

FHWA-Indiana Environmental Document
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION / ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM
 GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Road No./County:	Westchester-Liberty Trail/Porter
Designation Number(s):	1902832
Project Description/Termini:	Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3/The project consists of three segments. Segment 1 begins at the intersection of County Road (CR) 1100 N and CR 50 East (E)/5 th Street and continues approximately 0.45 mile east to a point approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Segment 2 starts at a point 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 East and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment to Laurel Creek Drive. Segment 3 begins where Segment 2 ends and continues east along Laurel Creek Drive for approximately 0.20 mile to the intersection with CR 100 E. Segment 3 then continues south approximately 0.05 mile along CR 100 E to the intersection with Rail Road.

	Categorical Exclusion, Level 2 – Required Signatories: INDOT DE and/or INDOT ESD
X	Categorical Exclusion, Level 3 – Required Signatories: INDOT ESD
	Categorical Exclusion, Level 4 – Required Signatories: INDOT ESD and FHWA
	Environmental Assessment (EA) – Required Signatories: INDOT ESD and FHWA
	Additional Investigation (AI) – The proposed action included a design change from the original approved environmental document. Required Signatories must include the appropriate environmental approval authority

Approval

N/A _____ INDOT DE Signature and Date	 July 14, 2023 _____ INDOT ESD Signature and Date
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N/A

 FHWA Signature and Date

Release for Public Involvement

N/A _____ INDOT DE Initials and Date	 January 26, 2023 _____ INDOT ESD Initials and Date
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Certification of Public Involvement

 _____ INDOT Consultant Services Signature and Date	5/17/2023
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INDOT DE/ESD Reviewer Signature and Date: _____
 7/14/23

Name and Organization of CE/EA Preparer: _____
 Brandon Miller (Lead) and Meghan Hinkle, American Structurepoint, Inc.

Note: Refer to the most current INDOT CE Manual, guidance language, and other ESD resources for further guidance regarding any section of this form.

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Part I – Public Involvement

Every Federal action requires some level of public involvement, providing for early and continuous opportunities throughout the project development process. **The level of public involvement should be commensurate with the proposed action.**

	Yes	No
Does the project have a historic bridge processed under the Historic Bridges PA*?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If No, then:		
Opportunity for a Public Hearing Required?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*A public hearing is required for all historic bridges processed under the Historic Bridges Programmatic Agreement between INDOT, FHWA, SHPO, and the ACHP.

Discuss what public involvement activities (legal notices, letters to affected property owners and residents (i.e. notice of entry), meetings, special purpose meetings, newspaper articles, etc.) have occurred for this project.

Notice of Entry letters were mailed to potentially affected property owners near the project area on May 18, 2020 and April 8, 2021 notifying them about the project and that individuals responsible for land surveying and field activities may be seen in the area. Sample copies of the Notice of Entry letters are included in Appendix G, G-1 to G-2.

The project met the minimum requirements described in the current *Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) Project Development Public Involvement Procedures Manual* which required the project sponsor to offer the public an opportunity to submit comments and/or request a public hearing. Therefore, a legal notice of planned improvement was published in the *Northwest Indiana Times* on February 15 and 22, 2023 (Appendix G, G-3 to G-7). The period for the public opportunity to submit comments and/or request a public hearing started on February 15, 2023 and was advertised to conclude on March 1, 2023. The legal notice was mailed to adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and the Tamarack Subdivision Homeowners Association on February 10, 2023 (Appendix G, G-8 to G-10). The Town of Chesterton also posted the legal notice and project information on their Facebook page. A project website at: <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt> was setup and included a project information packet (Appendix G, G-11 to G-18), the draft Categorical Exclusion (CE) document, project plan sheets, the legal notice, and a comment form. Additionally, the draft CE was made available for public review at the following locations:

- Chesterton Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
- Westchester Public Library, 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304

During the two-week comment period several comments were received to extend the comment period, therefore, the Town of Chesterton extended the comment period to March 15, 2023. During the four-week comment period, which concluded on March 15, 2023, a total of 82 comments were received from 53 people in the public and included several requests for a public hearing. All comments and concerns were coordinated with as they were received. The summary of comments received included concerns about decreasing property values due to a shared-use path being constructed through the Tamarack Subdivision; questions and concerns about the trees being removed for the project; questions of why the preferred alternative and alignment was selected; and concerns about the midblock crossing. All comments, coordination, and responses can be found in Appendix G, G-19 to G-273.

Due to the number of comments and requests for a public hearing, the Town of Chesterton scheduled a public hearing for the project. Therefore, a legal notice of public hearing announcing the April 19, 2023 public hearing was published in the *Northwest Indiana Times* on April 5 and 12, 2023 (Appendix G, G-274 to G-278). The comment period for the public hearing started on April 5, 2023 and concluded on May 5, 2023. The legal notice was mailed to adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and the Tamarack Subdivision Homeowners Association on April 3, 2023 (Appendix G, G-279 to G-281). Additionally, the legal notice was emailed to all those who had provided comments during the Opportunity for Comment or Request a Public Hearing (detailed above) on April 5, 2023 (Appendix G, G-282 to G-283), and the Town of Chesterton also posted the legal notice and project information on their Facebook page. The project website at: <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt> was updated and included a revised project information packet (Appendix G, G-284 to G-291), the draft CE document, project plan sheets, project exhibits, the legal notice, video presentation, and a comment form. Additionally, the CE was made available for public review at the following locations:

- Chesterton Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
- Westchester Public Library, 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304

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The public hearing was held on April 19, 2023 at 6pm CST at the Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue Chesterton, IN, 46304. The public hearing included playing the same video presentation that was posted to the website. This video presentation included discussion of the public comment period, the project purpose and need, the preferred and discarded alternatives, project details, and project funding (Appendix G, G-292 to G-321). Public hearing sign-in sheets were provided at the entrance and 47 people from the public were in attendance (Appendix G, G-322 to G-329). Also in attendance were the project team from American Structurepoint, Inc., representatives from the Town of Chesterton, and a representative from INDOT. One person provided a written comment at the hearing, and 21 people gave verbal comments (Appendix G, G-330 to G-332) which were transcribed by a stenographer (Appendix G, G-402 to G-490). During the four-week comment period, which concluded on May 5, 2023, an additional 14 comments were received (in addition to the 21 verbal comments and one written comment received at the public hearing). The summary of comments received included concerns about decreasing property values due to a shared-use path being constructed through the Tamarack Neighborhood; questions and concerns about the trees being removed for the project; questions of why the preferred alternative and alignment was selected; and concerns about the midblock crossing. All comments and responses can be found in Appendix G, G-333 to G-401.

The project received public involvement certification from INDOT on May 17, 2023 verifying that all public involvement requirements have been met. As a result of comments received, additional information has been added throughout this CE document post public involvement to provide additional clarity. However, the preferred alternative alignment has not been modified.

Public Controversy on Environmental Grounds

Discuss public controversy concerning community and/or natural resource impacts, including what is being done during the project to minimize impacts.

A total of 118 comments were received from the public between the opportunity to submit comments and/or request a public hearing period, the public hearing, and the public hearing comment period. Refer to the *Public Involvement* discussion above for specific appendix references to all comments and responses received. The reoccurring comments received included concerns about decreasing property values due to a shared-use path being constructed through the Tamarack Subdivision; questions of why the preferred alternative and alignment was selected; and concerns about the midblock crossing. In addition to the public involvement outreach that is discussed in the *Public Involvement* section of this CE above, the Town has also held several Town Council Meetings during the process. While these town council meetings occurred at their regularly scheduled time and were not exclusively about the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 project, all Town Council Meetings are open to the public to attend and the public at large. The April 10th and April 24th meetings minutes include public comments and concerns presented by the public on the proposed project. Documentation from the April 10th and April 24th Town Council meetings can be found on Appendix I, I-47 to I-56. Additionally, a response from the Chesterton Office of the Town Manager to the comments and concerns received during the April 10th Town Council Meeting can be found in Appendix I, I-57 to I-59. Although these meetings were not part of the federal undertaking and not official opportunities to comment for the project record, it was recognized that the Town of Chesterton took additional steps to ensure the public was engaged regarding the project and this information is being provided for the environmental record.

Several public comments were received during the official comment periods expressing concern of residential property values decreasing due to the construction of the shared-use path along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive through the Tamarack Subdivision. According to information located on the National Association of Realtors website (<https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>), property values will likely raise an average of 3%-5% with close accessibility to a park, trail, or greenway. This general guidance does not provide project specific data and American Structurepoint, Inc. further coordinated with right-of-way (ROW) specialists and a third-party ROW appraiser for additional information regarding these comments received. Based on coordination with the ROW specialists and appraiser, property values are determined by market data, and in the past, it has not been concluded that trails adjacent to residential properties decrease property values. Currently the trend of having trail accessibility along with accessibility to other outdoor recreational features has been an increased selling point in recently constructed or newer neighborhoods (Appendix I, I-34). One reason the preferred alternative was selected was implementing minimization measures during design to decrease the amount of new permanent ROW needed from residential property owners for the project. Additionally, due to the original project design and alignment implementing minimization measures and remaining entirely within Town owned ROW through the Tamarack Subdivision, no modifications to the original preferred alignment occurred based on these comments received. No new temporary or permanent ROW will be acquired from this community, and no impacts to property values are anticipated as a result of this project.

Several public comments were received questioning the preferred alignment verses the dismissed alternative alignment to follow CR 100 E. The alternative to follow along CR 100 E was dismissed for many reasons that were included in the response to comments and included in the public hearing video presentation. The preferred alternative was chosen because it minimizes the amount of new permanent ROW needed (maintaining a large portion of the trail alignment in Town of Chesterton land and ROW) and reduces the risks to pedestrians crossing CR 1100 N. This alternative also crosses into unincorporated Porter County. All public comments and responses can be found on Appendix G, G-19 to G-273 and G-333 to G-401, and the public hearing presentation slides can be found on Appendix G, G-292 to G-321. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E alternative, but the

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County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request (Appendix I, I-46). During town council meetings it was additionally asked by the public why the unincorporated land along CR 100 E could not be annexed or acquired by eminent domain by the Town of Chesterton. The Town Manager provided a response which noted the Town of Chesterton has always taken the position that annexation into the Town is voluntary. Therefore, forcible annexation of properties on CR 100 E was not considered (Appendix I, I-57). Because the Town determined the preferred alternative presented in this CE document is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County. However, several commenters at the hearing noted that they had discussed this alternative further with Porter County officials and noted County officials had indicated that there is an easement (ROW) available along CR 100 E that the Town of Chesterton can use. As part of the Town's evaluation process, ROW engineering has been completed. This included preliminary evaluation of the ROW for the CR 100 E alternative. Based on records reviewed, it has been determined to construct the trail on the CR 100 E alignment would require reacquisition of all land to the center to CR 100 E and, therefore, no existing ROWs (easements) are available for use. Advancement of the CR 100 E alternative would increase the right-of-way acquisition by approximately 50% for the project. These additional evaluations were completed to provide clarity and further information to the public on why the CR 100 E alternative was eliminated (Appendix G, G-313).

Several public comments were received questioning the reasoning and safety of the added midblock crossing proposed on CR 1100 N detailed in the preferred alternative discussion in this CE below. The midblock crossing reasoning was included in the response to comments and the public hearing presentation (Appendix G, G-292 to G-321). Mid-block crossings minimize risks to pedestrians when compared to traditional pedestrian crossings at intersections. On this project, the mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N was chosen because it minimizes the distance pedestrians have to travel to get across the roadway. Compared to the existing crossing of CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E which requires pedestrians to cross 48-feet in pavement width, the proposed mid-block crossing only requires pedestrians to cross 23-feet in pavement width, which is less than half the distance. Additionally, pedestrians do not have to watch for turning vehicles at the proposed mid-block crossings like they do at the intersection of CR 100 E where pedestrians would need to watch for right and left turning vehicles in addition to through traffic. The public also presented concerns regarding the location of the mid-block crossing noting that it is in a low lying area which rises upward in either direction (east/west) along CR 1100 N. The vehicle stopping sight distance at the mid-block crossing location on CR 1100 N was evaluated per INDOT requirements. The posted speed limit along CR 1100 N is 30 mph. Per the Indiana Design Manual (Indiana Design Manual Figure 42-1A), a 200-foot stopping sight distance is required for a 30 mph design speed. The hill to the west of the proposed mid-block crossing location is the closest to the crossing and is approximately 300 feet away from proposed mid-block crossing location. The hill to the east of the proposed mid-block crossing is more than 300 feet away. Therefore, the stopping sight distance to both the east and west of the proposed mid block crossing exceeds the minimum by 100 feet or more and adequate stopping sight distance is present at this location per INDOT Design Manual standards based on the posted speed limit. As noted in the Town Manager's response to concerns and questions there is an existing mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N along the Westchester Liberty Trail west of 11th Street and there have been no reported issues with the crossing (Appendix I, I-58). Please note that in the Town Manager's response the section of Westchester Liberty Trail is referred to as "Phase 2." This section is described and referred to as Phase 1 throughout this CE document. Furthermore, the proposed midblock crossing will include high visibility pavement markings, advanced warning signs, and push button activated flashing beacons to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadway. These measures have been implemented to minimize risks to motorists and trail users.

Several public comments were received questioning the amount tree clearing and if tree replanting will be occurring. The tree impacts, resource agency coordination that has occurred to date, and the consideration of tree replanting was included in the response to comments and included in the public hearing presentation. A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees will be cleared as a result of the project. Tree clearing is predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N. Terrestrial habitat includes grass, bushes, trees, etc. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was designed with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing, avoid clearing large trees, and minimize wetland impacts. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover and the existing tree line between the wooded area and property owners as large trees are preserved. Further, the proposed boardwalk is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and forest. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management for project impacts, including for tree clearing. The project impacts are discussed in further detail in Part III of this environmental document below. Live trees along Laurel Creek Drive that will be impacted as a result of this project will be relocated or replaced, if possible, at a 1:1 ratio. However, this is dependent on utility locations. This for consideration commitment has been added to this project. Additionally, the Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized. This firm project commitment has been added to this project. These steps have been taken to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to terrestrial habitat.

At this time there is still public opposition to the preferred alternative presented in this environmental document. As detailed above, steps have been implemented to further investigate, avoid, minimize, and mitigate public controversy. This includes completing

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additional coordination and research to obtain information on the preferred alternatives anticipated effects to property values; completing coordination and ROW research for the CR 100 E alternative; reviewing data – including line of sight information – on the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 E; and describing steps taken to avoid, minimize, and mitigate tree clearing impacts which included using a boardwalk to minimize tree clearing impacts, notifying the Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive once a landscaping plan is finalized (added as a firm project commitment), and considering relocating or replacement of impacted street trees along Laurel Creek Drive (added as a for consideration project commitment).

Part II – General Project Identification, Description, and Design Information

Sponsor of the Project: Town of Chesterton INDOT District: LaPorte

Local Name of the Facility: Westchester-Liberty Trail

Funding Source (mark all that apply): Federal State Local Other*

*If other is selected, please identify the funding source: _____

PURPOSE AND NEED:

The need should describe the specific transportation problem or deficiency that the project will address. The purpose should describe the goal or objective of the project. The solution to the traffic problem should NOT be discussed in this section.

Need:

The need for Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 project is evidenced by the current connectivity between the two existing Westchester-Liberty Trail corridor sections and existing sidewalks located in the northeast quadrant of the project area, along CR 1100 N and North CR 100 E. The existing project area is reliant on pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. This results in potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles between existing corridors of the Westchester-Liberty Trail. The first existing corridor section of the Westchester-Liberty Trail (WLT Phase 1) begins at the intersection of the Prairie Duneland Trail and 23rd Street, and extends south for approximately 1.0 mile before extending east along CR 1100 N for approximately 1.0 mile and terminating at the intersection with CR 50 E (also locally known as 5th Street) (Appendix I, I-30). The second existing corridor section of the Westchester-Liberty Trail (WLT Phase 2) begins at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road and extends east for approximately 0.30 mile before extending south along Keller Drive for approximately 0.30 mile and connecting to the Coffee Creek Preserve (Appendix I, I-30).

Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between WLT Phase 1 and WLT Phase 2, and the existing 8-foot-wide sidewalks located along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE):

County: Porter Municipality: Chesterton

Limits of Proposed Work: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 consists of three segments. Segment 1 begins at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E and continues approximately 0.45 mile east to a point approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Segment 2 starts at a point 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment to Laurel Creek Drive. Segment 3 begins where Segment 2 ends and continues east along Laurel Creek Drive for approximately 0.20 mile to the intersection with CR 100 E. Segment 3 then continues south approximately 0.05 mile along CR 100 E to the intersection with Rail Road.

Total Work Length: 0.99 Mile(s) Total Work Area: 1.84 Acre(s)

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Is an Interstate Access Document (IAD)¹ required?
 If yes, when did the FHWA provide a Determination of Engineering and Operational Acceptability?

Yes ¹	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date: _____	

¹If an IAD is required; a copy of the approved CE/EA document must be submitted to the FHWA with a request for final approval of the IAD.

Describe location of project including township, range, city, county, roads, etc. Existing conditions should include current conditions, current deficiencies, roadway description, surrounding features, etc. Preferred alternative should include the scope of work, anticipated impacts, and how the project will meet the Purpose and Need. Logical termini and independent utility also need discussed.

The Town of Chesterton and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) intend to proceed with the development of the Phase 3 of the Westchester-Liberty Trail.

Location:

The project is located in Chesterton, Westchester, and Liberty Townships, Porter County, Indiana. The project is more specifically located in the Chesterton United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map in Section 12, Township 36 North, and Range 6 West. The total length of the project is 0.99 mile. The project consists of three connected segments (Appendix B, B-3). The first segment (Segment 1) begins at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E and extends approximately 0.45 mile east along the north side of CR 1100 N, where an existing sidewalk begins. The second segment (Segment 2) exists between CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive, beginning 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment through a wooded area. The third segment (Segment 3) begins where Segment 2 ends, along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and extends east 0.20 mile to the intersection of CR 100 E and Laurel Creek Drive. Segment 3 then extends south approximately 0.05 mile along the west side of CR 100 E to the intersection with Rail Road, where WLT Phase 2 begins. Various maps, 2018 aerial photographs, and project area photographs can be referenced in Appendix B, B-1 to B-7.

Existing Conditions:

The existing Westchester-Liberty Trail (WLT) is an 8-foot-wide concrete shared-use path. WLT Phase 1 exists along the south side of CR 1100 N and terminates west of the project area at the intersection of CR 50 E and CR 1100 N. A CE document was approved for WLT Phase 1 (Des. No. 1382657) by INDOT Environmental Services on April 16, 2016. WLT Phase 2 exists along the south side of Rail Road and terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. There is no existing connection between WLT Phase 1 and WLT Phase 2. An existing 8-foot-wide concrete sidewalk exists along the north side of CR 1100 N, beginning at the intersection of CR 100 E and CR 1100 N and extends west approximately 0.04 mile before dead ending. An existing four-foot-wide concrete sidewalk exists along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. There also exists the Tamarack Subdivision Park, located 0.4 mile northwest of the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and Catkin Circle. Within the east side of the park, there exists a four-foot-wide gravel sidewalk. No additional sidewalks exist within the remaining areas of the project.

The existing typical roadway section of CR 1100 N consists of two, 11-foot-wide travel lanes (one in each direction) with no shoulders. The existing typical roadway section of Laurel Creek Drive is 30-feet wide, is bordered by curb and gutter, and by 10-foot-wide grass buffers and 4-foot-wide concrete sidewalks behind either curb line. Lane widths are generally 13-foot wide with one eastbound and westbound travel lane with on-street parking but there are no pavement markings on the street. The existing sidewalks along Laurel Creek Drive are not American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant. Specifically, the existing sidewalks do not include detectable warning surfaces on the curb ramps, the curb ramps exceed maximum allowable slope, do not provide adequate room for turning movements at the top of each curb ramp, and the sidewalks exceed the maximum allowable cross slopes. The existing typical roadway section of CR 100 E consists of two, 11-foot-wide travel lanes (one in each direction) with no shoulders.

There are two existing culverts which carry streams under CR 1100 N. Structure (STR) 101 is a 45-foot-long, 48-inch corrugated metal pipe (CMP). STR 101 carries Pope O'Connor Ditch under CR 1100 N, approximately 0.08 mile east of CR 50 E (Appendix B, B-15). STR 102 is a 45-foot-long, 30-inch CMP. STR 102 carries Unnamed Tributary (UNT) to Pope O'Connor Ditch under CR 1100 N, approximately 0.12 mile east of CR 50 E (Appendix B, B-15). Drainage along CR 1100 N is currently conveyed via roadside ditches (Appendix B, B-15 to B-16). Drainage along Laurel Creek Drive is conveyed via storm sewers (Appendix B, B-18).

The project area consists of wooded areas, with residential properties to the north of Laurel Creek Drive, and an institutional property to the north of CR 1100 N. Additionally, there are six wetlands (Wetlands A through F) located within the project area. Ground level photographs of the project area are included in Appendix B, B-4 to B-7.

Preferred Alternative:

Generally, the preferred alternative includes the construction of an 8-foot-wide shared-use path, connecting WLT Phase 1 to WLT Phase 2, and to existing 8-foot-wide sidewalks. For project plans, please see Appendix B, B-8 to B-27.

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Segment 1

A new paved shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of CR 1100 N, from the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E to the existing 8-foot-wide concrete sidewalk which begins approximately 250 feet west of CR 100 E (Appendix B, B-15 to B-16). There will be two crosswalks added in this segment. One will be located at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E to connect the new shared-use path to WLT Phase 1, and one will be a mid-block crosswalk (approximately 0.28 mile east of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E) added across CR 1100 N from the new shared-use path on the north side of CR 1100 N to Segment 2 of this project. The midblock crosswalk will cross 23-feet of roadway pavement and include high visibility pavement markings, advanced warning signs, and have push button activated flashing beacons to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadway. Additionally, signage with directional arrows will be added to the shared-use path to assist in directing traffic from Segment 1 to Segment 2. Two culvert pipe extensions (STR 101 and STR 102) will be necessary and consist of adding new pipes of the same size to the outlet of each structure. STR 101 would be extended five feet north and STR 102 would be extended three feet north under CR 1100 N, carrying streams Pope O'Connor Ditch and UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch, respectively. In the area of STR 101 and 102, the new shared-use path would be shifted closer to the roadway and a gabion basket retaining wall will be used to minimize stream and wetland impacts. This stretch of trail will be bordered by a guardrail to the south (between the trail and westbound travel lane of CR 1100 N) and a pedestrian handrail to the north (between the trail and the wetlands/stream) (Appendix B, B-15). Additionally, inlets, storm sewers, and driveway culverts will be installed as necessary to facilitate drainage along CR 1100 N. The new typical section of CR 1100 N will consist of two, 11-foot-wide travel lanes (one in each direction) with an 8-foot-wide grass buffer and the 8-foot-wide shared-use path along the northern side.

Segment 2

This segment would include construction of an 8-foot-wide boardwalk through portions of the forested area, between CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive, and includes a new stream crossing (Appendix B, B-17 to B-18). The boardwalk will include pan style footers which will be fully adjustable (up or down in height), will sit on the existing ground surface, and do not require excavation to install. This design minimizes excavation and disturbance to wetlands and trees. The boardwalk will have cable style railings and the deck material will be pressure treated lumber. A reinforced box culvert (STR 106) would be constructed where the new shared-use path crosses over UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch in the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive. Additionally, signage with directional arrows will be added to the shared-use path to assist in directing traffic from Segment 2 to Segment 3. The new shared-use path would then enter the Tamarack Subdivision Park and be constructed adjacent to the existing four-foot-wide gravel sidewalk (Appendix B, B-18).

Segment 3

The new paved shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive to CR 100 E, continue south along the west side of CR 100 E to the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road, and then would connect with WLT Phase 2 (Appendix B, B-18 to B-19). The existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with a new 8-foot-wide shared-use path, by widening towards the northern curb line. ADA-compliant curb ramps would be constructed at all intersections as needed. There would be four crosswalks added at the intersections of Laurel Creek Drive and Catkins Circle (two crossings), Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E, and CR 100 E and Rail Road. All crossing will have high visibility pavement markings and advanced pedestrian crossing signs to inform motorists of the crossing. Additionally, signage with directional arrows will be added to the shared-use path to assist in directing traffic from Segment 2 to Segment 3. The existing typical roadway pavement width of Laurel Creek Drive will remain the same. The south side of Laurel Creek Drive will remain the same consisting of an average 11-foot-wide grass buffer and a 4-foot-wide concrete sidewalk. The north side of Laurel Creek Drive will be reconstructed to include a 5 to 7-foot-wide grass buffer and the 8-foot-wide shared-use path. The existing typical roadway section of CR 100 E will remain the same consisting of two, 11-foot-wide travel lanes (one in each direction).

Segments 1 through 3

It is anticipated that Pope O'Connor Ditch will be permanently impacted due the installation of the STR 101 extension. UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch will be permanently impacted for the construction of the new shared-use path, the STR 102 extension, and the construction of STR 106. Additionally tree clearing and impacts to wetlands will occur. Please see Part III of this CE document below for specific details regarding environmental impacts. Avoidance and minimization of environmental impacts have been incorporated into the design to the maximum extent practical. This includes shifting Segment 1 towards CR 1100 N, using a retaining wall, and guardrail/handrail; utilizing boardwalk to minimize impacts to wetlands and trees within Segment 2; and widening towards the north curb line along Laurel Creek Road in Segment 3 to avoid need for ROW. However, total avoidance of impacts to streams, wetlands, and terrestrial habitats was not possible while still meeting the project's purpose and need. For more information about the project's anticipated impacts along with avoidance and minimization measures, please see the *Identification and Evaluation of Impacts* section of this document.

Approximately 1.60 acres of permanent ROW acquisition will be required for this project. Approximately 0.86 acre of reacquisition ROW will be required for this project. Since the release for public involvement, it has been determined that no temporary ROW is required. For additional details, see the *Right-of-Way* section of this CE document. It is anticipated that maintenance of traffic (MOT)

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will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. Additional details can be found in the *Maintenance of Traffic* section of this CE document.

The purpose and need has been refined since the early coordination letters were sent out (Appendix C, C-1 to C-3). American Structurepoint, Inc. has reviewed the decision-making process since the early coordination letters were sent out. Due to the change in the purpose and need, all of the documentation and decisions are still valid for studies completed as part of this document and no further analysis is needed.

This alternative has independent utility as it does not create the need for additional work and does not rely on any other project to meet the purpose and need. Therefore, it is a single and complete project. This project has logical termini because it begins and ends at existing shared-use trails, and the existing 8-foot-wide concrete sidewalk on north side of CR 1100 N approximately 0.04 mile west of the CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection.

The preferred alternative described above meets the objectives of the purpose and need for the project as it will reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between WLT Phase 1 and WLT Phase 2, and the sidewalks located along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E by separating them into a separate facility instead of sharing the same roadway.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Provide a header for each alternative. Describe all discarded alternatives, including the No Build Alternative. Explain why each discarded alternative was not selected. Make sure to state how each alternative meets or does not meet the Purpose and Need and why.

Do Nothing:

This alternative would not construct the shared-use path between WLT Phase 1, WLT Phase 2, and the existing sidewalk at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. No improvements to meet the project's purpose and need would be implemented. Bicyclists and pedestrians would still share the existing roadway with motor vehicles and maintain the same risk. While this alternative eliminates costs, the potential acquisition of adjacent ROW, and any environmental impacts, it would not address the objectives of the purpose and need, which is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

South along CR 100 E:

This alternative would construct a shared-use path along existing roadways. The shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of CR 1100 N between CR 50 E to the existing sidewalk approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E (as presented in the preferred alternative above). The shared-use path would then extend south along the west side of CR 100 E to the intersection with Rail Road. This alternative would meet the purpose and need of the project and minimize the total length of trail constructed as it is approximately 0.8 mile long compared to the 0.99 mi proposed under the preferred alternative. This alternative would require pedestrians to cross CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E. A cross walk at this location would be 48-feet in length, more than double that of the preferred mid-block crossing (23-feet in pavement width). Pedestrians crossing the road at this location would need to watch for traffic along CR 1100 N and also watch for turning vehicles from CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, increasing risks to pedestrians. Additionally, this alternative would require permanent ROW from an additional five residential parcels in unincorporated Porter County, which would increase the total permanent ROW approximately 50% for the project. The Town completed coordination with Porter County to determine if they would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route. However, the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request (Appendix I, I-46). Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County. This alternative increases risks to pedestrians crossing CR 1100 N, impacts more residential parcels, requires more ROW, and crosses into an unincorporated portion of Porter County. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

Bike Lane Alternative:

This alternative was evaluated based on comments received during public involvement and would construct a shared-use path between WLT Phase 1, WLT Phase 2, and the existing sidewalk at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Segment 1 and Segment 2 would be constructed as discussed in the preferred alternative above. Segment 3 would include restriping Laurel Creek Drive to include two four-foot-wide bike lanes along the east and west travel lanes from the end of Segment 2 to the intersection of CR 100 E. Bike traffic would then be directed via signage to use the bike lanes while pedestrian traffic would be directed to use the existing 4-ft sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive in the Tamarack Subdivision. The existing sidewalks along Laurel Creek Drive would remain for pedestrian use and not be impacted. From CR 100 E to Rail Road the shared-use path would then be constructed as presented in the preferred alternative. Bike traffic would merge from the bike lanes on Laurel Creek Drive to the shared-use path along CR 100 E at the intersection of the two roadways. Per recommendations from Federal Highway Administration, the minimum width of a separated bike lane against a curb and gutter section of roadway should be at least 4-feet-wide. Laurel Creek Drive is 30-foot-wide from back of

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curb to back of curb, is not striped with any lane markings, and has on-street parking. Restriping Laurel Creek Drive to include bike lanes would result in impacts to on-street parking. The Town does not want to remove on-street parking on this road; therefore, a separated bike lane cannot be constructed on this road to still maintain two travel lanes (one in each direction) and on-street parking without being widened. The existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive is not wide enough to allow multiple users to pass without stepping off the sidewalk into either private property on the north of the sidewalk, or the grassed buffer on the south of the sidewalk. Additionally, the existing sidewalk on the north side of Laurel Creek Drive is not ADA compliant as noted in the *Existing Conditions* discussion above. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

The No Build Alternative is not feasible, prudent or practicable because (Mark all that apply)

It would not correct existing capacity deficiencies;

It would not correct existing safety hazards;

It would not correct the existing roadway geometric deficiencies;

It would not correct existing deteriorated conditions and maintenance problems; or

It would result in serious impacts to the motoring public and general welfare of the economy.

Other (Describe): Does not meet the purpose and need to reduce potential conflicts.

X

ROADWAY CHARACTER: CR 1100 N

If the proposed action includes multiple roadways, complete and duplicate for each roadway.

Name of Roadway	<u>CR 1100 N</u>			
Functional Classification:	<u>Major Collector</u>			
Current ADT*:	<u>2,765</u>	<u>VPD (2021)</u>	Design Year ADT:	<u>2,765</u> <u>VPD (2041)</u>
Design Hour Volume (DHV):	<u>322</u>	Truck Percentage (%)	<u>N/A</u>	
Designed Speed (mph):	<u>30</u>	Legal Speed (mph):	<u>30</u>	

	Existing		Proposed	
Number of Lanes:	2		2	
Type of Lanes:	Travel		Travel	
Pavement Width:	22	ft.	22	ft.
Shoulder Width:	0	ft.	0	ft.
Median Width:	N/A	ft.	N/A	ft.
Sidewalk Width:	N/A	ft.	8 (8 N and 0 S)	ft.

Setting:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban	<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural
Topography:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Rolling	<input type="checkbox"/> Hilly

*Please note that the above traffic data was from the INDOT Traffic Count Database System (<https://indot.public.ms2soft.com/tcds/tsearch.asp?loc=Indot&mod>), which doesn't include future growth data. Therefore, it was assumed the traffic data would be staying the same.

ROADWAY CHARACTER: Laurel Creek Drive

If the proposed action includes multiple roadways, complete and duplicate for each roadway.

Name of Roadway	<u>Laurel Creek Drive</u>			
Functional Classification:	<u>Local</u>			
Current ADT*:	<u>N/A</u>		Design Year ADT:	<u>N/A</u>
Design Hour Volume (DHV)*:	<u>N/A</u>	Truck Percentage (%)	<u>N/A</u>	
Designed Speed (mph):	<u>20</u>	Legal Speed (mph):	<u>20</u>	

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	Existing	Proposed
Number of Lanes:	2	2
Type of Lanes:	Travel	Travel
Pavement Width:	30	30
Shoulder Width:	0	0
Median Width:	0	0
Sidewalk Width:	8 (4 N and 4 S)	12 (8 N and 4 S)

Setting: Urban Suburban Rural
 Topography: Level Rolling Hilly

*The roadway description for Laurel Creek Drive is provided as work is being performed adjacent to the roadway. However, as this is a local road and as work is not being completed on the existing roadway, traffic information is not available.

ROADWAY CHARACTER: CR 100 E

If the proposed action includes multiple roadways, complete and duplicate for each roadway.

Name of Roadway: CR 100 E
 Functional Classification: Minor Arterial
 Current ADT*: 5,586 VPD (2022) Design Year ADT: 5,586 VPD (2042)
 Design Hour Volume (DHV): 680 Truck Percentage (%): N/A
 Designed Speed (mph): 30 Legal Speed (mph): 30

	Existing	Proposed
Number of Lanes:	2	2
Type of Lanes:	Travel	Travel
Pavement Width:	22	22
Shoulder Width:	0	0
Median Width:	0	0
Sidewalk Width:	N/A	8 (8 W and 0 E)

Setting: Urban Suburban Rural
 Topography: Level Rolling Hilly

* Please note that the above traffic data was from the INDOT Traffic Count Database System (<https://indot.public.ms2soft.com/tcds/tsearch.asp?loc=Indot&mod>), which doesn't include future growth data. Therefore, it was assumed the traffic data would be staying the same.

BRIDGES AND/OR SMALL STRUCTURE(S):

If the proposed action includes multiple structures, complete and duplicate for each bridge and/or small structure. Include both existing and proposed bridge(s) and/or small structure(s) in this section.

Structure/NBI Number(s): N/A Sufficiency Rating: N/A
(Rating, Source of Information)

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	Existing	Proposed
Bridge/Structure Type:	N/A	N/A
Number of Spans:	N/A	N/A
Weight Restrictions:	N/A	N/A
Height Restrictions:	N/A	N/A
Curb to Curb Width:	N/A	N/A
Outside to Outside Width:	N/A	N/A
Shoulder Width:	N/A	N/A

Describe impacts and work involving bridge(s), culvert(s), pipe(s), and small structure(s). Provide details for small structure(s): structure number, type, size (length and dia.), location and impacts to water. Use a table if the number of small structures becomes large. If the table exceeds a complete page, put it in the appendix and summarize the information below with a citation to the table.

There are two culvert pipe extensions and one culvert installation associated with this project. All details are described in the table below:

Existing Structure Number	Existing Structure (Size and Material)	Existing Structure Length (feet)	Proposed Structure Number	Proposed Structure (Size and Material)	Proposed Structure Length (feet)	Proposed Work	Notes	Appendix
STR 101	48-inch CMP	45	STR 101	48-inch CMP	50	Pipe extension	STR 101 carries Pope O'Connor Ditch under CR 1100 N and is located 0.08 mile east of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E	Appendix B, B-15
STR 102	30-inch CMP	45	STR 102	30-inch CMP	48	Pipe extension	STR 102 carries UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch under CR 1100 N and is located 0.12 mile east of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E	Appendix B, B-15
N/A	N/A	N/A	STR 106	8 foot by 5 foot reinforced concrete box culvert	36	Culvert installation	STR 106 carries UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch under the new shared-use path and is located 0.13 mile east of CR 1100 N	Appendix B, B-17

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MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC (MOT) DURING CONSTRUCTION:

	Yes	No
Is a temporary bridge proposed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is a temporary roadway proposed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the project involve the use of a detour or require a ramp closure? (describe below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Provisions will be made for access by local traffic and so posted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Provisions will be made for through-traffic dependent businesses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Provisions will be made to accommodate any local special events or festivals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the proposed MOT substantially change the environmental consequences of the action?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is there substantial controversy associated with the proposed method for MOT?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the project require a sidewalk, curb ramp, and/or bicycle lane closure? (describe below)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provisions will be made for access by pedestrians and/or bicyclist and so posted (describe below).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discuss closures, detours, and/or facilities (if any) that will be provided for maintenance of traffic. Any known impacts from these temporary measures should be quantified to the extent possible, particularly with respect to properties such as Section 4(f) resources and wetlands. Discuss any pedestrian/bicycle closures. Any local concerns about access and traffic flow should be detailed as well.

The MOT for the project will require temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways and WLT Phase 2. Flagging will be utilized to provide roadway access for large construction vehicles (Appendix B, B-12 to B-13). Access shall be maintained to all residences and buildings throughout construction.

There will be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area (Appendix B, B-14). Signage and temporary curb ramps will be utilized for all pedestrian facility closures. The sidewalk located along CR 1100 N will remain open while the new shared-use path is constructed and connected to it. The end of WLT Phase 2, which dead ends at Rail Road, will be closed for approximately 5 days for the construction of an ADA-compliant curb ramp at the intersection of Rail Road and CR 100 E. As WLT Phase 2 also dead ends, there is no need to provide an additional route for pedestrians and/or bicyclists. There is also a sidewalk located along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive which will be closed for approximately 1 to 3 months for the removal and replacement of the sidewalk with the new shared-use path. An additional route will not be provided for pedestrians at this location as the sidewalk located to the south of Laurel Creek Drive will remain open and will provide access to all the facilities within the area. Additionally, crosswalk pavement markings for a pedestrian detour along Laurel Creek Drive will be utilized. Lastly, a portion of the gravel path located within the Tamarack Subdivision Park, will be closed temporarily for approximately 2 to 4 weeks for the construction of the new shared-use path. Access throughout the park will be maintained as the majority of the gravel path will be unaffected. Signage will be placed at all closures.

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

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST AND SCHEDULE:

Engineering: \$ 192,000* (2020*) Right-of-Way: \$ 150,000 (2023) Construction: \$ 1,600,000 (2023)

Anticipated Start Date of Construction: Spring 2024 (Fiscal Year 2023)

*PE funding was included in the 2020-2024 STIP and was expended in 2020. Therefore, the PE funding is not reflected in the current 2022-2026 STIP.

