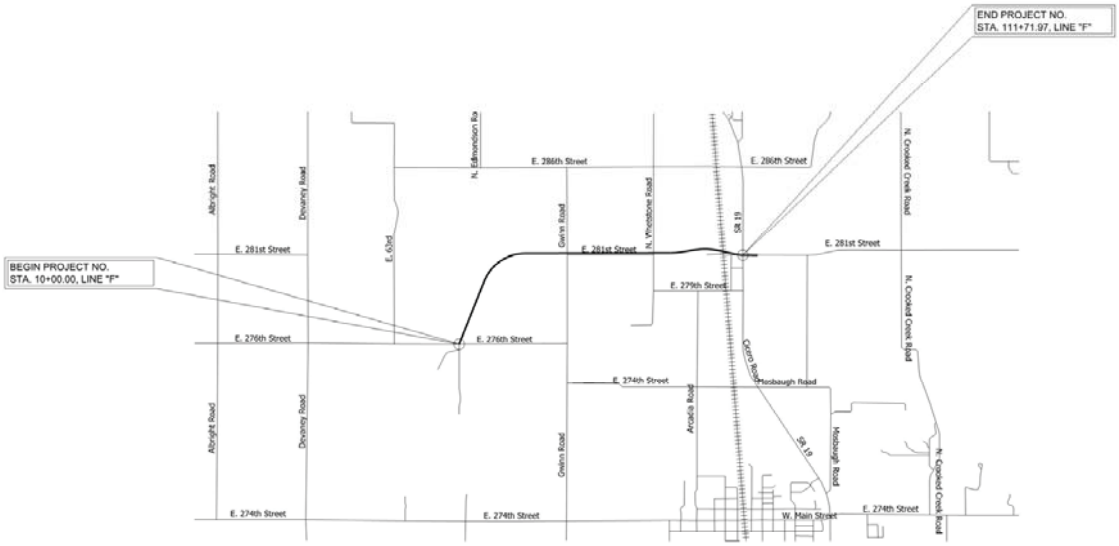
- Improve deteriorating condition of existing 276th Street pavement
- Provide structurally sufficient and efficient route between SR 19 and US 31 via 276th Street
- Accommodate expected increase in large truck traffic
- Alleviate large truck traffic on nearby narrow local routes

Project Description

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- **Preferred Alternative (Alternative B)** begins approximately 0.6 mile west of Gwinn Road, heads in a northeasterly direction on new terrain for approximately 0.9 mile to 281st Street and follows existing 281st Street to the 281st Street/Whetston Road Intersection. Then continues east on new terrain while crossing the railroad and Railroad Street and continues east along existing 281st Street until SR 19.
- Roadway will consist of two 12′ travel lanes and two 4′ usable (3′ paved) shoulders.
- To minimize impacts to the residential properties on the south side of 281st Street at the SR 19 Intersection, the roadway will consist of two 12′ travel lanes bordered by curb with a 2′ offset on the south side and a 4′ usable (3′ paved) shoulder on the north side.
- The western project terminus will include a single lane roundabout.
- Improve the at-grade railroad crossing with gates, signals and new signage.
- Upgrade and provide new efficient drainage structures as needed to convey drainage of the roadway.

Project Location Map



Project Overview

Proposed Alignment

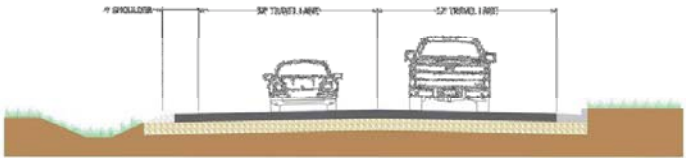
Project Overview

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

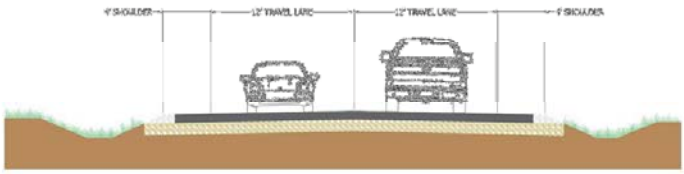
Proposed Roundabout

Typical Sections

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION



Curb Section - Railroad to SR 19



Shoulder Section - Roundabout to Railroad

Posted Speed Limits

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- Speed limit along the proposed roadway will be signed as 50 miles per hour (mph) between the roundabout and Whetson Road.
- Speed limit along the proposed roadway will be signed as 40 mph between Wheston Road and the railroad crossing.
- Speed limit along the proposed roadway will be signed as 30 mph between the railroad crossing and SR 19.

Maintenance of Traffic

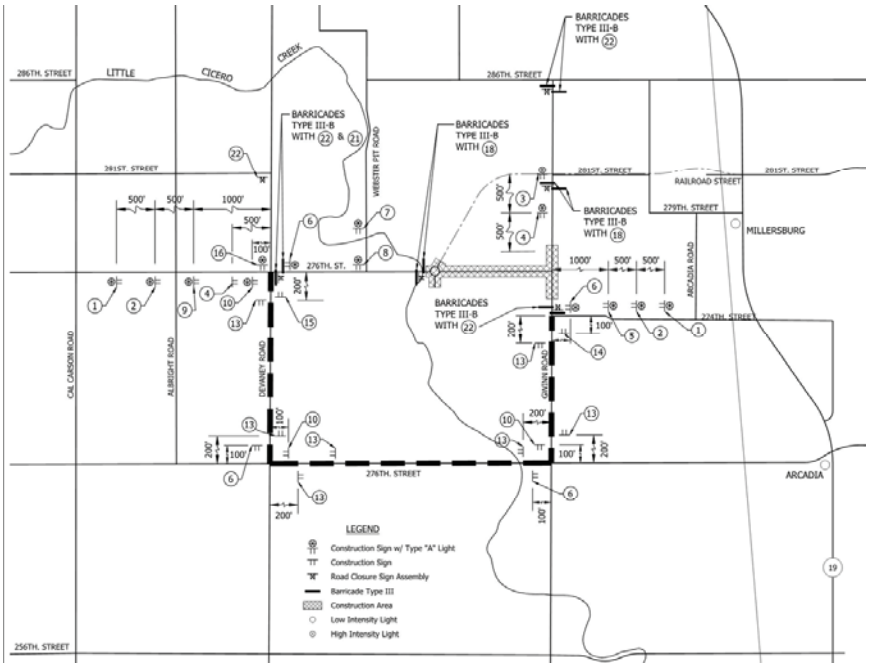
RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- Construction will occur in three phases to reduce impacts:
  - Phase I will close 276th Street to through traffic and utilize a detour (Devaney Road, 266th Street, Gwinn Road and 274th Street)
  - Phase II will construct the new terrain alignment and will not involve any roadway closures
  - Phase III will close 281st Street/Railroad Street to through traffic and utilize a detour (Gwinn Road, 286th Street, SR 19, 274th Street, and 276th Street)
- Access will be maintained to all properties during construction
- Mail, school bus and trash services will be maintained

