

15th AVENUE ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

from Martin Luther King Boulevard to Northbound
Exit Ramp of I-65
in Gary, Lake County, Indiana

Des. No. 1802973

PROJECT INFORMATION PACKET



Honorable
Jerome A. Prince Mayor



AMERICAN
STRUCTUREPOINT
INC.

Contact: Meghan Hinkle, American Structurepoint, Inc.
(317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com

March 15, 2023

Dear Concerned Citizens, Local Residents, and Elected Public Officials:

The purpose of this Project Information Packet is to explain the proposed project and to receive your comments, concerns, and suggestions and/or request for a public hearing. There are several ways your comments may be submitted, as outlined below:

1. **E-mail** comments to Meghan Hinkle of American Structurepoint, Inc. at mhinkle@structurepoint.com.
2. **Mail** comments to Meghan Hinkle at American Structurepoint, Inc., 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240.
3. **Submit** comments (or have comments postmarked by) **March 29, 2023**. Comments will be reviewed and considered as part of the decision making process.
4. **Questions?** Contact Meghan Hinkle of American Structurepoint, Inc. at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com.

All substantive comments received will be evaluated and responded to in writing within subsequent project documentation. The documentation will address concerns presented during the public comment process and describe project decisions reached following careful consideration of the views and/or concerns of the public.

Preliminary design plans along with the CE document and other project documents are available for review at the following locations:

1. In-Person –
Gary Public Library, Kennedy Branch, 3953 Broadway, Gary Indiana 46409
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. Website –
<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/15thave>

The 15th Avenue Roadway Improvements Project Team thanks you for your participation in this project.

Project Description

The 15th Avenue Roadway Improvement project is located along 15th Avenue from Martin Luther King Boulevard to the northbound exit ramp of I-65, a distance of 0.53 mile, in Gary, Lake County, Indiana.

The need for this project is evidenced by the deteriorated condition of the roadway, a lack of roadside and subsurface drainage, and a lack of pedestrian facilities through this industrial corridor. Based on the site visit on August 30, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc., the roadway has longitudinal joint separations at various locations; moderate-to-severe traverse cracking throughout the project area leading to potholes; and medium severity fatigue cracks and alligator cracking at various locations. According to the August 20, 2021 *Abbreviated Engineer's Report*, the lack of roadside and subsurface drainage has resulted in storm water ponding along the edges of the roadway and infiltrating into the pavement, which results in further damage to the already deteriorated roadway. Additionally, as there are no existing pedestrian facilities, but there is a bus route located along 15th Avenue and Texas Street, the area is reliant on pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. The purpose of this project is to correct the deteriorated condition of the roadway, to improve stormwater drainage along the roadway, and to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling along 15th Avenue's industrial corridor.

The project proposes to widen 15th Avenue to include four 12-foot-wide travel lanes (two in each direction). Turn lanes and auxiliary lanes will be reconstructed to match the existing conditions. Full-depth pavement replacement will occur throughout the project. New 6-foot-wide sidewalks will be constructed on both sides of 15th Avenue and include ADA-compliant curb ramps. A new storm sewer system will also be installed, utilizing curb and gutter to collect storm water runoff. The project will also consist of a full-depth pavement replacement along Michigan and Texas Streets, where the streets intersect with 15th Avenue.

Description of Right-of-Way

The project will require the purchase of right-of-way. Acquisition information can also be viewed at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/. The overall project requires the acquisition of approximately 1.93 acres of permanent right-of-way from commercial property. The overall project also requires approximately 0.01 acre of temporary right-of-way from commercial property. Typical existing right-of-way along 15th Avenue from Martin Luther King Boulevard to Texas Street is approximately 30-foot-wide north and south from the center of the roadway. The existing right-of-way along 15th Avenue between Texas Street to the I-65 northbound exit ramp is approximately 50-foot-wide north and 100-foot-wide south of the center of the roadway. The existing right-of-way along Michigan Street and Texas Street is approximately 30-foot-wide east and west from the center of the roadway.

Des. No. 1802973		
Amount (acres)		
Land Use Impacts	Permanent	Temporary
Residential	0.00	0.00
Commercial	1.93	0.01
Agricultural	0.00	0.00
Forest	0.00	0.00
Wetlands	0.00	0.00
Other:	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	1.93	0.01

Maintenance of Traffic

The maintenance of traffic for the project will require the closure of two lanes on one half of the road while maintaining one lane in each direction on the other half of the road. Once half the road is completed, the remaining lanes will be closed while maintaining traffic on the other half of the roadway. Access to all properties will be maintained throughout construction. School corporations and emergency services will be notified of closures prior to construction.

The lane restrictions and detours will pose a temporary inconvenience to traveling motorists (including school buses and emergency services) within the overall project; however, no significant delays are anticipated, and all inconveniences will cease upon project completion.

Environmental Documentation

The INDOT and FHWA have reviewed the Categorical Exclusion (CE) Document prepared by American Structurepoint, Inc. for this project and released the document for public involvement on January 20, 2023. The CE evaluates the impact of the 15th Avenue Roadway Improvement Project on the natural and human environment. No areas of potentially significant impacts have been identified.

Water Resources

The proposed project area was examined for the presence of wetlands and “waters of the U.S.” Five wetlands were identified within the project area as potentially regulated resources. It is anticipated that the preferred alternative will impact 0.02 acre of wetlands. A Section 401 Regional General Permit (RGP) from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and a Section 404 RGP from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will be required for impacts to wetlands.

In addition, the proposed project will also require a Construction Stormwater General Permit from IDEM as more than one acre of land will be disturbed.

Drinking Water Resources

This project is not located within a Wellhead Protection Area; however, the project is located within a Source Water Area. Coordination occurred with Hammond Water Works, East Chicago Water Works, and Indiana American Water-Northwest and no response was received. Utility coordination will continue as the project progresses. No permanent impacts are expected.

This project is located in an Urban Area Boundary (UAB). An early coordination letter was sent on October 4, 2021 to the City of Gary Department of Sustainability and Environmental Affairs (MS4 Coordinator). No response was received. No impacts are expected.

Additionally, this project is located where there is a public water system. Coordination with Indiana American Water was initiated by the project designer and will continue throughout the project. Indiana American Water did not respond. It is assumed there are no concerns regarding impacts from this project regarding the public water system.

Community Impacts

The project proposes to widen 15th Avenue to include four 12-foot-wide travel lanes (two in each direction). Turn lanes and auxiliary lanes will be reconstructed to match the existing conditions. Full-depth pavement replacement will occur throughout the project. New 6-foot-wide sidewalks will be constructed on both sides of 15th Avenue and include ADA-compliant curb ramps. A new storm sewer system will also be installed, utilizing curb and gutter to collect storm water runoff. The project will also consist of a full-depth pavement replacement along Michigan and Texas Streets, where the streets intersect with 15th Avenue. Therefore, the project is considered a benefit for the community. Temporary negative socioeconomic impacts the project will have on the community include temporary inconvenience commonly associated with construction, such as noise, fugitive dust, and increased travel delay. However, these impacts are temporary and will cease upon completion of the project. Permanent socioeconomic effects are not expected. Transportation within the community and access to community resources will not be affected. Overall, the project is expected to positively impact the community.

For more information regarding the project plans and potential impacts of the proposed project, please refer to the CE document.

Estimated Cost Summary

The estimated cost for this project is \$4,015,000 which includes preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction. Federal and local funding will be used for this project. The project is included in the 2022-2026 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Project Schedule

Milestone	Expected Dates
Right-of-Way Acquisition Begins	Spring 2023
Anticipated Construction Dates	Between Spring 2024 and Spring 2025