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RIGHT OF WAY:

Land Use Impacts	Amount (acres)		
	Permanent	Temporary	Reacquisition
Residential	0.43	0	0.32
Commercial	0.42	0	0.36
Agricultural	0	0	0
Forest	0.13	0	0
Wetlands	0.20	0	0
Other: Institutional (The River Church)	0.42	0	0.18
Other:	0	0	0
TOTAL	1.60	0	0.86

Describe both Permanent and Temporary right-of-way and describe their current use. Typical and Maximum right-of-way widths (existing and proposed) should also be discussed. Any advance acquisition, reacquisition or easements, either known or suspected, and their impacts on the environmental analysis should be discussed.

Within Segment 1, existing ROW extends to the edge of roadway along the north side of CR 1100 N. Within Segment 2, the existing ROW exists within a 60-ft wide corridor and land associated with the Tamarack Subdivision Park which are both owned by the Town of Chesterton. Within Segment 3, there is existing ROW along Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E, extending approximately 30 feet north and south, and 30 feet west, respectively, from the center of the roadways. Land use within the vicinity is primarily wooded with some residential and commercial areas along CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive. Additionally, there are wetlands located within Segment 1 along Pope O'Connor Ditch, and within Segment 2 throughout the wooded area.

The project requires approximately 1.60 acres of permanent ROW from commercial, residential, and institutional properties, wetlands, and forest along CR 1100 N, from wetlands within Segment 2, and from residential properties along Laurel Creek to construct the new shared-use path. The temporary ROW originally planned for this project is no longer required based on the project design being refined during the public involvement phase of this project. The project also requires the reacquisition of 0.86 acre of ROW from residential, commercial, and institutional properties.

If the scope of work or permanent or temporary ROW amounts change, the INDOT Environmental Services Division (ESD) and the INDOT District Environmental Section will be contacted immediately.

Part III – Identification and Evaluation of Impacts of the Proposed Action

SECTION A - EARLY COORDINATION:

List the date(s) coordination was sent and all resource agencies that were contacted as a part of the development of this Environmental Study. Also, include the date of their response or indicate that no response was received.

Early coordination letters were sent on February 3, 2021 (Appendix C, C-1 to C-3). After distribution of the early coordination letters, six entities were identified that were omitted from the distribution list and had not received coordination. Therefore, early coordination letters were also sent on February 10, 2021, April 16, 2021, April 30, 2021, January 19, 2022, and March 22, 2022.

Agency	Date Sent	Date Response Received	Appendix
United States Federal Highway Administration	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
United States Natural Resources Conservation Service	February 3, 2021	February 18, 2021	Appendix C, C-16
National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
United States Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A

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Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife	February 3, 2021	March 5, 2021	Appendix C, C-58 to C-62
Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Floodplain Administrator	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
INDOT, LaPorte District	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
INDOT, Environmental Services	February 3, 2021	February 5, 2021	Appendix C, C-4
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Porter County Highway Department	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Porter County Drainage Board	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Porter County Surveyor	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Porter County Sheriff	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Porter County Emergency Management	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Town of Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Chesterton MS4 Coordinator	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Duneland School Corporation	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Chesterton Fire Department	February 3, 2021	February 9, 2021	Appendix C, C-5
Chesterton Police Department	February 3, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Indiana Geological and Water Survey	February 10, 2021	February 10, 2021	Appendix C, C-13 to C-15
Indiana Department of Environmental Management	February 10, 2021	February 10, 2021	Appendix C, C-6 to C-10
The River Church	April 16, 2021	No Response Received	N/A
Indiana American Water Company	April 30, 2021	No Response Received	Appendix C, C-63
Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Office of Water Quality	January 19, 2022	February 3, 2022	Appendix C, C-11 to C-12
Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Lake Michigan Coastal Program	March 22, 2022	No Response Received	N/A

All applicable recommendations are included in the *Environmental Commitments* section of this CE document.

SECTION B – ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Streams, Rivers, Watercourses & Other Jurisdictional Features

- Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers
- State Natural, Scenic or Recreational Rivers
- Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) listed
- Outstanding Rivers List for Indiana
- Navigable Waterways

Presence

X

Impacts

Yes	No
X	

Total stream(s) in project area: 840 Linear feet Total impacted stream(s): 152.25 Linear feet

Stream Name	Classification	Total Size in Project Area (linear feet)	Impacted linear feet	Comments (i.e. location, flow direction, likely Water of the US, appendix reference)
Pope O'Connor Ditch	Riverine, Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Mud (R2UB3)	80	20.75	Pope O'Connor Ditch enters the project area at STR 101 along the south side of CR 1100 N, as noted above, and flows north for 80 linear feet. This stream is a County Legal Drain. Pope O'Connor Ditch would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US (Appendix F, F-15).
Unnamed Tributary to Pope	Riverine, Intermittent,	760	131.50	UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch enters the project area approximately 0.09 mile west of Catkin Circle and 0.01

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Stream Name	Classification	Total Size in Project Area (linear feet)	Impacted linear feet	Comments (i.e. location, flow direction, likely Water of the US, appendix reference)
O'Connor Ditch	Stream Bed, Mud (R4SB5)			mile north of Laurel Creek Drive and flows northwest for 510 linear feet before exiting the project area. UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch reenters the project area at STR 102 along the south side of CR 1100 N, as noted above. The streams flows northwest 250 feet and into Pope O'Connor Ditch. UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US (Appendix F, F-16).

Describe all streams, rivers, watercourses and other jurisdictional features adjacent or within the project area. Include whether or not impacts (both permanent and temporary) will occur to the features identified. Include if the streams or rivers are listed on any federal or state lists for Indiana. Include if features are likely subject to federal or state jurisdiction. Discuss measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate if impacts will occur.

Based on the desktop review, the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), and the Red Flag Investigation (RFI) report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), there are ten River and Stream segments within the 0.5 mile search radius. There are two stream segments, Pope O'Connor Ditch and UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch, within the project area. That number was confirmed by the site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc.

A *Waters of the US Wetland Delineation Report* was completed for the project on May 13, 2021. Please refer to Appendix F, F-1 to F-59 for excerpts from the *Waters of the US Wetland Delineation Report*. It was determined that two streams, Pope O'Connor Ditch and UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch, totaling 840 linear-feet (0.159 acre) were located within the investigated area and are anticipated to be jurisdictional Waters of the US. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) makes all final determinations regarding jurisdiction.

The Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers listing, State Natural Scenic and Recreational Rivers lists, Outstanding Rivers List, navigable waterways list, and National Rivers Inventory list were researched by American Structurepoint, Inc. to determine the possible presence of protected waterways in the project area. No listed waters were identified within or adjacent to the project area.

Pope O'Connor Ditch is listed as impaired for nutrient concentrations and Impaired Biotic Communities (IBC). Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to avoid further degradation to the stream.

It is anticipated that approximately 20.75 linear-feet of Pope O'Connor Ditch will be permanently impacted as a result of the installation of a five-foot-long culvert pipe extension (STR 101) under CR 1100 N as well as revetment riprap along the outlet for the construction of the new shared-use path. Temporary sandbag cofferdams and dewatering may be used during construction and may temporarily impact the stream.

It is anticipated that approximately 131.50 linear-feet of UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch will be permanently impacted as a result of the construction of the new shared-used path, as well as the installation of a three-foot-long culvert pipe extension (STR 102) under CR 1100 N, and the installation of a new 36-foot-long, reinforced box culvert (STR 106) with corresponding revetment riprap where the stream crosses under the new shared-use path within Segment 2. Temporary sandbag cofferdams and dewatering may be used during construction and temporarily impact the stream.

There are approximately 152.25 linear-feet of permanent impacts to streams anticipated for this project. The project includes all practical measures to minimize harm to streams; however, stream impacts could not be avoided due to the need to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between WLT Phase 1 and WLT Phase 2, and the sidewalks located along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. A Do Nothing alternative was considered which would eliminate stream impacts, but would not meet the purpose and need of this project. It is anticipated that the project will require the issuance of an IDEM Section 401 Regional General Permit (RGP) and a USACE Section 404 RGP. Mitigation will likely be required and will be determined during permitting. Additionally, as this project crosses Pope O'Connor Ditch, a Lake County Legal Drain, formal approval from the Lake County Drainage Board will be required.

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) automated response was received on February 10, 2021 with standard recommendations to avoid or minimize impacts to streams, rivers, and watercourses. Those recommendations include completing appropriate permitting and agency coordination prior to the disturbance of regulated resources (Appendix C, C-6 to C-10).

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The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)-Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) responded to early coordination on March 5, 2021 with recommendations to avoid and minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources. The response included recommendations regarding stream crossing design (Appendix C, C-58 to C-62).

All applicable recommendations are included in the *Environmental Commitments* section of this CE document.

Open Water Feature(s)	<u>Presence</u>	<u>Impacts</u>	
		Yes	No
Reservoirs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farm Ponds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retention/Detention Basin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storm Water Management Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Describe all open water feature(s) identified adjacent or within the project area. Include whether or not impacts (both permanent and temporary) will occur to the features identified. Include if features are likely subject to federal or state jurisdiction. Discuss measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate if impacts will occur.

Based on the desktop review, the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), there are seventeen open water features within the 0.5 mile search radius. There are no open water features within or adjacent to the project area, which was confirmed by the site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc. Therefore, no impacts are expected.

Wetlands	<u>Presence</u>	<u>Impacts</u>	
		Yes	No
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total wetland area: 0.87 Acre(s) Total wetland area impacted: 0.20 Acre(s)

(If a determination has not been made for non-isolated/isolated wetlands, fill in the total wetland area impacted above.)

Wetland No.	Classification	Total Size (Acres)	Impacted Acres	Comments (i.e. location, likely Water of the US, appendix reference)
Wetland A	Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Seasonally Flooded/Saturated (PEM1E)	0.11	0.03	Wetland A is an emergent wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N and west of Pope O'Connor Ditch. It is anticipated Wetland A would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US. (Appendix F, F-11)
Wetland B	Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded/Saturated (PFO1E)	0.23	0.08	Wetland B is a forested wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N and east of Pope O'Connor Ditch. It is anticipated Wetland B would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US. (Appendix F, F-12)
Wetland C	PFO1E	0.04	0.01	Wetland C is a forested wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N. It is anticipated Wetland C would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US. (Appendix F, F-12 to F-13)
Wetland D	PFO1E	0.18	0.03	Wetland D is a forested wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. It is anticipated Wetland D would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US. (Appendix F, F-13)
Wetland E	PFO1E	0.30	0.05	Wetland E is a forested wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. It is anticipated Wetland E would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US. (Appendix F, F-14)

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Wetland No.	Classification	Total Size (Acres)	Impacted Acres	Comments (i.e. location, likely Water of the US, appendix reference)
Wetland F	Palustrine, Scrub-shrub, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded/Saturated (PSS1E)	0.01	0	Wetland F is a scrub-shrub wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. It is anticipated Wetland F would be considered a jurisdictional water of the US. (Appendix F, F-14 to F-15)

Documentation

ESD Approval Dates

Wetlands (Mark all that apply)

- Wetland Determination
- Wetland Delineation
- USACE Isolated Waters Determination

X
X

N/A, LPA project
N/A, LPA project

Improvements that will not result in any wetland impacts are not practicable because such avoidance would result in (Mark all that apply and explain):

- Substantial adverse impacts to adjacent homes, business or other improved properties;
- Substantially increased project costs;
- Unique engineering, traffic, maintenance, or safety problems;
- Substantial adverse social, economic, or environmental impacts, or
- The project not meeting the identified needs.

X
X

Describe all wetlands identified adjacent or within the project area. Include whether or not impacts (both permanent and temporary) will occur to the features identified. Include if features are likely subject to federal or state jurisdiction. Discuss measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate if impacts will occur.

Based on the desktop review, the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), there are thirty-four wetlands within the 0.5 mile search radius. There are two wetlands adjacent to the project area. Six wetlands were confirmed by the site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc.

A *Waters of the U.S. Wetland Delineation Report* was completed for the project on May 13, 2021. Please refer to Appendix F, F-1 to F-59 for excerpts from the *Waters of the U.S. Wetland Delineation Report*. It was determined that six wetlands (Wetlands A through F), totaling approximately 0.87 acre, were located within the invested area. Wetlands A through F are anticipated to be jurisdictional Waters of the U.S. The USACE makes all final determinations regarding jurisdiction.

Wetland A is an emergent wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N and west of Pope O'Connor Ditch. The wetland is more specifically located 0.06 mile east of CR 50 E and extends east 0.03 mile. Wetland A was delineated for approximately 0.11 acre within the investigated area. Wetland A would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species. Approximately 0.03 acre of permanent impacts to Wetland A are anticipated for this project.

Wetland B is a forested wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N and east of Pope O'Connor Ditch. The wetland is more specifically located 0.10 mile east of CR 50 E and extends east 0.06 mile. Wetland B was delineated for approximately 0.23 acre within the investigated area. Wetland B would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species but has been manipulated due to the excavation of UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch and lacks the diversity to be considered higher quality. Approximately 0.08 acre of permanent impacts to Wetland B are anticipated for this project.

Wetland C is a forested wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N. The wetland is more specifically located 0.20 mile west of CR 100 E and extends east 0.02 mile. Wetland C was delineated for approximately 0.04 acre within the investigated area. Wetland C would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species; it is not considered a good wetland due to its proximity to a roadway. Approximately 0.01 acre of permanent impacts to Wetland C are anticipated for this project.

Wetland D is a forested wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. The wetland is more specifically located in a depressional area and begins just south of CR 1100 N and extends south 0.05 mile. Wetland D was delineated for approximately 0.18 acre within the investigated area. Wetland D would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species. Approximately 0.03 acre of permanent impacts to Wetland D are anticipated for this project.

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Wetland E is a forested wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. The wetland is more specifically located 0.08 mile south of CR 1100 N and extends south 0.05 mile. Wetland E was delineated for approximately 0.30 acre within the investigated area. Wetland E would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species. Approximately 0.05 acre of permanent impacts to Wetland E are anticipated for this project.

Wetland F is a scrub-shrub wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. The wetland is more specifically located 0.24 mile south of CR 1100 N and extends south 0.01 mile. Wetland F was delineated for approximately 0.01 acre within the investigated area. Wetland F would be considered a poor wetland due to the dominance of invasive species (*Phalaris arundinacea* and *Lythrum salicaria*). No permanent or temporary impacts to Wetland F are anticipated for this project.

There are a total of approximately 0.20 acre of permanent impacts to wetlands anticipated for this project. Impacts to Wetlands A through C are due to the construction of the shared-use path along CR 1100 N. Impacts to Wetlands D and E are due to the development of a boardwalk through the forested area between CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive. Mitigation will likely be required and will be determined during permitting.

The project includes all practical measures to minimize harm to wetlands; however, wetland impacts could not be avoided due to the need to construct a shared-use path to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between WLT Phase 1 and WLT Phase 2, and the sidewalks located along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This includes gabion baskets along Wetland B to eliminate the need for additional grading and side slopes, which would result in more extensive impacts to the wetland. A raised boardwalk is also being constructed within Segment 2 to further reduce harm to Wetlands D and E. A Do Nothing alternative was considered which would eliminate wetland impacts, but would not meet the purpose and need of this project. It is anticipated that the impacts to Wetlands A through E will require the issuance of an IDEM Section 401 WQC RGP and a USACE Section 404 RGP. The alternative South along CR 100 E would eliminate impacts to Wetlands D and E, however, it would have increased impacts to additional residences. This alternative would not completely avoid impacts to all wetlands. Constructing on the south side of CR 1100 N would impact several utilities and was not investigated in-depth.

The IDEM automated response was received on February 10, 2021 with standard recommendations to avoid or minimize impacts to wetlands. Those recommendations include completing appropriate permitting and agency coordination prior to the disturbance of regulated resources (Appendix C, C-6 to C-10).

The IDNR-DFW responded to early coordination on March 5, 2021 with recommendations to avoid or reduce impacts to wetland habitat. The response included recommendations regarding trail guidelines including the implementation of raised boardwalks and grass buffers (Appendix C, C-58 to C-62).

All applicable recommendations are included in the *Environmental Commitments* section of this CE document.

Terrestrial Habitat

Presence

Impacts

Yes

No

Total terrestrial habitat in project area: 2.52 Acre(s) Total tree clearing: 0.71 Acre(s)

Describe types of terrestrial habitat (i.e. forested, grassland, farmland, lawn, etc) adjacent or within the project area. Include whether or not impacts will occur to habitat identified. Include total terrestrial habitat impacted and total tree clearing that will occur. Discuss measure to avoid, minimize, and mitigate if impacts will occur.

Based on a desktop review, site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc., and the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), there is maintained grassy ROW along CR 1100 N, Laurel Creek Drive, CR 100 E, and Rail Road, as well as scrub-shrub and woody vegetation within the 0.26-mile-long area connecting CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive. Dominant tree species noted during the field investigation included black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), boxelder maple (*Acer negundo*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and black willow (*Salix nigra*). Dominant sapling and shrub species included green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), Tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*), mapleleaf viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), roughleaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*), boxelder maple (*Acer negundo*), northern spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*). Dominant herbaceous species included riverbank wild rye (*Elymus riparius*), reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), cat grass (*Dactylis glomerata*), cutleaf coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*), clustered black snakeroot (*Sanicula odorata*), lake sedge (*Carex lacustris*), Indian hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*), poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), broad-leaved enchanter's nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*), fowl mannagrass

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(*Glyceria striata*), bittersweet nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), and hairy crabgrass (*Digitaria sanguinalis*). Photos of the project area taken during the July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 site visits can be referenced in Appendix F, F-31 to F-58.

The project will impact a total of approximately 2.51 acres of terrestrial habitat due to the construction of the new shared-use path. It is anticipated that the clearing of approximately 0.71 acre of trees will be required for the development of the shared-use path throughout the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive. Of the 2.51 acre of terrestrial habitat impact, 1.60 acres is maintained ROW, 0.03 acre is emergent wetland, 0.17 acre is forested wetland, and 0.71 acre is trees. Tree removal will occur during bat inactive season (between October 1st and March 31st).

The IDNR-DFW responded to early coordination on March 5, 2021 with recommendations to avoid impacting riparian and urban tree habitat including mitigation guidelines for non-wetland forest, trail guidelines for alignment and construction, and revegetation (Appendix C, C-58 C-62).

The IDEM automated response was received on February 10, 2021 with standard recommendations to avoid or minimize impacts to terrestrial habitat. Those recommendations include completing appropriate permitting and agency coordination prior to the disturbance of regulated resources (Appendix C, C-6 to C-10).

The USFWS responded to early coordination on March 3, 2021 with recommendations to remove and replace non-native, invasive species with native species and to avoid the removal of large trees (Appendix C, C-17 to C-18).

All applicable recommendations are included in the *Environmental Commitments* section of this CE document.

Protected Species

Federally Listed Bats

Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) determination key completed Yes No
 Section 7 informal consultation completed (IpaC cannot be completed) Yes No
 Section 7 formal consultation Biological Assessment (BA) required Yes No

Determination Received for Listed Bats from USFWS: NE NLAA LAA

Other Species not included in IpaC

Additional federal species found in project area (based on IpaC species list) Yes No
 State species (not bird) found in project area (based upon consultation with IDNR) Yes No

Migratory Birds

Known usage or presence of birds (i.e. nests) Yes No
 State bird species based upon coordination with IDNR Yes No

Discuss IDNR coordination and species identified. Describe USFWS Section 7 consultation and determination received for Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat impacts. Discuss if other federally listed species were identified. If so, include consultation that has occurred and the determination that was received. Discuss if migratory birds have been observed and any impacts.

Based on a desktop review and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), completed by American Structurepoint, Inc. on May 7, 2021, the IDNR Porter County Endangered, Threatened and Rare (ETR) Species List has been checked. According to the IDNR-DFW early coordination response letter dated March 5, 2021 (Appendix C, C-58 to C-62), the Natural Heritage Program's Database has been checked and to date, no plant or animal species listed as state or federally threatened, endangered, or rare have been reported to occur in the project area. An INDOT 0.5-mile bat review occurred on June 25, 2020 and there were no records of bat captures, roosts, or hibernacula were noted within the project 0.5 mile radius.

Project information was submitted through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS's) Information for Planning and Consultation (IpaC) portal, and an official species list was generated (Appendix C, C-21 to C-35). The project is within the range of the federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis 19odalist*) and the federally threatened northern long-eared bat (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*). One other species was generated in the IpaC species list along with the Indiana bat and NLEB: the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). Currently, no guidance is available regarding the monarch butterfly; therefore, it is not covered by the effect finding. Refer to the paragraph below.

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The project qualified and completed *Limited Formal Programmatic Consultation* for the Indiana bat and NLEB due to tree clearing between 100 to 300 feet from existing roadway. A culvert inspection occurred on August 3, 2021 and no signs of bats or birds were found (Appendix C, C-19 to C-20). An effect determination key was completed on January 24, 2022, and based on the responses provided, the project was found to “may affect-likely to adversely affect” the Indiana bat and/or the NLEB (Appendix C, C-36 to C-49). Proposed impacts have been minimized and cannot be avoided due to the construction of the new shared-use path to meet the purpose and need of this project, which is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between WLT Phase 1 and WLT Phase 2, and the sidewalks located along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E.

INDOT verified the effect finding and submitted to USFWS on March 9, 2022. On March 15, 2022, USFWS concurred with the “may affect-likely to adversely affect” finding (Appendix C, C-50 to C-53). Four Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs) were included with the effect determination, including general, lighting, and tree removal AMMs. AMMs and/or commitments are included as firm commitments in the *Environmental Commitments* section of this document.

Additionally, a “Reinitiation Notice” is required if: more than 0.10 acre of suitable habitat is to be cleared; new information about listed species is encountered; the project is modified in a manner that causes an effect to the listed species; or a new species or critical habitat is listed that the project may affect. These requirements, and the Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs) from the Project Submittal Form, are included as firm commitments for this project.

INDOT shall satisfy the compensatory mitigation requirements of the formal consultation with USFWS through one of the conservation options outlined on page 41 of the May 20, 2016 *Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat and NLEB*. The amount to be paid to the Range-wide In-lieu Fee Program, to be administered by The Conservation Fund, shall be \$1,636.95. This amount was determined by the Habitat Block Method. The area of suitable habitat to be cleared, multiplied by the mitigation ratio for inactive season tree clearing for Porter County, and the compensatory price per acre; 0.10 acre X 1.75 X \$9,354.

On April 17, 2023 INDOT sent out updated information from USFWS regarding the elevated listing status of the NLEB from federally threatened to federally endangered. This project was included in the re-initiation documentation from USFWS due to receiving a “may affect-likely to adversely affect” determination under the previous coordination. USFWS has evaluated this project and it is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the NLEB, however, the documentation provided from USFWS must be included in this environmental document. Through additional coordination with INDOT, the USFWS amendment letter to the 2018 Programmatic BO, and the specific project listing is included in Appendix C, C-54 to C-57.

The official species list generated from IPaC indicated one other species present within the project area: monarch butterfly. The monarch butterfly is currently listed as a candidate species, and therefore, no further coordination is necessary. USFWS responded to early coordination on March 3, 2021 and did not state any concerns regarding the Indiana bat, NLEB, or the monarch butterfly.

As part of the Official Species List, USFWS now indicates migratory birds that are of particular concern either because they occur on the USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC) list or warrant special attention in your project location (Appendix C, C-28 to C-29). The list indicates birds that may be in the range of the project but are not guaranteed to be present. American Structurepoint, Inc. reviewed the E-bird data mapping tool for the species listed on August 25, 2022. No species listed by the USFWS have been identified by the general public and added to the E-bird data mapping tool within the project area. IDNR-DFW did not indicate any migratory birds as being reported to occur in the project vicinity (Appendix C, C-58 to C-62). Based on the review of the E-bird data mapping tool and the correspondence from IDNR-DFW, no impacts are expected to migratory birds as a result of this project.

This precludes the need for further consultation on this project as required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as amended. If new information on endangered species at the site becomes available, or if the project plans are changed. USFWS will be contacted for consultation.

Geological and Mineral Resources

- Project located within the Indiana Karst Region
- Karst features identified within or adjacent to the project area
- Oil/gas or exploration/abandoned wells identified in the project area

Yes

No
X
X
X

Date Karst Evaluation reviewed by INDOT EWPO (if applicable): N/A

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Discuss if project is located in the Indiana Karst Region and if any karst features have been identified in the project area (from RFI). Discuss response received from IGWS coordination. Discuss if any mines, oil/gas, or exploration/abandoned wells were identified and if impacts will occur. Include discussion of karst study/report was completed and results. (Karst investigation must comply with the current Protection of Karst Features during Planning and Construction guidance and coordinated and reviewed by INDOT EWPO)

Based on a desktop review and the Indiana Karst Region map, the project is located outside the designated Indiana Karst Region as outlined in the most current *Protection of Karst Features during Project Development and Construction*. According to the topographic map of the project area (Appendix B, B-2) and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), there are no karst features identified within or adjacent to the project area. In early coordination response dated February 10, 2021, the Indiana Geological and Water Survey (IGWS) did not indicate that karst features exist in the project area (Appendix C, C-13 to C-15). The response indicated high liquefaction potential and a floodway as potential geological hazards, as well as a moderate potential for bedrock resource and a low potential for sand and gravel resource. The features will not be affected because the depth of excavation (5 feet) will not be deep enough to encounter these resources. Response from IGWS has been communicated with the designer on September 8, 2021. No impacts are expected.

SECTION C – OTHER RESOURCES

Drinking Water Resources

- Wellhead Protection Area(s)
- Source Water Protection Area(s)
- Water Well(s)
- Urbanized Area Boundary
- Public Water System(s)

Presence

X
X
X
X

Impacts

Yes	No
	X
	X
	X
	X

- Is the project located in the St. Joseph Sole Source Aquifer (SSA):
- If Yes, is the FHWA/EPA SSA MOU Applicable?
- If Yes, is a Groundwater Assessment Required?

Yes	No
	X

Check the appropriate boxes and discuss each topic below. Provide details about impacts and summarize resource-specific coordination responses and any mitigation commitments. Reference responses in the Appendix.

The project is located in Porter County, which is not located within the area of the St. Joseph Sole Source Aquifer, the only legally designated sole source aquifer in the state of Indiana. Therefore, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/EPA/INDOT Sole Source Aquifer Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is not applicable to this project, a detailed groundwater assessment is not needed, and no impacts are expected.

The IDEM's Wellhead Proximity Determinator website (<http://www.in.gov/idem/cleanwater/pages/wellhead/>) was accessed on January 4, 2022 by American Structurepoint, Inc. This project is not located within a Wellhead Protection Area; however, the project is located within a Source Water Area. In an early coordination letter dated February 3, 2022, IDEM stated that the project is located within a Source Water Area and listed one Public Water Supply System (PWSS) that could potentially be affected by the project (Appendix C, C-11 to C-12). Indiana American Water responded to early coordination on May 4, 2021 stating that they do not anticipate the project impacting the source water or related facilities (Appendix C, C-63). Therefore, no impacts are expected.

The IDNR Water Well Record Database website (<https://www.in.gov/dnr/water/3595.htm>) was accessed on January 4, 2022 by American Structurepoint, Inc. There are four unconsolidated wells located within or adjacent to the project area along CR 1100 N. Based on the site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc., there are no wells located within the project area. Therefore, no impacts are expected. Should it be determined during the ROW phase that these wells will be affected, a cost to cure will likely be included in the appraisal to restore the wells.

Based on a desktop review by American Structurepoint, Inc. and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), this project is located in an Urban Area Boundary (UAB). An early coordination letter was sent on February 3, 2021 to the Chesterton MS4 Coordinator. The MS4 coordinator did not respond within the 30-day time frame. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Based on a desktop review, site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc., the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), this project is located where there is a public water system. The public water system will not be affected based upon the current plans and the scope of the project. Early coordination letters were sent on May 4, 2021 to Indiana American Water Company, in which they stated they do not anticipate the project impacting the source water or related facilities (Appendix C, C-63). Therefore, no impacts are expected.

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Floodplains

- Project located within a regulated floodplain
- Longitudinal encroachment
- Transverse encroachment
- Homes located in floodplain within 1000' up/downstream from project

Presence

X
X

Impacts

Yes	No
X	
X	

If applicable, indicate the Floodplain Level?

Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 Level 5

Use the IDNR Floodway Information Portal to help determine potential impacts. Include floodplain map in appendix. Discuss impacts according to the classification system. If encroachment on a flood plain will occur, coordinate with the Local Flood Plain Administrator during design to insure consistency with the local flood plain planning.

Based on a desktop review of The IDNR Indiana Floodway Information Portal website (<https://indnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=05026dabc2e8461983e196d56a213c1e>) on January 4, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc., and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), this project is located in a regulatory floodplain as determined from approved IDNR floodplain maps (Appendix F, F-60). An early coordination letter was sent on February 3, 2021 to the local Floodplain Administrator. The Floodplain Administrator did not respond within the 30-day time frame. This project qualifies as a Category 3 per the current INDOT CE Manual, which states that for projects involving modifications to existing drainage structures, which may affect flood heights and flood limits, an analysis may be needed to determine the effect of the modifications. Calculations will be made during permitting to determine any changes in capacity of existing structures and an inspection of the floodplain will be made to determine whether any expected increase in flood heights could result in substantial damage not expected under current conditions.

The modifications to drainage structures included in this project will likely result in an insubstantial change in their capacity to carry flood water. This change could cause a minimal increase in flood heights and flood limits. These minimal increases will not result in any substantial adverse impacts on the natural and beneficial floodplain values; they will not result in substantial change in flood risks or damage; and they do not have substantial potential for interruption or termination of emergency service or emergency routes; therefore, it has been determined that this encroachment is not substantial.

In an early coordination response dated March 5, 2021, the IDNR-DFW stated that formal approval for construction in a floodway under the Flood Control Act (IC 14-28-1) will be required for this project (Appendix C, C-58 to C-62).

Farmland

- Agricultural Lands
- Prime Farmland (per NRCS)

Presence

Impacts

Yes	No

Total Points (from Section VII of CPA-106/AD-1006*) _____

**If 160 or greater, see CE Manual for guidance.*

Discuss existing farmland resources in the project area, impacts that will occur to farmland, and mitigation and minimization measures considered.

Based on a desktop review, site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc., and the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), there is no land that meets the definition of farmland under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) within or adjacent to the project area. The requirements of the FPPA do not apply to this project; therefore, no impacts are expected. An early coordination letter was sent on February 3, 2021 to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which stated there will be no conversion of prime farmland (Appendix C, C-16).

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SECTION D – CULTURAL RESOURCES

Minor Projects PA	Category(ies) and Type(s) Category B, Type 8	INDOT Approval Date(s) May 26, 2021	N/A
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Full 106 Effect Finding

 No Historic Properties Affected No Adverse Effect Adverse Effect
Eligible and/or Listed Resources Present

 NRHP Building/Site/District(s) Archaeology NRHP Bridge(s)
Documentation Prepared (mark all that apply)

APE, Eligibility and Effect Determination	<input type="checkbox"/>	
800.11 Documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Historic Properties Report or Short Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Archaeological Records Check and Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Archaeological Phase Ia Survey Report	X	
Archaeological Phase Ic Survey Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	

ESD Approval Date(s)
SHPO Approval Date(s)

May 26, 2021	N/A

 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
MOA Signature Dates (List all signatories)

If the project falls under the MPPA, describe the category(ies) that the project falls under and any approval dates. If the project requires full Section 106, use the headings provided. The completion of the Section 106 process requires that a Legal Notice be published in local newspapers. Please indicate the publication date, name of the paper(s) and the comment period deadline. Include any further Section 106 work which must be completed at a later date, such as mitigation from a MOA or avoidance commitments.

On May 26, 2021, the INDOT Cultural Resource Office (CRO) determined that this project falls within the guidelines of Category B, Type 8 under the Minor Projects Programmatic Agreement (Appendix D, D-1 to D-3). Category B-8 covers "construction of pedestrian facilities, including trails, multi-use paths, greenways, and associated minor activities." As the project does not occur in previously disturbed soils, an archaeological survey was completed on April 12, 2021. The Phase Ia Archaeological Reconnaissance found no cultural materials or deposits within the survey area (Appendix D, D-4 to D-11). No further consultation is required. This completes the Section 106 process and the responsibilities of the FHWA under Section 106 have been fulfilled.

SECTION E – SECTION 4(f) RESOURCES/ SECTION 6(f) RESOURCES

	<u>Presence</u>	<u>Use</u>	
		Yes	No
Parks and Other Recreational Land			
Publicly owned park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publicly owned recreation area	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (school, state/national forest, bikeway, etc.)	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges			
National Wildlife Refuge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
National Natural Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Wildlife Area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Nature Preserve	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic Properties			
Site eligible and/or listed on the NRHP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Evaluations Prepared

Programmatic Section 4(f)
 "De minimis" Impact
 Individual Section 4(f)
 Any exception included in 23 CFR 774.13

X

Discuss Programmatic Section 4(f) and "de minimis" Section 4(f) impacts in the discussion below. Individual Section 4(f) documentation must be included in the appendix and summarized below. Discuss proposed alternatives that satisfy the requirements of Section 4(f). FHWA has identified various exceptions to the requirement for Section 4(f) approval. Refer to 23 CFR § 774.13 - Exceptions.

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the use of certain public and historic lands for federally funded transportation facilities unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. The law applies to significant publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges, and National Register for Historical Places (NRHP) eligible or listed historic properties regardless of ownership. Lands subject to this law are considered Section 4(f) resources.

Based on a desktop review, the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), there are ten potential Section 4(f) resources located within the 0.5 mile search radius. According to additional research and by the site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint Inc., there are four Section 4(f) resources located within or adjacent to the project area.

WLT Phase 1

WLT Phase 1 is an existing trail corridor section that serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. This section ends along the south side of CR 1100 N, at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E. The new shared-use path will be constructed beginning in the northeast quadrant of the intersection between CR 1100 N and CR 50 E. In order to provide connectivity between WLT Phase 1 and the new shared-use path, crosswalks will be added at the intersection. Therefore, WLT Phase 1 will not be closed for any time during the construction of the new shared-use path. Additionally, as WLT Phase 1 is already owned by the Town of Chesterton, none of the permanent ROW will be purchased adjacent to or within WLT Phase 1. Therefore, no use is expected.

WLT Phase 2

WLT Phase 2 is an existing trail corridor section that serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. This section ends along the south side of Rail Road, at the intersection of Rail Road and CR 100 E. In order to provide connectivity between WLT Phase 2 and the new shared-use path, a new ADA-compliant curb ramp will be installed to WLT Phase 2 at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. For this reason, WLT Phase 2 will be temporarily impacted and closed for approximately 5 days during construction. During the remainder of construction, WLT Phase 2 will be unaffected by the installation of the new shared-use path. Additionally, as WLT Phase 2 is already owned by the Town of Chesterton, none of the permanent ROW will be purchased adjacent to or within WLT Phase 2.

Although the development of the new shared-use path will require temporary closure of a portion of WLT Phase 2, the installation of the new ADA-compliant curb ramp will result in connectivity between WLT Phase 2 and the new shared-use path. Therefore, the scope of work concerning the installation of the ADA-compliant curb ramp at WLT Phase 2 would be considered a transportation enhancement activity and constitutes a no use under Section 4(f). INDOT concurred with pursuing the designation of transportation enhancement on February 3, 2022 from the official with jurisdiction (OWJ) (Appendix I, I-31 to I-32).

Tamarack Subdivision Park

Tamarack Subdivision Park is an existing publicly-owned park and serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. The Tamarack Subdivision Park is located north of Laurel Creek Drive, as described above. There is a four-foot-wide gravel path along the eastern edge of the park that will be temporarily impacted for the construction of the new shared-use path. The Tamarack Subdivision Park will be temporarily impacted and a portion of the gravel path will be closed for approximately 2 to 4 weeks during construction; however, the park will still be accessible and open to the public during this time. Additionally, as the Tamarack Subdivision Park is already owned by the Town of Chesterton, none of the permanent ROW will be purchased adjacent to or within the park.

Although the development of the new shared-use path will require temporary closure of the gravel path within the Tamarack Subdivision Park, the installation of the new shared-use path will result in connectivity between WLT Phase 1 and WLT Phase 2 to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Therefore, the scope of work concerning the installation of the new shared-use path within the Tamarack Subdivision Park would be considered a transportation enhancement activity and constitutes a no use under Section 4(f). INDOT concurred with pursuing the designation of transportation enhancement on February 3, 2022 from the OWJ (Appendix I, I-31 to I-32).

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Dunes-Kankakee Trail

The Dunes-Kankakee Trail is a planned trail that will serve as a general resource to the public and would be a Section 4(f) resource. The Dunes-Kankakee Trail will be located to the east of the project area, as described above, and would connect to WLT Phase 2 near the intersection Rail Road and SR 49. As the planned trail is located outside of the construction limits, it is not anticipated to be impacted by this project; therefore, no use expected.

WLT Phase 2 and Tamarack Subdivision Park

In a letter dated February 15, 2022 (Appendix I, I-28 to I-30), the Chesterton Town Manager, the OWJ, agreed that the area of the new trail connection between the proposed shared-use path and the gravel path within the Tamarack Subdivision Park is used for recreational purposes and would qualify for protection under Section 4(f). Additionally, they agreed that the area in which the ADA-compliant curb ramp will be installed along the WLT Phase 2 is used for recreational purposes and would qualify for protection under Section 4(f).

Land from a Section 4(f) resource may be used directly by permanent or temporary occupancy or indirectly through temporary use. However, there are uses of Section 4(f) properties that are exempt from Section 4(f) approval under 23 CFR 774.13. This includes transportation enhancement activities, transportation alternatives project, and mitigation activities under 23 CFR 774.13(g) that meet the conditions listed below:

- 1) The use of the Section 4(f) property is solely for the purpose of preserving or enhancing an activity, feature, or attribute that qualifies the property for Section 4(f) protection; and
- 2) The OWJs over the Section 4(f) resource agrees in writing to paragraph (g)(1) of this section.