Maintenance of Traffic

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

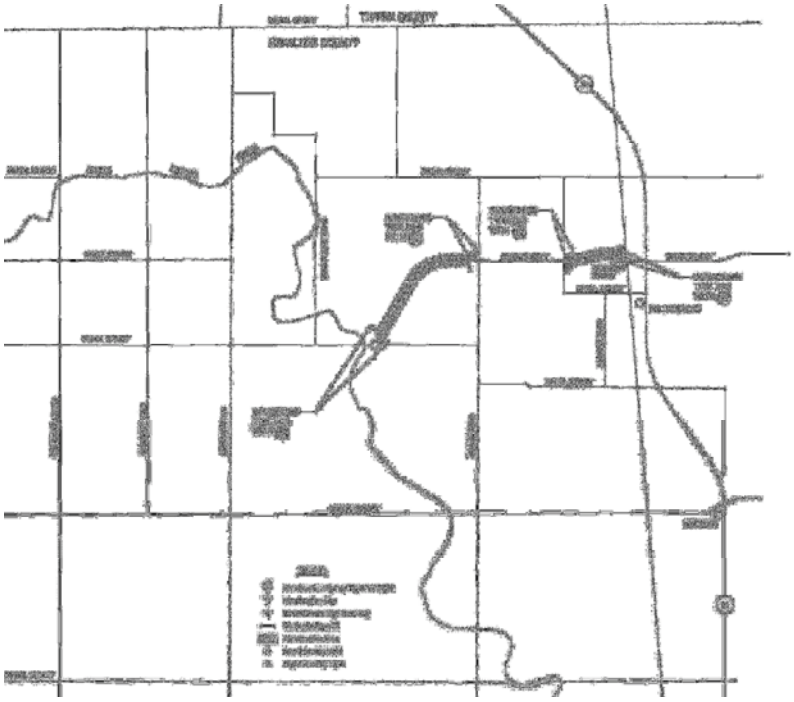
Phase 1



Maintenance of Traffic

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

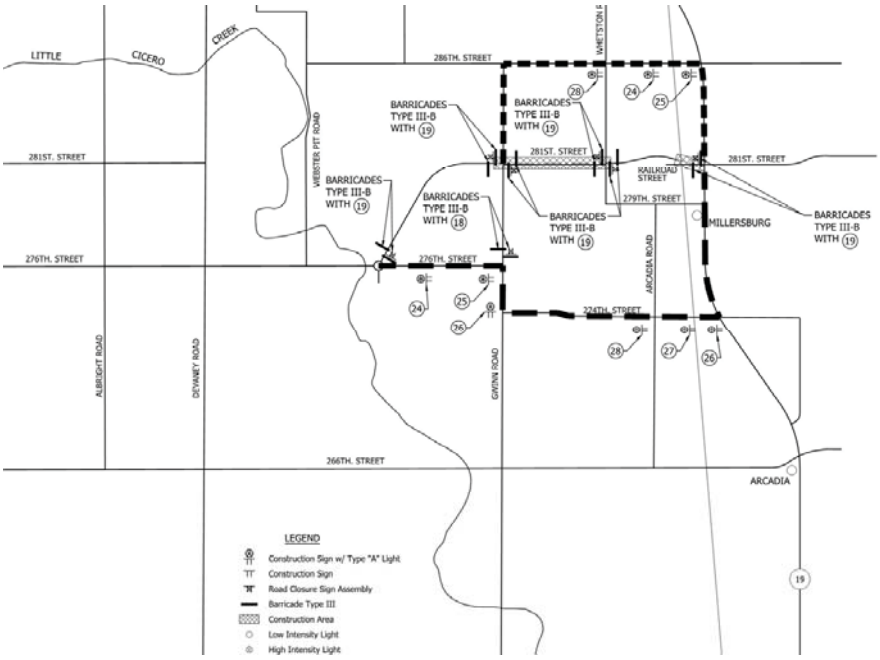
Phase 2



Maintenance of Traffic

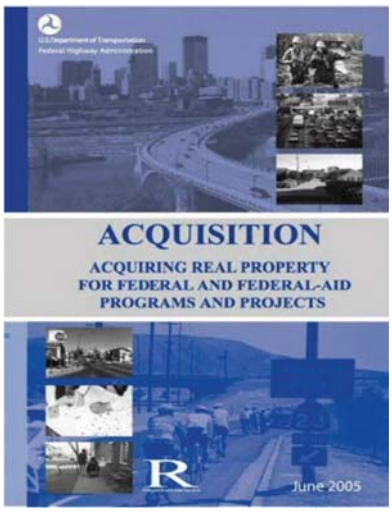
RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

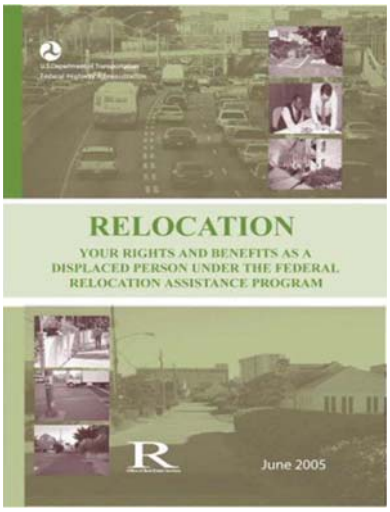
Phase 3



Real Estate Acquisition Process

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION





No relocations are anticipated

Real Estate Acquisition Process

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- **Hamilton County Representatives are available to discuss procedures**
- **How Land Is Purchased**
  - Explains the process of buying property needed for highway improvements
- **Relocation**
  - Explains your rights and benefits as a displaced person
  - No relocations will occur as a result of this project

Real Estate Acquisition Process

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- **The breakdown in right-of-way is as follows:**

Agricultural	22.70 acres
Commercial	2.92 acres
Residential	0.64 acre
Forest	0.81 acre
Wetlands	0.03 acre
Total permanent R/W	27.1 acres

- **1.02 acres temporary right-of-way**
- **No relocations will occur**
- **Right-of-way is estimated based on information available at this time**

Real Estate Acquisition Process

RQAW
INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- **"Uniform Act of 1970"**
  - All federal, state, and local governments must comply
  - Requires an offer for just compensation
- **Acquisition Process**
  - Appraisals
  - Review appraisals
  - Negotiations

Project Schedule

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INTENTIONAL INNOVATION

- Design/environmental documentation (November 2016-May 2018)
- Public Hearing (June 2018)
- Finalize environmental document (August 2018)
- Real estate acquisition activities (August 2018-December 2018)
- Complete design activities (October 2019)
- Project letting (March 2019)
- Anticipated construction start (May 2019)
- Anticipated project completion (October 2020)
- Estimated total project cost is $4.5 million

Public Comments

- Talk with Hamilton County and design project team members
- Comment sheet in the information packet
- E-mail or mail comments
- All comments are very much appreciated and will be given full consideration by project team

Project Updates

- Sign-in at attendance table to be added to the project mailing list
- Hamilton County website at:

http://www.hamiltoncounty.in.gov/233/Highway-Department

Contact Information

For Future questions, please contact us:

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS?	ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS?	COUNTY QUESTIONS
Lisa Casler, PE RQAW Director of Road Services	Joe Dabkowski, PWS RQAW Director of Environmental Services	Joel Thurman, PE Hamilton County Project Manager
lcasler@rqaw.com	jdabkowski@rqaw.com	Joel.Thurman@hamiltoncounty.in.gov
317-588-1798	317-588-1798	317-773-7770

Thank You

- Please visit with Hamilton County Highway Department project officials
- Project Open House:
  - Project maps, displays and project officials for informal Q&A
  - A special thank you to Hamilton Heights High School
- Thank you for your attendance this evening

JUNE 19, 2018 PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT

The public hearing commenced at 5:30 pm. Lisa Casler, RQAW Project Manager, welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. Ms. Casler stated that an informal question and answer session would be offered after the formal presentation. She briefly introduced representatives from Hamilton County, Indiana Department of Transportation, and RQAW (the firm responsible for the design and environmental document). Ms. Casler described the purpose of the hearing.

Joe Dabkowski, RQAW Director of Environmental Services, then described the overall project development process and why public hearings can be a requirement of the environmental process. Mr. Dabkowski defined why the project qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion (CE) Level 4 document and that the CE was released for public involvement on May 22, 2018. He generally noted elements that are reviewed, analyzed and described in CEs. For this project, the primary concerns are water resource impacts and right-of-way impacts. The preferred alternative was generally described as well as other alternatives considered. Lastly, Mr. Dabkowski described how public comments could be made and that any public comments would be addressed in the environmental document (CE).

Ms. Casler continued with the presentation by describing the purpose and need of the project and specifically outlining the project scope. The maintenance of traffic, right-of-way process and project schedule were then described. She then reiterated the different ways public comments could be made. Ms. Casler concluded the formal presentation by thanking everyone, providing ways for the public to see updates on the project and providing contact information for any questions.

An opportunity to publicly comment was then offered. Below are comments made from the public speakers.

Public Comments

Speaker - Larry Indicot: “The only comment I got, I think we need to look into maybe shift or maybe look at the option of shifting the route to the south.”

Speaker - LeeAnn Richards: “I’m actually part owner of the Whistler Farm where the road is going through and I’m not happy personally. This has been in the family one hundred and seventy-two years and there’s six of us that own us now that want to keep it that way and I think there will be quite a problem with the environment after all this road stuff is through and you’re all going to be very sorry that it went through because of all the traffic and development that will appear. I think we all need to be sure and write our comments, email, and get everything in that we can to stop this because it’s only going to hurt you. It’s not going to help you, it’s going to hurt you.”

