

**Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Central Avenue  
Roadway Improvement Project  
Brandt Street to Peach Street  
Portage, Porter County, Indiana**

**Designation Nos. 1173430, 2101214, 2101167, and 2100131  
(Parent Des. No. 0901928)**

---

**INFORMATION PACKET**

---



Prepared By:

American Structurepoint, Inc.  
9025 River Road, Suite 200  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240  
(317) 547-5580



April 10, 2023

Dear Concerned Citizens, Local Residents, and Elected Public Officials

The City of Portage and American Structurepoint Inc. have put together the following informational packet regarding Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Central Avenue Roadway Improvement project from Brandt Street to Peach Street.

The Central Avenue Roadway Improvement project (Des. No. 1173430/0901928) is an approximate 2.08-mile corridor beginning at County Line Road and extending east to Willowcreek Road. A Categorical Exclusion (CE) Level 3 was prepared for the overall project (County Line Road to Willowcreek Road, Des. No. 0901928) and approved by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) on February 27, 2012.

Since the approval of the overall project in 2012, no portion has been constructed and the overall project has been broken into four phases for construction and funding purposes. This document is intended to provide an update to the projects status and the anticipated schedule of the first two phases. The first two phases (Phase 1 and Phase 2) of the Central Avenue Roadway Improvement project (Des. No. 1173430) is an approximate 0.53-mile corridor beginning at Brandt Street and extending east to Peach Street. An Additional Information (AI) document was approved for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project on January 5, 2022.

The purpose of the informational packet is to update the public and interested parties on the proposed project and to receive comments, concerns, and suggestions. This informational packet along with project plans can be accessed on the American Structurepoint Public Involvement website at the following address <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/centralavenue>. Submit comments to the project team via the contact information below by May 10, 2023.

- a. Mail a letter attention Cameron Schuler at American Structurepoint, Inc., 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, IN 46240
- b. Email Cameron Schuler of American Structurepoint at [cschuler@structurepoint.com](mailto:cschuler@structurepoint.com)
- c. Call Cameron Schuler of American Structurepoint at 317-547-5580

**Please have all comments submitted or postmarked by May 10, 2023 to ensure evaluation and inclusion within the project documentation.**



## **Project Description – Phase 1 and Phase 2**

The City of Portage is developing a federal-aid project to re-construct a portion of Central Avenue in Portage, Porter County, Indiana. The current projects will be constructed in two consecutive phases. Phase 1 (Des. No. 2101214), located in the center of the proposed project, would move to construction first. While Phase 2 (Des. No. 2100131) consists of two working areas on either end of Phase 1. Phase 1 of the project begins 100 feet north of Willowdale Road and extends east before terminating 250 feet west of Swanson Road (Des. No. 2101214). Phase 1 also includes the replacement of Porter County Bridge 1007 (Des. No. 21011670). The western portion of Phase 2 (Des. No. 210131) begins 100 feet west of Brandt Street and extends east to 100 feet north of Willowdale Road. The eastern portion of Phase 2 begins 250 feet west of Swanson Road and extends east to 300 feet east of Peach Street. The purpose and need of the project remains unchanged from the original approved CE. Specifically, the purpose of this project is to address inadequate safety conditions for both pedestrians and motorists along the project corridor, to address deteriorating infrastructure along Central Avenue, reduce congestion along the corridor, and to address stormwater drainage issues. The primary need for this project is to provide a safe roadway and a safe and continuous sidewalk/trail system with curb ramps for pedestrians. Currently, the existing roadway does not meet INDOT design standards, especially concerning sight distance at the Willow Creek Bridge (Porter County Bridge 1007) and with regards to the roadway width. The pavement condition is also deteriorating. Traffic congestion issues related to turning movements are present at a number of locations along Central Avenue, due to a lack of left-turn lanes at major intersections and the presence of a 3-leg intersection where the major traffic movement makes a 90-degree turn. Additionally, limited pedestrian facilities exist along the project corridor. A secondary need for this project is to address stormwater drainage within the project area and as it relates to the existing Willow Creek Bridge. The existing bridge is undersized and cannot handle significant stormwater events. Curb and gutter are not currently present within the project limits, and the existing stormwater management infrastructure consists of ditches which are incomplete or do not adequately drain the roadway and adjacent right-of-way.