In a letter dated February 15, 2022 (Appendix I, I-28 to I-30), the Chesterton Town Manager, the OWJ, agreed that (1) the scope of work concerning the new trail connection described above would be considered a transportation enhancement activity and the use of the Section 4(f) property is solely for the purpose of preserving or enhancing an activity, feature, or attribute that qualifies the property for Section 4(f) protection; and (2) that the project will not adversely affect the recreational activities, features, and attributes that qualify the Tamarack Subdivision Park and the WLT Phase 2 for protection under Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act.

Although the project would “use” the Section 4(f) property, it is considered a transportation enhancement activity that is considered exempt from the requirement of Section 4(f) approval under 23 CFR 774.13(g) because it meets conditions (1) and (2) noted above. Because this project meets the requirements of a transportation enhancement activity under 23 CFR 774.13(g), no further Section 4(f) evaluation for either the Tamarack Subdivision Park or the WLT Phase 2 are required.

Section 6(f) Involvement

Section 6(f) Property

Presence

Use

Yes

No

Discuss Section 6(f) resources present or not present. Discuss if any conversion would occur as a result of this project. If conversion will occur, discuss the conversion approval.

The US Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 established the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF), which was created to preserve, develop, and assure accessibility to outdoor recreation resources. Section 6(f) of this Act prohibits conversion of lands purchased with LWCF monies to a non-recreation use.

A review of Section 6(f) properties on the INDOT ESD website revealed a total of 31 properties in Porter County (Appendix I, I-33). None of these properties are located within or adjacent to project area. Therefore, there will be no impacts to Section 6(f) resources.

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SECTION F – Air Quality

STIP/TIP and Conformity Status of the Project

Is the project in the most current STIP/TIP? Yes No
 Is the project located in an MPO Area? Yes No
 Is the project in an air quality non-attainment or maintenance area? Yes No
 If Yes, then:
 Is the project in the most current MPO TIP? Yes No
 Is the project exempt from conformity? Yes No
 If No, then:
 Is the project in the Transportation Plan (TP)? Yes No
 Is a hot spot analysis required (CO/PM)? Yes No

Yes	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Location in STIP: Appendix C, NIRPC, Page 1
 Name of MPO (if applicable): Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)
 Location in TIP (if applicable): Page 51

Level of MSAT Analysis required?

Level 1a Level 1b Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 Level 5

Describe if the project is listed in the STIP and if it is in a TIP. Describe the attainment status of the county(ies) where the project is located. Indicate whether the project is exempt from a conformity determination. If the project is not exempt, include information about the TP and TIP. Describe if a hot spot analysis is required and the MSAT Level.

This project is included in the FY 2022-2026 NIRPC Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (Appendix H, H-5). The project is part of the FY 2022-2026 NIRPC TIP which has been directly incorporated into the FY 2022-2026 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in Appendix C - NIRPC. The approval pages directly incorporating the NIRPC TIP into the STIP are located in Appendix H, H-1 to H-4. Since the FY 2022-2026 NIRPC TIP and FY 2022-2026 STIP Appendix C – NIRPC pages are identical, only one copy is included in Appendix H.

This project is located in Porter County, which is currently a maintenance area for 8-Hour Ozone, according to the IDEM Office of Air Quality's list of Current Status and Nonattainment History (https://www.in.gov/idem/airquality/files/nonattainment_county_list.pdf). This project has been identified as being exempt from air quality analysis in accordance with 40 CFR Part 93.126 and this project is not a project of air quality concern (40 CFR 93.126). Therefore, the project will have no significant impact on air quality.

This project is of a type qualifying as a categorical exclusion (Group 1) under 23 CFR 771.117(c), or exempt under the Clean Air Act conformity rule under 40 CFR 93.126, and as such, a Mobile Source Air Toxics analysis is not required.

SECTION G - NOISE

Noise

Is a noise analysis required in accordance with FHWA regulations and INDOT's traffic noise policy? Yes No

Date Noise Analysis was approved/technically sufficient by INDOT ESD: _____

Describe if the project is a Type I or Type III project. If it is a Type I project, describe the studies completed to date and if noise impacts were identified. If noise impacts were identified, describe if abatement is feasible and reasonable and include a statement of likelihood.

This project is a Type III project. In accordance with 23 CFR 772 and the current INDOT Traffic Noise Analysis Procedure, this action does not require a formal noise analysis.

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SECTION H – COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Regional, Community & Neighborhood Factors

- Will the proposed action comply with the local/regional development patterns for the area?
- Will the proposed action result in substantial impacts to community cohesion?
- Will the proposed action result in substantial impacts to local tax base or property values?
- Will construction activities impact community events (festivals, fairs, etc.)?
- Does the community have an approved transition plan?
- If No, are steps being made to advance the community's transition plan?
- Does the project comply with the transition plan? (explain in the discussion below)

Yes	No
X	
	X
	X
	X
X	
X	

Discuss how the project complies with the area's local/regional development patterns; whether the project will impact community cohesion; and impact community events. Discuss how the project conforms with the ADA Transition Plan.

Social and Economic Effects

The proposed project will construct an 8-foot-wide shared-use path along CR 1100 N, through Tamarack Subdivision Park, and along Laurel Creek Drive increasing the availability of recreational facilities in the project area. The project will positively impact community cohesion by improving access to facilities like Tamarack Subdivision Park, Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, the Middle School, connecting WLT Phase 1 to WLT Phase 2, and connecting the new shared-use path to existing sidewalks. The proposed project would also add ADA-compliant facilities throughout the project area, which increases non-motorized accessibility. Therefore, this project will be a net benefit for the community.

Traffic is expected to be maintained along the existing roadway during construction. The only potential impacts to motor traffic would be the result of temporary lane closures or restrictions for road markings at trail crossings. However, access shall be maintained to all residences, school, and businesses throughout construction and consideration shall be given to community events. Further, according to the Town of Chesterton website (<https://www.chestertonin.org/>), there are currently no planned town events during construction. Further, most planned events in previous years were located in the Chesterton Town Hall, which will not be impacted by this project. Emergency service providers and school district official will be notified of any closures during construction.

The Town of Chesterton's *Comprehensive Plan 2010* notes neighborhoods and activity centers will be connected through local streets, sidewalks, and trails (Appendix I, I-9 to I-15). Thus, the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 project meets the town's current Comprehensive Plan. The WLT connection was identified many years ago, and the vision for this connection was to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to downtown Chesterton and the existing surrounding trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail connection planning and funding was pursued (Appendix I, I-35 to I-45). Further, as the Westchester-Liberty Trail is identified as a High Priority Corridor in the NIRPC's *Greenways and Blueways 2020 Regional Plan, Priority Trail Corridors Map* (Appendix I, I-18), it is considered an area with a need for pedestrian facilities. Additionally, the NIRPC *2050 Plan* indicated the need to finish the multi-use trail network across the communities in Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties, and indicated that gaps in the pedestrian infrastructure network are a critically important issue as it makes pedestrian travel unsafe (Appendix I, I-16). Thus, the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 also meets the meets the NIRPC *2050 Plan* (Appendix I, I-17). Additionally, the City of Chesterton has identified in their *Comprehensive Plan 2010* the intent to continue the Westchester-Liberty Trail to the east to eventually tie into the proposed Dunes-Kankakee Trail (Appendix I, I-9 to I-15), which would exist on a north-south alignment across Porter County and would provide further connections within the multi-use trail network.

Transition Plan

The *2010 Chesterton, Indiana Comprehensive Plan* serves as the Town of Chesterton's ADA Transition Plan, which was approved by the Town on December 6, 2010. This proposed project serves to meet the various needs and action items, such as connectivity and accessibility, as outlined in the approved plan. A copy of the transition plan (partial) and approval is contained in Appendix I, I-9 to I-15.

Public Facilities and Services

Discuss what public facilities and services are present in the project area and impacts (such as MOT) that will occur to them. Include how the impacts have been minimized and what coordination has occurred. Some examples of public facilities and services include health facilities, educational facilities, public and private utilities, emergency services, religious institutions, airports, transportation or public pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Based on a desktop review, the 2018 aerial map of the project area (Appendix B, B-3), and the RFI report (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9), there are three religious facilities, one cemetery, two schools, three recreational facilities, six pipelines, one railroad, six trails, and one managed land located within the 0.5 search mile radius of the project. There is one religious facility, The River Church, adjacent to the

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project area. Two pipeline segments, associated with Northern Indiana Public Service Co. and Marathon Pipe Line Co., are located within the project area. That number was confirmed by the site visits on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 by American Structurepoint, Inc. There will be no impacts to the pipeline segments. ROW will be acquired from the River Church, as noted in the ROW table above.

An early coordination letter was sent to Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department, and Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, Duneland School Corporation, Porter County Highway Department, Porter County Sheriff, Porter County Emergency Management Agency, Chesterton Fire Department, and Chesterton Police Department on February 3, 2021, and the River Church on April 16, 2021. The Chesterton Fire Department responded on February 9, 2021 stating they did not anticipate any issues associated with the project (Appendix C, C-5). No other facilities responded to early coordination within the 30-day time frame.

Currently, four communications companies (Northwestern Indiana Telephone Company, Calumet Communications, MCI, and AT&T Distribution), one water company (Indiana American Water – Northwest), one electric and gas company (NIPSCO Electric – Valparaiso), and two pipeline companies (Marathon and Wolverine Pipeline), provide services to residences and businesses within the project area. Coordination with these utility companies to identify potential conflicts and relocation of the appropriate facilities, if needed, has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. Based on the projects minimum depth of excavation, no impacts to the pipelines are anticipated.

The existing residential mailboxes along Laurel Creek Drive are located at the roadway curb line. No impacts are expected to the existing mailboxes, however, if they are impacted, they will be replaced in kind and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Sprinkler lines are not permitted in Town owned ROW. However, if a sprinkler line is encountered during construction, the contractor will coordinate with the Town of Chesterton and the affected property owner to mitigate for impacts to the sprinkler line. This has been added as a firm commitment to the project.

It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to notify The River Church, school corporations, and emergency services at least two weeks prior to any construction that would block or limit access.

Since the proposed project would not change the existing grade, no utility relocation, including overhead electric lines or phone lines along CR 1100 N, is anticipated. All applicable recommendations are included in the *Environmental Commitments* section of this CE document.

Environmental Justice (EJ) (Presidential EO 12898)

During the development of the project were EJ issues identified?

Yes	No
X	
X	

Does the project require an EJ analysis?

If YES, then:

Are any EJ populations located within the project area?

X	
	X

Will the project result in adversely high and disproportionate impacts to EJ populations?

Indicate if EJ issues were identified during project development. If an EJ analysis was not required, discuss why. If an EJ analysis was required, describe how the EJ population was identified. Include if the project has a disproportionately high or adverse effect on EJ populations and explain your reasoning. If yes, describe actions to avoid, minimize and mitigate these effects.

Under FHWA Order 6640.23A, FHWA and the project sponsor, as a recipient of funding from FHWA, are responsible to ensure that their programs, policies, and activities do not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority or low-income populations. Per the current INDOT Categorical Exclusion Manual, and Environmental Justice (EJ) Analysis is required for any project that has two or more relocations or 0.5 acre of additional permanent ROW. The project will require 1.60 acres of additional permanent ROW and no relocations. Therefore, an EJ Analysis is required.

Potential EJ impacts are detected by locating minority and low-income populations relative to a reference population to determine if populations of EJ concern exist and whether there could be disproportionately high and adverse impacts to them. The reference population may be a county, city or town, and is called the community of comparison (COC). In this project, the COC is the combined data from Census Tracts 501.04 and 502.03. The community that overlaps the project area is called the affected community (AC). In this project, the ACs are Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04 (AC-1) and Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03 (AC-2). An AC has a population of concern for EJ if the population is more than 50% minority or low-income or if the low-income or minority population is 125% of the COC. Data from the 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates was obtained from the US Census Bureau Website (<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>) for low-income and minority populations on May 5, 2022 by American Structurepoint, Inc. The data collected for minority and low-income populations within the AC are summarized in the below table.

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Table: Minority and Low-Income Data (2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)			
	COC	AC-1	AC-2
	Census Tracts 501.04 and 502.03	Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04	Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03
Percent Minority	12.70%	25.29%	10.48%
125% of COC	15.88%	AC > 125% COC	AC < 125% COC
EJ Population of Concern		Yes	No
Percent Low-Income	6.93%	3.70%	14.11%
125% of COC	8.66%	AC < 125% COC	AC > 125% COC
EJ Population of Concern		No	Yes

AC-1, Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04 has a percent minority of 25.29%, which is below 50% but is above the 125% COC threshold. AC-2, Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03 has a percent minority of 10.48%, which is below 50% and is below the 125% COC threshold. Therefore, AC-1 has a minority population of EJ concern.

AC-1, Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04 has a percent low-income of 3.70%, which is below 50% and is below the 125% COC threshold. AC-2, Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03 has a percent low-income of 14.11%, which is below 50% but is above the 125% COC threshold. Therefore, AC-2 has a low-income population of EJ concern.

The proposed project will reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles for both EJ and non-EJ populations. Further, this project will increase pedestrian access throughout the area and is a net benefit to all users, including EJ populations. The proposed project will not disrupt community cohesion nor create a physical barrier. Based upon the scope of the proposed project, the identified populations will not experience a disproportionately high and adverse impact from the project. This project is acquiring 1.60 acres of new permanent ROW and 0.006 acre of temporary ROW for the construction of the new shared-use path. A Do Nothing alternative was considered which would eliminate all impact to EJ populations, but would not address the objectives of the purpose and need of this project, which is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles. Additionally, an alternative was considered which would construct a shared-used path along existing roadways. The shared-use path would have been constructed along the north side of CR 1100 N between CR 50 E to the existing sidewalk approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. The shared-use path would then extend south along the west side of CR 100 E to the intersection with Rail Road. This alternative would meet the purpose and need of the project but would increase ROW impacts to residential and commercial properties, and thus increase impacts to potential EJ populations, and would extend beyond the limits of the Town of Chesterton and into an unincorporated portion of Porter County.

On July 28, 2022, INDOT-ESD reviewed the project information along with the EJ Analysis for the project (Appendix I, I-19 to I-27). With the information provided, the project may require minimal ROW, require no relocations, and would not disrupt community cohesion or create a physical barrier. With the information provided, INDOT-ESD would not consider the impacts associated with this project as causing a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority and/or low-income populations of EJ concern relative to non-EJ populations in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23a. No further EJ Analysis is required.

Relocation of People, Businesses or Farms

Will the proposed action result in the relocation of people, businesses or farms?
Is a BIS or CSRS required?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Number of relocations: Residences: 0 Businesses: 0 Farms: 0 Other: 0

Discuss any relocations that will occur due to the project. If a BIS or CSRS is required, discuss the results in the discussion below.

No relocations of people, businesses, or farms will take place as a result of this project.

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SECTION I – HAZARDOUS MATERIALS & REGULATED SUBSTANCES

Hazardous Materials & Regulated Substances (Mark all that apply)

- Red Flag Investigation (RFI)
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (Phase I ESA)
- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (Phase II ESA)
- Design/Specifications for Remediation required?

Documentation

X

Date RFI concurrence by INDOT SAM (if applicable): May 12, 2021

Include a summary of the potential hazardous material concerns found during review. Discuss in depth sites found within, directly adjacent to, or ones that could impact the project area. Refer to current INDOT SAM guidance. If additional documentation (special provisions, pay quantities, etc.) will be needed, include in discussion. Include applicable commitments.

Based on a review of GIS and available public records, the RFI was completed by American Structurepoint, Inc. on May 7, 2021 and INDOT SAM provided their concurrence on May 12, 2021 (Appendix E, E-1 to E-9). One RCRA Generator/TSD, four underground storage tanks (USTs), one leaking underground storage tank (LUST), two institutional controls, and two NPDES facilities are located within 0.5 mile of the project area. None of the hazmat sites identified will impact the project. Further investigation for hazardous material concerns is not required at this time.

Part IV – Permits and Commitments

PERMITS CHECKLIST

Permits (mark all that apply)

Likely Required

Army Corps of Engineers (404/Section10 Permit)

Nationwide Permit (NWP)	
Regional General Permit (RGP)	X
Individual Permit (IP)	
Other	

IN Department of Environmental Management (401/Rule 5)

Nationwide Permit (NWP)	
Regional General Permit (RGP)	X
Individual Permit (IP)	
Isolated Wetlands	
Rule 5	
Other	

IN Department of Natural Resources

Construction in a Floodway	X
Navigable Waterway Permit	
Other	

Mitigation Required

US Coast Guard Section 9 Bridge Permit	
Others (Please discuss in the discussion below)	X

List the permits likely required for the project and summarize why the permits are needed, including permits designated as "Other."

Due to impacts to wetlands and streams, a Section 401 RGP from IDEM and a Section 404 RGP from the USACE are anticipated for impacts to waters of the US. Due to total permanent impacts, compensatory mitigation is likely required.

The project is crossing Pope O'Connor Ditch, which is a Porter County regulated drain, and will require formal approval from the Porter County Drainage Board.

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The project occurs within a 100-year floodplain; therefore, a formal application for a CIF permit from the IDNR is required pursuant to the Flood Control Act (IC-14-28-1).

Applicable recommendations provided by resource agencies are included in the *Environmental Commitments* section of this CE document. If permits are found to be necessary, the conditions of the permit will be requirements of the project and will supersede these recommendations.

It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to identify and obtain all required permits.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

List all commitments and include the name of agency/organization requesting/requiring the commitment(s). Listed commitments should be numbered.

Firm:

- 1) If the scope of work or permanent or temporary ROW amounts change, the INDOT ESD and the INDOT District Environmental Section will be contacted immediately. (INDOT ESD and INDOT District)
- 2) It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to notify The River Church, school corporations, and emergency services at least two weeks prior to any construction that would block or limit access. (INDOT ESD)
- 3) General AMM 1: Ensure all operators, employees, and contractors working in areas of known or presumed bat habitat are aware of FHWA/FRA/FTA (Transportation Agencies) environmental commitments, including all applicable AMMs. (USFWS)
- 4) Lighting AMM 1: Direct temporary lighting away from suitable habitat during the active season. (USFWS)
- 5) Tree Removal AMM 3: Ensure tree removal is limited to that specified in project plans and ensure that contractors understand clearing limits and how they are marked in the field (e.g., install bright colored flagging/fencing prior to any tree clearing to ensure contractors stay within clearing limits). (USFWS)
- 6) Tree Removal AMM 1: Modify all phases/aspects of the project (e.g., temporary work areas, alignments) to avoid tree removal. (USFWS)
- 7) Pope O'Connor Ditch is listed as impaired for nutrient concentrations and Impaired Biotic Communities (IBC). Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to avoid further degradation to the stream. (INDOT SAM)
- 8) A "Reinitiation Notice" is required if: more than 0.10 acre of suitable habitat is to be cleared; new information about listed species is encountered; the project is modified in a manner that causes an effect to the listed species; or a new species or critical habitat is listed that the project may affect. (USFWS)
- 9) Wetland F and the portions of Wetlands A through E that will not be impacted shall be labeled on the plans as "Do Not Disturb" and shall be demarcated in the field prior to construction. (INDOT ESD)
- 10) The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized. (INDOT ESD)
- 11) The existing mailboxes are located at the roadway curb line. No impacts are expected to the existing mailboxes, however, if they are impacted, they will be replaced in kind. (INDOT ESD)
- 12) If a sprinkler line is encountered during construction, the contractor will coordinate with the Town of Chesterton and the affected property owner to mitigate for impacts to the sprinkler line. (INDOT ESD)

For Further Consideration:

- 13) Live trees along Laurel Creek Drive that will be impacted as a result of this project will be relocated or replaced, if possible, at a 1:1 ratio. (INDOT ESD)
- 14) For purposes of maintaining fish and wildlife passage through a crossing structure, the Environmental Unit recommends bridges rather than culverts and bottomless culverts rather than box or pipe culverts. Multiple culverts or culverts with multiple openings are not recommended. These types of structures are often problematic for fish and wildlife passage as they tend to accumulate debris and become blocked. If box and pipe culverts are used, the culvert bottom should be sumped a minimum of 6" (or 20% of the culvert height or diameter, whichever is greater up to a maximum of 2') below the stream bed elevation. Sumping is not required for bridges or three-sided culverts. Crossings must span the entire channel width (a minimum of 1.2 times the OHWM width). (IDNR)
- 15) There are a number of techniques and materials for incorporating wildlife passage into the design of a crossing structure. Coordination with a Regional Environmental Biologist to address wildlife passage issues before submitting a permit application (if required) is encouraged to avoid delays in the permitting process. The following links are good resources to consider in the design of stream crossing structures to maintain fish and wildlife passage: <http://www.fs.fed.us/wildlifecrossings/library/>, https://roadecology.ucdavis.edu/files/content/projects/DOT-FHWA_Wildlife_Crossing_Structures_Handbook.pdf, http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/nsaec/fishxing/aop_pdfs.html, <https://www.fhwa.do.gov/engineering/hydraulics/pubs/11008/hif11008.pdf> (IDNR)

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- 16) If tree removal is needed, the Division of Fish & Wildlife recommends avoiding removing urban trees to the greatest extent possible and replacing trees that must be removed. Street trees are important to fish and wildlife resources in urban areas. Indiana's street trees also provide millions of dollars of tangible benefits to Indiana communities by their presence in the urban environment. Their shade and beauty contribute to the quality of life. They provide significant increases in real estate values, create attractive settings for commercial businesses, and improve community neighborhood appeal. Trees decrease energy consumption by providing shade and acting as windbreaks. They reduce water treatment costs and impede soil erosion by slowing the runoff of stormwater. Trees also cool the air temperature, cleanse pollutant from the air, and produce oxygen while absorbing carbon dioxide. Trees are an integral component of the urban environment. Proactively managing and maintaining a street tree population will ultimately maximize the benefits afforded by their aesthetic and ecological functions. The following links give a good overview of the benefits of a street tree program and how to select the right species to avoid the negative impacts of non-native invasive species such as the common and popular Bradford pear: <https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/3605.htm> > Community & Urban Forestry > Tree Species Lists. (IDNR)
- 17) Impacts to non-wetland forest of one (1) acre or more should be mitigated at a minimum 2:1 ratio. If less than one acre of non-wetland forest is removed in a rural setting, replacement should be at a 1:1 ratio based on area. Impacts to non-wetland forest under one (1) acre in an urban setting should be mitigated by planting five trees, at least 2 inches in diameter-at-breast height (dbh), for each tree which is removed that is 10" dbh or greater (5:1 mitigation based on the number of large trees) or by using the 1:1 replacement ratio based on area depending on the type of habitat impacted (individual canopy tree removal in an urban streetscape or park-like environment versus removal of habitat supporting a tree canopy, woody understory, and herbaceous layer). Impacts under 0.10 acre in an urban area may still involve the replacement of large diameter trees but typically do not require any additional mitigation or additional plantings beyond seeding and stabilizing disturbed areas. There are exceptions for high quality habitat sites however. (IDNR)
- 18) Place the trail in or adjacent to existing ROW where possible to minimize significant impacts to natural resource habitat. Also, utilize previously disturbed or degraded areas. Align the trail along or near existing man-made edges or areas that have the potential to be restored or enhanced by trail construction (i.e. railroad corridors), rather than routing the trail through previously undisturbed areas. (IDNR)
- 19) When designing or constructing a trail, disturb as narrow an area as possible to help minimize negative impacts. Where significant impacts to fish, wildlife, or botanical resources are likely due to the trail's width, reduce the width to help avoid those impacts. ADA accessibility standards allow departures from the standards under certain conditions, including substantial harm to natural features, habitat, or vegetation (see <http://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/1500/outdoor-rule.pdf>, Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas). (IDNR)
- 20) Do not focus only on the direct impact of the trail's width; also consider the trail's impact to the surrounding habitat. Trails can fragment larger habitat areas and reduce the overall usefulness of the site to fish, wildlife, or botanical resources (1 large habitat block is better than 2 small habitat blocks). Trails can cause significant impacts to forested areas, riparian forested corridors along creeks and rivers, and wetland areas. They also may cause sediment and erosion issues or introduce human disturbance into fairly isolated areas containing wildlife habitat. (IDNR)
- 21) Avoid unnecessary stream crossings. Instead, make use of or modify existing stream crossings or avoid crossing the stream altogether. Where stream crossings are unavoidable, pedestrian bridges with supports/abutments placed no less than 10 feet landward from the tops of the banks on each side of the waterway are recommended. Alternatively, a three-sided culvert may be used. Three-sided culverts should be oversized to allow terrestrial wildlife movement along the creek on unsubmerged dry land at normal water levels. Box-culvert or pipe-culvert crossings are not recommended. (IDNR)
- 22) Trails designed to follow a stream's course must be placed outside the stream's forested riparian buffer. Also, do not place the trail along the tops of the banks of a forested creek. Avoid perpendicular fragmentation of riparian areas (streamside habitat). Where the stream has little or no forested riparian buffer, the trail should be no closer than 15 feet from the tops of the banks. (IDNR)
- 23) Avoid elements identified in the Natural Heritage Database; trails may negatively affect species that require specific natural conditions (vegetation, light levels, moisture, etc.) that are altered as a result of trail construction. Rare and high quality habitats, and wildlife habitats that possess high wildlife abundance and diversity, should be avoided by placing the trail around the habitat and screening it from the trail and trail users with a buffer of native vegetation or another method as discussed below. Wetlands and karst features are but two examples of areas to avoid. (IDNR)
- 24) Raised boardwalks should be constructed in wet areas or near wetlands (trails through wetlands are not recommended). A material such as composite decking should be used rather than treated wood which can leach elements toxic to aquatic life. (IDNR)
- 25) Screen wildlife habitat from the trail corridor. Vegetation, topography, and fences can help reduce the impact of noise and line of site disturbances of trail users on wildlife. Walls can create wildlife movement barriers and potential impacts must be considered. Native grass buffers (2 to 3 feet tall) are recommended along the edge of trails near habitat such as wetlands. (IDNR)
- 26) Lighting should only be used when absolutely necessary. Lighting in forested areas and along creeks, streams, and rivers should be the lowest intensity feasible and shielded to cast light on the path and not diffused into the surroundings to avoid disturbing wildlife circadian rhythms and disorienting night-migrating birds. (IDNR)

Indiana Department of Transportation

County Porter

Route CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive

Des. No. 1902832

- 27) Any plantings in the riparian areas should be locally native species, not exotic species or horticultural varieties (e.g. "Autumn Blaze" Red Maple). A list of appropriate native woody and herbaceous vegetation can be provided upon request. (IDNR)
- 28) Trail surfaces can have negative effects on surrounding natural areas and deter movement of some species across the trail. Some surface materials are more environmentally acceptable than others, such as mulch and mown grass which should be considered as the first options. Asphalt is not recommended as a trail surface in the floodway. The conventional maintenance for aging asphalt is to seal it with a blacktop or asphalt sealer. Research has shown that as these sealers break down over time, they move into the aquatic environment and are highly toxic to aquatic life. If asphalt is used, then asphalt sealer should not be used for long-term maintenance and repair of the asphalt trail surface. In previously disturbed areas, concrete is an acceptable surface material, and porous concrete is preferred wherever it can be used. (IDNR)
- 29) Shoulders should be constructed using unconsolidated materials where possible. In some situations, solid shoulders are necessary. In those cases, shoulders should be constructed using porous concrete. (IDNR)
- 30) Trails that highlight natural resources should skirt the resource and utilize "pulloffs" at specific sites instead of letting the entire trail and traffic disturb the resource. (IDNR)
- 31) Do not work in the waterway from April 1 through June 30 without the prior written approval of the Division of Fish and Wildlife. (IDNR)
- 32) Do not cut any trees suitable for Indiana bat or NLEB roosting (greater than 5 inches dbh, living or dead, with loose hanging bark, or with cracks, crevices, or cavities) from April 1 through September 30. (IDNR)
- 33) Do not construct any temporary runarounds, access bridges, causeways, cofferdams, diversions, or pumparounds. (IDNR)
- 34) Use minimum average 6 inch graded riprap stone extended below the normal water level to provide habitat for aquatic organisms in the voids. (IDNR)
- 35) The crossing over Pope O'Connor Ditch along the north side of CR 1100 N could likely be completed as an extension or modification of the existing structure. The modified crossing structure, and any bank stabilization under or around the structure, must not create conditions that are less favorable for wildlife passage when compared to existing conditions. Upgrading wildlife passage for modified structures is recommended whenever possible to improve wildlife/vehicle safety. (IDNR)
- 36) If the structure must be replaced, then upgrading wildlife passage must be included as part of the Construction in a Floodway permit application. All new structures proposed in areas where no crossing has previously existed (west side of Tamarack Subdivision) must incorporate White-tailed deer passage into the design of the structure if a Construction in a Floodway permit is required. Minimum structure dimensions for white-tailed deer passage are 20 feet of width clearance (overall size of the structure span) and eight feet of height clearance measured from the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) to the low chord elevation. (IDNR)
- 37) Bank lines must be restored within structures to allow for wildlife passage above the OHWM. (IDNR)
- 38) All wildlife passage designs must include a smooth level pathway a minimum of 1-2 feet in width composed of natural substrate (soil, sand, gravel, etc.) or compacted aggregate fill over riprap (#2, #53, #73, etc.) tied into existing elevations both upstream and downstream. Crossings must maintain the natural stream substrate within the structure (natural stream substrate must be replaced in sumped box and pipe culverts up to the existing flowline). Scour protection at the inlet and outlet must not extend above the existing flowline elevation. Stream depth, channel width and water velocities in the crossing structure during low-flow conditions must approximate those in the natural stream channel. (IDNR)
- 39) If there are non-native invasive shrubs within the woodlands, such as bush honeysuckles (*Lonicera spp.*), multi-flora rose, buckthorn, and/or autumn olive, we recommend that they be removed and replaced with native species that will be beneficial to wildlife. (USFWS)
- 40) The removal of large trees within this are should be avoided to the extent possible; large trees lost to the project should be replaced along the edge of the new trail. (USFWS)

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Categorical Exclusion Level Thresholds

	PCE	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4 ¹
Section 106	Falls within guidelines of Minor Projects PA	“No Historic Properties Affected”	“No Adverse Effect”	-	“Adverse Effect” Or Historic Bridge involvement ²
Stream Impacts³	No construction in waterways or water bodies	< 300 linear feet of stream impacts	≥ 300 linear feet of stream impacts	-	USACE Individual 404 Permit ⁴
Wetland Impacts³	No adverse impacts to wetlands	< 0.1 acre	-	< 1.0 acre	≥ 1.0 acre
Right-of-way⁵	Property acquisition for preservation only or none	< 0.5 acre	≥ 0.5 acre	-	-
Relocations⁶	None	-	-	< 5	≥ 5
Threatened/Endangered Species (Species Specific Programmatic for Indiana bat & northern long eared bat)*	“No Effect”, “Not likely to Adversely Affect” (With select AMMs ⁷)	“Not likely to Adversely Affect” (With any AMMs or commitments)	-	“Likely to Adversely Affect”	Project does not fall under Species Specific Programmatic ⁸
Threatened/Endangered Species (Any other species)*	Falls within guidelines of USFWS 2013 Interim Policy or “No Effect”	“Not likely to Adversely Affect”	-	-	“Likely to Adversely Affect”
Environmental Justice	No disproportionately high and adverse impacts	-	-	-	Potential ⁹
Sole Source Aquifer	No Detailed Groundwater Assessment	-	-	-	Detailed Groundwater Assessment
Floodplain	No Substantial Impacts	-	-	-	Substantial Impacts
Section 4(f) Impacts	None	-	-	-	Any ¹⁰
Section 6(f) Impacts	None	-	-	-	Any
Permanent Traffic Alteration	None	-	-	-	Any
Noise Analysis Required	No	-	-	-	Yes
Air Quality Analysis Required	No	-	-	-	Yes ¹¹
Approval Level	Concurrence by DE or ESD	DE or ESD	DE or ESD	DE and/or ESD	DE and/or ESD; and FHWA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Env. (DE) • Env. Serv. Div. (ESD) • FHWA 					

¹ Coordinate with INDOT Environmental Services Division. INDOT will then coordinate with the appropriate FHWA Environmental Specialist.

² Any involvement with a bridge processed under the Historic Bridge Programmatic Agreement.

³ Total permanent impacts to streams (linear feet) and wetlands (acres).

⁴ US Army Corps of Engineers Individual 404 Permit

⁵ Total permanent and temporary right-of-way. This does not include reacquisition of existing apparent right-of-way.

⁶ If any relocations are within an area with a known or suspected Environmental Justice (EJ) or disadvantaged population, or has greater than 5 relocations, a conversation with FHWA, through INDOT ESD, is needed to confirm NEPA classification and outreach plan for the project.

⁷ Avoidance and Mitigation Measures (AMMs) determined by the IPAC determination key to be required that are not tree AMMs, bridge AMMs, or structure AMMs.

⁸ Projects that do not fall under a Species Specific Programmatic and results in a “Likely to Adversely Affect”. Other findings can be processed as a lower-level CE.

⁹ Potential for causing a disproportionately high and adverse impact.

¹⁰ Section 4(f) use resulting in an Individual, Programmatic, or *de minimis* evaluation. The only exception is a *de minimis* evaluation for historic properties (Effective January 2, 2020). If a historic property *de minimis* and no other use, mark the *None* column.

¹¹ Hot Spot Analysis and/or MSAT Quantitative Emission Analysis.

* Includes the threatened/endangered species critical habitat

Note: Substantial public or agency controversy may require a higher-level NEPA document.



Project Location



Porter County, Indiana

Source: ESRI Street Map North America

Not to Scale

Path: \\indySAN\PI\Projects\2018\02818\02818.D Drawings\ArcView\Westchester Phase 3 Trail\Early Coordination\2018.02818.EV.2020-06-16.State Location.WestchesterPhase3.krb.mxd Date:6/16/2020 User:kbright



State Location Map

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix B
B-1

Date: 06/11/2020

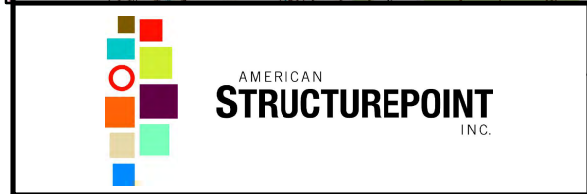
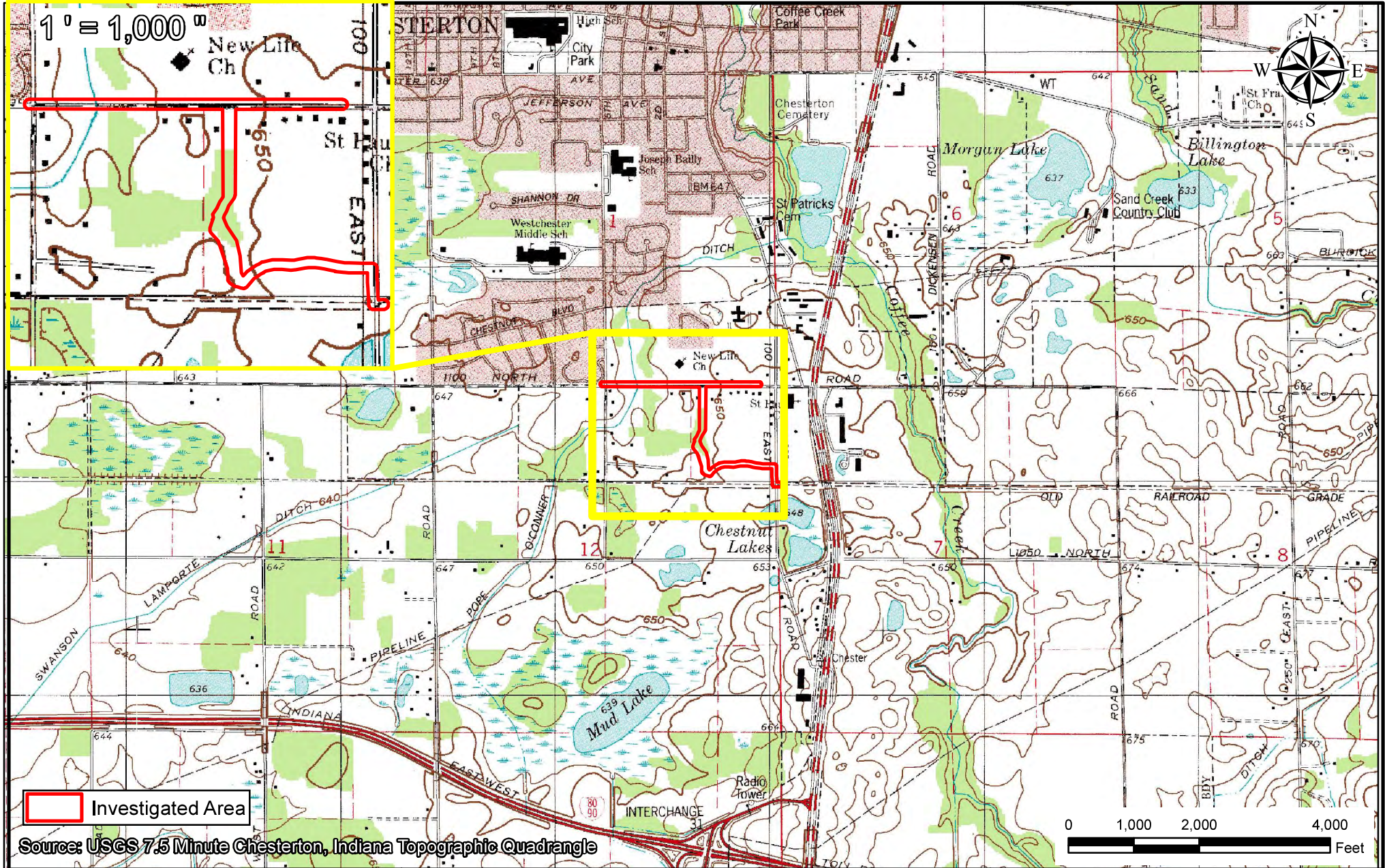


Figure 2: USGS Topographic Map

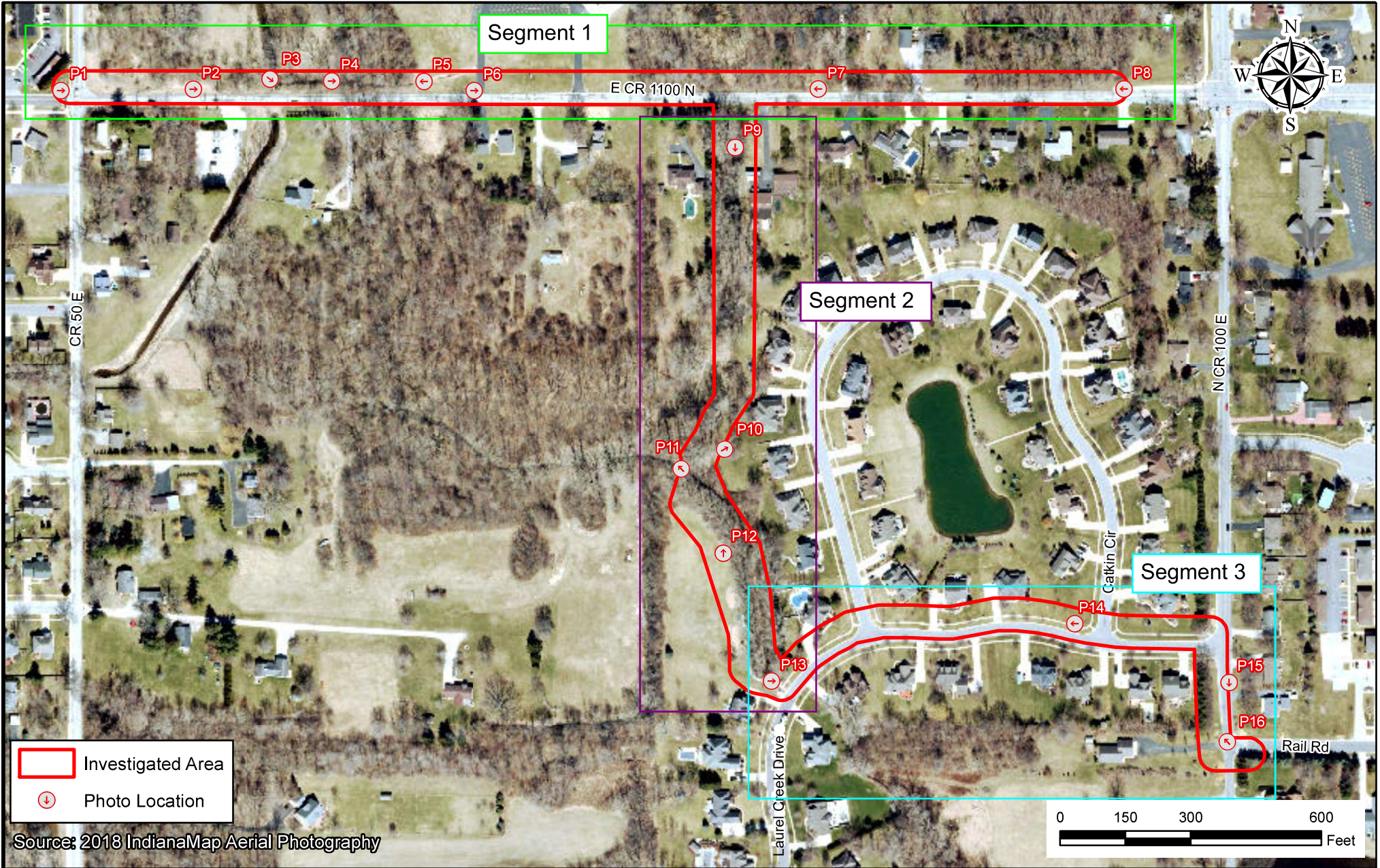
Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix B
B-2

Date: 05/11/2021



2018 Aerial Photography

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Des. No. 1902832
Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Date: 1/17/2022

Appendix B
B-3



Photo 1. Looking east along CR 1100 N from the western boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 2. Looking east along CR 1100 N.