Aaron Lawson

From: Lisa Casler
Sent: Sunday, July 1, 2018 3:03 PM
To: Aaron Lawson
Subject: Fwd: 276th Street and Realignment Project

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Comment.

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Lisa Casler <lcasler@rqaw.com>
> **Date:** July 1, 2018 at 3:02:28 PM EDT
> **To:** Joseph Dabkowski <jdabkowski@RQAW.com>, Jaime Byerly <jbyerly@RQAW.com>
> **Subject: Fwd: 276th Street and Realignment Project**
>
> Comment from hearing.
>
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> > **From:** Beth Richards <brichardspii@aol.com>
> > **Date:** July 1, 2018 at 2:36:00 PM EDT
> > **To:** lcasler@rqaw.com
> > **Subject: 276th Street and Realignment Project**
> >
> > RQAW
> > ATTN: Lisa Casier
> > 8770 North Street, Suite 110
> > Fishers, Indiana 46038
> >
> > RE: 276th Street Extension and Realignment Project
> >
> > Dear Ms. Lisa Casier,
> > My name is Lee Ann Richards, part owner of the Whisler Farm, along with my sister, Georgia Andrews, and four cousins. I want to protest the requested Right of Way through our property.
> > We are not happy that this project is cutting through our farm. This farm is a homestead farm and has been in the Whisler family for 172 years.
> > The one paragraph that bothered me the most is that it would not harm the environment. This project will be taking up valuable farm land that produces food for families. The project will also be cutting down trees that make the air safer and provides for natural habitat. The project will affect each and every person in the surrounding communities.

If you need a better road why not spend the money making existing roads safe for traffic, both for the businesses and the residents in the area.
It is very hard for me to believe that this project was approved. This project will cause so much disruption to necessary farmland. The project is unnecessary, when there are existing roads that could be improved to meet local business needs. This project only benefits L Sonny Beck and is not for the best interest of the surrounding community.
I do not understand how L Sony Beck got this project approved to begin with without talking to the land owners. Can you provide me this information?
It also concerns me that your company, RQAW, sent out letters addressed to an individual, but was in a different envelope to who it was addressed. It seems unlikely for a reputable company to do, under the circumstances that it was to notify people of a public hearing. Plus the fact is was dated June 11th and not delivered till June 16th, and the hearing was set for June 19th. It certainly did not give adequate notice of said hearing.
I will continue to strongly object to this project which will permanently damage vital farm land and natural habitat.

Regards,
Lee Ann Richards
14279 Moonlight Path
Fishers, Indiana 46038
Lawrichards7@aol.com
Cell: 317-372-6527

Lisa Casler
8770 North Street
Suite 110
Fishers, IN 46038

July 3, 2018

RE: Proposed 276th Street Extension and Realignment Project (Phase II)
Des. Number 1600597, Hamilton County, Indiana

Dear Lisa –

This letter is intended as my formal statement in response to the public hearing held June 19, 2018 on the above referenced project.

I am part owner of the Whisler Family Farm Partnership, and part owner of the land on which the Whisler Family Farm Partnership operates. The farm is approximately 100 acres and lies just east of Whetstone Ave. I am also the financial manager of the partnership and the tax matters partner.

The proposed project involves constructing a roadway across the southern portion of the Whisler Family Farm property, including a significant portion of land dedicated to a Black Walnut grove (approximately 4.2 acres). The farm also produces corn and soy beans on the land marked for the road construction.

On behalf of the partners of the Whisler Family Farm, which include Lee Ann Richards of Fishers, IN, Georgia Andrews of Tucker, GA, Robert Whisler of Glen Allen, VA, Nancy Whisler of Richmond, VA, Debra DeKeuster of Richmond, VA and myself, William Whisler of Long Grove, IL, I would like to state our collective objections to the project, and ask that the project pursue other alternatives. The reasons for our objection include the following:

1. The project produces no economic, social or environmental benefit to the community or county as a whole. The sole benefactor of the project appears to be Becks Hybrids located at 6767 E. 276th St. Atlanta, IN. The project effectively transfers the use of private property from the current owners (including me and the partners listed above), to Becks. There are no traffic or vehicular studies provided that substantiate the need for or otherwise call for construction of this road. The sole benefactor of this project is Becks Hybrids, and the Hamilton County Commissioners are enabling this transfer of property (and use thereof) through their sponsorship, promotion and solicitation of state and federal funding for the project. The commissioners of the county are required to represent and consider the interests of <u>all</u> residents and landowners in the county. In this case, the interests of one party (Becks) are being imposed on current landowners of the land without providing evidence that this transfer results in a benefit to the community as a whole.

2. The Whisler Farm has been a productive farm and vital contributor to the township and 8Hamilton County for roughly 180 years. Construction of this road significantly diminishes the Farm's ability to continue this contribution. The road as planned effectively splits off approximately one-third of the existing contiguous farm. Less land is available for crop production, and the presence of the road significantly burdens and complicates the manner in which the property will be farmed in the future. It also significantly changes the drainage patterns of what is some of the best farmland in the area.
3. The farm is a designated as an Indiana Hoosier Homestead. It was established in 1846. The family house on the property was constructed the 1880's. The designation by the State of Indiana is intended to recognize significant and long-standing homesteads in the state. Construction of a road through this homestead would be contrary to the spirit of this designation.
4. The project would pass through a tract of land currently dedicated to a Black Walnut Tree grove. These trees were planted as part of a project started by my father, Robert D. Whisler in 1987, and stand on a portion of the farm that includes natural woodland. The intention was a long-term project (50 years plus), to eventually harvest full grown walnut trees for timber. The project is intended to benefit Robert's grandchildren and great grandchildren. My father, Robert Whisler (now deceased), was a 7th generation American and grew up on the farm. He shared many memories and experiences of growing up on the farm with his children (4) and grandchildren (7). The farm has been in my family for over 180 years. While opportunity and his career took him elsewhere, throughout his life my father remained highly engaged and dedicated to the care, upkeep and preservation of the farm and the house on the farm where he was born in 1921. If alive today, he would be devastated to think that a road could be constructed through his farm, and especially distressed to think that his Walnut Tree project could be destroyed.
5. Viable alternatives to the proposed project exist. I understand that alternative road sites were considered and apparently not pursued due to protests by landowners that would be impacted. Since those objections were heeded, I ask that my objections to the current project also be acted upon, and that alternative routes be pursued – or better, that no road be constructed at all. Sufficient and adequate roadways already exist that can accommodate the proposed truck traffic.
6. The project will result in the destruction of natural habitat for many animals in the woodland of the Whisler farm. Pollution from truck exhaust, as well as noise pollution would result from the project.

Thank you for your consideration of these objections to the proposed project.

Sincerely,

William L. Whisler
6543 Salem Ct
Long Grove, IL 60047

From: Lisa Casler
To: Joseph Dabkowski; Aaron Lawson
Subject: Fwd: Beck Hybrid Seed road expansion concern
Date: Wednesday, July 4, 2018 7:46:35 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: rwhis8099@aol.com
Date: July 3, 2018 at 8:59:57 PM PDT
To: lcasler@rqaw.com, joel.thurman@hamiltoncounty.in.gov
Cc: <rwhis8099@aol.com>
Subject: Beck Hybrid Seed road expansion concern

To: Ms. Lisa Casler & Mr. Joel Thurman,

My name is Robert Whisler Jr. I am one of the owners of the Whisler farm located on 276th Street in Atlanta, Indiana. Recently, we all were notified that approximately a fourth of our family farm is designated to be made into a road. This designated plan will cut through our farm on the south side. I am emailing both of you to share some insight how surprised and taken back we all were when we were notified of the designated plan of a new road cutting our family's farm land up.

First, possibly each of you are not aware of the Whisler's farm heritage. This farm has been in our family since 1846. The Whisler family has had the farm in our family's ownership for one hundred seventy-two years. Our family farm has been recognized and has received the honor to be called a Hoosier Homestead farm.

Secondly, my father, Robert Whisler Sr., grew up on the farm with his sister. He worked the farm with his father and his father's father. I also, have memories I hold dear to my heart. I can remember traveling to the farm most weekends while I was growing up to visit grandma and grandpa on the farm. My father, by his example, showed me how much the farm meant to him growing up there through his adult life and beyond. My father would include all of his children in what was being planted, harvested, and which fields would be rotating off from planting and why. If my father was still alive, he would be in Atlanta today working with each of you and whomever else to try and brainstorm with the town board and Mr. Beck to understand the designated plan and why his family's homestead was chosen for the cut through.