The proposed alignment and typical section of the roadway within Phase 1 and Phase 2 remain unchanged from the 2012 CE 3. The proposed undertaking consists of the reconstruction of Central Avenue to include two 12-foot travel lanes (one in each direction) along with curb and gutter. An 8-foot-wide multi-use path would be added along the north side of the roadway and be separated from the travel lanes by a 5-foot vegetated buffer strip. As part of the proposed project, an enclosed stormwater system will still be included. Stormwater will be conveyed through storm sewer to Willow Creek. Lighting will be provided at intersections as warranted. The roadway alignment will still be shifted south at Swanson Road to correct the substandard existing geometry and address sight distance concerns as originally proposed.

Additionally, the existing bridge over Willow Creek (Porter County Bridge 1007; Des. No. 2101167) will still be replaced and re-aligned as previously anticipated in the 2012 CE 3 due to sight distance concerns and the hydraulic capacity of the existing structure. The existing Willow Creek Bridge is a single-span pre-stressed box beam bridge constructed in 1973. This bridge is not listed, nor is it eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The proposed bridge, along with Central Avenue approaching the bridge, would be realigned to the north to flatten the existing horizontal curve present in the current roadway on the same alignment as previously anticipated in the 2012 CE 3. The proposed bridge is a single-span composite pre-stressed concrete I-beam bridge. The bridge would carry two 12-foot travel lanes (one eastbound and one westbound), two 2-foot shoulders on either side of the travel



lanes, and one 8-foot 7-inch multi-use path, north of the westbound travel lane and shoulder, over Willow Creek.

Since the approval of the 2012 CE 3, it has been determined that the proposed roundabout at Central and Willowdale within Phase 2 will be modified to a three-way stop-controlled intersection. Furthermore, it was anticipated that one detention pond was to be constructed south of Central Avenue, west of Swanson Road, and adjacent to Willow Creek. This detention pond is no longer included in the Phase 1 or Phase 2 proposed project. Additionally, since the approval of the 2022 Additional Information Document it has been determined that two dry bottom detention ponds will be constructed to intercept and detain water prior to discharge to Willow Creek. The first basin will be located north of Willow Creek and south of Central Avenue while the second basin is proposed to be located south of Willow Creek and north of Central Avenue. These basins are currently proposed to be located outside of the regulated floodway of Willow Creek. Additionally, new lighting will be installed at the intersections of Central Avenue with Willowdale Road, Swanson Road, and Peach Street.

### **Description of Right-of-Way**

The project will require the purchase of right-of-way. Refer to the link “*Real Property Acquisition for Federal and Federal-Aid Programs and Projects*” and “*Relocation: Your Rights and Benefits as a Displaced Person under the Federal Relocation Assistance Program*” at [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real\\_estate/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/) for more information on the right-of-way acquisition and relocation process. One relocation is anticipated to occur as a result of Phase 2 of this project due to the re-alignment of the intersection of Central Avenue and Willowdale Road.

The proposed right-of-way width will typically extend approximately 60-70 feet from the centerline of Central Avenue within Phase 1. At the intersection of Willowdale Road within Phase 2, the right-of-way will extend approximately 85-feet north of the existing centerline of Central Avenue. At the intersection of Swanson Road, also within Phase 2, the right-of-way will extend approximately 160-feet south of the existing centerline of Central Avenue. It is anticipated that Phase 1 of the proposed project will require approximately 1.77-acre of permanent right-of-way and no temporary right-of-way. Phase 2 will require approximately 6.26-acres of permanent right-of-way and 0.11-acre of temporary right-of-way. The proposed project will result in one relocation of a commercial property within the eastern portion of Phase 2.