Photo 3. Looking southeast, upstream of Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 4. Looking east, upstream at UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.

July 21, 2020

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana



Photo 5. Looking west at a ditch east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 6. Looking west along CR 1100 N from the northern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 7. Looking west along CR 1100 N.



Photo 8. Looking west along CR 1100 N at the western boundary of the investigated area.

July 21, 2020

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana



Photo 9. Looking south at Wetland D located south of CR 1100 N.



Photo 10. Looking northeast along the boundary of the investigated area south of Wetland E.



Photo 11. Looking northwest at UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 12. Looking north along the southwestern boundary of the investigated area.

July 21, 2020

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana



Photo 13. Looking east along the existing trail.



Photo 14. Looking west along Laurel Creek Drive on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 15. Looking south along CR 100 E at the southeast boundary of the investigated area.



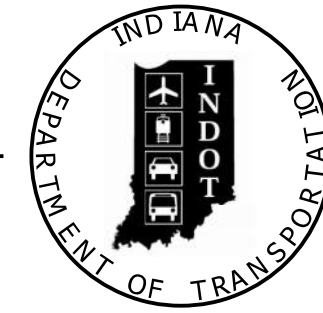
Photo 16. Looking northwest along CR 100 E at the southeast boundary of the investigated area.

July 21, 2020

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana

PROJECT	DESIGNATION
1902832	1902832
CONTRACT	BRIDGE FILE
R-42649	N/A

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



ROAD PLANS

ROUTE: WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL: SHARED USE PATH

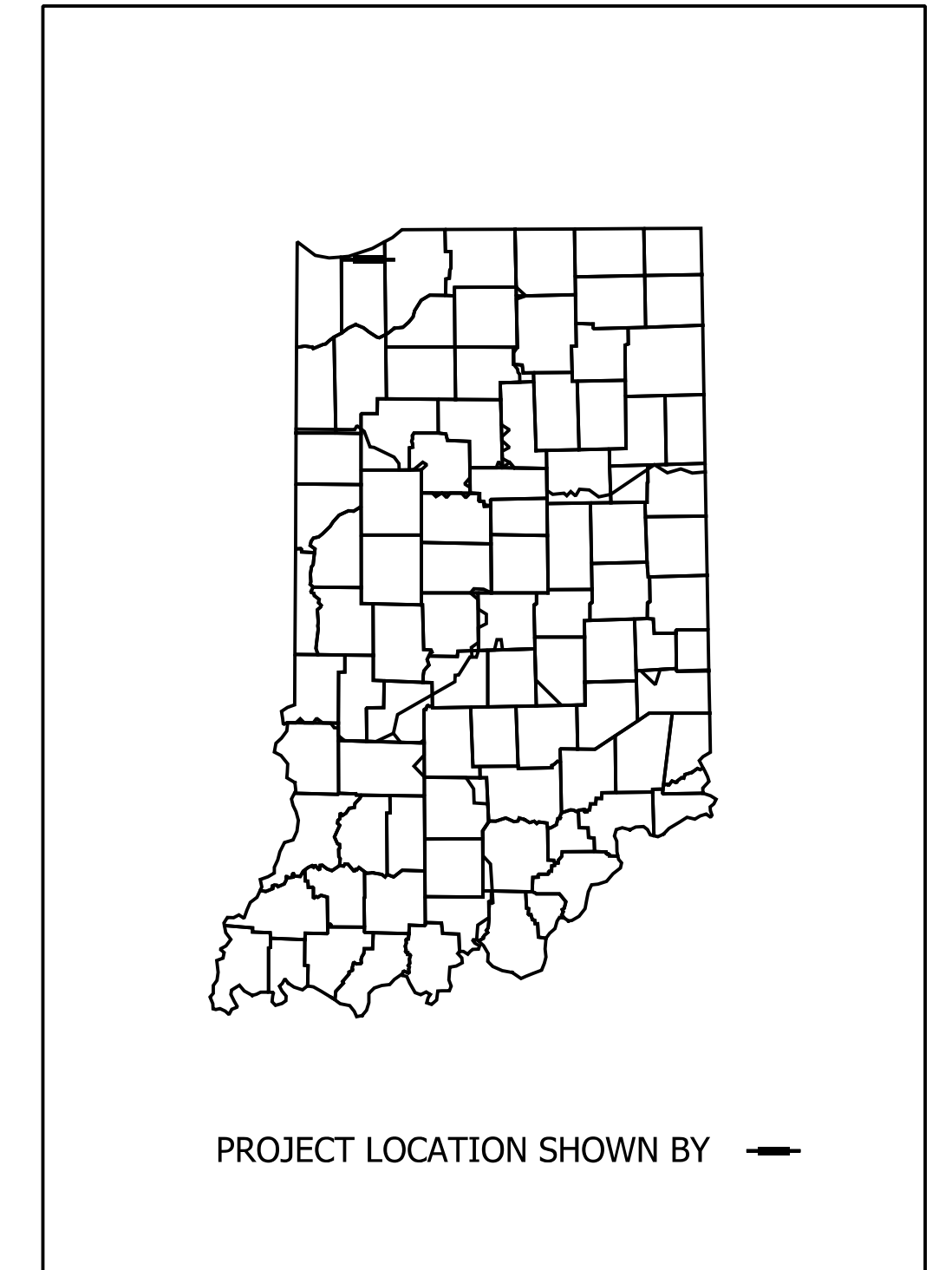
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A.A.D.T.	N/A	V.P.D.
A.A.D.T.	N/A	V.P.D.
D.H.V	N/A	V.P.H.
DIRECTIONAL DISTRIBUTION	N/A	%
TRUCKS	N/A	% A.A.D.T.
	N/A	% D.H.V.
DESIGN DATA		
DESIGN SPEED	15	M.P.H.
PROJECT DESIGN CRITERIA	IDM 51-7.05	
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION	SHARED-USE PATH	
RURAL/URBAN	URBAN	
TERRAIN	LEVEL	
ACCESS CONTROL	NONE	

TOWN OF CHESTERTON, INDIANA TOWN COUNCIL	
Sharon Darnell, President	Date
Jennifer Fisher, Member	Date
Lloyd Kittredge, Member	Date
James Ton, Member	Date
Dane Lafata, Member	Date

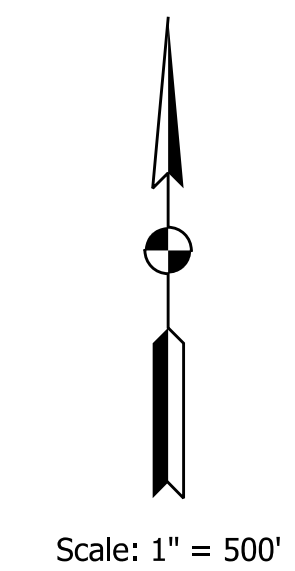
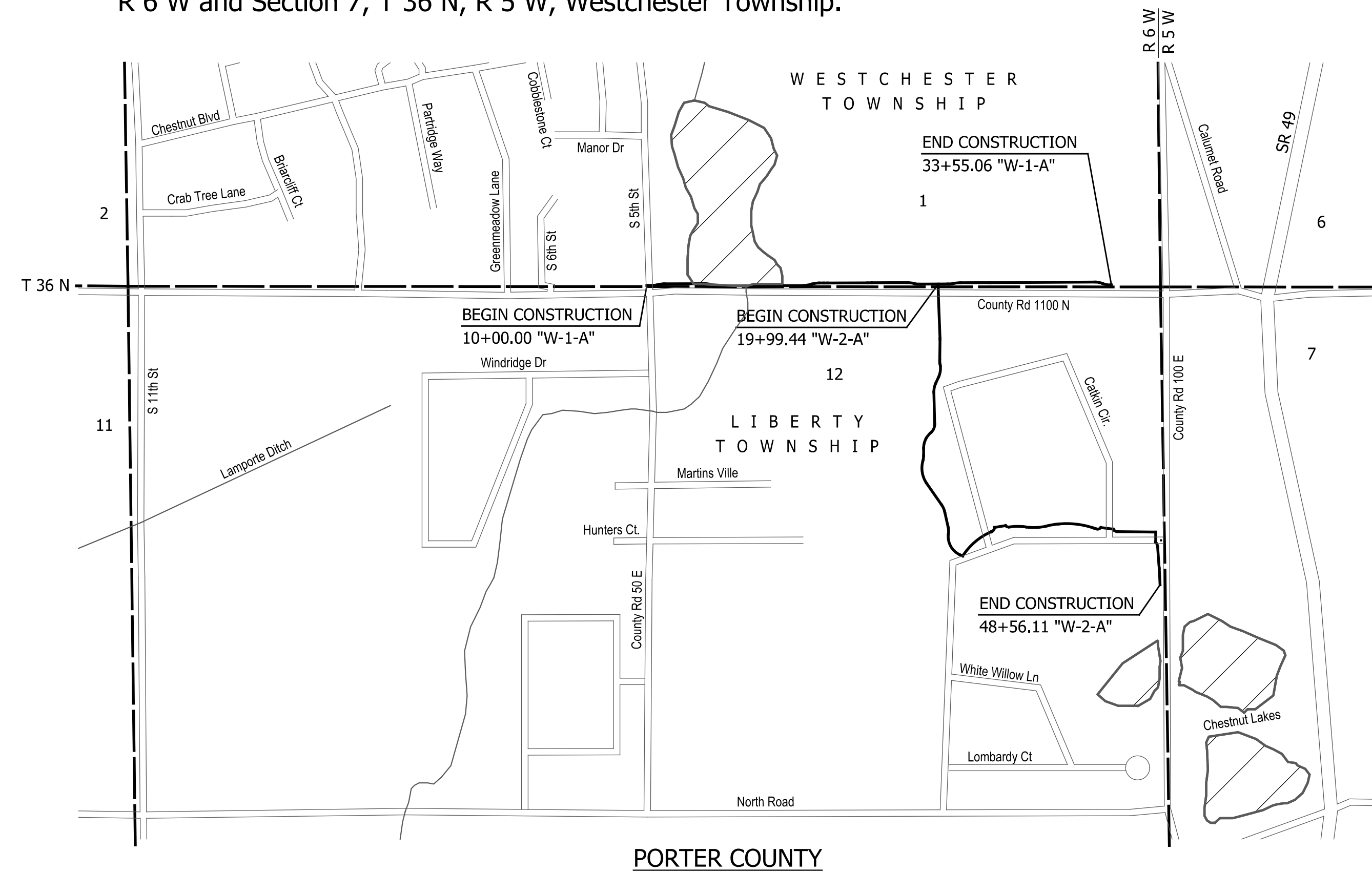
TOWN OF CHESTERTON, INDIANA	
Mark O'Dell, Town Engineer, ERC	Date

Project Description: The Project is Located Along CR 1100 N, Beginning at the Intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, Continuing East Approximately 0.45 Miles to a Point of Termination Approximately 250' West of the Intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. A Second Segment of the Shared-Use Path Begins at a Point Along CR 1100 N Approximately 1,130' West of CR 100 E and Continues South for Approximately .30 Miles To Laurel Creek Drive Where it Continues East Along Laurel Creek Drive to CR 100 E, and Continues South Along CR 100 E to a Point of Termination at Rail Road. The Project is Located Within the Town Limits of Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana in Sections 1 and 12, T 36 N, R 6 W and Section 7, T 36 N, R 5 W, Westchester Township.



LATITUDE: 41°35'34.90"N LONGITUDE: 87° 3'6.42"W

Gross Length: 0.99 MI.
Net Length: 0.98 MI.
Maximum Grade: 4.29 %



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS DATED 2022
TO BE USED WITH THESE PLANS.

PLANS PREPARED BY:	American Structurepoint, Inc.	(317) 547-5580
	MM/DD/YYYY	PHONE NUMBER
CERTIFIED BY:		DATE
APPROVED FOR LETTING:	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	DATE

	BRIDGE FILE	
	N/A	
	DESIGNATION	
	1902832	
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS	
N/A	1	72
CONTRACT	PROJECT	
R-42649	1902832	

UTILITIES

COMMUNICATIONS

Northwestern Indiana Telephone Company
205 N. Washington St
Hebron, IN 46341
(219) 996-2981
Contact: Mark O'Dell
Email: modell@chestertonin.org

Frontier
2401 Chicago Street
Valparaiso, IN 46383
(219) 531-6947
Contact: Charles McKean
Email: Chuck.McKean@ftr.com

Calumet Communications
309 S. 13th St.
Chesterton, IN 46304
(219) 928-8024
Contact: Keith Sharpe
Email: ksharpei@yahoo.com

WATER
IN American Water (Northwest)
153 N Emerson Ave
Greenwood, IN 46143
(219) 880-2326
Contact: Ed Nickels
Email: Edward.Nickels@amwater.com

MCI
400 Internation PKWY
Richardson, TX 75081
(312) 617-2131
Contact: Joe Chaney
Email: joe.chaney@verizon.com

ELECTRIC & GAS
NIPSCO ELECTRIC (VALPARAISO)
2755 N Raystone Dr
Valparaiso, IN 46383
(219) 252-6530
Contact: Alejandro Alvarez
Email: AAlvarez@nisource.com

AT&T Distribution
240 N. Meridian St., Room 1791
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(219) 775-1781
Contact: Matt Smith
Email: MS2827@att.com

NIPSCO Gas (VALPARAISO)
2755 N Raystone Dr
Valparaiso, IN 46383
(219) 252-6530
Contact: Mike Hudak
Email: Mhudak@nisource.com

PIPELINE

Marathon
(317) 473-7441
Contact: Austin Guyer
Email: aguyer@marathonpetroleum.com

Wolverine Pipeline
(269) 217-5158
Contact: Louis Kraus
Email: Louis_Kraus@wplco.com

GENERAL NOTES

**	All earth shoulders, median areas, and cut and fill slopes shall be plain or mulch seeded except where sodding is specified
	The final cross sections of the grading contract will be the original cross sections of the paving contract. However, partial or complete cross sections shall be taken if necessary to determine the actual excavation quantities.
	The paper relocation will be cross sectioned by the Engineer before construction.
	The quantity of peat excavation shown on the plans has been estimated on the basis of theoretical cross sections by using treatment of existing fills, treatment by removal, or treatment by displacement, where each treatment applies.
	All limited access right-of-way (L.A. R/W) is to be fenced with chain link type fence (CLTF) or farm field type fence (FFTF) where specified in the plans.
	Contractor shall verify existing flowline elevations to set the appropriate sump depth.

** REPRESENTS GENERAL NOTES REQUIRED

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5	Geometric Tie-Ups
6-8	Geometric Tie-In Detail
9-10	Maintenance of Traffic
11	Maintenance of Traffic - Pedestrian Detour
12-16	Plan and Profiles
17-21	Curb Ramp Details
22-23	Erosion Control Details
24-25	Pavement Marking & Signing Details
26	Miscellaneous Details
27	Structure Data Table & Pipe Material Table
28	Summary of Quantities & Approach Table
29	Miscellaneous Tables
30-72	Cross Sections

REVISIONS

SHEET NO.	DATE	REVISED

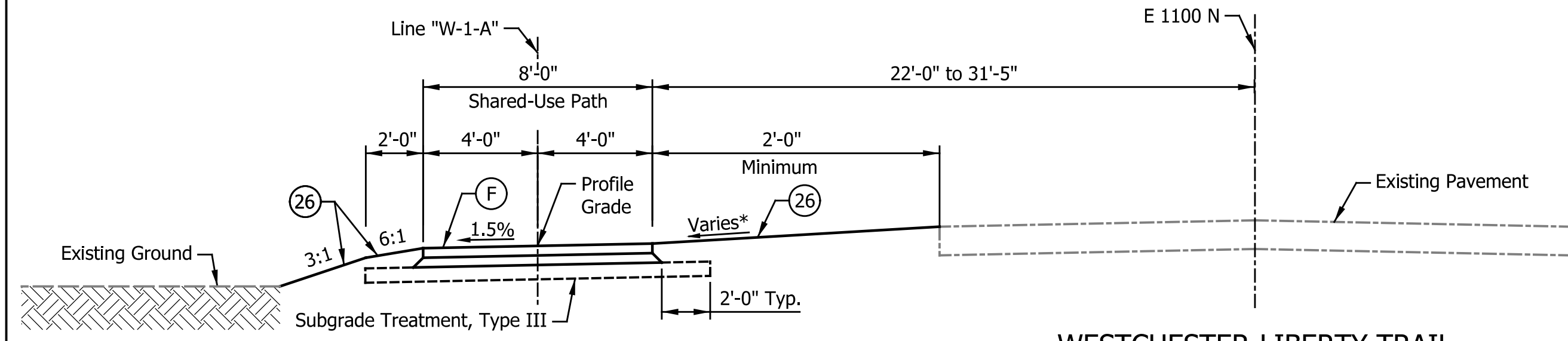
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DESIGNED: <u> JJS </u>	DRAWN: <u> CAK </u>		
CHECKED: <u> GAL </u>	CHECKED: <u> GAL </u>		

INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

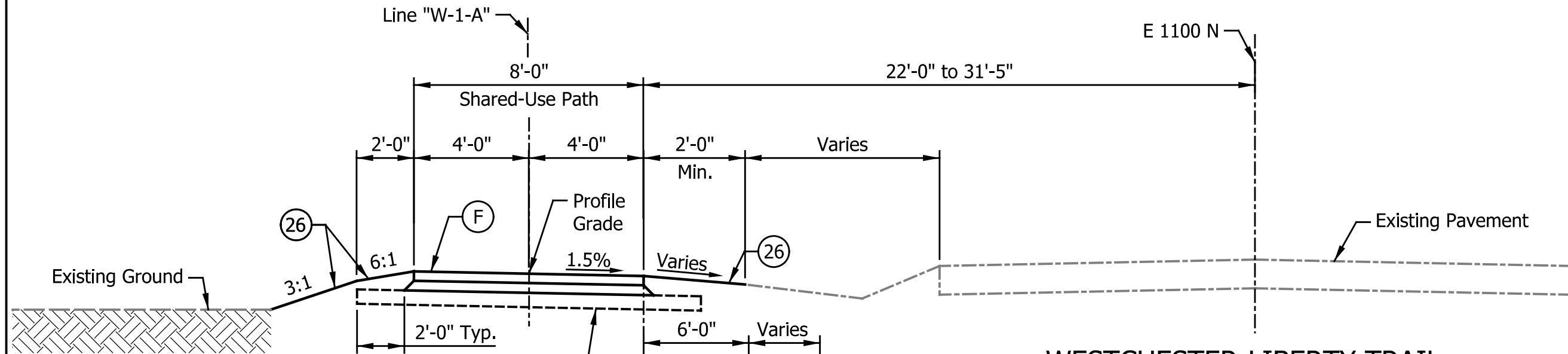
INDEX AND GENERAL NOTES

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
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VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	2 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832

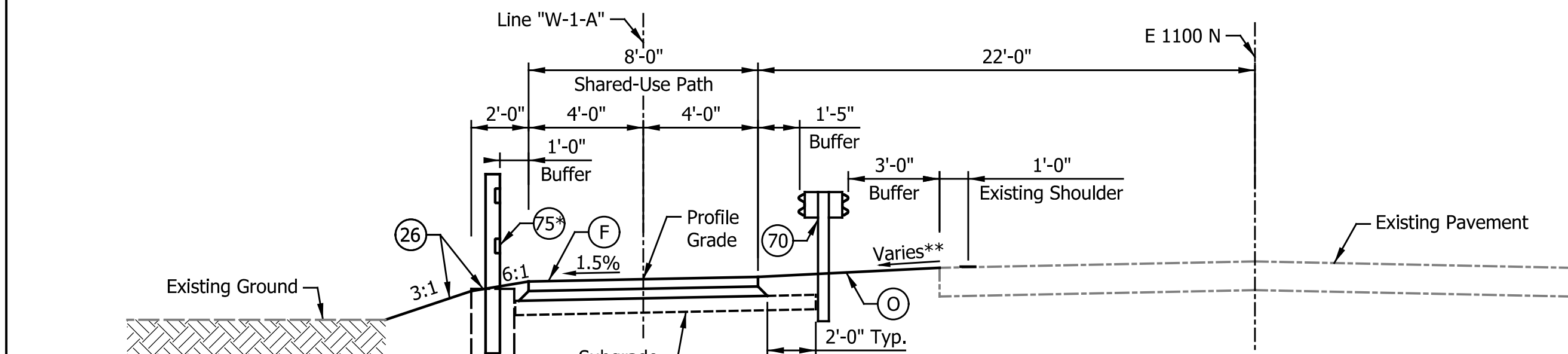
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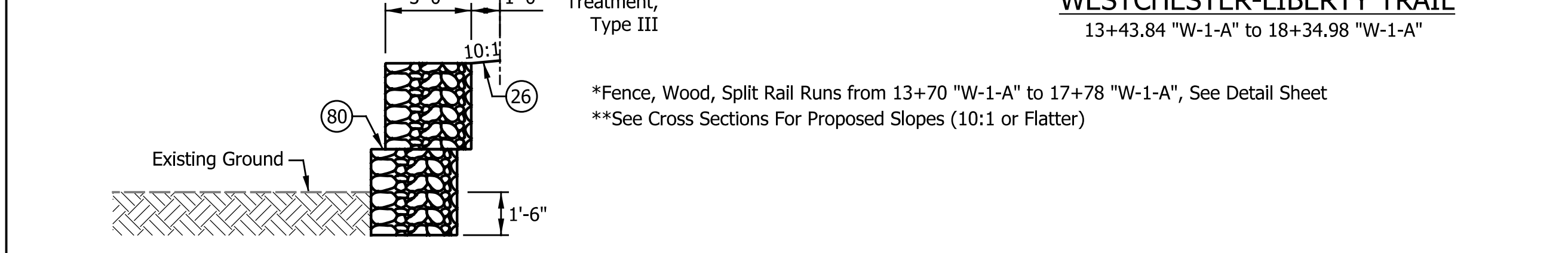
WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL
 10+00.00 "W-1-A" to 13+43.84 "W-1-A"
 19+50.00 "W-1-A" to 27+50.00 "W-1-A"
 32+00.00 "W-1-A" to 33+50.00 "W-1-A"



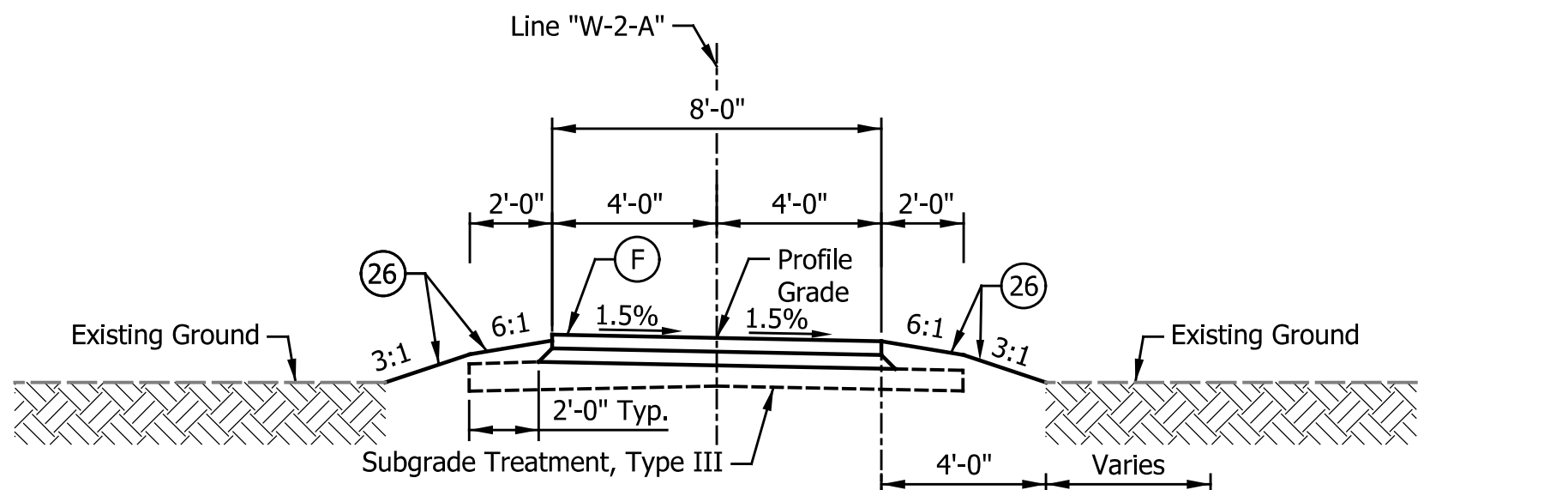
WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL
 18+40.00 "W-1-A" to 19+50.00 "W-1-A"
 27+50.00 "W-1-A" to 32+00.00 "W-1-A"
 33+50.00 "W-1-A" to 33+55.06 "W-1-A"



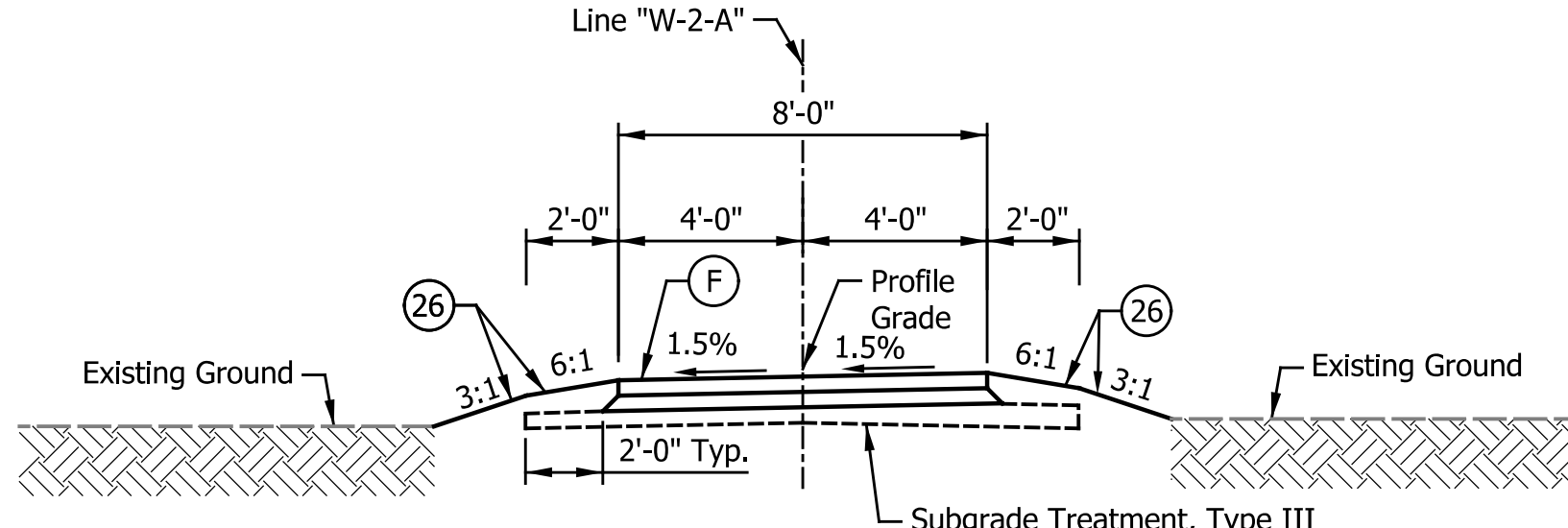
WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL
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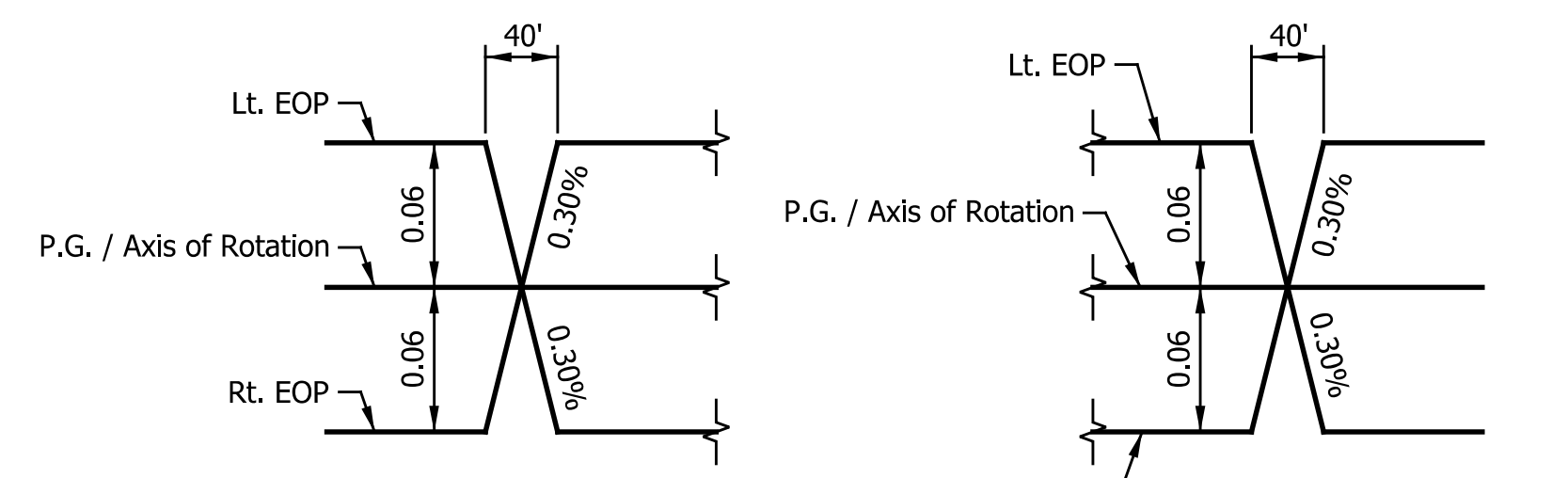
14+00.00 "W-1-A" to 17+00.00 "W-1-A"
 *See Cross Sections For Varying Heights of Gabion Baskets



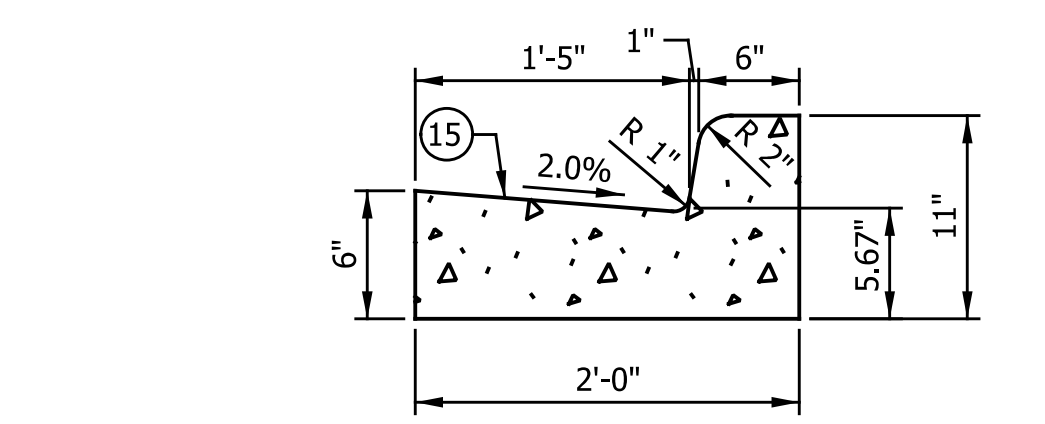
WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL
 19+99.44 "W-2-A" to 20+14.36 "W-2-A"
 20+36.87 "W-2-A" to 20+50.00 "W-2-A"
 28+00.00 "W-2-A" to 36+86.67 "W-2-A"
 37+60.72 "W-2-A" to 42+40.83 "W-2-A"
 43+20.65 "W-2-A" to 45+19.47 "W-2-A"



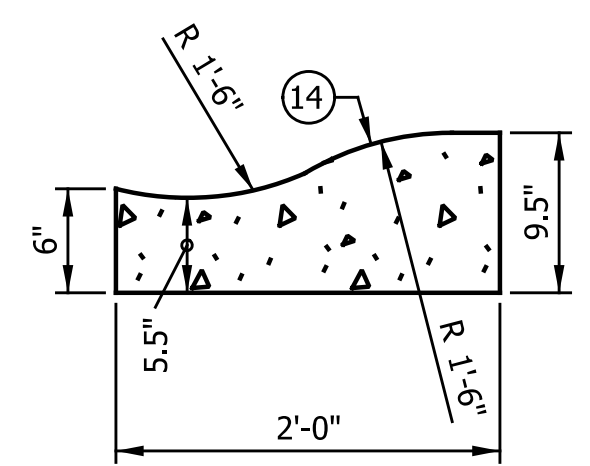
WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL
 45+86.20 "W-2-A" to 48+56.11 "W-2-A"



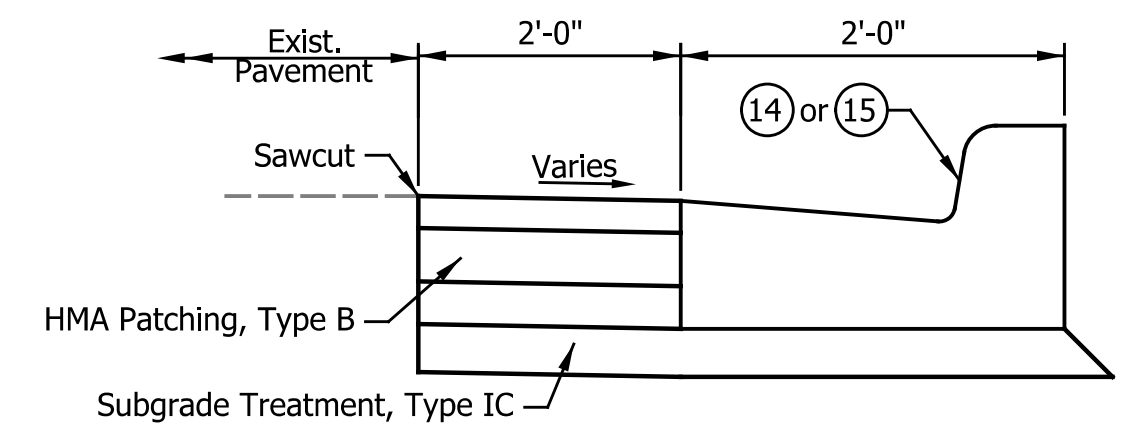
EDGE TRANSITION DIAGRAM LINE "W-1-A"
 Not To Scale