Thirdly, my father, Robert Whisler Sr., planted approximately 140 seedlings of walnut trees approximately thirty years ago. One of my father's reasons for planting the walnut trees was to have his children, his grandchildren, and their children's children,x etc. enjoy and take pride in watching the walnut trees grow into their full growth potential. Also, knowing eventually the walnut trees would be an inheritance from him years down the road.

I understand change needs to happen in order for future progress to come about. I hope with whatever happens, the town board and the Beck Hybrid Seed company will be considerate, respectful, and fair with any change that is to come about with the surrounding farm owners.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Whisler Jr.

Aaron Lawson

From: Lisa Casler
Sent: Tuesday, July 3, 2018 6:50 AM
To: Aaron Lawson; Joseph Dabkowski
Subject: FW: 276th Street Extension and Realignment Project

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Lisa L. Casler, PE | Director of Roadway Services
O: 317.588.1737
www.rqaw.com

From: Saralyn Kimsey [mailto:saralynkimsey@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 3, 2018 12:17 AM
To: Lisa Casler <lcasler@rqaw.com>
Subject: 276th Street Extension and Realignment Project

Lisa Caster

8170 North Street

Suite 110

Fishers, IN 46038

lcasler@rqaw.com

RE: 276th Street Extension and Realignment Project

To: Whom It May Concern

I am the great great granddaughter of the Whisler that the land was land granted to 172 years ago – I have spent many summers counting cars as they passed while I was on the front porch swing with my grandparents.

I am appalled that it is actually stated "for the proposed expansion of "Beck Superior Hybrid" – This infers that this is for private enterprise. I

understand the county is sending this letter supported by state and federal funds. How did a private enterprise convince the county to "eminent domain" good farmland instead of taking care of roads already established?

I am in disbelief the president of Beck Superior Hybrid, Sonny Beck, would personally say he was "sorry"– as he pridefully strutted about the meeting.

This eminent domain by the county is a false front for a private enterprise – Beck Superior Hybrids. Many people have manipulated the path of the road to include the Whisler Farm.

The original plan was laid out south of the Whisler Farm. The new plan was altered to take property of the Whisler Farm rather than the farmland south of the Whisler property. Why was there a change in the original plan?

I want to strongly object and protest the project which will permanently damage vital farm land and natural habitat.

Regards,

Georgia Andrews

2857 Rotherwood Dr.

Tucker, GA 30084

kkoolkay@hotmail.com

From:	Lisa Casler
To:	Joseph Dabkowski; Aaron Lawson
Subject:	FW: Final Plea To Save The Whisler Hoosier Homestead Re:DES Number 1600597
Date:	Tuesday, July 3, 2018 4:23:16 PM

Here you go…

Lisa L. Casler, PE | Director of Roadway Services
O: 317.588.1737
www.rqaw.com

From: Debra DeKeuster [mailto:dekeusterdebbie@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 3, 2018 4:21 PM
To: Lisa Casler <lcasler@rqaw.com>
Subject: Final Plea To Save The Whisler Hoosier Homestead Re:DES Number 1600597

How does one begin a letter asking for a family homestead of 172 years to be saved from economic growth and big business expansion?

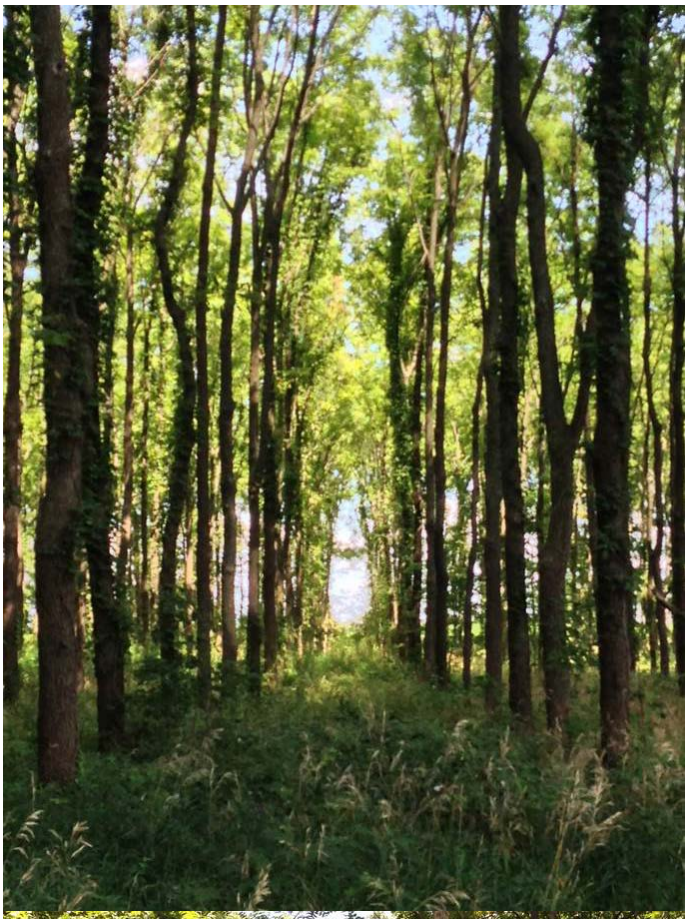
The Whisler Hoosier Homestead was established on April 15 1846. Jacob Whistler purchased the land from Abraham Shock at a cost of $7.50 per acre. It was here that Jacob cleared the timber, built his homestead in 1880 and began his life as a farmer. The Whisler family is now seeking answered questions as this cherished property is pending direct alterations from the Department of Transportation.

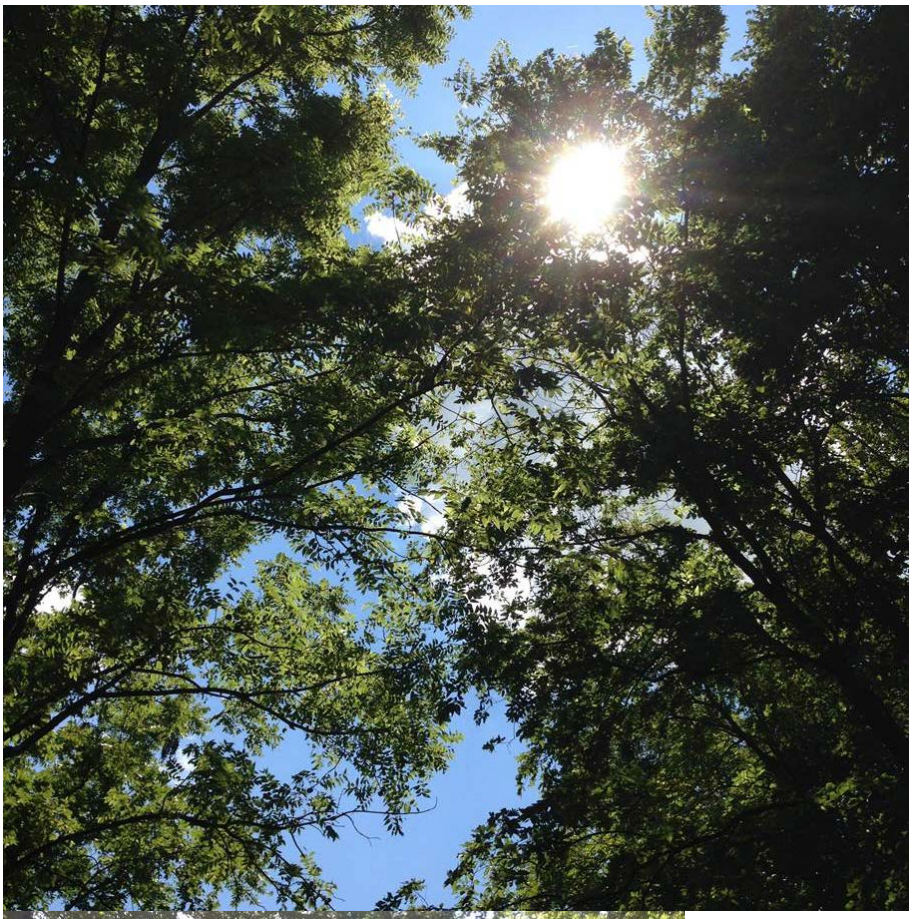
The question now is why. Why would the Indiana Department of Transportation decide that no significant impacts to prime farmland will result from this project? Somehow cutting directly across a Hoosier Homestead and the destruction of 400 black walnut trees has been deemed as not a significant impact? Robert D. Whisler Sr. purchased 400 black walnut seedlings from Purdue University Agriculture Extension in 1986 to create a living legacy with the dream of one day having his great grandchildren harvest the wood.