### **Maintenance of Traffic**

The Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) for Phase 1 will consist of phased construction. Offline construction of the new bridge will keep Central Avenue and the existing Willowcreek bridge open until a full closure of Central Avenue is required while the existing bridge is removed and roadway tie-in work is completed. An approximately 3.2-mile detour, which utilizes Willowdale Road, Stone Avenue, and Willowcreek Road, will be necessary at this stage of Phase 1 which is anticipated to last approximately 4 months.

The MOT for Phase 2 consists of a full closure of Central Avenue from Brandt Street to Peach Street for the duration of the project, approximately 1 year. An approximately 4.95-mile detour, which utilizes County Line Road, Stone Avenue, and Willowcreek Road, will be necessary. The multi-use path, constructed as part of Phase 1, will remain closed for the duration of Phase 2 construction. Access shall be maintained to all residences and businesses throughout construction.



## Project Schedule

Milestone	Expected Dates
Right-of-way Acquisition, Phase 1 & 2	Fall/Winter 2023
Phase 1 Construction Start	Spring 2023
Phase 2 Construction Start	Spring 2024

## Environmental Documentation

A CE Level 3 was prepared to evaluate the impact of the overall project (County Line Road to Willowcreek Road, Des. No. 0901928) on the natural and human environment. The CE 3 was approved by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) on February 27, 2012. Due to the passage of time and modifications to the scope of work, an Additional Information (AI) document was prepared to address any updated impacts to the natural and human environment within Phase 1 and Phase 2. The AI was approved for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project on January 5, 2022. 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.” One stream, Willow Creek, and one wetland were identified within the project area for Phase 1. It is anticipated that Phase 1 of the project will permanently impact a maximum of 186 linear feet of Willow Creek. Within Phase 1, approximately 0.04-acre of permanent wetland impacts are anticipated to occur. No wetland or stream impacts are anticipated within Phase 2 as no waters were identified within the proposed construction limits for the project. Phase 1 would require a Section 401 Individual Permit from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), a Section 404 Regional General Permit (RGP) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and a Construction in a Floodway Permit from IDNR will be required for impacts to streams and wetlands. Mitigation may be needed and will be determined during permitting.

The proposed project will also require a Rule 5 Construction Sediment and Erosion Control Permit from IDEM for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 as more than one acre of land will be disturbed.

### Cultural Resources

This project went through Section 106 as part of the 2012 CE. As a part of this process, a Historic Properties Report was completed and determined that one building, the Calvary Cemetery Office Building, was an above ground structure eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP). The project received a finding of “No Adverse Effect” for this historic building in 2011. An Archaeology Survey of the project area was also completed as a part of the 2012 CE, but no sites eligible for the NHRP were found.



Based on the passage of time since the previous Section 106 documentation was completed, a Memorandum dated May 17, 2021 prepared by Weintraut and Associates to reassess above-ground resources within the Phase 1 and Phase 2 project area to determine if there are any new properties that could be affected by the project, and to determine if the Findings and Determinations, signed on March 28, 2011, are still applicable. The document concluded that the Office Building at the Calvary Cemetery (IHSSI No. 127-520-10016) remains eligible for listing in the NHRP. The document goes on to note that the historians believe the project will have “No Adverse Effect” on the Office Building at the Calvary Cemetery as originally documented in the 2011 Section 106 Finding. Based on the reduction in scope of the proposed undertaking and the project footprint, no additional archaeological studies were completed. A Cemetery Development Plan (CDP) will be prepared for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the proposed undertaking due to work within 100 feet of the Calvary Cemetery. A separate CDP will also be prepared for the Phase 2 undertaking due to work within 100 feet of the Temple Beth-el Cemetery. No impacts are anticipated to the cemetery internment areas.

The approved Additional Information Document for Phase 1 and Phase 2, including project plans, and detailed supporting information can be viewed on the project website <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/CentralAvenue>.