Curb & Gutter, Concrete, Modified
 Not to Scale

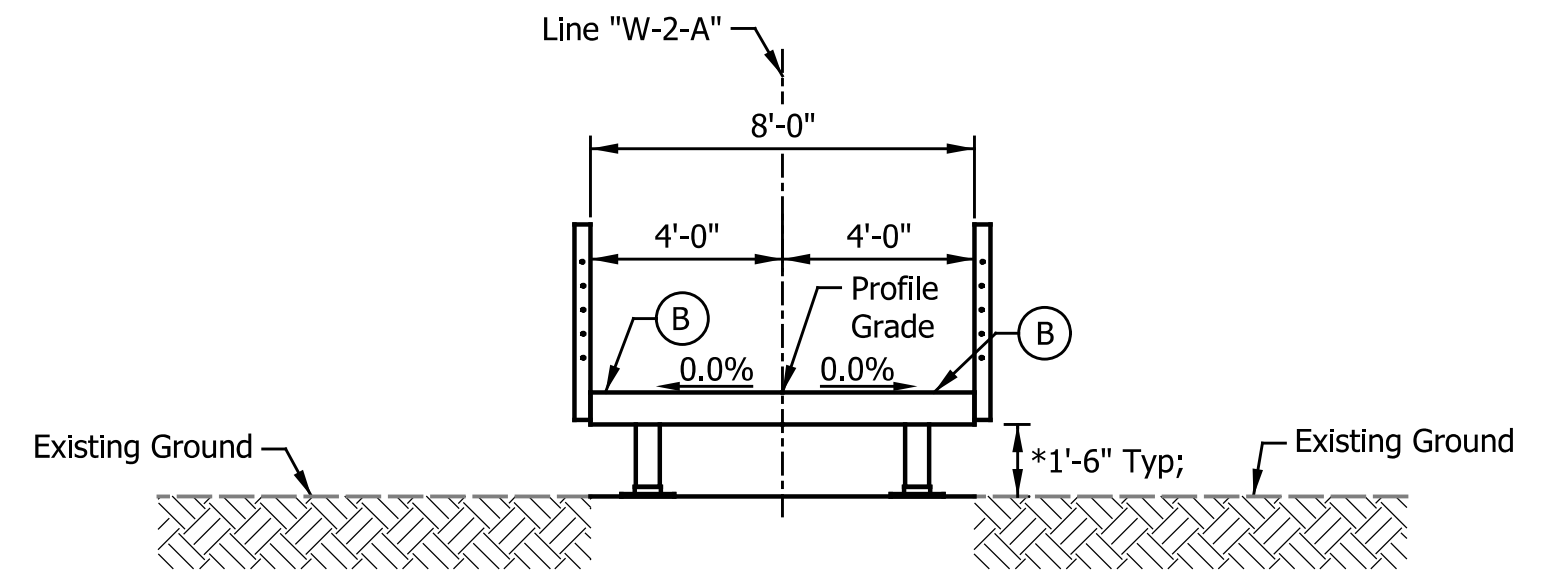


Curb & Gutter, Roll Curb, Modified
 Not to Scale



HMA Patching, Type B Detail
 Not to Scale

See Curb Ramp Detail Sheets For Proposed Slopes



WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL
 20+50.00 "W-2-A" to 28+00.00 "W-2-A"

*Adjust Leg Height As Req'd; See Cross Sections

LEGEND

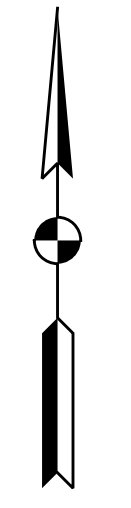
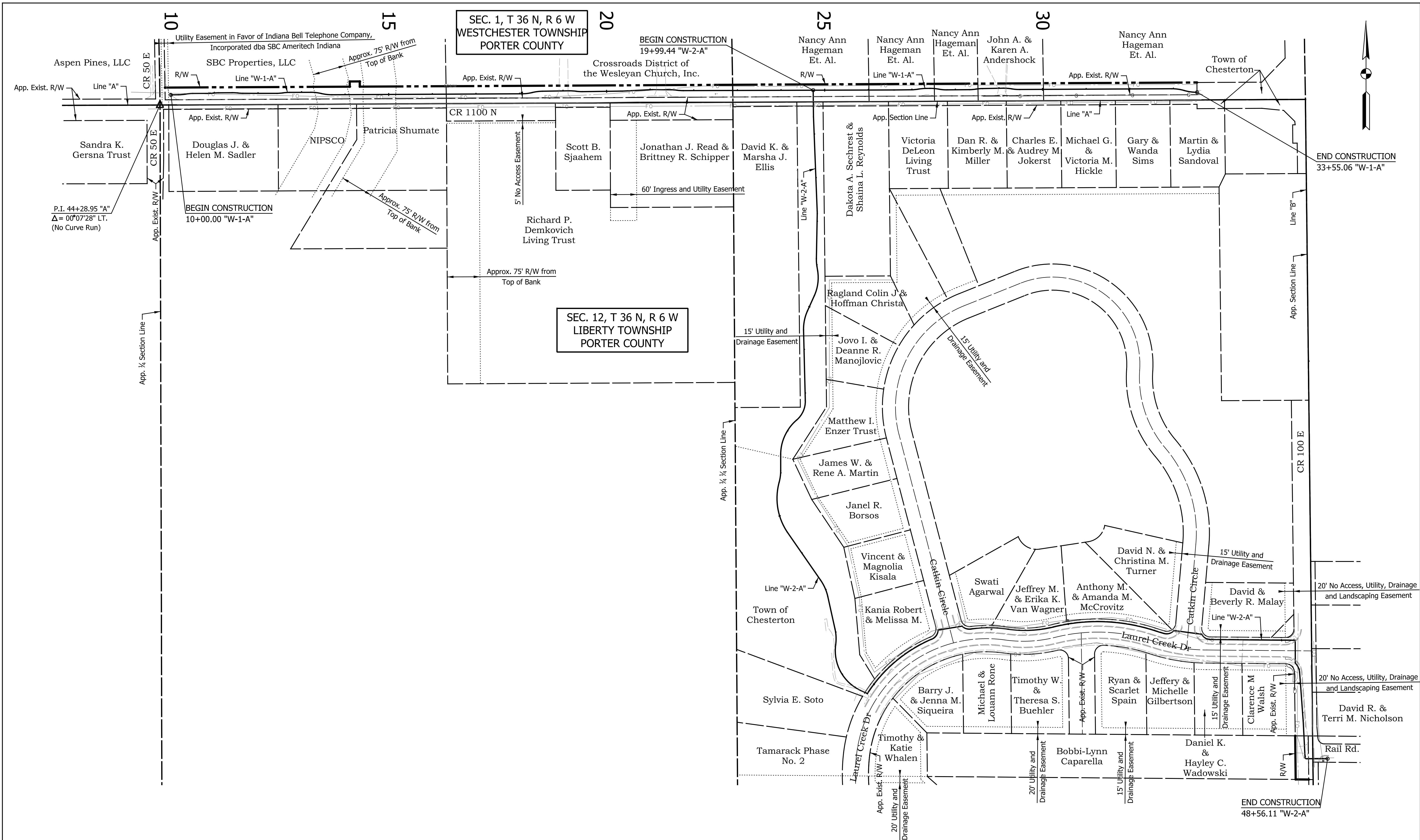
- (B) Boardwalk
- (F) 4" PCCP w/ 8" Spacing of Transverse Joints on 4" Compacted Aggregate NO. 53, Base
- (O) 9" Compacted Aggregate, No. 53
- (26) Sodding, Nursery
- (70) Guardrail, MSG W-Beam, Double Faced 6 Ft. 3 In. Spacing
- (75) Fence, Wood, Split Rail, 42 in.
- (80) Gabions, Metallic Coated

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: CAK	DATE
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

INDIANA
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS
 Line "W-1-A" & "W-2-A"

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1/2" = 1'-0"	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	3 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



SEC. 1, T 36 N, R 6 W
WESTCHESTER TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY

SEC. 12, T 36 N, R 6 W
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY

END CONSTRUCTION
33+55.06 "W-1-A"

END CONSTRUCTION
48+56.11 "W-2-A"

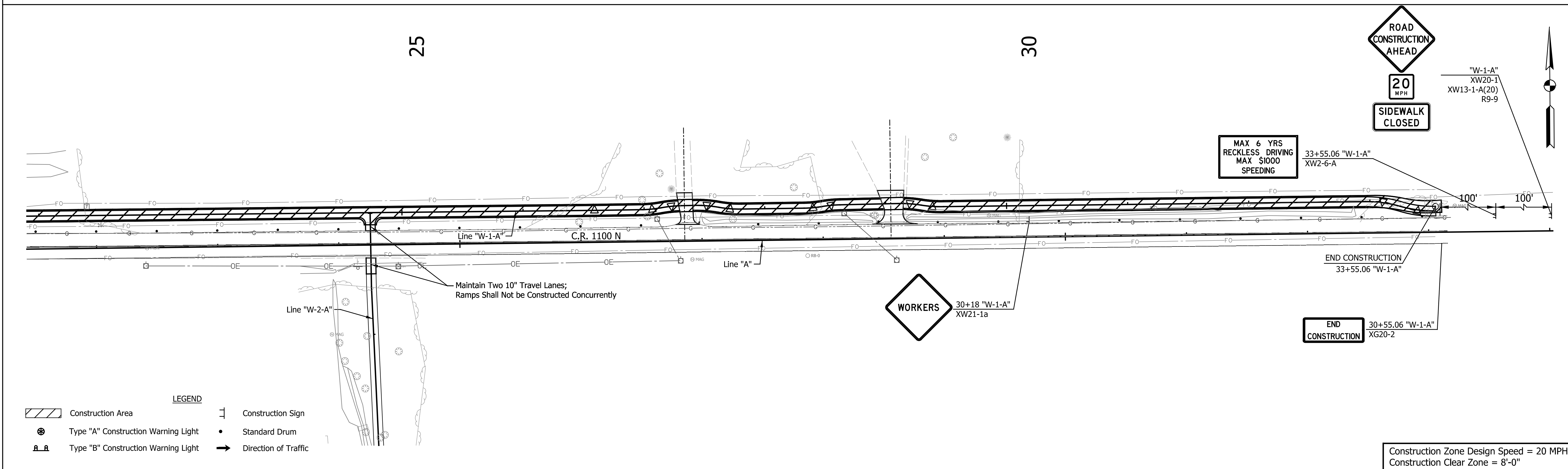
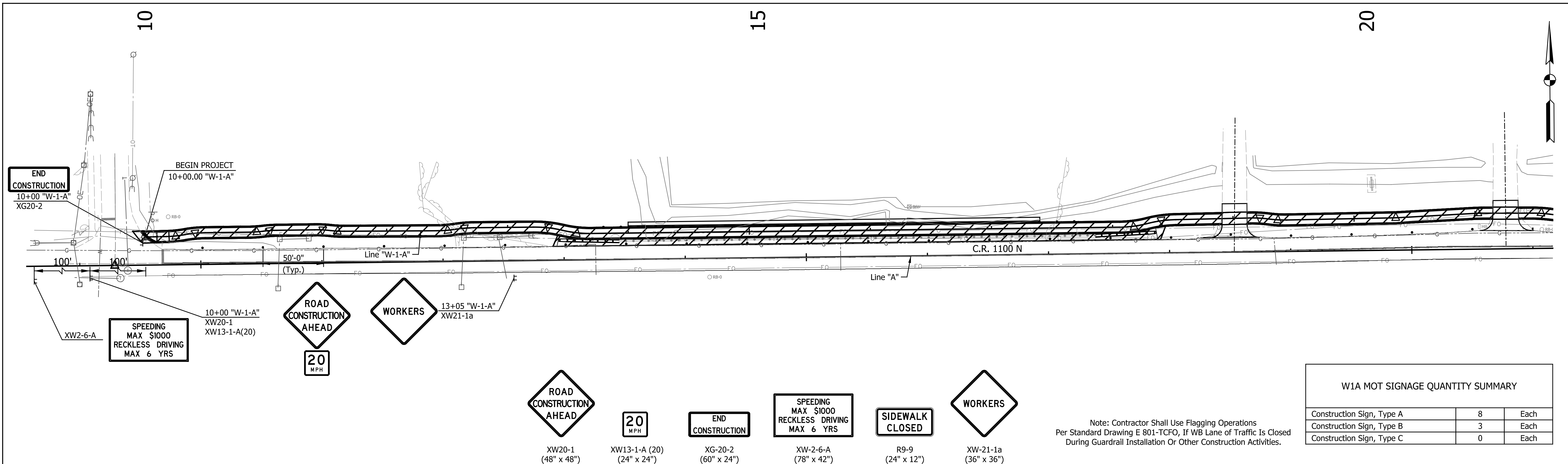
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY DATE
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: JJS	
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PLAT NO. 1

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1"=100'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	4 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



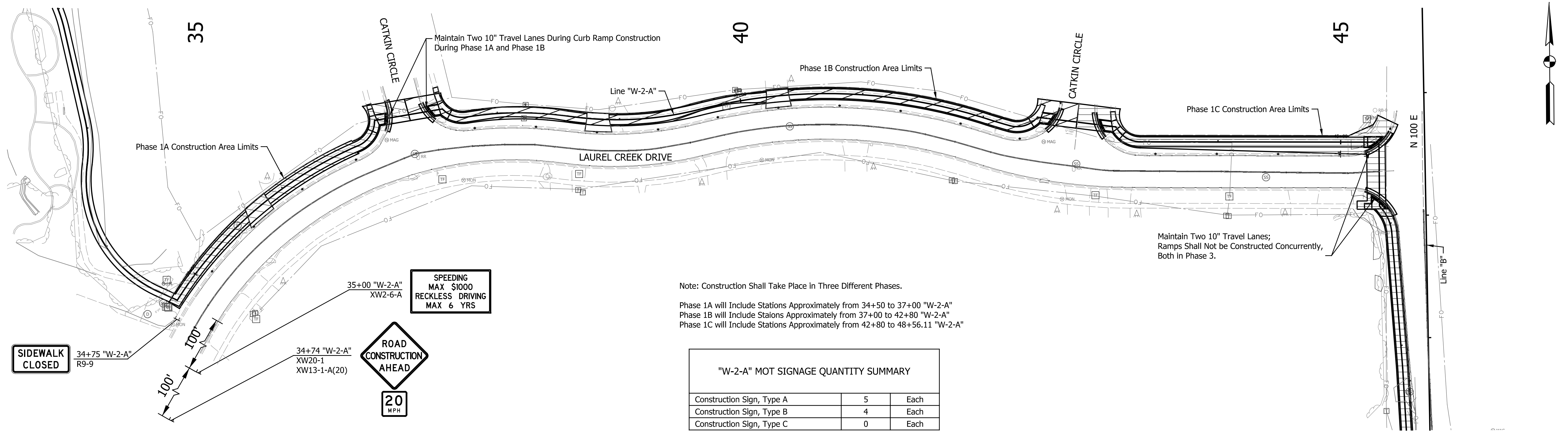
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY	DATE
DESIGNED: LMZ	DRAWN: LMZ	CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL

INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

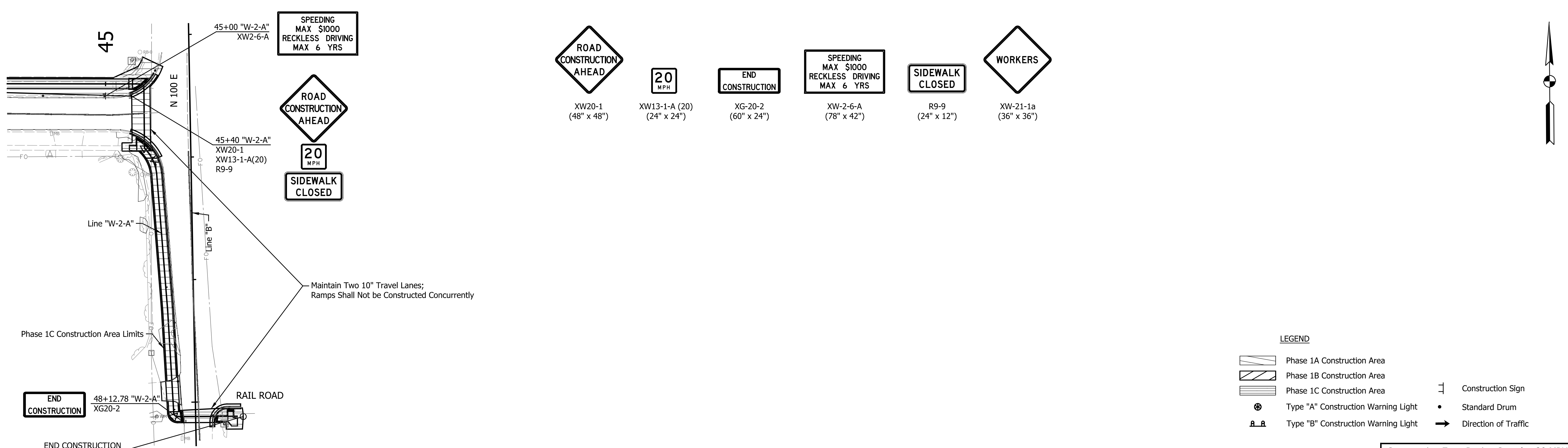
MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC
LINES "W-1-A" & "W-2-A"

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	9 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



Note: Construction Shall Take Place in Three Different Phases.
 Phase 1A will Include Stations Approximately from 34+50 to 37+00 "W-2-A"
 Phase 1B will Include Stations Approximately from 37+00 to 42+80 "W-2-A"
 Phase 1C will Include Stations Approximately from 42+80 to 48+56.11 "W-2-A"

"W-2-A" MOT SIGNAGE QUANTITY SUMMARY		
Construction Sign, Type A	5	Each
Construction Sign, Type B	4	Each
Construction Sign, Type C	0	Each



- ROAD CONSTRUCTION AHEAD (XW20-1 (48" x 48"))
- 20 MPH (XW13-1-A (20) (24" x 24"))
- END CONSTRUCTION (XG-20-2 (60" x 24"))
- SPEEDING MAX \$1000 RECKLESS DRIVING MAX 6 YRS (XW-2-6-A (78" x 42"))
- SIDEWALK CLOSED (R9-9 (24" x 12"))
- WORKERS (XW-21-1a (36" x 36"))

LEGEND

	Phase 1A Construction Area		Construction Sign
	Phase 1B Construction Area		Standard Drum
	Phase 1C Construction Area		Direction of Traffic
	Type "A" Construction Warning Light		
	Type "B" Construction Warning Light		

Construction Zone Design Speed = 20 MPH
 Construction Clear Zone = 8'-0"

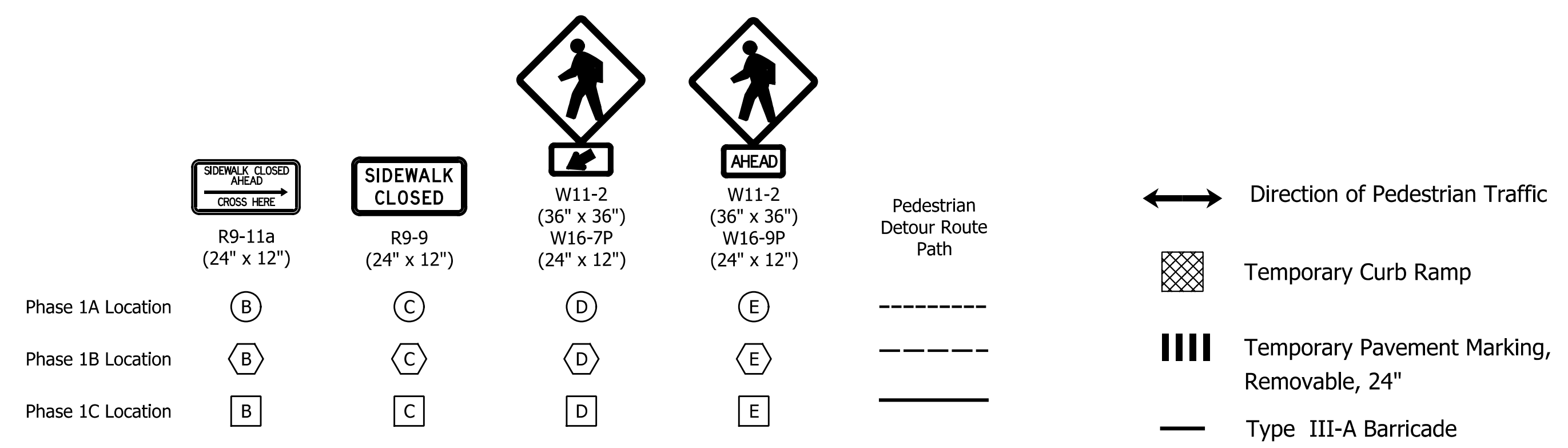
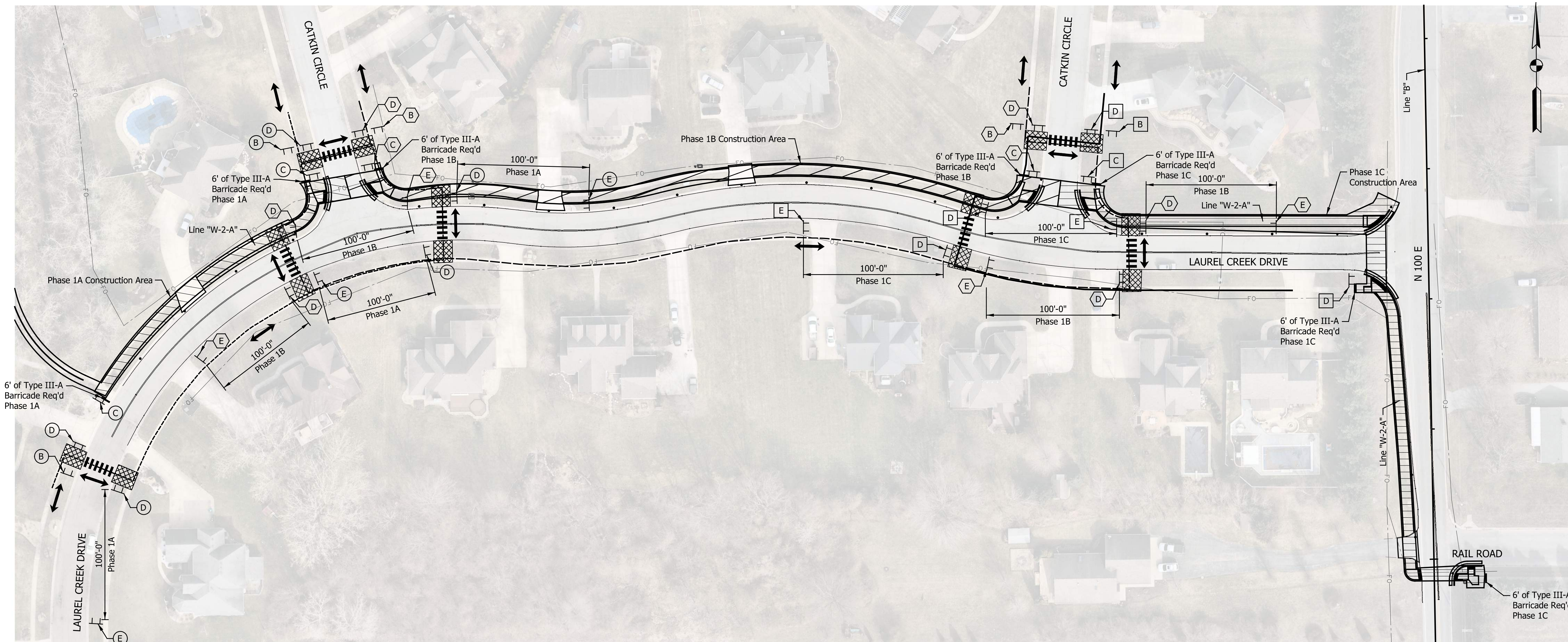
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY	DATE
DESIGNED: LMZ	DRAWN: LMZ		
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL		

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC LINES "W-1-A" & "W-2-A"

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	10 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



Note: Construction Shall Take Place in Three Different Phases.

Phase 1A will Include Stations Approximately from 34+50 to 37+00 "W-2-A"
 Phase 1B will Include Stations Approximately from 37+00 to 42+80 "W-2-A"
 Phase 1C will Include Stations Approximately from 42+80 to 48+56.11 "W-2-A"

1. Within the Closure, Sidewalks Shall Be Constructed in Phases, Such that Pedestrian Connectivity is Maintained.
2. Temporary Curb Ramps Shall Be Utilized as Necessary to Allow Pedestrians to Cross When Existing Curb Ramps are Not Present.
3. Contractor Shall Maintain All Temporary Crossing/Ramps and Ensure Crossings/Ramps are Clearly Delineated, Clean and Free of Debris and/or Obstructions.
4. Contractor Shall Maintain Pedestrian Access to All Residential Homes.
5. Contractor To Re-Use Signs, Barricades, and Temporary Curb Ramps Between the 3 Phases.

"W-2-A" PEDESTRIAN DETOUR QUANTITY SUMMARY - PHASE I A&B&C		
Construction Sign, Type A	10	Each
Construction Sign, Type B	14	Each
Type III-A Barricade	12	Lft.
Temporary Curb Ramps	8	Each
Temp. Pavm't Marking, Removable, 24 in.	216	Lft.

DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: JJS	DATE
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

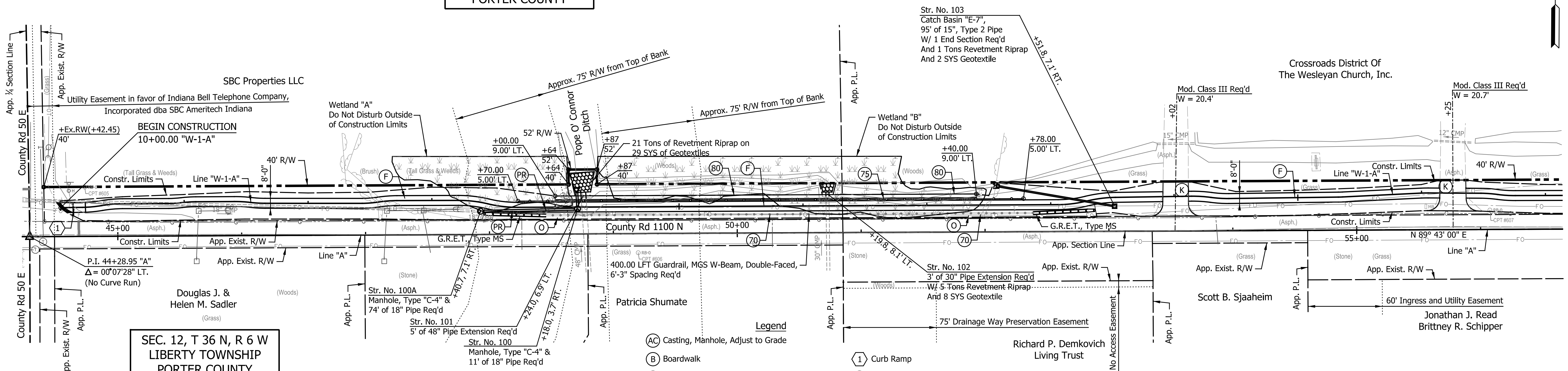
INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC
PEDESTRIAN DETOUR

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	11 of
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832

SEC. 1, T 36 N, R 6 W
WESTCHESTER TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY

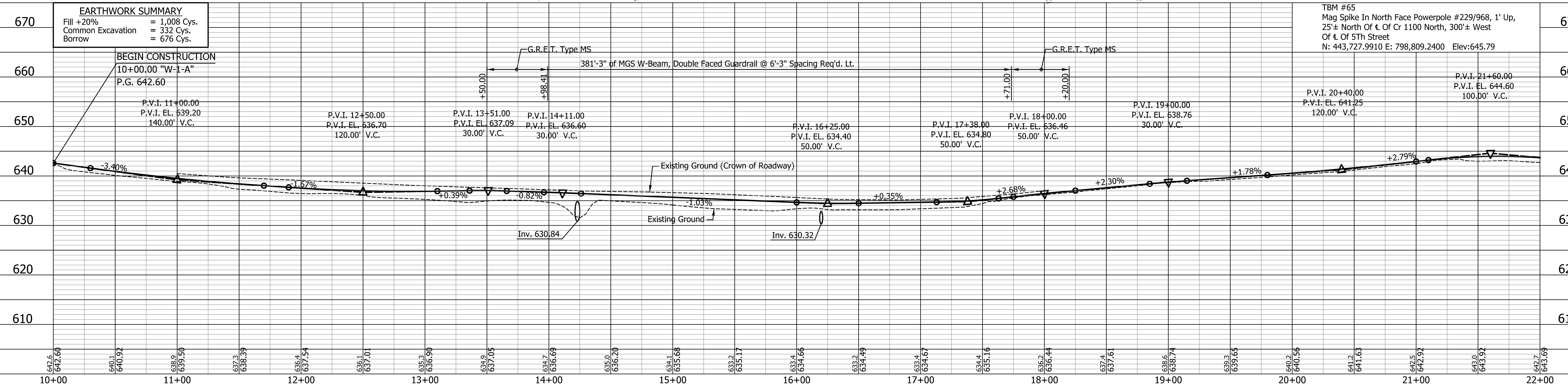
SEC. 12, T 36 N, R 6 W
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY



- Legend**
- (AC) Casting, Manhole, Adjust to Grade
 - (B) Boardwalk
 - (F) 4" PCCP w/ 8' Spacing of Transverse Joints on 4" Compacted Aggregate NO. 53, Base
 - (P) Protect
 - (UR) Utility Relocate (By Others)
 - (K) PCCP for Approaches, 9 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (O) 9" Compacted Aggregate, No. 53
 - (1) Curb Ramp
 - (70) Guardrail, MGS W-Beam, Double faced, 6 Ft. 3 In. Spacing
 - (75) Fence, Rail, Wood
 - (80) Gabions, Metallic Coating
 - (K1) PCCP for Approaches, 6 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (PR) Pipe, Remove

EARTHWORK SUMMARY

Fill +20%	= 1,008 Cys.
Common Excavation	= 332 Cys.
Borrow	= 676 Cys.



TBM #65
Mag Spike In North Face Powerpole #229/968, 1' Up,
25'± North Of ½ Of Cr 1100 North, 300'± West
Of ½ Of 5th Street
N: 443,727.9910 E: 798,809.2400 Elev:645.79

NOTES:
All Topographic Information Described
From Line "W-1-A", Except as Noted.
All Geometric Tie-In Details for
Additional Alignment Information
All Right-of-Way Information Described
From Line "A", Except as Noted.

DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: CAK	
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

**INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

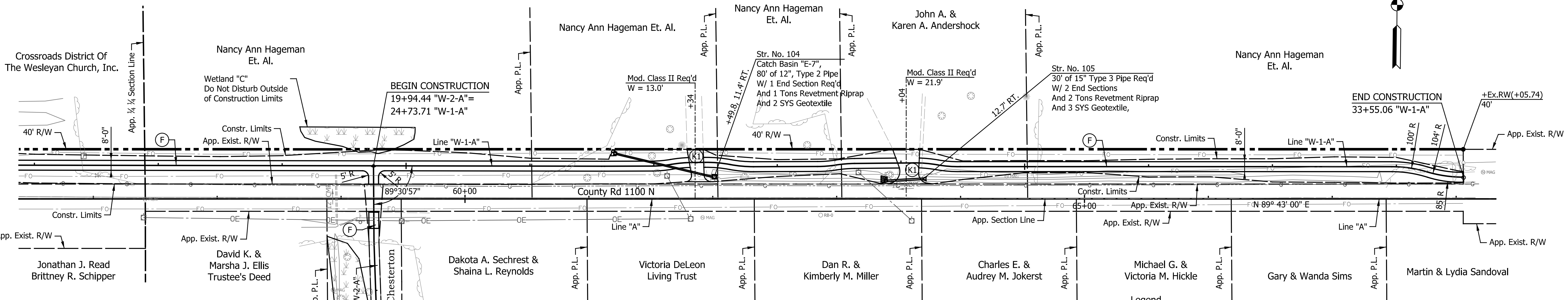
PLAN AND PROFILE
STA. 10+00.00 TO ST. 22+00.00 "W-1-A"

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
1" = 10'	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	12 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832

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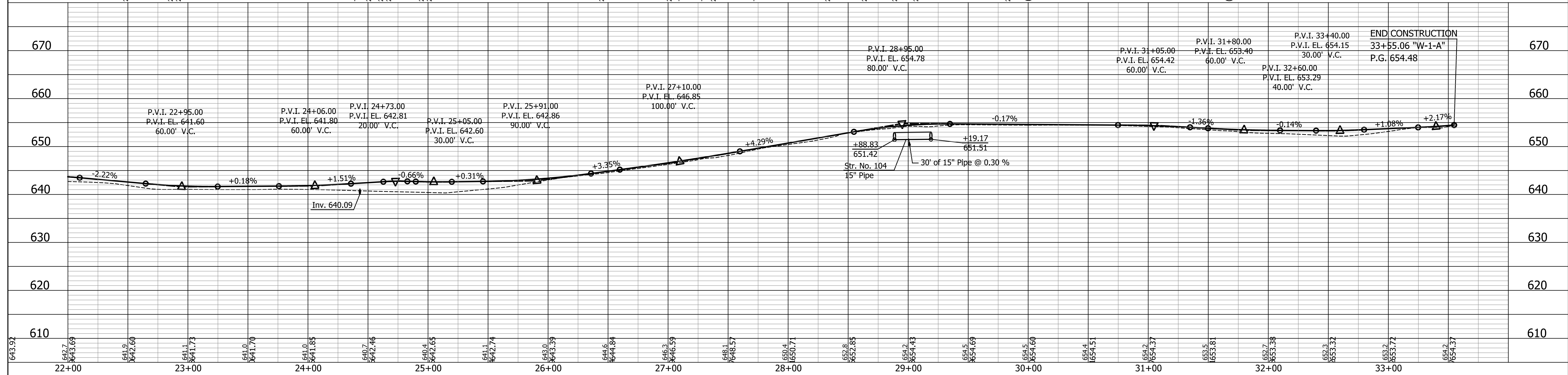
SEC. 1, T 36 N, R 6 W
WESTCHESTER TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY

SEC. 12, T 36 N, R 6 W
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY



- Legend**
- (AC) Casting, Manhole, Adjust to Grade
 - (B) Boardwalk
 - (F) 4" PCCP w/ 8" Spacing of Transverse Joints on 4" Compacted Aggregate NO. 53, Base
 - (P) Protect
 - (UR) Utility Relocate (By Others)
 - (K) PCCP for Approaches, 9 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (O) 9" Compacted Aggregate, No. 53
 - (1) Curb Ramp
 - (70) Guardrail, MGS W-Beam, Double faced, 6 Ft. 3 In. Spacing
 - (75) Fence, Rail, Wood
 - (80) Gabions, Metallic Coating
 - (K1) PCCP for Approaches, 6 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (PR) Pipe, Remove

NOTES:
All Topographic Information Described From Line "W-1-A", Except as Noted.
All Geometric Tie-In Details for Additional Alignment Information
All Right-of-Way Information Described From Line "A", Except as Noted.