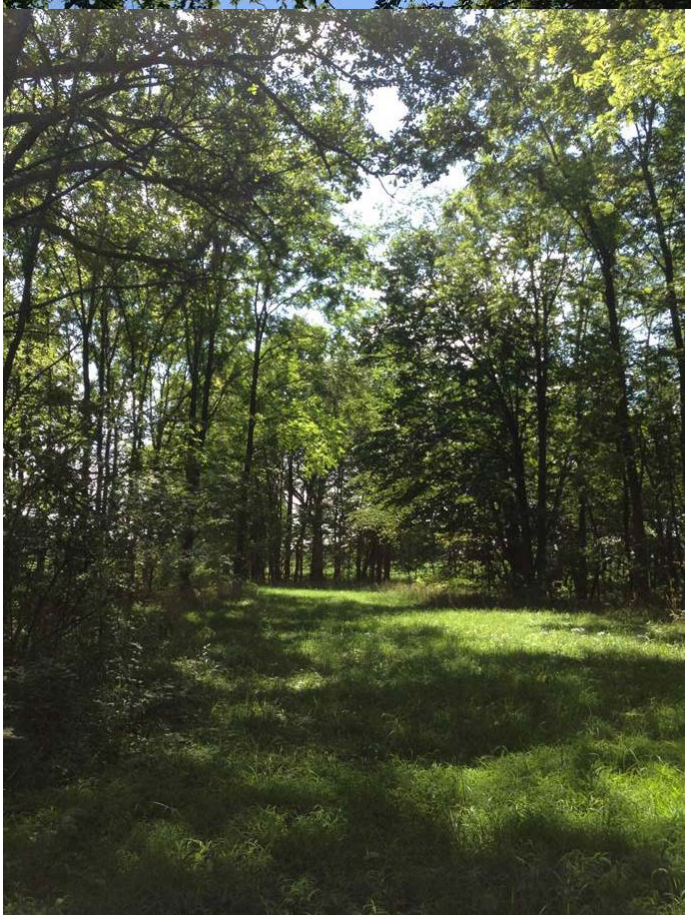
How can the Indiana Department of Transportation justify the need and cost to create a new road when one already exists and merely could be improved upon? Is it because Beck Superior Hybrids did not wish to cut a road through their existing many agricultural fields adjacent to the project area in order to reach that existing road? If the existing design calls for a road to cut through the Whisler property, why does it swing north into those 30 year old black walnut trees for the sake of saving a shed on the adjacent property. On the surface it seems incredibly suspicious, and we are hoping answered questions may help bring clarity to the plans ahead.

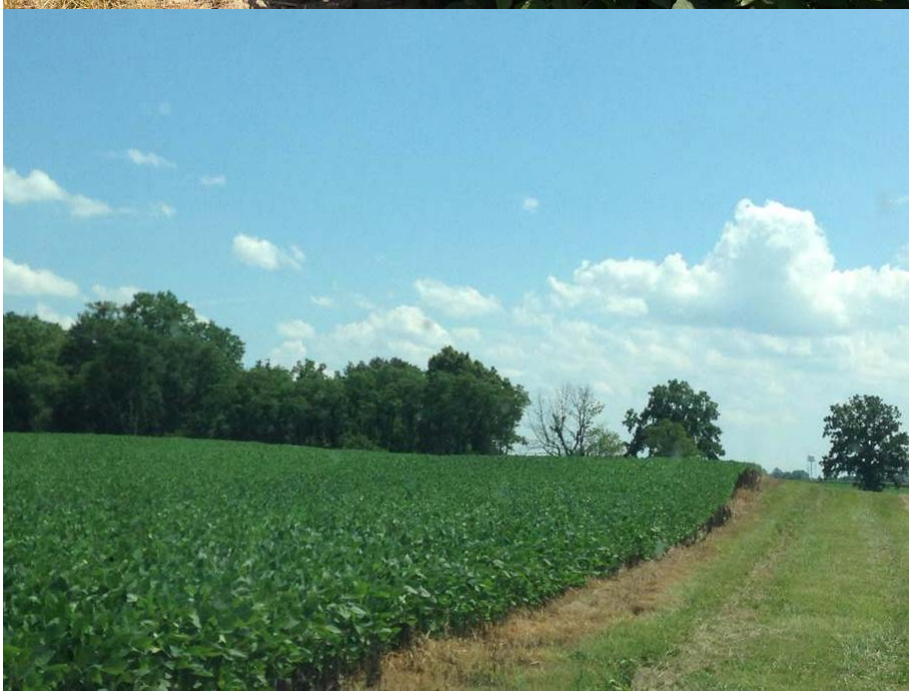
One can only imagine the increase of noise and exhaust pollution that will befall this beloved Hoosier Homestead. It is hard to believe that the Indiana Department of Transportation has decided that no significant impacts to prime farmland will result. By altering this landscape rich, Indiana farmland will be broken by concrete, culverts, noise and pollution. And those 400 black walnut trees that bird, mice, rabbit, chipmunk, bat, owl, raccoon, opossum, deer, hawk, snake, turtle and even spider all call

home... where will they go? Or are they too, not significant enough to care about?









Imagine all this gone...for the sake of a shed. Imagine all this gone...for the sake of a truck "highway" when alternate roads which already exist that can be improved upon and utilized instead.

We are very aware of the fact that the eminent domain spares no one and big business, money and power are no match for the small farmer. However, the Whisler family would greatly appreciate the new road be considerate of the walnut trees in an effort to alleviate losing this agriculture and rich history, forever.

Our father was born in the farmhouse that overlooks the land in 1921. He would be devastated.

Debra Lee Whisler DeKeuster
Nancy Anne Whisler
And The Entire Whisler Family

One last remark, this land represents the Whisler Hoosier Homestead rich history of farming and love of land. Generations of Whislers are buried not too far from this farm...and indeed there is a road named Whistler Road just east of the farm. How unfortunate to think that economic growth and expansion will consume this land steeped in beauty, rich agricultural production and tranquil forest.

Imagine all of this stand of trees gone.....home and protection for wildlife gone. Tis sad indeed and truly at what cost is it worth it? To Beck Hybrid Seed anything is worth it if it benefits them.

Joel B. Thurman

From: County Highway
Sent: Thursday, July 5, 2018 8:58 AM
To: Joel B. Thurman
Subject: FW: Reconstruction of 276th Street

From: klaugheed [mailto:klaugheed@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2018 9:44 AM
To: County Highway <County.Highway@hamiltoncounty.in.gov>
Subject: Reconstruction of 276th Street

To Whom It May Concern:

I would just like to enter into the public record that the community was not given adequate notice of the hearing for the 276th road reconstruction project, held on Tuesday, June 19, 2018.

I and other effected homeowners received a letter in the mail on Saturday, June 16, which allowed very little time to make arrangements to attend the meeting. Because the meeting was held at 5:30 p.m., many area residents were still at work or on their way home and could not attend the meeting since they had not been given adequate time to arrange to leave work early on that day.

Although you may have fulfilled the legal requirements for announcing the hearing, it felt as if you did not want area residents to come. If you had truly cared about getting input from the area residents, you would have given us at least a two-week warning instead of two days.

If you wanted to irritate and frustrate homeowners in the area, you could not have done a better job.

Sincerely,

Kathy Laugheed
6908 E. 266th Street
Arcadia, IN 46030

Commenter	Comment	Response
Indicot 01 (hearing)	The only comment I got, I think we need to look into maybe shift or maybe look at the option of shifting the route to the south.	Mr. Indicot's comment is referring to the shift in the proposed roadway alignment near the east end of the project where the alignment curves north, approximately 0.28 mile west of SR 19. At this location, the proposed roadway alignment shifts north to avoid a residence. Shifting the roadway alignment farther south would avoid a stand of walnut trees, but would result in relocation of the residence. The preferred alternate as described in the Categorical Exclusion Level 4 (CE-4) document was selected through an alternative analysis. A discussion of the alternate analysis may be found in the environmental document. The proposed alignment was selected to avoid a residential relocation, as indicated above. Four other alternatives were considered for this project, but were discarded because they were not the most feasible and prudent alternatives due to higher environmental impacts and costs.
Richards 01 (hearing)	I'm actually part owner of the Whistler Farm where the road is going through and I'm not happy personally. This has been in the family one hundred and seventy-two years and there's six of us that own us now that want to keep it that way and I think there will be quite a problem with the environment after all this road stuff is through and you're all going to be very sorry that it went through because of all the traffic and development that will appear. I think we all need to be sure and write our comments, email, and get everything in that we can to stop this because it's only going to hurt you. It's not going to help you, it's going to hurt you.	Comment noted
Richards 02 (e-mail)	My name is Lee Ann Richards, part owner of the Whisler Farm, along with my sister, Georgia Andrews, and four cousins. I want to protest the requested Right of Way through our property. We are not happy that this project is cutting through our farm. This farm is a homestead farm and has been in the Whisler family for 172 years.	Comment noted
Richards 03 (e-mail)	The one paragraph that bothered me the most is that it would not harm the environment. This project will be taking up valuable farm land that produces food for families. The project will also be cutting down trees that make the air safer and provides for natural habitat.	Impacts to environmental resources will occur. Impacts to environment resources, such as farmland and terrestrial habitat are documented accordingly in the draft CE-4 document.
Richards 04 (e-mail)	The project will affect each and every person in the surrounding communities.	The proposed project will comply with the local/regional development patterns for the area. The project is not anticipated to result in substantial impacts to community cohesion, because it will not change access to properties within the area or divide existing communities. The proposed project is not expected to impact the surrounding community or cause economic impacts to the surrounding area. Therefore, the project will have minimal or no negative impacts to the community or local economy.
Richards 05 (e-mail)	If you need a better road why not spend the money making existing roads safe for traffic, both for the businesses and the residents in the area.	The need for the project is due to the deteriorating condition of the existing 276th Street pavement and lack of efficient connectivity between 276th Street and SR 19. The existing 276th Street pavement has deteriorated and shows signs of edge cracking, moderate longitudinal and transverse cracking, and minor raveling. 276th Street currently consists of two, 9 to 10-foot wide travel lanes (one eastbound and one westbound) with variable width shoulders (0 to 4-foot wide). Currently, 276th Street terminates at Gwinn Road and does not directly connect to SR 19. To reach SR 19 from 276th Street, motorists and large trucks (semi-trucks) must utilize local routes. The existing narrow travel lane widths of 276th Street and the local roadway system increases the risk of head-on collisions between large trucks and smaller passenger vehicles traveling in opposing directions. Beck's Superior Hybrids is located approximately 0.3 mile west of the 276th Street/Gwinn Road Intersection and experiences a high volume of large truck traffic daily. The proposed expansion of Beck's Superior Hybrids is expected to increase large truck traffic in the area, thus causing the existing pavement conditions of 276th Street to further deteriorate, as well as increase the volume of large trucks traveling on the narrow local routes to reach SR 19.

Commenter	Comment	Response
Richards 06 (e-mail)	It is very hard for me to believe that this project was approved. This project will cause so much disruption to necessary farmland. The project is unnecessary, when there are existing roads that could be improved to meet local business needs.	See response to previous comment.
Richards 07 (e-mail)	This project only benefits L Sonny Beck and is not for the best interest of the surrounding community. I do not understand how L Sony Beck got this project approved to begin with without talking to the land owners. Can you provide me this information?	This proposed project is sponsored by Hamilton County Highway Department and the Federal Highway Administration. Hamilton County identified the needs for this project which includes the deteriorating condition of the existing pavement, lack of connectivity between SR 19 and US 31, and accommodating the expected increase of large truck traffic due to business development along the corridor.
Richards 08 (e-mail)	It also concerns me that your company, RQAW, sent out letters addressed to an individual, but was in a different envelope to who it was addressed. It seems unlikely for a reputable company to do, under the circumstances that it was to notify people of a public hearing. Plus the fact is was dated June 11th and not delivered till June 16th, and the hearing was set for June 19th. It certainly did not give adequate notice of said hearing.	This was addressed at the public hearing. Some of the Notice of Public Hearing letters addressed to individual property owners were accidently put into envelopes addressed to different property owners. However, the information provided in the Notice of Hearing letters was the same for all property owners. The Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Indianapolis Star on June 4 and June 11, 2018, which meets the minimum requirements described in the current INDOT Public Involvement Manual (2012) for notifying the public of the public hearing and offering the public the opportunity to comment on the project. The Notice of Public Hearing letters sent out to individual property owners were not required by INDOT, but were sent out at the request of the county.
Richards 09 (e-mail)	I will continue to strongly object to this project which will permanently damage vital farm land and natural habitat.	Comment noted
W. Whisler 01 (e-mail)	This letter is intended as my formal statement in response to the public hearing held June 19, 2018 on the above referenced project. I am part owner of the Whisler Family Farm Partnership, and part owner of the land on which the Whisler Family Farm Partnership operates. The farm is approximately 100 acres and lies just east of Whetstone Ave. I am also the financial manager of the partnership and the tax matters partner.	Comment noted
W. Whisler 02 (e-mail)	The proposed project involves constructing a roadway across the southern portion of the Whisler Family Farm property, including a significant portion of land dedicated to a Black Walnut grove (approximately 4.2 acres). The farm also produces corn and soy beans on the land marked for the road construction.	The project has been designed to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the surrounding environment to the greatest extent possible, which includes agricultural and forested land. A total of approximately 0.81 acre of forested habitat, consisting of black walnut trees will be impacted by the project. The proposed roadway alignment was shifted to the south in an effort to avoid further impacts to the stand of black walnut trees.
W. Whisler 03 (e-mail)	On behalf of the partners of the Whisler Family Farm, which include Lee Ann Richards of Fishers, IN, Georgia Andrews of Tucker, GA, Robert Whisler of Glen Allen, VA, Nancy Whisler of Richmond, VA, Debra DeKeuster of Richmond, VA and myself, William Whisler of Long Grove, IL, I would like to state our collective objections to the project, and ask that the project pursue other alternatives.	Comment noted. Four other alternatives were considered for this project, but were discarded because they were not the most feasible and prudent alternatives due to higher environmental impacts and costs.