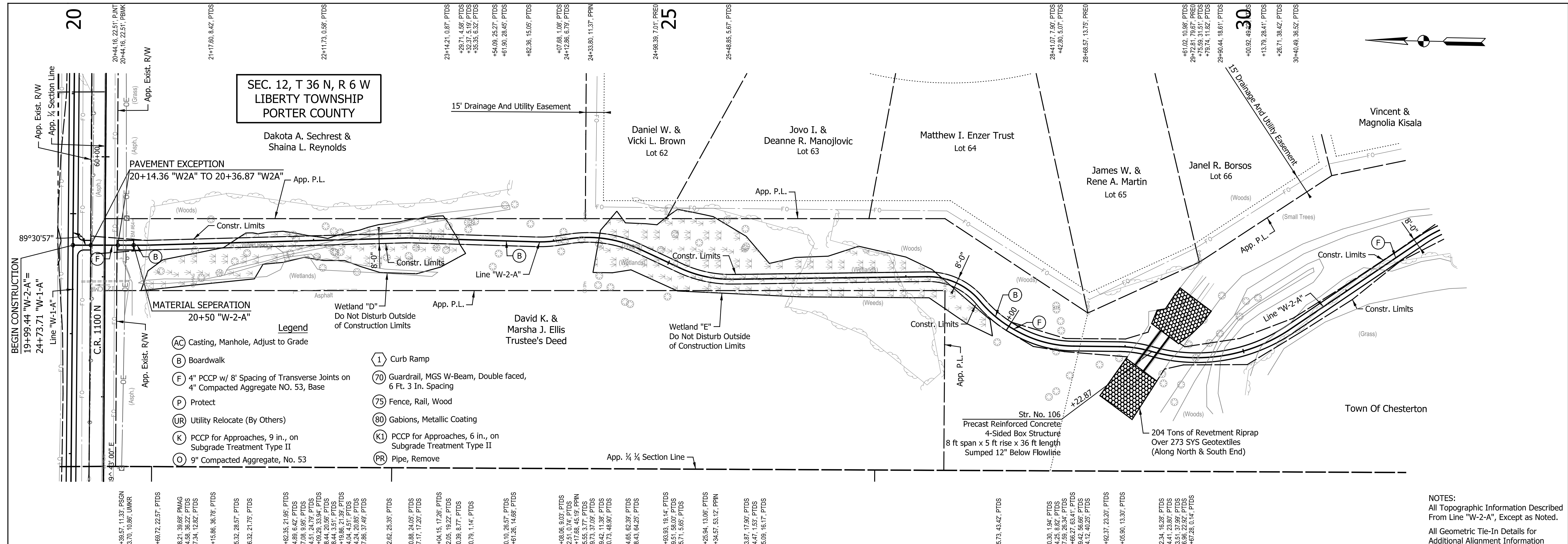
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RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: CAK	CHECKED: GAL
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

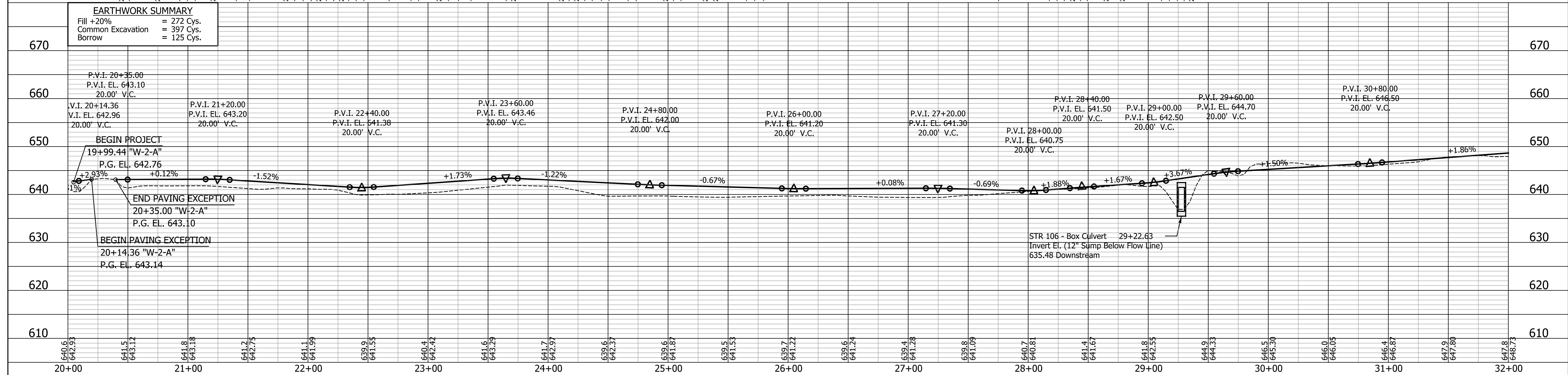
PLAN AND PROFILE
STA. 22+00.00 TO ST. 34+00 "W-1-A"

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
1" = 10'	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	13 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



- Legend**
- (AC) Casting, Manhole, Adjust to Grade
 - (B) Boardwalk
 - (F) 4" PCCP w/ 8' Spacing of Transverse Joints on 4" Compacted Aggregate NO. 53, Base
 - (P) Protect
 - (UR) Utility Relocate (By Others)
 - (K) PCCP for Approaches, 9 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (O) 9" Compacted Aggregate, No. 53
 - (1) Curb Ramp
 - (70) Guardrail, MGS W-Beam, Double faced, 6 Ft. 3 In. Spacing
 - (75) Fence, Rail, Wood
 - (80) Gabions, Metallic Coating
 - (K1) PCCP for Approaches, 6 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (PR) Pipe, Remove

NOTES:
 All Topographic Information Described From Line "W-2-A", Except as Noted.
 All Geometric Tie-In Details for Additional Alignment Information



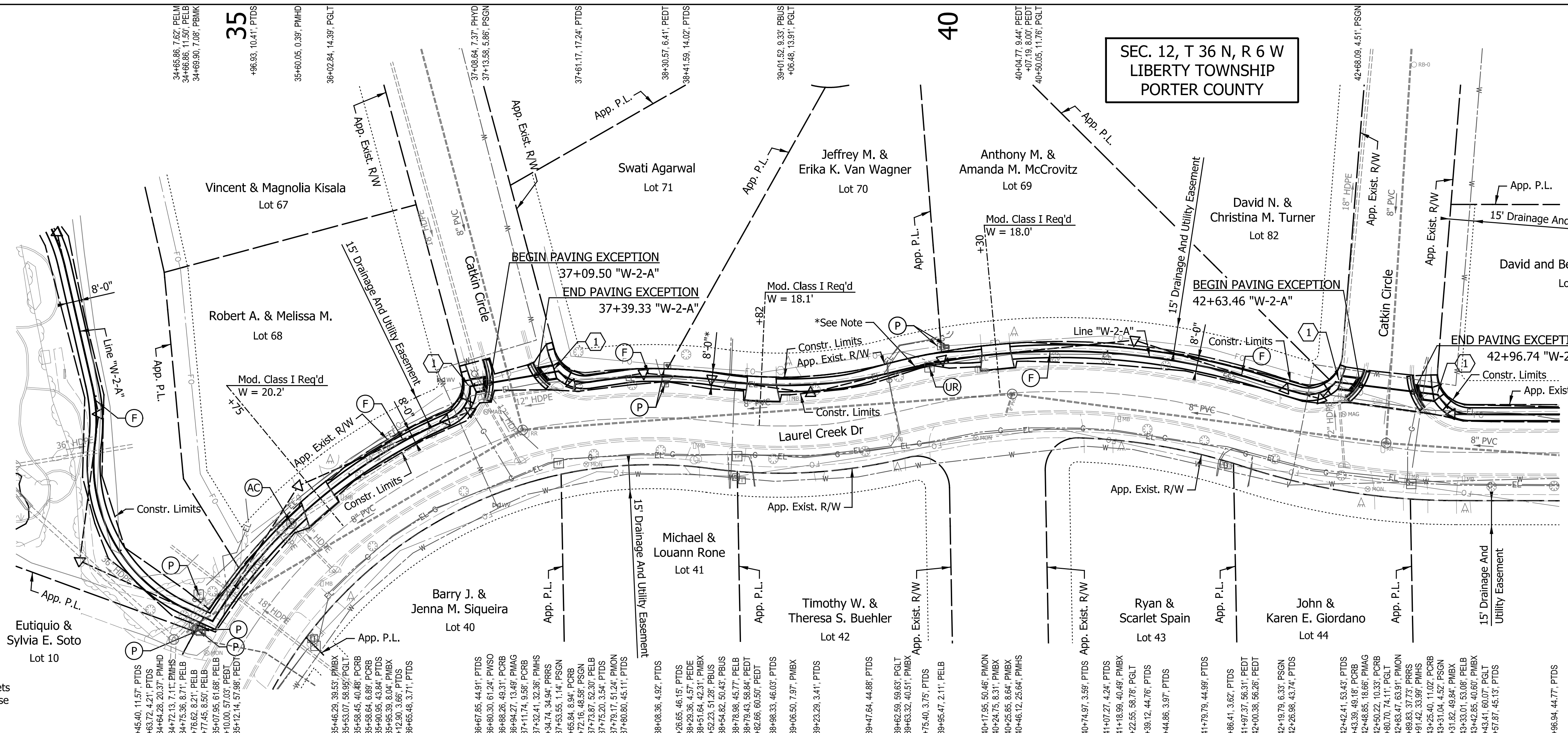
EARTHWORK SUMMARY

Fill +20%	=	272 Cys.
Common Excavation	=	397 Cys.
Borrow	=	125 Cys.

DATE	REVISION	RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE	
						1" = 40'	N/A	
					DESIGNED: JJS	VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION	
					DRAWN: CAK	1" = 10'	1902832	
					CHECKED: GAL	SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS	
					CHECKED: GAL	N/A	14 of 72	
					PLAN AND PROFILE		CONTRACT	PROJECT
					STA. 20+00.00 TO ST. 32+00.00 "W-2-A"		R-42649	1902832

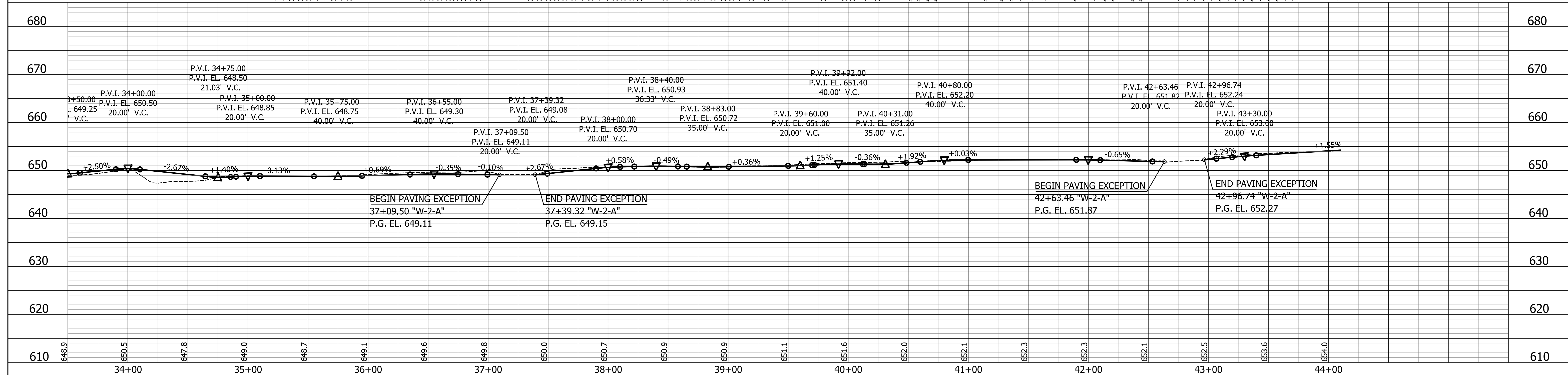
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SEC. 12, T 36 N, R 6 W
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY



- Legend**
- (AC) Casting, Manhole, Adjust to Grade
 - (B) Boardwalk
 - (F) 4" PCCP w/ 8' Spacing of Transverse Joints on 4" Compacted Aggregate NO. 53, Base
 - (P) Protect
 - (UR) Utility Relocate (By Others)
 - (K) PCCP for Approaches, 9 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (I) Curb Ramp
 - (70) Guardrail, MGS W-Beam, Double faced, 6 Ft. 3 In. Spacing
 - (75) Fence, Rail, Wood
 - (80) Gabions, Metallic Coating
 - (K1) PCCP for Approaches, 6 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (PR) Pipe, Remove
- NOTES:**
All Topographic Information Described From Line "W-2-A", Except as Noted.
All Geometric Tie-In Details for Additional Alignment Information

Note:
*See Spot Elevation Detail Sheets For This Area, Where Shared-Use Path does not follow "W-2-A"



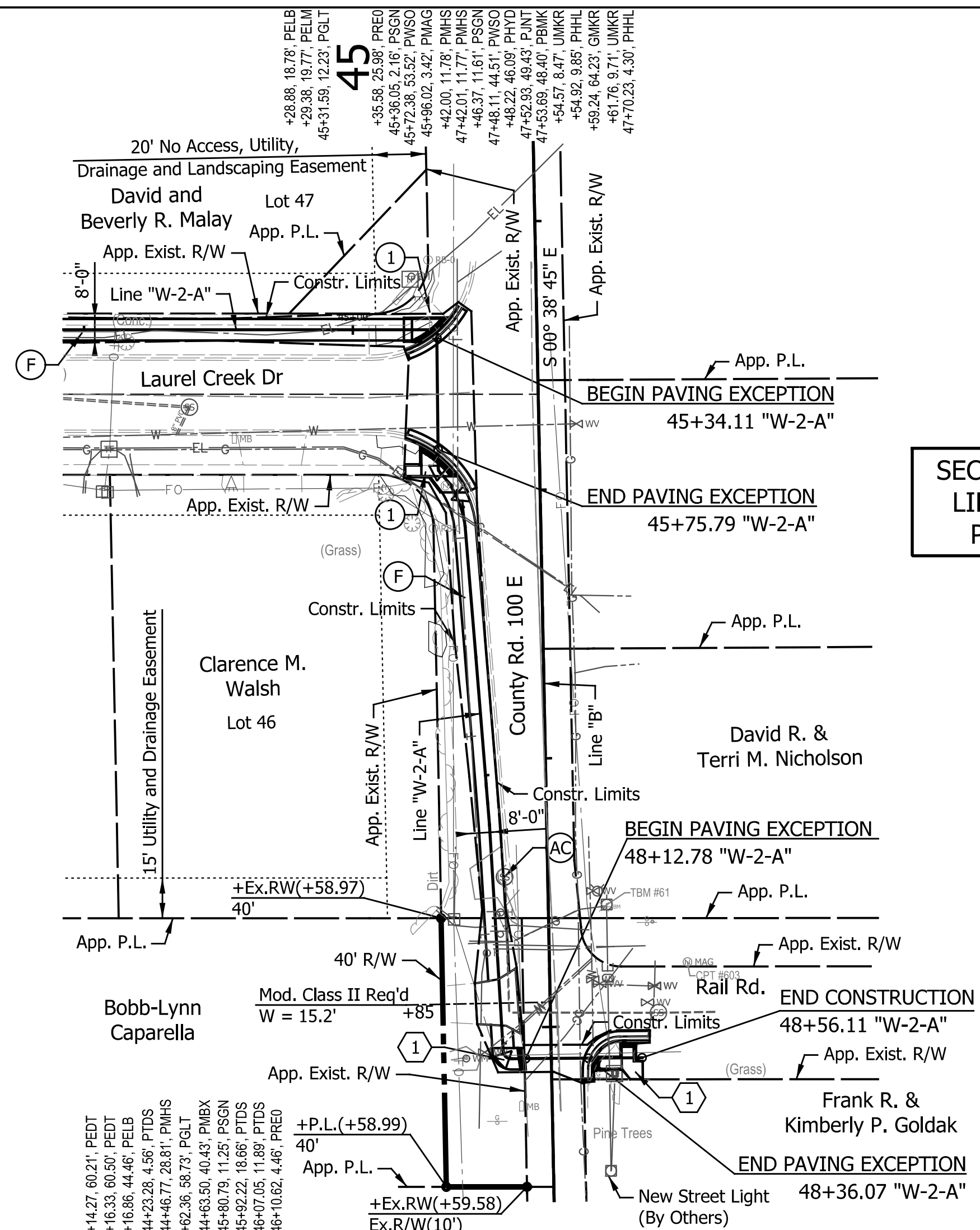
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: CAK	
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PLAN AND PROFILE
STA. 32+00.00 TO ST. 44+00.00 "W-2-A"

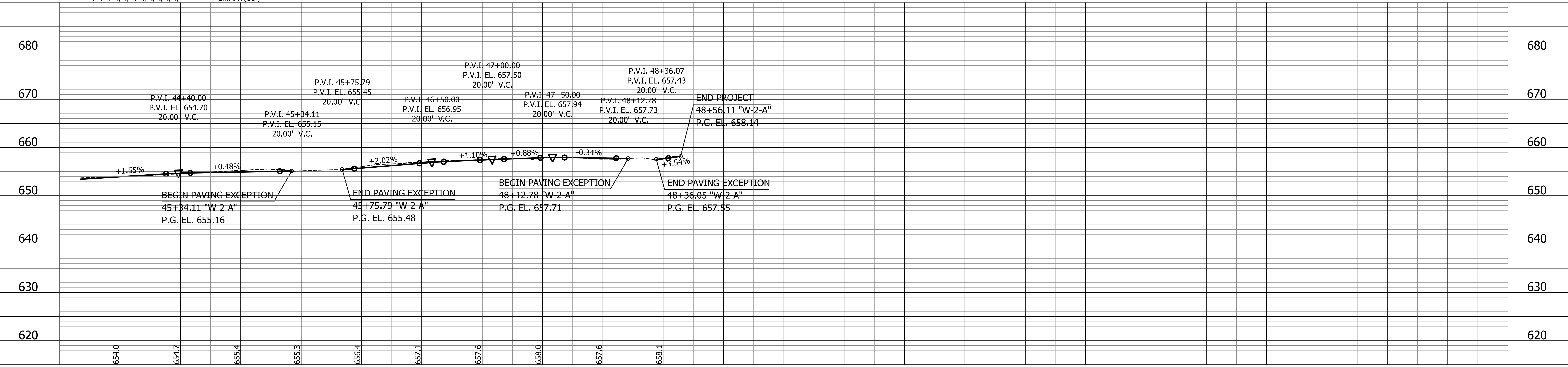
HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
1" = 10'	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	15 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



SEC. 12, T 36 N, R 6 W
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP
PORTER COUNTY

- Legend**
- (AC) Casting, Manhole, Adjust to Grade
 - (B) Boardwalk
 - (F) 4" PCCP w/ 8' Spacing of Transverse Joints on 4" Compacted Aggregate NO. 53, Base
 - (P) Protect
 - (UR) Utility Relocate (By Others)
 - (K) PCCP for Approaches, 9 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (O) 9" Compacted Aggregate, No. 53
 - (1) Curb Ramp
 - (70) Guardrail, MGS W-Beam, Double faced, 6 Ft. 3 In. Spacing
 - (75) Fence, Rail, Wood
 - (80) Gabions, Metallic Coating
 - (K1) PCCP for Approaches, 6 in., on Subgrade Treatment Type II
 - (PR) Pipe, Remove

NOTES:
All Topographic Information Described From Line "W-2-A", Except as Noted.
All Geometric Tie-In Details for Additional Alignment Information



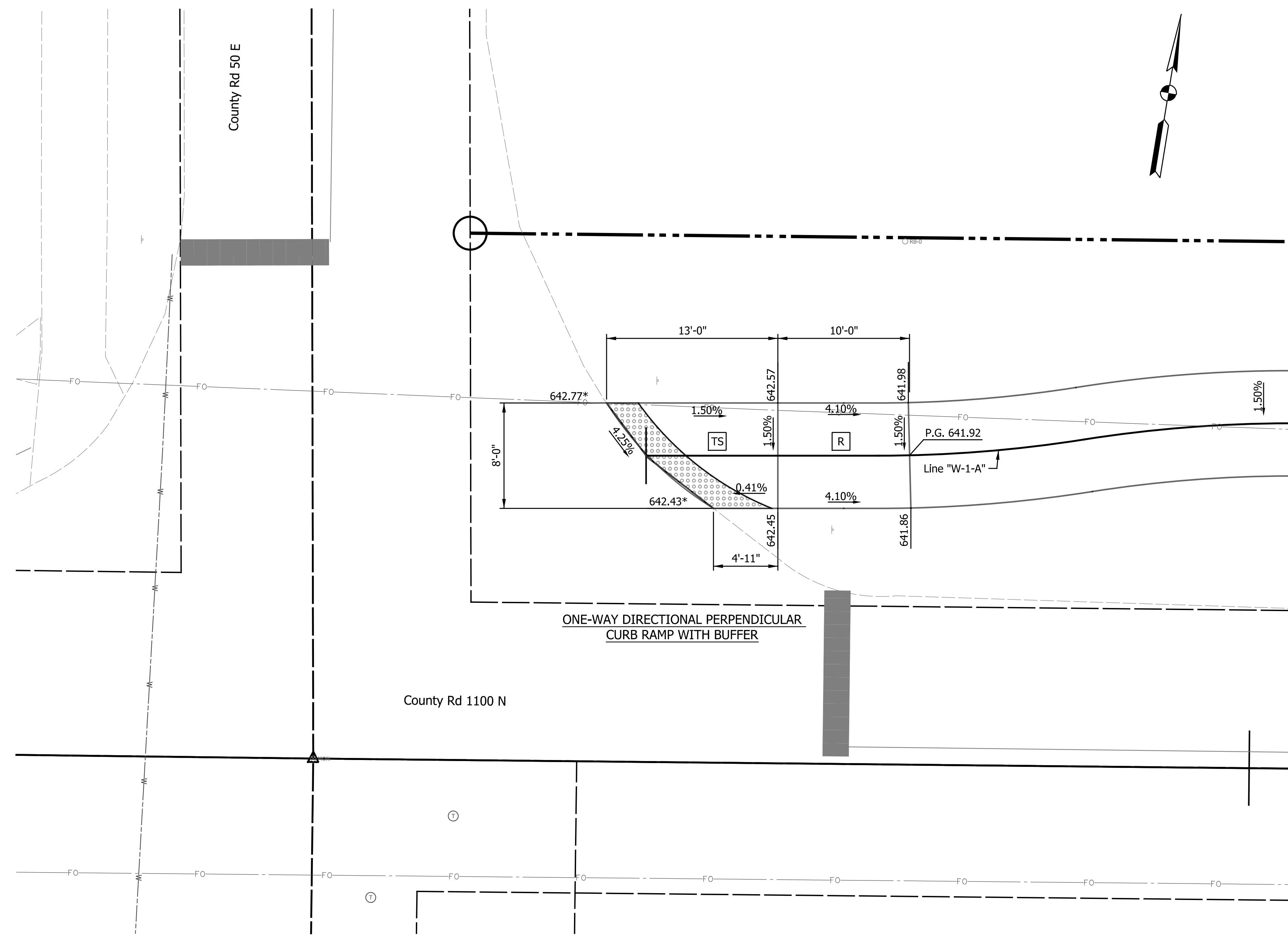
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: CAK	DATE
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PLAN AND PROFILE
STA. 44+00.00 TO ST. 47+80.97 "W-2-A"

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
1" = 10'	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	16 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



NOTES:

1. Curb Ramps Designed Per Standard Drawing Series E 604-SWCR
2. * Match Existing
3. Running Slope on Blended Transitions Shall Not Exceed 5.0%.
4. Flared Sides Shall Not Exceed a 10.0% Slope.
5. Cross Slopes Shall Not Exceed 1.5%.
6. If field conditions differ from topographic information shown on the plans, the Contractor shall consult the design engineer and make necessary field adjustments to comply with ADA standards.
7. Removal of existing Detectable Warning Surface and replacement of adjacent concrete curb ramp shall be included in the cost of retrofitting Detectable Warning Surface.
8. Survey Limits extend to the joint between the existing curb and gutter and pavement. Contractor to match existing elevation at edge of pavement.
9. See Typical Cross Sections for Patching Detail

LEGEND

	Direction of Slope		Patch
	Detectable Warning Surface		Curb & Gutter, Roll Curb, Modified
	Sodding		Curb & Gutter, Concrete, Modified
	Turning Space	B.C.	Bottom of Curb
	Flare Side	T.C.	Top of Curb
	Pedestrian Clear Space		Temp. Inlet Protection
	Curb Ramp		
	Clear Space - Cross Slope Shall Not Exceed 1.5% and Counter Slope Shall Not Exceed 5%		

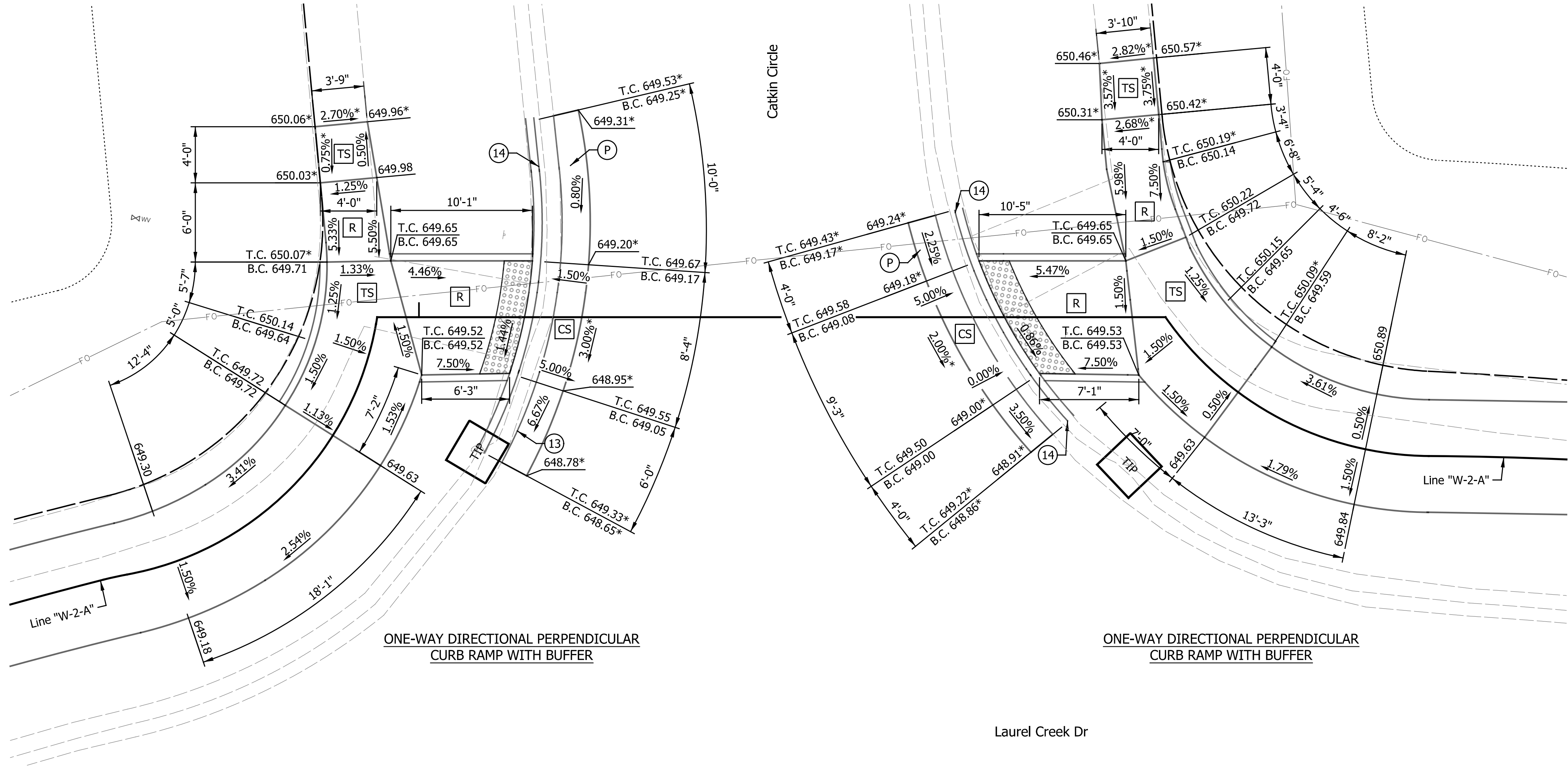
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY	DATE
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: JJS		
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL		

INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

CURB RAMP DETAILS

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 5'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	17 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



- NOTES:
1. Curb Ramps Designed Per Standard Drawing Series E 604-SWCR
 2. * Match Existing
 3. Running Slope on Blended Transitions Shall Not Exceed 5.0%.
 4. Flared Sides Shall Not Exceed a 10.0% Slope.
 5. Cross Slopes Shall Not Exceed 1.5%.
 6. If field conditions differ from topographic information shown on the plans, the Contractor shall consult the design engineer and make necessary field adjustments to comply with ADA standards.
 7. Removal of existing Detectable Warning Surface and replacement of adjacent concrete curb ramp shall be included in the cost of retrofitting Detectable Warning Surface.
 8. Survey Limits extend to the joint between the existing curb and gutter and pavement. Contractor to match existing elevation at edge of pavement.
 9. See Typical Cross Sections for Patching Detail

LEGEND

	Direction of Slope		Patch
	Detectable Warning Surface		Curb & Gutter, Roll Curb, Modified
	Sodding		Curb & Gutter, Concrete, Modified
	Turning Space	B.C.	Bottom of Curb
	Flare Side	T.C.	Top of Curb
	Pedestrian Clear Space		Temp. Inlet Protection
	Curb Ramp		
	Clear Space - Cross Slope Shall Not Exceed 1.5% and Counter Slope Shall Not Exceed 5%		

DATE	REVISION

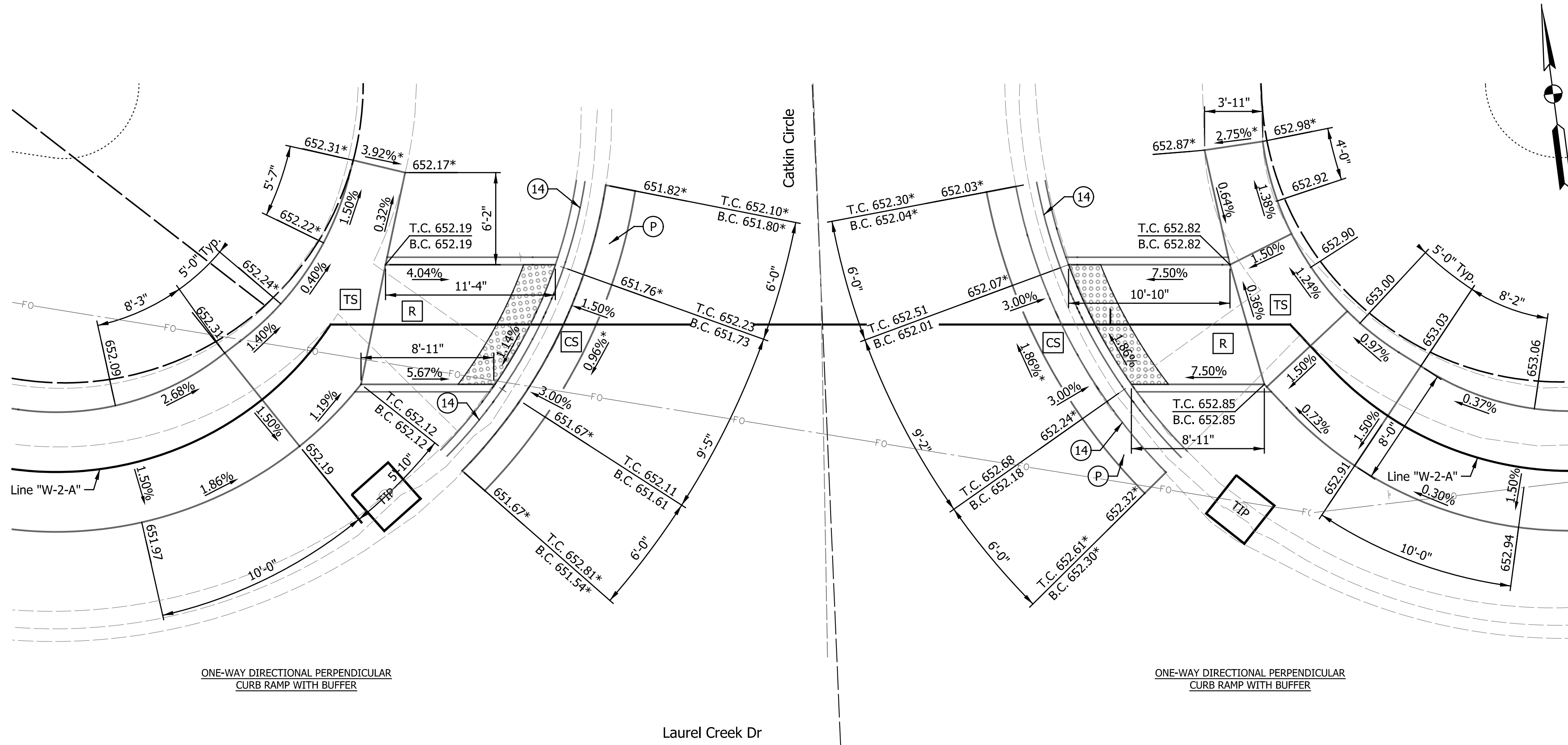
RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: JJS	DATE
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

**INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

CURB RAMP DETAILS

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 5'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	18 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832

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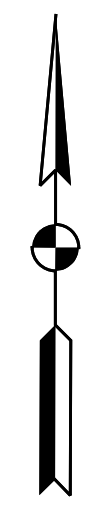
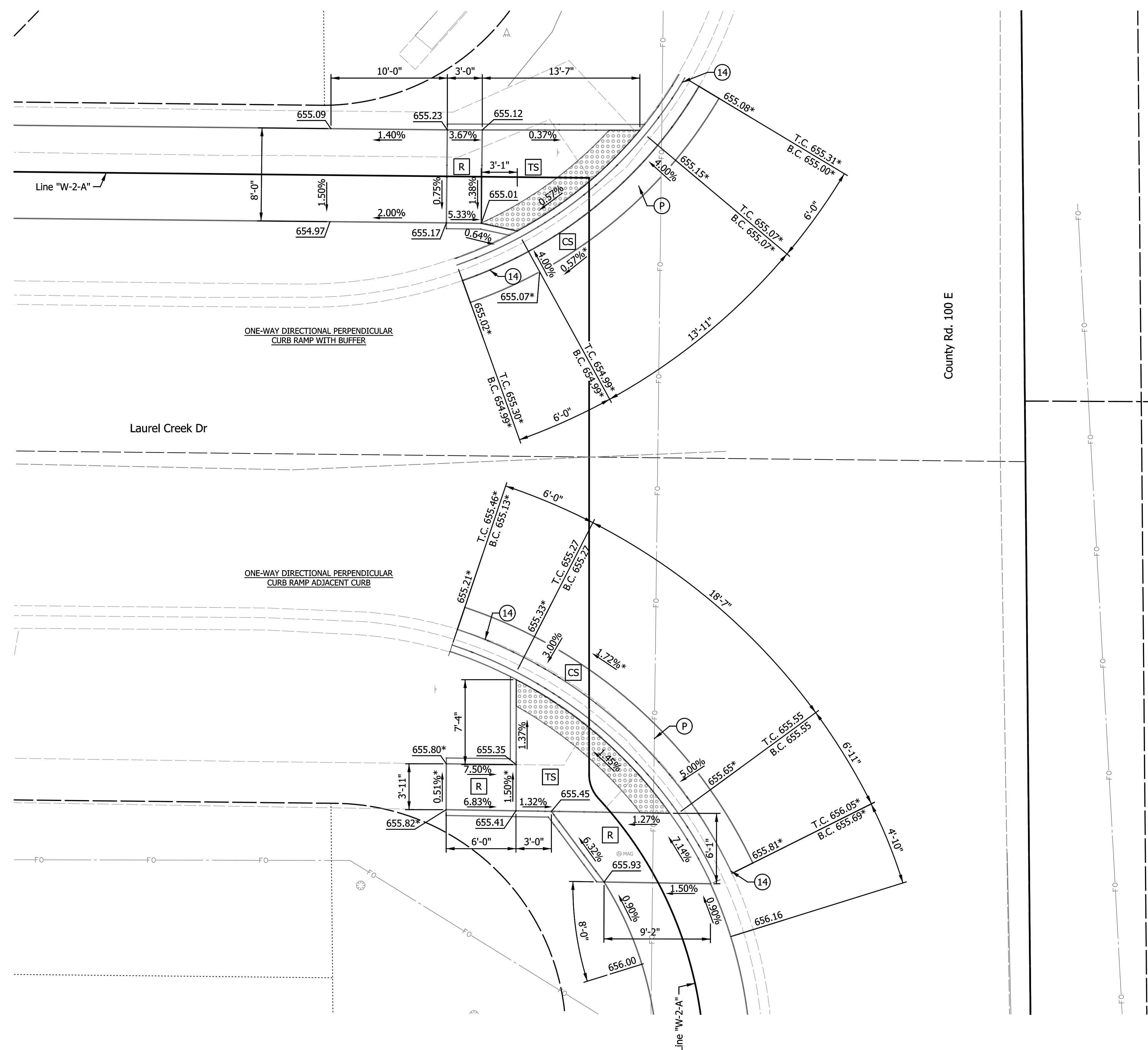
	Direction of Slope		Patch
	Detectable Warning Surface		Curb & Gutter, Roll Curb, Modified
	Sodding		Curb & Gutter, Concrete, Modified
	Turning Space	B.C.	Bottom of Curb
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	Pedestrian Clear Space		Temp. Inlet Protection
	Curb Ramp		
	Clear Space - Cross Slope Shall Not Exceed 1.5% and Counter Slope Shall Not Exceed 5%		

DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL _____	DESIGN ENGINEER _____	MM/DD/20YY _____	DATE _____
DESIGNED: _____ JJS _____	DRAWN: _____ JJS _____		
CHECKED: _____ GAL _____	CHECKED: _____ GAL _____		

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	
CURB RAMP DETAILS	

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 5'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	19 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



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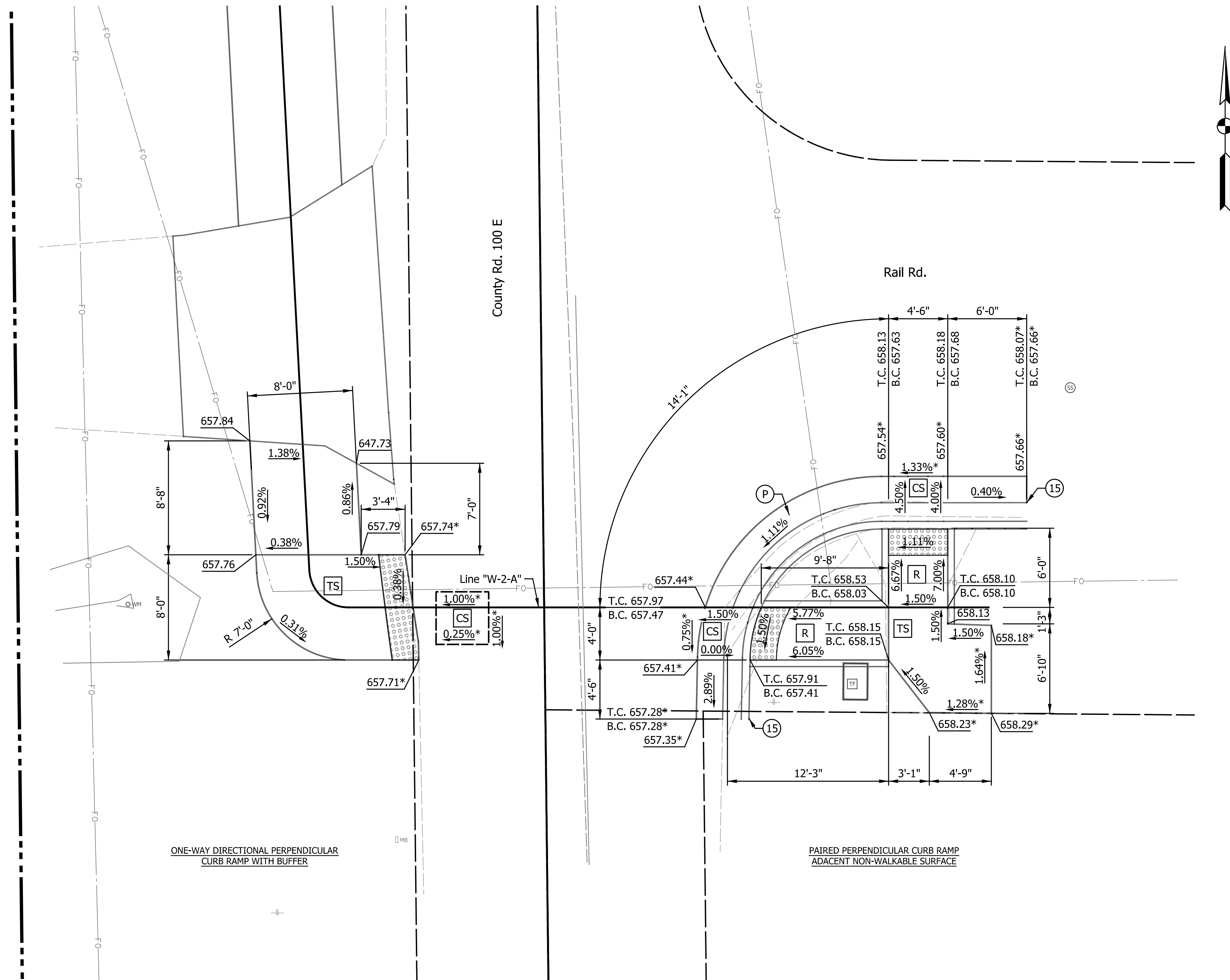
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: JJS	DATE
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