Commenter	Comment	Response
W. Whisler 04 (e-mail)	The reasons for our objection include the following: The project produces no economic, social or environmental benefit to the community or county as a whole.	The purpose of the project is to provide a structurally sufficient and efficient route between 276th Street and SR 19 to accommodate the expected increase in large truck traffic volume associated with Beck's Superior Hybrids, as well as alleviate large truck traffic on the nearby narrow local routes. The purpose of the project is also to improve the deteriorating condition of the existing 276th Street pavement from east of Little Cicero Creek to Gwinn Road. The proposed project will comply with the local/regional development patterns for the area. The project is not anticipated to result in substantial impacts to community cohesion, because it will not change access to properties within the area or divide existing communities. The proposed project is not expected to impact the surrounding community or cause economic impacts to the surrounding area. Therefore, the project will have minimal or no negative impacts to the community or local economy.
W. Whisler 05 (e-mail)	The sole benefactor of the project appears to be Becks Hybrids located at 6767 E. 276th St. Atlanta, IN. The project effectively transfers the use of private property from the current owners (including me and the partners listed above), to Becks.	The permanent right-of-way to be acquired for the project will be purchased by Hamilton County. All purchased right-of-way will maintained and owned by Hamilton County. The road will remain a public road which will be maintained by Hamilton County.
W. Whisler 06 (e-mail)	There are no traffic or vehicular studies provided that substantiate the need for or otherwise call for construction of this road.	The need for the project is due to the deteriorating condition of the existing 276th Street pavement and lack of efficient connectivity between 276th Street and SR 19. Currently, 276th Street terminates at Gwinn Road and does not directly connect to SR 19. To reach SR 19 from 276th Street, motorists and large trucks (semi-trucks) must utilize local routes. The existing narrow travel lane widths of 276th Street and the local roadway system increases the risk of head-on collisions between large trucks and smaller passenger vehicles traveling in opposing directions. Large truck traffic is expected to increase in the area, thus causing the existing pavement conditions of 276th Street to further deteriorate, as well as increase the volume of large trucks traveling on the narrow local routes to reach SR 19.
W. Whisler 07 (e-mail)	The sole benefactor of this project is Becks Hybrids, and the Hamilton County Commissioners are enabling this transfer of property (and use thereof) through their sponsorship, promotion and solicitation of state and federal funding for the project. The commissioners of the county are required to represent and consider the interests of all residents and landowners in the county. In this case, the interests of one party (Becks) are being imposed on current landowners of the land without providing evidence that this transfer results in a benefit to the community as a whole.	This proposed project is sponsored by Hamilton County Highway Department and the Federal Highway Administration. Hamilton County identified the needs for this project which includes the deteriorating condition of the existing pavement, lack of connectivity between SR 19 and US 31, and accommodating the expected increase of large truck traffic due to business development along the corridor.
W. Whisler 08 (e-mail)	The Whisler Farm has been a productive farm and vital contributor to the township and 8Hamilton County for roughly 180 years. Construction of this road significantly diminishes the Farm's ability to continue this contribution. The road as planned effectively splits off approximately one-third of the existing contiguous farm. Less land is available for crop production, and the presence of the road significantly burdens and complicates the manner in which the property will be farmed in the future. It also significantly changes the drainage patterns of what is some of the best farmland in the area.	The project has been designed to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the surrounding environment to the greatest extent possible, which includes agricultural land. The proposed route will also avoid cutting off access to remaining farmland by providing multiple access drives for farming equipment.
W. Whisler 09 (e-mail)	The farm is a designated as an Indiana Hoosier Homestead. It was established in 1846. The family house on the property was constructed the 1880's. The designation by the State of Indiana is intended to recognize significant and long-standing homesteads in the state. Construction of a road through this homestead would be contrary to the spirit of this designation.	According to the Hoosier Homestead Program Manager, the State of Indiana may recognize a property as a Indiana Hoosier Homestead, but the recognition does not provide any specific protections from right-of-way acquisition or any other impacts. Additionally, the agricultural land associated with the property was not identified as National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible above-ground or below-ground historic resource during the Section 106 review process.

Commenter	Comment	Response
W. Whisler 10 (e-mail)	The project would pass through a tract of land currently dedicated to a Black Walnut Tree grove. These trees were planted as part of a project started by my father, Robert D. Whisler in 1987, and stand on a portion of the farm that includes natural woodland. The intention was a long-term project (50 years plus), to eventually harvest full grown walnut trees for timber. The project is intended to benefit Robert's grandchildren and great grandchildren. My father, Robert Whisler (now deceased), was a 7th generation American and grew up on the farm. He shared many memories and experiences of growing up on the farm with his children (4) and grandchildren (7). The farm has been in my family for over 180 years. While opportunity and his career took him elsewhere, throughout his life my father remained highly engaged and dedicated to the care, upkeep and preservation of the farm and the house on the farm where he was born in 1921. If alive today, he would be devastated to think that a road could be constructed through his farm, and especially distressed to think that his Walnut Tree project could be destroyed.	Comment noted.
W. Whisler 11 (e-mail)	Viable alternatives to the proposed project exist. I understand that alternative road sites were considered and apparently not pursued due to protests by landowners that would be impacted. Since those objections were heeded, I ask that my objections to the current project also be acted upon, and that alternative routes be pursued – or better, that no road be constructed at all. Sufficient and adequate roadways already exist that can accommodate the proposed truck traffic.	The preferred alternate as described in the CE-4 document was selected through an alternative analysis. A discussion on the alternate analysis may be found in the environmental document. Currently, 281st Street east of SR 19 directly connects to SR 37 and 276th Street west of SR 19 directly connects to US 31. The preferred alternative for the project will connect 276th Street to 281st Street, thus providing improved connectivity between US 31 and SR 37. A route option south of the preferred alternative was evaluated during the corridor study that was completed during the project planning process in 2014. This route option south of the preferred alternative would extend 276th Street east of Gwinn Rd., then curve north to Whetston Rd, then curve east to 281st Street and then tie into SR 19. However, this alternative would require substantial right-of-way acquisition of farmland, two relocations, construction of a cul-de-sac on existing Whetston Rd. at its intersection with 281st St. and relocating the intersection further east, which would result in a geometrically insufficient intersection. For these reasons, this alternative was dismissed during the corridor study and was not evaluated further as part of the alternate analysis. No other options south of the preferred route were considered as part of the alternative analysis. Extending 276th Street directly east to SR 19, or using Gwinn Road and 274th Street to connect to SR 19 would not provide a structurally sufficient and efficient route between 276th Street and SR 19. Thus, these options were not considered as part of the alternative analysis.
W. Whisler 12 (e-mail)	The project will result in the destruction of natural habitat for many animals in the woodland of the Whisler farm.	The stand of black walnut trees was identified as suitable habitat for the federally endangered Indiana bat and federally threatened Northern long-eared bat. However, per coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the project will not eliminate enough habitat to affect these species. Tree clearing restrictions regarding these bat species will be implemented. Impacts to unique or high quality habitat were not identified during early coordination efforts with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of Fish and Wildlife and USFWS. The project will not impact any core forest and will not have significant impacts on wildlife communities.

Commenter	Comment	Response
W. Whisler 13 (e-mail)	Pollution from truck exhaust, as well as noise pollution would result from the project. Thank you for your consideration of these objections to the proposed project.	This project has been determined to generate minimal air quality impacts for Clean Air Act criteria pollutants and has not been linked with any special mobile source air toxic (MSAT) concerns. As such, this project will not result in changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, basic project location, or any other factor that would cause a meaningful increase in MSAT impacts of the project from that of the no-build alternative. Moreover, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations for vehicle engines and fuels will cause overall MSAT emissions to decline significantly over the next several decades. Based on regulations now in effect, an analysis of national trends with EPA's MOVES2014 model forecasts a combined reduction of over 90 percent in the total annual emission rate for the priority MSAT from 2010 to 2050 while vehicle-miles of travel are projected to increase by over 45 percent (Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents, Federal Highway Administration, October 12, 2016). This will both reduce the background level of MSAT as well as the possibility of even minor MSAT emissions from this project. A Highway Noise Analysis was completed for the project in May 2017. Based on the studies thus far accomplished, Hamilton County has not identified any locations where noise abatement is likely.
Andrews 01 (e-mail)	I am the great great granddaughter of the Whisler that the land was land granted to 172 years ago – I have spent many summers counting cars as they passed while I was on the front porch swing with my grandparents.	Comment noted.
Andrews 02 (e-mail)	I am appalled that it is actually stated "for the proposed expansion of "Beck Superior Hybrid" – This infers that this is for private enterprise. I understand the county is sending this letter supported by state and federal funds. How did a private enterprise convince the county to "eminent domain" good farmland instead of taking care of roads already established?	This proposed project is sponsored by Hamilton County Highway Department and the Federal Highway Administration. Hamilton County identified the needs for this project which includes the deteriorating condition of the existing pavement, lack of connectivity between SR 19 and US 31, and accommodating the expected increase of large truck traffic due to business development along the corridor.
Andrews 03 (e-mail)	I am in disbelief the president of Beck Superior Hybrid, Sonny Beck, would personally say he was "sorry"– as he pridefully strutted about the meeting.	Comment noted
Andrews 04 (e-mail)	This eminent domain by the county is a false front for a private enterprise – Beck Superior Hybrids. Many people have manipulated the path of the road to include the Whisler Farm.	This proposed project is sponsored by Hamilton County Highway Department and the Federal Highway Administration. Hamilton County identified the need for this project which includes the deteriorating condition of the existing pavement, lack of connectivity between SR 19 and US 31, and accommodating the expected increase of large truck traffic due to business development along the corridor. The proposed alignment was designed to avoid a residential relocation.
Andrews 05 (e-mail)	The original plan was laid out south of the Whisler Farm. The new plan was altered to take property of the Whisler Farm rather than the farmland south of the Whisler property. Why was there a change in the original plan?	Please see response to W. Whisler 11 comment.
Andrews 06 (e-mail)	I want to strongly object and protest the project which will permanently damage vital farm land and natural habitat.	Please see responses to W. Whisler 08 and W. Whisler 12 comments above.

Commenter	Comment	Response
R. Whisler 01 (e-mail)	My name is Robert Whisler Jr. I am one of the owners of the Whisler farm located on 276th Street in Atlanta, Indiana. Recently, we all were notified that approximately a fourth of our family farm is designated to be made into a road. This designated plan will cut through our farm on the south side. I am emailing both of you to share some insight how surprised and taken back we all were when we were notified of the designated plan of a new road cutting our family's farm land up.	Comment noted.
R. Whisler 02 (e-mail)	First, possibly each of you are not aware of the Whisler's farm heritage. This farm has been in our family since 1846. The Whisler family has had the farm in our family's ownership for one hundred seventy-two years. Our family farm has been recognized and has received the honor to be called a Hoosier Homestead farm.	Comment noted.
R. Whisler 03 (e-mail)	Secondly, my father, Robert Whisler Sr., grew up on the farm with his sister. He worked the farm with his father and his father's father. I also, have memories I hold dear to my heart. I can remember traveling to the farm most weekends while I was growing up to visit grandma and grandpa on the farm. My father, by his example, showed me how much the farm meant to him growing up there through his adult life and beyond. My father would include all of his children in what was being planted, harvested, and which fields would be rotating off from planting and why. If my father was still alive, he would be in Atlanta today working with each of you and whomever else to try and brainstorm with the town board and Mr. Beck to understand the designated plan and why his family's homestead was chosen for the cut through.	Comment noted.
R. Whisler 04 (e-mail)	Thirdly, my father, Robert Whisler Sr., planted approximately 140 seedlings of walnut trees approximately thirty years ago. One of my father's reasons for planting the walnut trees was to have his children, his grandchildren, and their children's children, x etc. enjoy and take pride in watching the walnut trees grow into their full growth potential. Also, knowing eventually the walnut trees would be an inheritance from him years down the road.	Comment noted.
R. Whisler 05 (e-mail)	I understand change needs to happen in order for future progress to come about. I hope with whatever happens, the town board and the Beck Hybrid Seed company will be considerate, respectful, and fair with any change that is to come about with the surrounding farm owners.	Comment noted.
Whisler-DeKeuster 01 (e-mail)	How does one begin a letter asking for a family homestead of 172 years to be saved from economic growth and big business expansion? The Whisler Hoosier Homestead was established on April 15 1846. Jacob Whistler purchased the land from Abraham Shock at a cost of $7.50 per acre. It was here that Jacob cleared the timber, built his homestead in 1880 and began his life as a farmer. The Whisler family is now seeking answered questions as this cherished property is pending direct alterations from the Department of Transportation.	Comment noted. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Hamilton County are the sponsors of the proposed project. The FHWA is the lead agency for the project.
Whisler-DeKeuster 02 (e-mail)	The question now is why. Why would the Indiana Department of Transportation decide that no significant impacts to prime farmland will result from this project? Somehow cutting directly across a Hoosier Homestead and the destruction of 400 black walnut trees has been deemed as not a significant impact? Robert D. Whisler Sr. purchased 400 black walnut seedlings from Purdue University Agriculture Extension in 1986 to create a living legacy with the dream of one day having his great grandchildren harvest the wood.	As is required by the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) was coordinated with and the Form NRCS-CPA-106 was completed regarding farmland impacts. Since this project received a total point value of less than 160 points, the affected land will receive no further consideration for farmland protection. Thus, it was determined that the project will not have a significant impact to farmland. The project has been designed to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the surrounding environment to the greatest extent possible, which includes agricultural and forested land. A total of approximately 0.81 acre of forested habitat, consisting of black walnut trees will be impacted by the project. The proposed roadway alignment was shifted to the south in an effort to avoid further impacts to the stand of black walnut trees.

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Whisler-DeKeuster 03 (e-mail)	How can the Indiana Department of Transportation justify the need and cost to create a new road when one already exists and merely could be improved upon?	Please see response to W. Whisler 06 comment.
Whisler-DeKeuster 04 (e-mail)	Is it because Beck Superior Hybrids did not wish to cut a road through their existing many agricultural fields adjacent to the project area in order to reach that existing road?	The project will impact a total of approximately 22.70 acres of agricultural land, which includes land owned by Beck's Superior Hybrids.
Whisler-DeKeuster 05 (e-mail)	If the existing design calls for a road to cut through the Whisler property, why does it swing north into those 30 year old black walnut trees for the sake of saving a shed on the adjacent property. On the surface it seems incredibly suspicious, and we are hoping answered questions may help bring clarity to the plans ahead.	The project route shifts north to avoid relocation of a private residence.
Whisler-DeKeuster 06 (e-mail)	One can only imagine the increase of noise and exhaust pollution that will befall this beloved Hoosier Homestead.	Please see response to W. Whisler 13 comment.
Whisler-DeKeuster 07 (e-mail)	It is hard to believe that the Indiana Department of Transportation has decided that no significant impacts to prime farmland will result.	Please see response to Whisler-DeKeuster 02 comment.
Whisler-DeKeuster 08 (e-mail)	By altering this landscape rich, Indiana farmland will be broken by concrete, culverts, noise and pollution. And those 400 black walnut trees that bird, mice, rabbit, chipmunk, bat, owl, raccoon, opossum, deer, hawk, snake, turtle and even spider all call home...where will they go? Or are they too, not significant enough to care about?	Please see response to W. Whisler 12 comment.
Whisler-DeKeuster 09 (e-mail)	Imagine all this gone...for the sake of a shed. Imagine all this gone...for the sake of a truck "highway" when alternate roads which already exist that can be improved upon and utilized instead.	This proposed project is sponsored by Hamilton County Highway Department and the Federal Highway Administration. Hamilton County identified the needs for this project which includes the deteriorating condition of the existing pavement, lack of connectivity between SR 19 and US 31, and accommodating the expected increase of large truck traffic due to business development along the corridor. The proposed alignment was selected to avoid a residential relocation.
Whisler-DeKeuster 10 (e-mail)	We are very aware of the fact that the eminent domain spares no one and big business, money and power are no match for the small farmer. However, the Whisler family would greatly appreciate the new road be considerate of the walnut trees in an effort to alleviate losing this agriculture and rich history, forever.	Please see response to W. Whisler 02 comment.
Whisler-DeKeuster 11 (e-mail)	Our father was born in the farmhouse that overlooks the land in 1921. He would be devastated.	Comment noted.
Whisler-DeKeuster 12 (e-mail)	One last remark, this land represents the Whisler Hoosier Homestead rich history of farming and love of land. Generations of Whislers are buried not too far from this farm...and indeed there is a road named Whistler Road just east of the farm. How unfortunate to think that economic growth and expansion will consume this land steeped in beauty, rich agricultural production and tranquil forest.	The proposed route will be a limited access roadway; access drives for future development will not be provided. The proposed project is not expected to impact the surrounding community or cause economic impacts to the surrounding area. Therefore, the project will have minimal or no negative impacts to the community or local economy.
Whisler-DeKeuster 13 (e-mail)	Imagine all of this stand of trees gone.....home and protection for wildlife gone. Tis sad indeed and truly at what cost is it worth it? To Beck Hybrid Seed anything is worth it if it benefits them.	Comment noted.
Laugheed 01 (e-mail)	I would just like to enter into the public record that the community was not given adequate notice of the hearing for the 276th road reconstruction project, held on Tuesday, June 19, 2018.	The Notice of Public Hearing was published in the *Indianapolis Star* on June 4 and June 11, 2018, which meets the minimum requirements described in the current INDOT Public Involvement Manual (2012) for notifying the public of the public hearing and offering the public the opportunity to comment on the project. The Notice of Public Hearing letters sent out to individual property owners were not required by INDOT, but were sent out at the request of the county.

Commenter	Comment	Response
Laugheed 02 (e-mail)	I and other effected homeowners received a letter in the mail on Saturday, June 16, which allowed very little time to make arrangements to attend the meeting. Because the meeting was held at 5:30 p.m., many area residents were still at work or on their way home and could not attend the meeting since they had not been given adequate time to arrange to leave work early on that day.	Please see response to previous comment.
Laugheed 03 (e-mail)	Although you may have fulfilled the legal requirements for announcing the hearing, it felt as if you did not want area residents to come. If you had truly cared about getting input from the area residents, you would have given us at least a two-week warning instead of two days.	See response to Laugheed 01 comment.
Laugheed 04 (e-mail)	If you wanted to irritate and frustrate homeowners in the area, you could not have done a better job.	Comment noted.