CURB RAMP DETAILS

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 5'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	20 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



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	Direction of Slope		Patch
	Detectable Warning Surface		Curb & Gutter, Roll Curb, Modified
	Sodding		Curb & Gutter, Concrete, Modified
	Turning Space	B.C.	Bottom of Curb
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RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL _____	DESIGN ENGINEER _____	MM/DD/20YY _____	DATE _____
DESIGNED: _____	JJS	DRAWN: _____	JJS
CHECKED: _____	GAL	CHECKED: _____	GAL

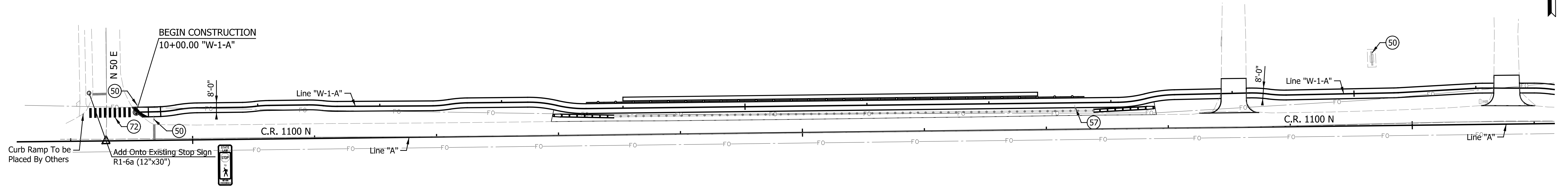
INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
VERTICAL SCALE	N/A
SURVEY BOOK	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
CONTRACT	SHEETS
R-42649	21 of 72
	PROJECT
	1902832

10

15

20

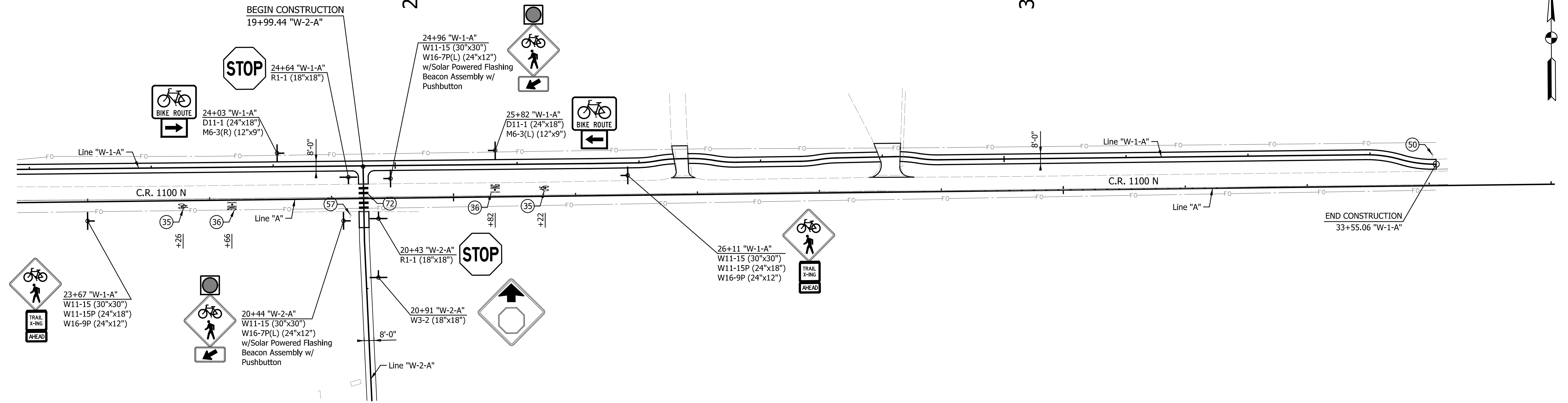


LEGEND:

- (35) Pavement Message Marking, Thermoplastic, Bike Symbol
- (36) Pavement Message Marking, Thermoplastic, "X-ING" Symbol
- (50) No Change Required to Existing Sign and Supports
- (56) Sign, Sheet and Supports Remove
- (57) Relocate Exist. Sheet Sign on New Supports
- (59) Existing Sheet on New Supports
- (72) Transverse Markings, Thermoplastic, Crosswalk Line, White, 24"
- Proposed Sheet Sign

25

30

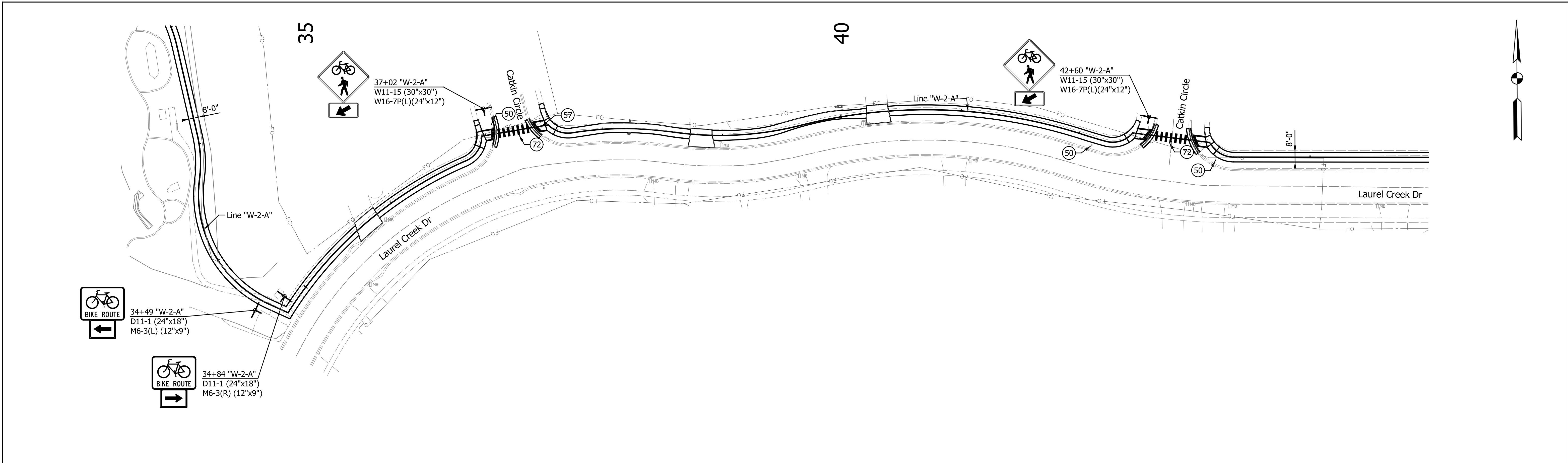


DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY
DESIGNED: LMZ	DRAWN: LMZ	DATE
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL	

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	
PAVEMENT MARKINGS AND SIGNING DETAILS	

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1" = 40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	24 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



- LEGEND:**
- Ⓟ Pavement Message Marking, Thermoplastic, Bike Symbol
 - Ⓟ Pavement Message Marking, Thermoplastic, "X-ING" Symbol
 - Ⓟ No Change Required to Existing Sign and Supports
 - Ⓟ Sign, Sheet and Supports Remove
 - Ⓟ Relocate Exist. Sheet Sign on New Supports
 - Ⓟ Existing Sheet on New Supports
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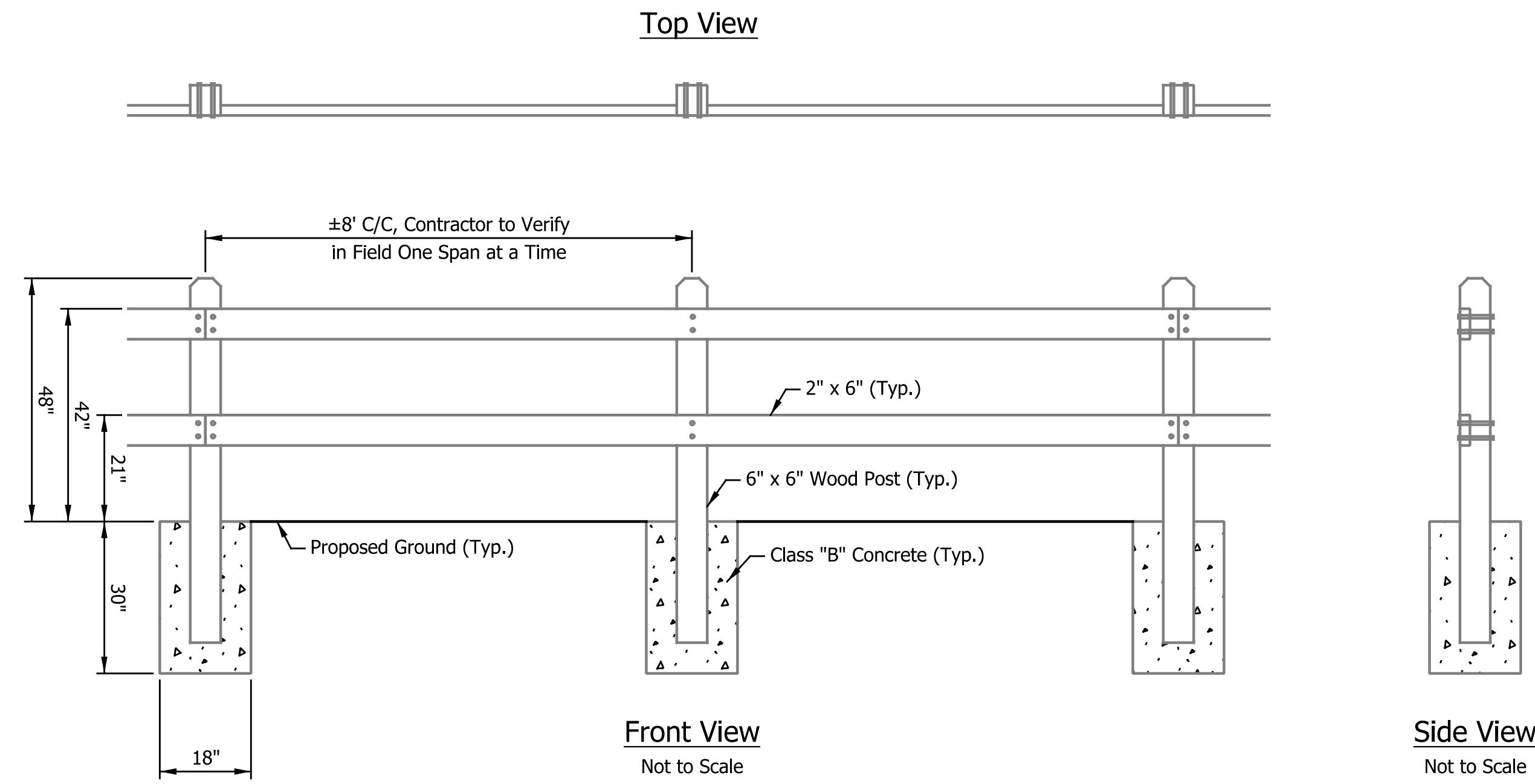
DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY	DATE
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: JJS		
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL		

**INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**PAVEMENT MARKINGS AND
SIGNING DETAILS**

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
1"=40'	N/A
VERTICAL SCALE	DESIGNATION
1"=40'	1902832
SURVEY BOOK	SHEETS
N/A	25 of 72
CONTRACT	PROJECT
R-42649	1902832



Fence, Wood, Split Rail, 42 in.
Sta. 13+70.00 to 17+78.00 LT. "W-1-A"

DATE	REVISION

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL _____	DESIGN ENGINEER	MM/DD/20YY	DATE
DESIGNED: JJS	DRAWN: JJS		
CHECKED: GAL	CHECKED: GAL		

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	
MISCELLANEOUS DETAILS	

HORIZONTAL SCALE	BRIDGE FILE
VERTICAL SCALE	N/A
SURVEY BOOK	DESIGNATION
N/A	1902832
CONTRACT	SHEETS
R-42649	26 of 72
	PROJECT
	1902832



February 3, 2021

Example Early Coordination Letter

Re: Des. No. 1902832, Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3
Chesterton, Westchester and Liberty Township, Porter County, Indiana

Dear Board Members:

The Town of Chesterton, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and administrative oversight from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), intends to proceed with the Westchester Trail Phase 3 project. This letter is part of the early coordination phase of the environmental review process. American Structurepoint, Inc., on behalf of the Town of Chesterton, is requesting comments from your area of expertise regarding any possible environmental effects associated with this project. **Please use the above designation number and description in your reply.** We will incorporate your comments into a study of the project's environmental impacts.

The proposed project would extend the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail beginning along the north side of CR 1100 N at 5th Street east to an existing sidewalk near CR 100 E. Approximately 0.30 mile west of SR 49, the proposed trail would also extend south generally along the west edge of the Tamarack subdivision for approximately 0.26 mile until turning east and connecting with the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. At the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 N, the trail corridor would continue south along the west side of CR 100 N for approximately 0.06 mile before crossing CR 100 E and connecting with the existing Wabash Corridor Trail, south of the CR 100 E and Rail Road intersection.

The purpose of this project is to complete the final phase of the Westchester-Liberty Trail, providing a continuous route along the trail corridor and connectivity to adjacent trails, including the Wabash Corridor Trail, which will eventually connect to the Dunes-Kankakee Trail.

The proposed project would consist of extending the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail as described above, completing the final section. The trail would be eight feet in width, constructed of concrete on top of compacted aggregate. Curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Culverts would likely be added at the stream crossing west of the Tamarack subdivision and other various locations to allow for drainage underneath the trail. Additionally, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with a new 8-foot-wide trail. It is anticipated that the project would require the acquisition of more than 0.5 acre of additional right-of-way. No relocations are anticipated as a result of this project.

Land use within the proposed project area is primarily wooded with some residential areas south of CR 1100 N. A wetland delineation and waters investigation will be performed to identify ecological resources that may be present. Coordination for the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat will be completed using the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consulting (IPaC) system, and the results of the IPaC determination will be reviewed by the USFWS. The project area will be evaluated in regards to archaeological and historic resources for Section 106 compliance. The result of any cultural resource evaluations/investigations will be forwarded to the State Historic Preservation Officer for review and concurrence as required.

American Structurepoint, on behalf of the Town of Chesterton, is requesting comments regarding any possible environmental effects associated with this project. Should we not receive your response within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this letter, it will be assumed that your agency feels that there will be no adverse effects incurred as a result of the proposed project. However, should you find that an extension to the response time is necessary, a reasonable amount may be granted upon request. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Kylie Bright, American Structurepoint, by phone at (317) 547-5580 or e-mail at kbright@structurepoint.com, or Mark O'Dell, Town of Chesterton Engineer, by phone at (219) 926-2610 or e-mail at modell@chestertonin.org. Thank you in advance for your input.

Very truly yours,
American Structurepoint, Inc.



Kylie R. Bright
Environmental Specialist
Environmental Services Group

KRB:mgn

Enclosures

State Location Map
USGS Topographic Map – Chesterton Quadrangle
2018 Aerial Photography and Photo Locations

Note: State Location Map and Photographs can be found in Appendix B.

Distribution List

US Natural Resources Conservation Service
Indiana Geological Survey
National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office
Federal Highway Administration
US Department of Housing and Urban Development
Indiana Department of Environmental Management
IDNR, Division of Fish and Wildlife
IDNR, Floodplain Administrator
~~IDNR, Lake Michigan Coastal Program~~
INDOT, LaPorte District
INDOT, Environmental Services
US Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

This was a mistake. This letter was sent to the Porter County Floodplain Administrator with Porter County Plan Commission (not IDNR). Additionally, this letter was NOT sent to IDNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program.

Early Coordination Request

Page 3

February 3, 2021

Porter County Highway Department
Porter County Drainage Board
Porter County Surveyor
Porter County Sheriff
Porter County Emergency Management
Town of Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department
Chesterton MS4 Coordinator
Duneland School Corporation
Chesterton Fire Department
Chesterton Police Department

Note:

The coordination with IDEM and IGS was completed on February 10, 2021.

On February 3, 2021 this letter was also sent to Chesterton Town Council and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

On April 16, 2021 this letter was also sent to River Church (formerly New Life Wesleyan Church).

On April 30, 2021 this letter was also sent to Indiana American Water Northwest.

On January 19, 2022 this letter was also sent to IDEM, Office of Water Quality.

Bright, Kylie

From: Michels, Stewart <SMichels@indot.IN.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 11:12 AM
To: Bright, Kylie
Cc: Hope, Briana
Subject: RE: Early Coordination Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832)

Kylie,

Thank you for providing a copy of the early coordination letter for Des 1902832 to the LaPorte District Environmental Services. We do not have any comment at this time. Thank you, again, for contacting us.

Regards,

Stew

From: Bright, Kylie <kbright@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 12:13 PM
To: Michels, Stewart <SMichels@indot.IN.gov>
Cc: Hope, Briana <bhope@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Early Coordination Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832)

**** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email. ****

Mr. Michels,

Please find attached an Early Coordination letter for the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832) located in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. Please review the attached information and supply our office with any comments you may have regarding the proposed project.

Sincerely,

Kylie Bright
Environmental Specialist

9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.294.5695 [CELL](#)
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



Best Places to Work in Indiana
Best Employers in Ohio

DISCLAIMER: This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If you are not the named addressee, you should not disseminate, distribute, utilize, or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake, and delete this e-mail from your system. No design changes or decisions made by e-mail shall be considered part of the contract documents unless otherwise specified, and all design changes and/or decisions made by e-mail must be submitted as an RFI or a submittal unless otherwise

Bright, Kylie

From: Eric Camel <ecamel@chestertonfire.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 9, 2021 1:57 PM
To: Bright, Kylie
Subject: Phase 3

Kylie,
I was able to look over the Phase 3 and see no issues with the project.
Chief Camel

--

Eric Camel
Fire Chief
Town of Chesterton
702 Broadway
Chesterton, IN 46304
219-926-7162 - station
219-246-8223 - cellular



Indiana Department of Environmental Management

We Protect Hoosiers and Our Environment.

100 North Senate Avenue - Indianapolis, IN 46204
(800) 451-6027 - (317) 232-8603 - www.idem.IN.gov

Town of Chesterton
Mark O'Dell
726 Broadway
Chesterton, IN 46304

American Structurepoint, Inc.
Kylie Bright
9025 River Road
Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Date

To Engineers and Consultants Proposing Roadway Construction Projects:

RE: The proposed project would extend the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail beginning along the north side of CR 1100 North 5th Street east to an existing sidewalk near CR N 100 E. Approximately 0.30 mile west of SR 49, the proposed trail would also extend south generally along the west edge of the Tamarack subdivision for approximately 0.26 mile until turning east and connecting with the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. At the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 N, the trail corridor would continue south along the west side of CR 100 N for approximately 0.06 mile before crossing CR 100 E and connecting with the existing Wabash Corridor Trail, south of the CR 100 E and Rail Road intersection. The proposed project would consist of extending the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail as described above, completing the final section. The trail would be eight feet in width, constructed of concrete on top of compacted aggregate. Curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Culverts would likely be added at the stream crossing west of the Tamarack subdivision and other various locations to allow for drainage underneath the trail. Additionally, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with a new 8-foot-wide trail. It is anticipated that the project would require the acquisition of more than 0.5 acre of additional right-of-way. No relocations are anticipated as a result of this project.

This letter from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) serves as a standardized response to enquiries inviting IDEM comments on roadway construction, reconstruction, or other improvement projects within existing roadway corridors when the proposed scope of the project is beneath the threshold requiring a formal National Environmental Policy Act-mandated Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. As the letter attempts to address all roadway-related environmental topics of potential concern, it is possible that not every topic addressed in the letter will be applicable to your particular roadway project.

For additional information on specific roadway-related topics of interest, please visit the appropriate Web pages cited below, many of which provide contact information for persons within the various program areas who can answer questions not fully addressed in this letter. Also please be mindful that some environmental requirements may be subject to change and so each person intending to include a copy of this letter in their project documentation packet is advised to download the most recently revised version of the letter; found at: <http://www.in.gov/idem/5283.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/5283.htm>)

To ensure that all environmentally-related issues are adequately addressed, IDEM recommends that you read this letter in its entirety, and consider each of the following issues as you move forward with the planning of your proposed roadway construction, reconstruction, or improvement project:

WATER AND BIOTIC QUALITY

1. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires that you obtain a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) before discharging dredged or fill materials into any wetlands or other waters, such as rivers, lakes, streams, and ditches. Other activities regulated include the relocation, channelization, widening, or other such alteration of a stream, and the mechanical clearing (use of heavy construction equipment) of wetlands. Thus, as project owner or sponsor, it is your responsibility to ensure that no wetlands are disturbed without the proper permit. Although you may initially refer to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory maps as a means of identifying potential areas of concern, please be mindful that those maps do not depict jurisdictional wetlands regulated by the USACE or the Department of Environmental Management. A valid jurisdictional wetlands determination can only be made by the USACE, using the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual

USACE recommends that you have a consultant check to determine whether your project will abut, or lie within, a wetland area. To view a list of consultants that have requested to be included on a list posted by the USACE on their Web site, see USACE Permits and Public Notices (<http://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/orf/default.asp>) (<http://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/orf/default.asp>) and then click on "Information" from the menu on the right-hand side of that page. Their "Consultant List" is the fourth entry down on the "Information" page. Please note that the USACE posts all consultants that request to appear on the list, and that inclusion of any particular consultant on the list does not represent an endorsement of that consultant by the USACE, or by IDEM.

Much of northern Indiana (Newton, Lake, Porter, LaPorte, St. Joseph, Elkhart, LaGrange, Steuben, and DeKalb counties; large portions of Jasper, Starke, Marshall, Noble, Allen, and Adams counties; and lesser portions of Benton, White, Pulaski, Kosciusko, and Wells counties) is served by the USACE District Office in Detroit (313-226-6812). The central and southern portions of the state (large portions of Benton, White, Pulaski, Kosciusko, and Wells counties; smaller portions of Jasper, Starke, Marshall, Noble, Allen, and Adams counties; and all other Indiana counties located in north-central, central, and southern Indiana) are served by the USACE Louisville District Office (502-315-6733).

Additional information on contacting these U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) District Offices, government agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands, and other water quality issues, can be found at <http://www.in.gov/idem/4396.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4396.htm>). IDEM recommends that impacts to wetlands and other water resources be avoided to the fullest extent.

2. In the event a Section 404 wetlands permit is required from the USACE, you also must obtain a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the IDEM Office of Water Quality Wetlands Program. To learn more about the Wetlands Program, visit: <http://www.in.gov/idem/4384.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4384.htm>).
3. If the USACE determines that a wetland or other water body is isolated and not subject to Clean Water Act regulation, it is still regulated by the state of Indiana. A State Isolated Wetland permit from IDEM's Office of Water Quality (OWQ) is required for any activity that results in the discharge of dredged or fill materials into isolated wetlands. To learn more about isolated wetlands, contact the OWQ Wetlands Program at 317-233-8488.
4. If your project will involve over a 0.5 acre of wetland impact, stream relocation, or other large-scale alterations to water bodies such as the creation of a dam or a water diversion, you should seek additional input from the OWQ Wetlands Program staff. Consult the Web at: <http://www.in.gov/idem/4384.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4384.htm>) for the appropriate staff contact to further discuss your project.
5. Work within the one-hundred year floodway of a given water body is regulated by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water. The Division issues permits for activities regulated under the following statutes:
 - o IC 14-26-2 Lakes Preservation Act 312 IAC 11
 - o IC 14-26-5 Lowering of Ten Acre Lakes Act No related code
 - o IC 14-28-1 Flood Control Act 310 IAC 6-1
 - o IC 14-29-1 Navigable Waterways Act 312 IAC 6
 - o IC 14-29-3 Sand and Gravel Permits Act 312 IAC 6
 - o IC 14-29-4 Construction of Channels Act No related code

For information on these Indiana (statutory) Code and Indiana Administrative Code citations, see the DNR Web site at: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/water/9451.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/dnr/water/9451.htm>). Contact the DNR Division of Water at 317-232-4160 for further information.

The physical disturbance of the stream and riparian vegetation, especially large trees overhanging any affected water bodies should be limited to only that which is absolutely necessary to complete the project. The shade provided by the large overhanging trees helps maintain proper stream temperatures and dissolved oxygen for aquatic life.

6. For projects involving construction activity (which includes clearing, grading, excavation and other land disturbing activities) that result in the disturbance of one (1), or more, acres of total land area, contact the Office of Water Quality – Watershed Planning Branch (317/233-1864) regarding the need for a Rule 5 Storm Water Runoff Permit. Visit the following Web page
 - o <http://www.in.gov/idem/4902.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4902.htm>)

To obtain, and operate under, a Rule 5 permit you will first need to develop a Construction Plan (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4917.htm#constreq> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4917.htm#constreq>)), and as described in 327 IAC 15-5-6.5 (<http://www.in.gov/legislative/iac/T03270/A00150> [PDF] (<http://www.in.gov/legislative/iac/T03270/A00150.PDF>), pages 16 through 19). Before you may apply for a Rule 5 Permit, or begin construction, you must submit your Construction Plan to your county Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) (<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/contacts/map.html> (<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/contacts/map.html>)).

Upon receipt of the construction plan, personnel of the SWCD or the Indiana Department of Environmental Management will review the plan to determine if it meets the requirements of 327 IAC 15-5. Plans that are deemed deficient will require re-submittal. If the plan is sufficient you will be notified and instructed to submit the verification to IDEM as part of the Rule 5 Notice of Intent (NOI) submittal. Once construction begins, staff of the SWCD or Indiana Department of Environmental Management will perform inspections of activities at the site for compliance with the regulation.

Please be mindful that approximately 149 Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) areas are now being established by various local governmental entities throughout the state as part of the implementation of Phase II federal storm water requirements. All of these MS4 areas will eventually take responsibility for Construction Plan review, inspection, and enforcement. As these MS4 areas obtain program approval from IDEM, they will be added to a list of MS4 areas posted on the IDEM Website at: <http://www.in.gov/idem/4900.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4900.htm>).

If your project is located in an IDEM-approved MS4 area, please contact the local MS4 program about meeting their storm water requirements. Once the MS4 approves the plan, the NOI can be submitted to IDEM.

Regardless of the size of your project, or which agency you work with to meet storm water requirements, IDEM recommends that appropriate structures and techniques be utilized both during the construction phase, and after completion of the project, to minimize the impacts associated with storm water runoff. The use of appropriate planning and site development and appropriate storm water quality measures are recommended to prevent soil from leaving the construction site during active land disturbance and for post construction water quality concerns. Information and assistance regarding storm water related to construction activities are available from the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) offices in each county or from IDEM.

7. For projects involving impacts to fish and botanical resources, contact the Department of Natural Resources - Division of Fish and Wildlife (317/232-4080) for additional project input.
8. For projects involving water main construction, water main extensions, and new public water supplies, contact the Office of Water Quality - Drinking Water Branch (317-308-3299) regarding the need for permits.
9. For projects involving effluent discharges to waters of the State of Indiana, contact the Office of Water Quality - Permits Branch (317-233-0468) regarding the need for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.
10. For projects involving the construction of wastewater facilities and sewer lines, contact the Office of Water Quality - Permits Branch (317-232-8675) regarding the need for permits.

AIR QUALITY

The above-noted project should be designed to minimize any impact on ambient air quality in, or near, the project area. The project must comply with all federal and state air pollution regulations. Consideration should be given to the following:

1. Regarding open burning, and disposing of organic debris generated by land clearing activities; some types of open burning are allowed (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4148.htm>) under specific conditions. You also can seek an open burning variance from IDEM.

However, IDEM generally recommends that you take vegetative wastes to a registered yard waste composting facility or that the waste be chipped or shredded with composting on site (you must register with IDEM if more than 2,000 pounds is to be composted; contact 317/232-0066). The finished compost can then be used as a mulch or soil amendment. You also may bury any vegetative wastes (such as leaves, twigs, branches, limbs, tree trunks and stumps) onsite, although burying large quantities of such material can lead to subsidence problems, later on.

Reasonable precautions must be taken to minimize fugitive dust emissions from construction and demolition activities. For example, wetting the area with water, constructing wind barriers, or treating dusty areas with chemical stabilizers (such as calcium chloride or several other commercial products). Dirt tracked onto paved roads from unpaved areas should be minimized.

Additionally, if construction or demolition is conducted in a wooded area where blackbirds have roosted or abandoned buildings or building sections in which pigeons or bats have roosted for 3-5 years precautionary measures should be taken to avoid an outbreak of histoplasmosis. This disease is caused by the fungus *Histoplasma capsulatum*, which stems from bird or bat droppings that have accumulated in one area for 3-5 years. The spores from this fungus become airborne when the area is disturbed and can cause infections over an entire community downwind of the site. The area should be wetted down prior to cleanup or demolition of the project site. For more detailed information on histoplasmosis prevention and control, please contact the Acute Disease Control Division of the Indiana State Department of Health at (317) 233-7272.

2. The U.S. EPA and the Surgeon General recommend that people not have long-term exposure to radon levels above 4 pCi/L. (For a county-by-county map of predicted radon levels in Indiana, visit: <http://www.in.gov/idem/4145.htm>.)

The U.S. EPA further recommends that all homes (and apartments within three stories of ground level) be tested for radon. If in-home radon levels are determined to be 4 pCi/L, or higher, EPA recommends a follow-up test. If the second test confirms that radon levels are 4 pCi/L, or higher, EPA recommends the installation of radon-reduction measures. (For a list of qualified radon testers and radon mitigation (or reduction) specialists visit: http://www.in.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/pdfs/radon_testers_mitigators_list.pdf.) It also is recommended that radon reduction measures be built into all new homes, particularly in areas like Indiana that have moderate to high predicted radon levels.

To learn more about radon, radon risks, and ways to reduce exposure visit: <http://www.in.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/radon.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/radon.htm>), <http://www.in.gov/idem/4145.htm>, or <http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html>.

3. With respect to asbestos removal: all facilities slated for renovation or demolition (except residential buildings that have (4) four or fewer dwelling units and which will not be used for commercial purposes) must be inspected by an Indiana-licensed asbestos inspector prior to

the commencement of any renovation or demolition activities. If regulated asbestos-containing material (RACM) that may become airborne is found, any subsequent demolition, renovation, or asbestos removal activities must be performed in accordance with the proper notification and emission control requirements.

If no asbestos is found where a renovation activity will occur, or if the renovation involves removal of less than 260 linear feet of RACM off of pipes, less than 160 square feet of RACM off of other facility components, or less than 35 cubic feet of RACM off of all facility components, the owner or operator of the project does not need to notify IDEM before beginning the renovation activity.

For questions on asbestos demolition and renovation activities, you can also call IDEM's Lead/Asbestos section at 1-888-574-8150.

However, in all cases where a demolition activity will occur (even if no asbestos is found), the owner or operator must still notify IDEM 10 working days prior to the demolition, using the form found at <http://www.in.gov/icpr/webfile/formsdiv/44593.pdf> (<http://www.in.gov/icpr/webfile/formsdiv/44593.pdf>).

Anyone submitting a renovation/demolition notification form will be billed a notification fee based upon the amount of friable asbestos containing material to be removed or demolished. Projects that involve the removal of more than 2,600 linear feet of friable asbestos containing materials on pipes, or 1,600 square feet or 400 cubic feet of friable asbestos containing material on other facility components, will be billed a fee of \$150 per project; projects below these amounts will be billed a fee of \$50 per project. All notification remitters will be billed on a quarterly basis.

For more information about IDEM policy regarding asbestos removal and disposal, visit <http://www.in.gov/idem/4983.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4983.htm>).

4. With respect to lead-based paint removal: IDEM encourages all efforts to minimize human exposure to lead-based paint chips and dust. IDEM is particularly concerned that young children exposed to lead can suffer from learning disabilities. Although lead-based paint abatement efforts are not mandatory, any abatement that is conducted within housing built before January 1, 1978, or a child-occupied facility is required to comply with all lead-based paint work practice standards, licensing and notification requirements. For more information about lead-based paint removal visit: <http://www.in.gov/isdh/19131.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/isdh/19131.htm>).
5. Ensure that asphalt paving plants are permitted and operate properly. The use of cutback asphalt, or asphalt emulsion containing more than seven percent (7%) oil distillate, is prohibited during the months April through October. See 326 IAC 8-5-2, Asphalt Paving Rule (<http://www.ais.org/legislative/iac/T03260/A00080.PDF>) (<http://www.ais.org/legislative/iac/T03260/A00080.PDF>).
6. If your project involves the construction of a new source of air emissions or the modification of an existing source of air emissions or air pollution control equipment, it will need to be reviewed by the IDEM Office of Air Quality (OAQ). A registration or permit may be required under 326 IAC 2 (View at: www.ais.org/legislative/iac/t03260/a00020.pdf) (<http://www.ais.org/legislative/iac/t03260/a00020.pdf>.) New sources that use or emit hazardous air pollutants may be subject to Section 112 of the Clean Air Act and corresponding state air regulations governing hazardous air pollutants.
7. For more information on air permits visit: <http://www.in.gov/idem/4223.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4223.htm>), or to initiate the IDEM air permitting process, please contact the Office of Air Quality Permit Reviewer of the Day at (317) 233-0178 or OAMPROD@dem.state.in.us.

LAND QUALITY

In order to maintain compliance with all applicable laws regarding contamination and/or proper waste disposal, IDEM recommends that:

1. If the site is found to contain any areas used to dispose of solid or hazardous waste, you need to contact the Office of Land Quality (OLQ) at 317-308-3103.
2. All solid wastes generated by the project, or removed from the project site, need to be taken to a properly permitted solid waste processing or disposal facility. For more information, visit <http://www.in.gov/idem/4998.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4998.htm>).
3. If any contaminated soils are discovered during this project, they may be subject to disposal as hazardous waste. Please contact the OLQ at 317-308-3103 to obtain information on proper disposal procedures.
4. If PCBs are found at this site, please contact the Industrial Waste Section of OLQ at 317-308-3103 for information regarding management of any PCB wastes from this site.
5. If there are any asbestos disposal issues related to this site, please contact the Industrial Waste Section of OLQ at 317-308-3103 for information regarding the management of asbestos wastes (Asbestos removal is addressed above, under Air Quality).
6. If the project involves the installation or removal of an underground storage tank, or involves contamination from an underground storage tank, you must contact the IDEM Underground Storage Tank program at 317/308-3039. See: <http://www.in.gov/idem/4999.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/4999.htm>).

FINAL REMARKS

Should you need to obtain any environmental permits in association with this proposed project, please be mindful that IC 13-15-8 requires that you notify all adjoining property owners and/or occupants within ten days your submittal of each permit application. However, if you are seeking multiple permits, you can still meet the notification requirement with a single notice if all required permit applications are submitted with the same ten day period.

Should the scope of the proposed project be expanded to the extent that a National Environmental Policy Act Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required, IDEM will actively participate in any early interagency coordination review of the project.

Meanwhile, please note that this letter does not constitute a permit, license, endorsement or any other form of approval on the part of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management regarding any project for which a copy of this letter is used. Also note that it is the responsibility of the project engineer or consultant using this letter to ensure that the most current draft of this document, which is located at <http://www.in.gov/idem/5284.htm> (<http://www.in.gov/idem/5284.htm>), is used.

Signature(s) of the Applicant

I acknowledge that the following proposed roadway project will be financed in part, or in whole, by public monies.

Project Description

The proposed project would extend the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail beginning along the north side of CR 1100 N at 5th Street east to an existing sidewalk near CR N 100 E. Approximately 0.30 mile west of SR 49, the proposed trail would also extend south generally along the west edge of the Tamarack subdivision for approximately 0.26 mile until turning east and connecting with the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. At the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 N, the trail corridor would continue south along the west side of CR 100 N for approximately 0.06 mile before crossing CR 100 E and connecting with the existing Wabash Corridor Trail, south of the CR 100 E and Rail Road intersection. The proposed project would consist of extending the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail as described above, completing the final section. The trail would be eight feet in width, constructed of concrete on top of compacted aggregate. Curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Culverts would likely be added at the stream crossing west of the Tamarack subdivision and other various locations to allow for drainage underneath the trail. Additionally, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with a new 8-foot-wide trail. It is anticipated that the project would require the acquisition of more than 0.5 acre of additional right-of-way. No relocations are anticipated as a result of this project.

With my signature, I do hereby affirm that I have read the letter from the Indiana Department of Environment that appears directly above. In addition, I understand that in order to complete that project in which I am interested, with a minimum of impact to the environment, I must consider all the issues addressed in the aforementioned letter, and further, that I must obtain any required permits.

Date: _____

Signature of the INDOT

Project Engineer or Other Responsible Agent _____

Mark O'Dell

Date: 02/10/2021

Signature of the
For Hire Consultant _____

Kylie Bright



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

We Protect Hoosiers and Our Environment.

100 N. Senate Avenue • Indianapolis, IN 46204
(800) 451-6027 • (317) 232-8603 • www.idem.IN.gov

Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

Brian C. Rockensuess
Commissioner

February 3, 2022

American Structurepoint, Inc.
Attention: Alexa Helms
9025 River Road, Unit 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Dear Alexa Helms:

Re: Wellhead Protection Area
Proximity Determination
Des No 1902832
Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3
Chesterton, Westchester and Liberty Township,
Porter County, Indiana

Upon review of the above referenced project site, it has been determined that the proposed project area **is not located within** a Wellhead Protection Area. The information is accurate to the best of our knowledge; however, there are in some cases a few factors that could impact the accuracy of this determination. Some Wellhead Protection Area Delineations have not been submitted, and many have not been approved by this office. In these cases, we use a 3,000-foot fixed radius buffer to make the proximity determination. To find the status of a Public Water Supply System's (PWSS's) Wellhead Protection Area Delineation please visit our tracking database at <http://www.in.gov/idem/cleanwater/2456.htm> and scroll to the bottom of the page.

The project area **is located within** a Source Water Assessment Areas for a PWSS's surface water intake. The Source Water Assessment Area relates to the surface water drainage area that water could potentially flow and influence water quality for a PWSS's source of drinking water. The PWSS that could be impacted by the project is Indiana American Water - Northwest. A contact person for Indiana American Water – Northwest is Christina Gosnell, and she could be reached via e-mail and/or phone at: christina.gosnell@amwater.com and 317-885-2408. The contact information is provided as a courtesy and reference for you if any issues arise that could potentially impact the water quality for the PWSS during the course of the project. It is not a requirement of IDEM that you contact the system regarding the project.

In the future, **please consider using this self-service tool** if it suits your needs. The Drinking Water Branch has a self-service tool which allows one to determine wellhead proximity without submitting the application form. Go to <https://www.in.gov/idem/cleanwater/pages/wellhead/> and use the instructions at the bottom of the page.

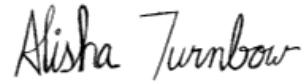


Please Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Alexa Helms
Page 2

If you have any additional questions please feel free to contact me at the address above or at 317-233-9158 and aturnbow@idem.in.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alisha Turnbow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alisha Turnbow,
Environmental Manager
Ground Water Section
Drinking Water Branch
Office of Water Quality

Electronic cc: Christina Gosnell, Indiana American Water – Northwest

Organization and Project Information

Project ID: Town of Chesteron
Des. ID: 1902832
Project Title: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3
Name of Organization: American Structurepoint, Inc.
Requested by: Kylie Bright

Environmental Assessment Report

1. Geological Hazards:
 - High liquefaction potential
 - Floodway
2. Mineral Resources:
 - Bedrock Resource: Moderate Potential
 - Sand and Gravel Resource: Low Potential
3. Active or abandoned mineral resources extraction sites:
 - None documented in the area

*All map layers from Indiana Map (maps.indiana.edu)

DISCLAIMER:

This document was compiled by Indiana University, Indiana Geological Survey, using data believed to be accurate; however, a degree of error is inherent in all data. This product is distributed "AS-IS" without warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, including but not limited to warranties of suitability to a particular purpose or use. No attempt has been made in either the design or production of these data and document to define the limits or jurisdiction of any federal, state, or local government. The data used to assemble this document are intended for use only at the published scale of the source data or smaller (see the metadata links below) and are for reference purposes only. They are not to be construed as a legal document or survey instrument. A detailed on-the-ground survey and historical analysis of a single site may differ from these data and this document.

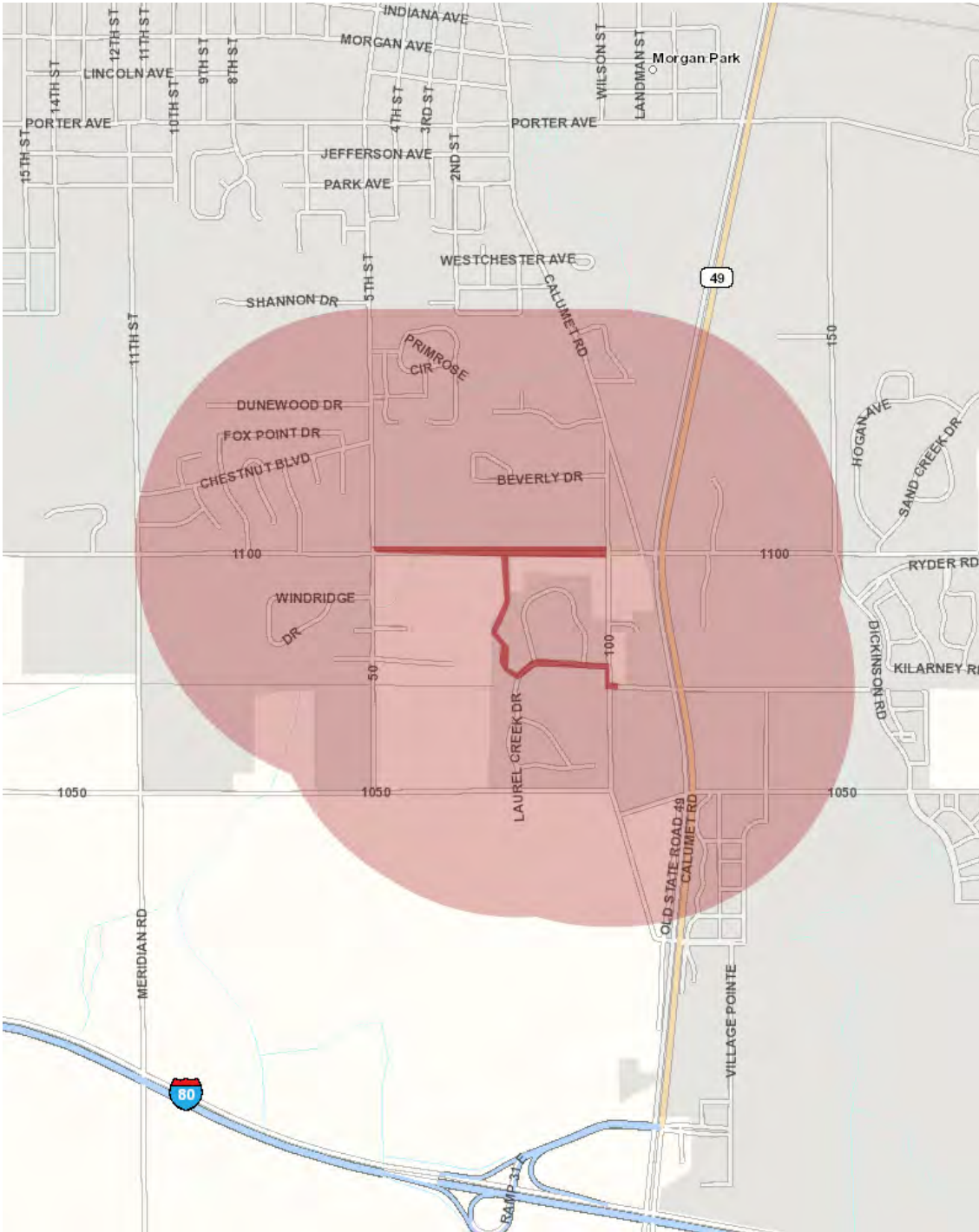
This information was furnished by Indiana Geological Survey

Address: 420 N. Walnut St., Bloomington, IN 47404

Email: IGSEnvir@indiana.edu

Phone: 812 855-7428

Date: February 10, 2021



etadata:

- http://maps.indiana.edu/etadata/Geology/Seismic_Earthquake_Liquefaction_Potential.html
- http://maps.indiana.edu/metadata/Geology/Industrial_Minerals_Sand_Gravel_Resources.html
- http://maps.indiana.edu/metadata/Hydrology/Floodplains_FIRM.html
- http://maps.indiana.edu/metadata/Geology/Bedrock_Geology.html

February 18, 2021

Kylie R. Bright
American StructurePoint
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

Dear Ms. Bright:

The proposed project to move forward with phase 3 of the Westchester-Liberty Trail in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana (Des. No. 1902832), as referred to in your letter received February 3, 2021, will not cause a conversion of prime farmland.

If you need additional information, please contact John Allen at 317-295-5859.

Sincerely,

RICHARD Digitally signed by
RICHARD NEILSON
NEILSON Date: 2021.02.18
15:46:37 -05'00'

RICK NEILSON
State Soil Scientist





United States Department of the Interior

Fish and Wildlife Service



Indiana Field Office (ES)
620 South Walker Street
Bloomington, IN 47403-2121
Phone: (812) 334-4261 Fax: (812) 334-4273

March 3, 2021

Ms. Kylie R. Bright
American Structurepoint, Inc.
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

Project No.: Des. 1902832
Project: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3
Location: Chesterton, Porter County

Dear Ms. Bright:

This responds to your letter dated February 3, 2021, requesting our comments on the aforementioned project.

These comments have been prepared under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et. seq.) and are consistent with the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Mitigation Policy.

The proposed project consists of the construction of about a mile of concrete trail from the existing end of the Westchester-Liberty Trail along CR 1100 North to CR 100 East and Rail Road. Most of the route will be along existing roads, with about 0.26 mile being cross-country along the west side of the Tamarack subdivision between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive. The cross-country section will be through a sparsely wooded area and will include a crossing of an unnamed tributary of Pope O'Conner Ditch.

If there are non-native invasive shrubs within the woodlands, such as bush honeysuckles (Lonicera spp.), multi-flora rose, buckthorn, and/or autumn olive, we recommend that they be removed and replaced with native species that will be beneficial to wildlife. The removal of large trees within this area should be avoided to the extent possible; large trees lost to the project should be replaced along the edge of the new trail.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

The proposed project is within the range of the Federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). The impacts on the 2 bat species will be evaluated utilizing the Range-wide Programmatic Consultation process.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this proposed project. If project plans change, please recoordinate with our office as soon as possible. For further discussion, please contact Elizabeth McCloskey at elizabeth_mccloskey@fws.gov.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ *Elizabeth S. McCloskey*

for Scott E. Pruitt
Supervisor

Sent via email March 3, 2021; no hard copy to follow.

Bridge/Structure Bat Assessment Form

Date & Time of Assessment August 3, 2021 12:00 PM	DOT Project Number 1902832	Route/Facility Carried CR 1100 N	County Porter
Federal Structure ID	Structure Coordinates (latitude and longitude) 41.593598, -87.055625	Structure Height (approximate) 48 inches	Structure Length 44 feet
Structure Type (check one)		Structure Material (check all that apply)	
<i>Bridge Construction Style</i>		<i>Deck Material</i>	<i>Beam Material</i> <i>End/Back Wall Material</i>
<input type="radio"/> Cast-in-place	<input type="radio"/> Pre-stressed Girder	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete
<input type="radio"/> Flat Slab/Box	<input type="radio"/> Steel I-beam	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete
<input type="radio"/> Truss	<input type="radio"/> Covered	<input type="checkbox"/> Timber	<input type="checkbox"/> Steel
<input type="radio"/> Parallel Box Beam	<input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Open grid	<input type="checkbox"/> Timber
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<i>Culvert Type</i>	<i>Other Structure</i>	<i>Culvert Material</i>	<i>Creosote Evidence</i>
<input type="radio"/> Box	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metal	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Pipe/Round	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete	<input type="radio"/> Unknown
<input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic	<i>Notes:</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/> Stone/Masonry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
Crossings Traversed (check all that apply)		Surrounding Habitat (check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bare ground	<input type="checkbox"/> Open vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Grassland
<input type="checkbox"/> Rip-rap	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Ranching
<input type="checkbox"/> Flowing water	<input type="checkbox"/> Railroad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential-urban	<input type="checkbox"/> Riparian/wetland
<input type="checkbox"/> Standing water	<input type="checkbox"/> Road/trail - Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Residential-rural	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seasonal water	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Woodland/forested	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Areas Assessed (check all that apply)			
Check all areas that apply. If an area is not present in the structure, check the "not present" box. Document all bat indicators observed during the assessment. Include the species present, if known, and provide photo documentation as indicated.			
Area (check if assessed)	Assessment Notes	Evidence of Bats (include photos if present)	
<input type="checkbox"/> All crevices and cracks: Bridges/culverts: rough surfaces or imperfections in concrete Other structures: soffits, rafters, attic areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete surfaces (open roosting on concrete)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> Spaces between concrete end walls and the bridge deck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> Crack between concrete railings on top of the bridge deck 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> Vertical surfaces on concrete I-beams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> Spaces between walls, ceiling joists	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weep holes, scupper drains, and inlets/pipes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> All guiderails	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> All expansion joints	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guano	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staining	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
Name: Josh Iddings		Signature:	
		Appendix C C-19	

Bridge/Structure Bat Assessment Form

Date & Time of Assessment August 3, 2021 12:00 PM	DOT Project Number 1902832	Route/Facility Carried CR 1100 N	County Porter
Federal Structure ID	Structure Coordinates (latitude and longitude) 41.593600, -87.054296	Structure Height (approximate) 30 inches	Structure Length 45 feet
Structure Type (check one)		Structure Material (check all that apply)	
<i>Bridge Construction Style</i>		<i>Deck Material</i>	<i>Beam Material</i> <i>End/Back Wall Material</i>
<input type="radio"/> Cast-in-place	<input type="radio"/> Pre-stressed Girder	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete
<input type="radio"/> Flat Slab/Box	<input type="radio"/> Steel I-beam	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete <input type="checkbox"/> Timber
<input type="radio"/> Truss	<input type="radio"/> Covered	<input type="checkbox"/> Timber	<input type="checkbox"/> Steel <input type="checkbox"/> Stone/Masonry
<input type="radio"/> Parallel Box Beam	<input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Open grid	<input type="checkbox"/> Timber <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<i>Culvert Type</i>		<i>Culvert Material</i>	
<input type="radio"/> Box	<input type="radio"/> Other Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metal	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="radio"/> Pipe/Round		<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete	<input type="radio"/> Unknown
<input type="radio"/> Other:		<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic	<i>Notes:</i>
<input type="radio"/> Other:		<input type="checkbox"/> Stone/Masonry	
<input type="radio"/> Other:		<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
Crossings Traversed (check all that apply)		Surrounding Habitat (check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bare ground	<input type="checkbox"/> Open vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Grassland
<input type="checkbox"/> Rip-rap	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Ranching
<input type="checkbox"/> Flowing water	<input type="checkbox"/> Railroad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential-urban	<input type="checkbox"/> Riparian/wetland
<input type="checkbox"/> Standing water	<input type="checkbox"/> Road/trail - Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Residential-rural	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seasonal water	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Woodland/forested	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Areas Assessed (check all that apply)			
Check all areas that apply. If an area is not present in the structure, check the "not present" box. Document all bat indicators observed during the assessment. Include the species present, if known, and provide photo documentation as indicated.			
Area (check if assessed)	Assessment Notes	Evidence of Bats (include photos if present)	
<input type="checkbox"/> All crevices and cracks: Bridges/culverts: rough surfaces or imperfections in concrete Other structures: soffits, rafters, attic areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete surfaces (open roosting on concrete)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input type="checkbox"/> Spaces between concrete end walls and the bridge deck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input type="checkbox"/> Crack between concrete railings on top of the bridge deck 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input type="checkbox"/> Vertical surfaces on concrete I-beams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input type="checkbox"/> Spaces between walls, ceiling joists	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weep holes, scupper drains, and inlets/pipes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input type="checkbox"/> All guiderails	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
<input type="checkbox"/> All expansion joints	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not present	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual - live # dead #	<input type="checkbox"/> Audible <input type="checkbox"/> Species <input type="checkbox"/> Odor <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Staining
Name: Josh Iddings		Signature:	
		Appendix C C-20	



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Indiana Ecological Services Field Office

620 South Walker Street

Bloomington, IN 47403-2121

Phone: (812) 334-4261 Fax: (812) 334-4273

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/section7/s7process/step1.html>

In Reply Refer To:

March 10, 2022

Project Code: 2022-0018270

Project Name: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Des. No. 1902832

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

Please use the species list provided and visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Region 3 Section 7 Technical Assistance website at - <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/s7process/index.html>. This website contains step-by-step instructions which will help you

determine if your project will have an adverse effect on listed species and will help lead you through the Section 7 process. For all **wind energy projects and projects that include installing towers that use guy wires or are over 200 feet in height**, please contact this field office directly for assistance, even if no federally listed plants, animals or critical habitat are present within your proposed project or may be affected by your proposed project.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2) (c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF>

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see <https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations.php>.

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see <https://www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/threats-to-birds.php>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of

Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/executive-orders/e0-13186.php>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. **Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.**

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

Official Species List

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Indiana Ecological Services Field Office

620 South Walker Street
Bloomington, IN 47403-2121
(812) 334-4261

Project Summary

Project Code: 2022-0018270
Event Code: None
Project Name: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Des. No. 1902832
Project Type: Recreation - New Construction
Project Description: Des. No. 1902832: This proposed project is begins at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E and continues east approximately 0.45 mile to approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. A second segment of the shared-use path begins along CR 1100 N, approximately 1130 feet west of CR 100 E and continues south for approximately 0.30 mile to Laurel Creek Drive, where it continues east along Laurel Creek Drive to CR 100 E and continues south along CR 100 E to Rail Road. Further, the proposed project is located in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The proposed project is more specifically located on the Chesterton United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map in Section 12, Township 36 North, and Range 6 West. It is anticipated that the proposed project would require the acquisition of 1.62 acres of additional right-of-way.

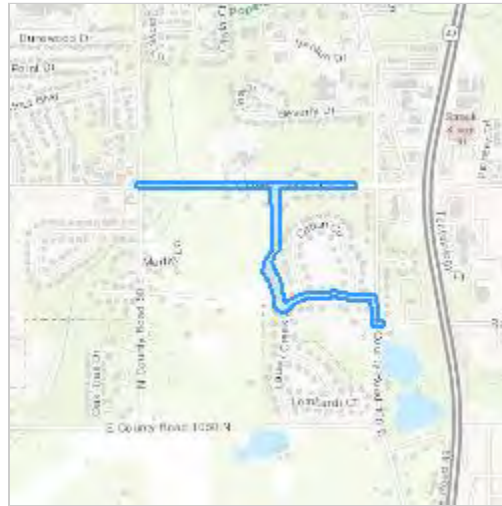
The proposed project would consist of extending the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail throughout the project area as described above. The new trail would connect the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail to the Wabash Corridor Trail. The trail would be eight feet in width, constructed of concrete on top of compacted aggregate. Curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Culverts will be added at the stream crossing west of the Tamarack subdivision and other various locations to allow for drainage underneath the trail. Additionally, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with a new eight-foot-wide trail.

A review of the USFWS database on June 25, 2020 did not indicate the presence of endangered bat species in or within a half mile of the project area. Some suitable bat summer habitat is within and adjacent to the project area. It is anticipated that approximately 0.71 acre of trees would be removed as part of this project. Of that, it is anticipated 0.10 acre of trees will be cleared between 100-300 feet from the existing roadway. This tree clearing will require \$1,636.95 of mitigation (using the formula: $0.10 \text{ acre} \times 1.75 \text{ ratio} \times \$9,354 = \$1,636.95$). All trees will be cleared within bat inactive season. Dominant species of trees noted within the area include Black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), Boxelder maple (*Acer negundo*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), Eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), Green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and Black

willow (*Salix nigra*). Construction is anticipated to occur between April 2023 and November 2023. Temporary lighting may be used during construction, but all lighting will be directed away from potential roosts. No permanent lighting will be added or changed.

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@41.59154425,-87.05186261559535,14z>



Counties: Porter County, Indiana

Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 3 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species. Note that 1 of these species should be considered only under certain conditions.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

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1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Mammals

NAME	STATUS
Indiana Bat <i>Myotis sodalis</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949	Endangered
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incidental take of the NLEB is not prohibited here. Federal agencies may consult using the 4(d) rule streamlined process. Transportation projects may consult using the programmatic process. See www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/index.html Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045	Threatened

Insects

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

Migratory Birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described [below](#).

-
1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

The birds listed below are birds of particular concern either because they occur on the [USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) list or warrant special attention in your project location. To learn more about the levels of concern for birds on your list and how this list is generated, see the FAQ [below](#). This is not a list of every bird you may find in this location, nor a guarantee that every bird on this list will be found in your project area. To see exact locations of where birders and the general public have sighted birds in and around your project area, visit the [E-bird data mapping tool](#) (Tip: enter your location, desired date range and a species on your list). For projects that occur off the Atlantic Coast, additional maps and models detailing the relative occurrence and abundance of bird species on your list are available. Links to additional information about Atlantic Coast birds, and other important information about your migratory bird list, including how to properly interpret and use your migratory bird report, can be found [below](#).

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, click on the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY at the top of your list to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities.	Breeds Oct 15 to Aug 31
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<p>Henslow's Sparrow <i>Ammodramus henslowii</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3941</p>	Breeds May 1 to Aug 31
<p>Lesser Yellowlegs <i>Tringa flavipes</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9679</p>	Breeds elsewhere
<p>Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p>	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
<p>Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p>	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
<p>Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA</p>	Breeds elsewhere
<p>Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p>	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

Probability Of Presence Summary

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read and understand the FAQ "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Each green bar represents the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during a particular week of the year. (A year is represented as 12 4-week months.) A taller bar indicates a higher probability of species presence. The survey effort (see below) can be used to establish a level of confidence in the presence score. One can have higher confidence in the presence score if the corresponding survey effort is also high.

How is the probability of presence score calculated? The calculation is done in three steps:

1. The probability of presence for each week is calculated as the number of survey events in the week where the species was detected divided by the total number of survey events for that week. For example, if in week 12 there were 20 survey events and the Spotted Towhee was found in 5 of them, the probability of presence of the Spotted Towhee in week 12 is 0.25.

- To properly present the pattern of presence across the year, the relative probability of presence is calculated. This is the probability of presence divided by the maximum probability of presence across all weeks. For example, imagine the probability of presence in week 20 for the Spotted Towhee is 0.05, and that the probability of presence at week 12 (0.25) is the maximum of any week of the year. The relative probability of presence on week 12 is $0.25/0.25 = 1$; at week 20 it is $0.05/0.25 = 0.2$.
- The relative probability of presence calculated in the previous step undergoes a statistical conversion so that all possible values fall between 0 and 10, inclusive. This is the probability of presence score.

Breeding Season (■)

Yellow bars denote a very liberal estimate of the time-frame inside which the bird breeds across its entire range. If there are no yellow bars shown for a bird, it does not breed in your project area.

Survey Effort (|)

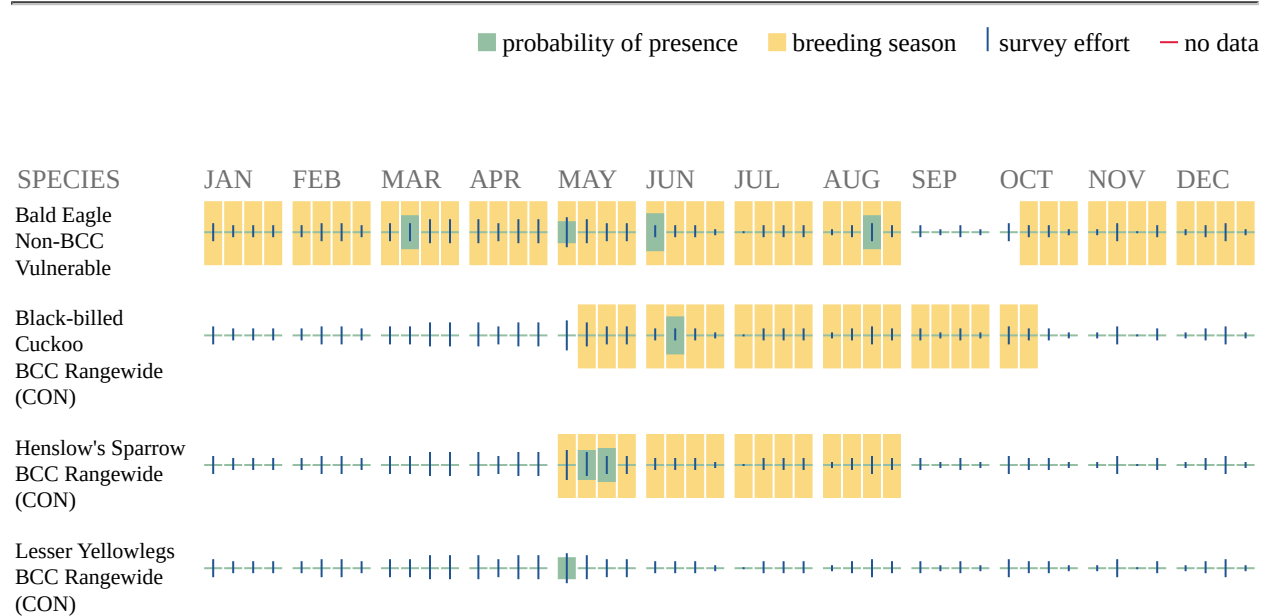
Vertical black lines superimposed on probability of presence bars indicate the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps. The number of surveys is expressed as a range, for example, 33 to 64 surveys.

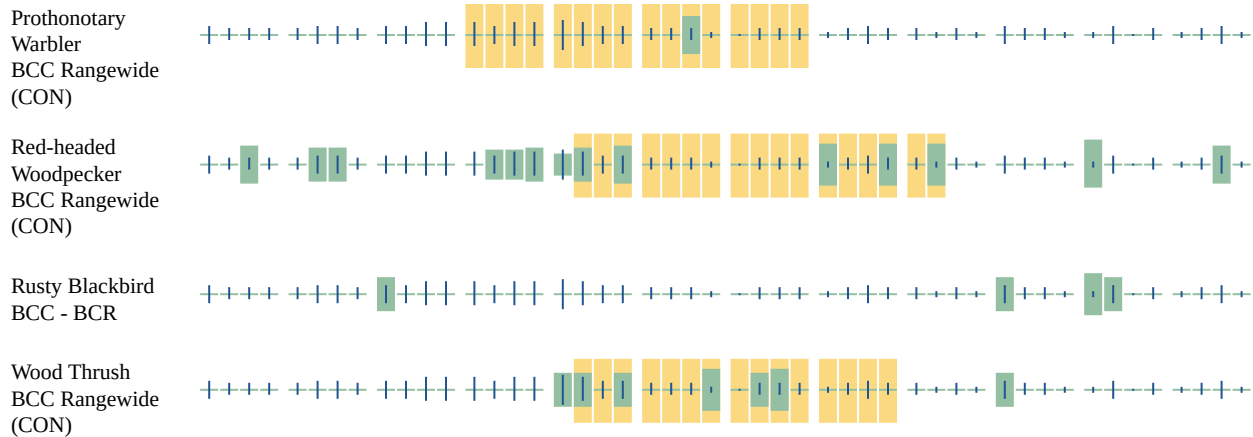
No Data (-)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.

Survey Timeframe

Surveys from only the last 10 years are used in order to ensure delivery of currently relevant information. The exception to this is areas off the Atlantic coast, where bird returns are based on all years of available data, since data in these areas is currently much more sparse.





Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern <http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/conservation-measures.php>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/nationwidestandardconservationmeasures.pdf>

Migratory Birds FAQ

Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.

[Nationwide Conservation Measures](#) describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. [Additional measures](#) or [permits](#) may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS [Birds of Conservation Concern \(BCC\)](#) and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#) and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle ([Eagle Act](#)

requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the [AKN Phenology Tool](#).

What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?

The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). This data is derived from a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#).

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go to the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering, migrating or present year-round in my project area?

To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may refer to the following resources: [The Cornell Lab of Ornithology All About Birds Bird Guide](#), or (if you are unsuccessful in locating the bird of interest there), the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology Neotropical Birds guide](#). If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?

Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are [Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
2. "BCC - BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
3. "Non-BCC - Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the [Eagle Act](#) requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects

For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the [Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#). The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the [NOAA NCCOS Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#) project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the [Diving Bird Study](#) and the [nanotag studies](#) or contact [Caleb Spiegel](#) or [Pam Loring](#).

What if I have eagles on my list?

If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to [obtain a permit](#) to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report

The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ "Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds" at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

Wetlands

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

RIVERINE

- [R2UBFx](#)

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- [PFO1/EM1C](#)
- [PFO1C](#)

IPaC User Contact Information

Agency: Indiana Department of Transportation
Name: Stewart Michels
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Lead Agency Contact Information

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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IPaC Record Locator: 935-108866812

January 24, 2022

Subject: Consistency letter for the 'Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Des. No. 1902832' project (no current TAILS record) under the revised February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat.

To whom it may concern:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your request to verify that the **Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Des. No. 1902832** (Proposed Action) may rely on the revised February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat (PBO) to satisfy requirements under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat.884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Based on the information you provided (Project Description shown below), you have determined that the Proposed Action is within the scope and adheres to the criteria of the PBO, including the adoption of applicable avoidance and minimization measures, and may affect, and is likely to adversely affect the endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and/or the threatened Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). Consultation with the Service pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) is required.

For Proposed Actions that include bridge/structure removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities: If your initial bridge/structure assessments failed to detect Indiana bats, but you later detect bats during construction, please submit the Post Assessment Discovery of Bats at Bridge/Structure Form (User Guide Appendix E) to this Service Office. In these instances, potential incidental take of Indiana bats may be exempted provided that the take is reported to the Service.

If the Proposed Action may affect any other federally-listed or proposed species and/or designated critical habitat, additional consultation between the lead Federal action agency and this Service Office is required. If the proposed action has the potential to take bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

may also be required. In either of these circumstances, please advise the lead Federal action agency accordingly.

The following species may occur in your project area and **are not** covered by this determination:

- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Candidate

Project Description

The following project name and description was collected in IPaC as part of the endangered species review process.

Name

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Des. No. 1902832

Description

Des. No. 1902832: This proposed project is begins at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E and continues east approximately 0.45 mile to approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. A second segment of the shared-use path begins along CR 1100 N, approximately 1130 feet west of CR 100 E and continues south for approximately 0.30 mile to Laurel Creek Drive, where it continues east along Laurel Creek Drive to CR 100 E and continues south along CR 100 E to Rail Road. Further, the proposed project is located in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The proposed project is more specifically located on the Chesterton United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map in Section 12, Township 36 North, and Range 6 West. It is anticipated that the proposed project would require the acquisition of 1.62 acres of additional right-of-way.

The proposed project would consist of extending the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail throughout the project area as described above. The new trail would connect the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail to the Wabash Corridor Trail. The trail would be eight feet in width, constructed of concrete on top of compacted aggregate. Curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Culverts will be added at the stream crossing west of the Tamarack subdivision and other various locations to allow for drainage underneath the trail. Additionally, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with a new eight-foot-wide trail.

A review of the USFWS database on June 25, 2020 did not indicate the presence of endangered bat species in or within a half mile of the project area. Some suitable bat summer habitat is within and adjacent to the project area. It is anticipated that approximately 0.71 acre of trees would be removed as part of this project. Of that, it is anticipated 0.10 acre of trees will be cleared between 100-300 feet from the existing roadway. This tree clearing will require \$1,636.95 of mitigation (using the formula: 0.10 acre x 1.75 ratio x \$9,354 = \$1,636.95). All trees will be cleared within bat inactive season. Dominant species of trees noted within the area include Black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), Boxelder maple (*Acer negundo*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), Eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), Green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and Black willow (*Salix nigra*). Construction is anticipated to occur between April 2023 and November 2023. Temporary lighting may be used during construction, but all lighting will be directed away from potential roosts. No permanent lighting will be added or changed.

Determination Key Result

Based on your answers provided, this project is likely to adversely affect the endangered Indiana bat and/or the threatened Northern long-eared bat. Therefore, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) is required. However, also based on your answers provided, this project may rely on the conclusion and Incidental Take Statement provided in the revised February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat.

Qualification Interview

1. Is the project within the range of the Indiana bat^[1]?

[1] See [Indiana bat species profile](#)

Automatically answered

Yes

2. Is the project within the range of the Northern long-eared bat^[1]?

[1] See [Northern long-eared bat species profile](#)

Automatically answered

Yes

3. Which Federal Agency is the lead for the action?

A) *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)*

4. Are *all* project activities limited to non-construction^[1] activities only? (examples of non-construction activities include: bridge/abandoned structure assessments, surveys, planning and technical studies, property inspections, and property sales)

[1] Construction refers to activities involving ground disturbance, percussive noise, and/or lighting.

No

5. Does the project include *any* activities that are **greater than** 300 feet from existing road/rail surfaces^[1]?

[1] Road surface is defined as the actively used [e.g. motorized vehicles] driving surface and shoulders [may be pavement, gravel, etc.] and rail surface is defined as the edge of the actively used rail ballast.

Yes

6. Are *all* project activities **greater than** 300 feet from existing road/rail surfaces^[1]?

[1] Road surface is defined as the actively used [e.g. motorized vehicles] driving surface and shoulders [may be pavement, gravel, etc.] and rail surface is defined as the edge of the actively used rail ballast.

No

7. Does the project include *any* activities **within** 0.5 miles of a known Indiana bat and/or NLEB hibernaculum^[1]?

[1] For the purpose of this consultation, a hibernaculum is a site, most often a cave or mine, where bats hibernate during the winter (see suitable habitat), but could also include bridges and structures if bats are found to be hibernating there during the winter.

No

8. Is the project located **within** a karst area?

No

9. Is there *any* suitable^[1] summer habitat for Indiana Bat or NLEB **within** the project action area^[2]? (includes any trees suitable for maternity, roosting, foraging, or travelling habitat)

[1] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

[2] The action area is defined as all areas to be affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action and not merely the immediate area involved in the action (50 CFR Section 402.02). Further clarification is provided by the [national consultation FAQs](#).

Yes

10. Will the project remove *any* suitable summer habitat^[1] and/or remove/trim any existing trees **within** suitable summer habitat?

[1] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

Yes

11. Will the project clear more than 20 acres of suitable habitat per 5-mile section of road/rail?

No

12. Have presence/probable absence (P/A) summer surveys^{[1][2]} been conducted^{[3][4]} **within** the suitable habitat located within your project action area?

[1] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

[2] Presence/probable absence summer surveys conducted within the fall swarming/spring emergence home range of a documented Indiana bat hibernaculum (contact local Service Field Office for appropriate distance from hibernacula) that result in a negative finding requires additional consultation with the local Service Field Office to determine if clearing of forested habitat is appropriate and/or if seasonal clearing restrictions are needed to avoid and minimize potential adverse effects on fall swarming and spring emerging Indiana bats.

[3] For projects within the range of either the Indiana bat or NLEB in which suitable habitat is present, and no bat surveys have been conducted, the transportation agency will assume presence of the appropriate species. This assumption of presence should be based upon the presence of suitable habitat and the capability of bats to occupy it because of their mobility.

[4] Negative presence/probable absence survey results obtained using the [summer survey guidance](#) are valid for a minimum of two years from the completion of the survey unless new information (e.g., other nearby surveys) suggest otherwise.

No

13. Does the project include activities **within documented Indiana bat habitat**^{[1][2]}?

[1] Documented roosting or foraging habitat – for the purposes of this consultation, we are considering documented habitat as that where Indiana bats and/or NLEB have actually been captured and tracked using (1) radio telemetry to roosts; (2) radio telemetry biangulation/triangulation to estimate foraging areas; or (3) foraging areas with repeated use documented using acoustics. Documented roosting habitat is also considered as suitable summer habitat within 0.25 miles of documented roosts.)

[2] For the purposes of this key, we are considering documented corridors as that where Indiana bats and/or NLEB have actually been captured and tracked to using (1) radio telemetry; or (2) treed corridors located directly between documented roosting and foraging habitat.

No

14. Will the removal or trimming of habitat or trees occur **within** suitable but **undocumented Indiana bat** roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors?

Yes

15. What time of year will the removal or trimming of habitat or trees **within** suitable but **undocumented Indiana bat** roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors occur^[1]?

[1] Coordinate with the local Service Field Office for appropriate dates.

B) During the inactive season

16. Does the project include activities **within documented NLEB habitat**^{[1][2]}?

[1] Documented roosting or foraging habitat – for the purposes of this consultation, we are considering documented habitat as that where Indiana bats and/or NLEB have actually been captured and tracked using (1) radio telemetry to roosts; (2) radio telemetry biangulation/triangulation to estimate foraging areas; or (3) foraging areas with repeated use documented using acoustics. Documented roosting habitat is also considered as suitable summer habitat within 0.25 miles of documented roosts.)

[2] For the purposes of this key, we are considering documented corridors as that where Indiana bats and/or NLEB have actually been captured and tracked to using (1) radio telemetry; or (2) treed corridors located directly between documented roosting and foraging habitat.

No

17. Will the removal or trimming of habitat or trees occur **within** suitable but **undocumented NLEB** roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors?

Yes

18. What time of year will the removal or trimming of habitat or trees **within** suitable but **undocumented NLEB** roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors occur?

B) During the inactive season

19. Will *any* tree trimming or removal occur **within** 100 feet of existing road/rail surfaces?

Yes

20. Will *any* tree trimming or removal occur **between** 100-300 feet of existing road/rail surfaces?

Yes

21. Will *any* tree trimming or removal occur **greater than** 300 feet from existing road/rail surfaces?

No

22. Are *all* trees that are being removed clearly demarcated?

Yes

23. Will the removal of habitat or the removal/trimming of trees include installing new or replacing existing **permanent** lighting?

No

24. Does the project include maintenance of the surrounding landscape at existing facilities (e.g., rest areas, stormwater detention basins)?

No

25. Does the project include wetland or stream protection activities associated with compensatory wetland mitigation?

No

26. Does the project include slash pile burning?

No

27. Does the project include *any* bridge removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities (e.g., any bridge repair, retrofit, maintenance, and/or rehabilitation work)?

Yes

28. Is there *any* suitable habitat^[1] for Indiana bat or NLEB **within** 1,000 feet of the bridge? (includes any trees suitable for maternity, roosting, foraging, or travelling habitat)

[1] See the Service's current [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

Yes

29. Has a bridge assessment^[1] been conducted **within** the last 24 months^[2] to determine if the bridge is being used by bats?

[1] See [User Guide Appendix D](#) for bridge/structure assessment guidance

[2] Assessments must be completed no more than 2 years prior to conducting any work below the deck surface on all bridges that meet the physical characteristics described in the Programmatic Consultation, regardless of whether assessments have been conducted in the past. Due to the transitory nature of bat use, a negative result in one year does not guarantee that bats will not use that bridge/structure in subsequent years.

Yes

SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS

- *Structure Bat Assessment Form.pdf* <https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/project/2WVS2C25Z5AMHI5AGL5HDQWP2I/projectDocuments/108970630>

30. Did the bridge assessment detect *any* signs of Indiana bats and/or NLEBs roosting in/under the bridge (bats, guano, etc.)^[1]?

[1] If bridge assessment detects signs of *any* species of bats, coordination with the local FWS office is needed to identify potential threatened or endangered bat species. Additional studies may be undertaken to try to identify which bat species may be utilizing the bridge prior to allowing *any* work to proceed.

Note: There is a small chance bridge assessments for bat occupancy do not detect bats. Should a small number of bats be observed roosting on a bridge just prior to or during construction, such that take is likely to occur or does occur in the form of harassment, injury or death, the PBO requires the action agency to report the take. Report all unanticipated take within 2 working days of the incident to the USFWS. Construction activities may continue without delay provided the take is reported to the USFWS and is limited to 5 bats per project.

No

31. Will the bridge removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities include installing new or replacing existing **permanent** lighting?

No

32. Does the project include the removal, replacement, and/or maintenance of *any* structure other than a bridge? (e.g., rest areas, offices, sheds, outbuildings, barns, parking garages, etc.)

No

33. Will the project involve the use of **temporary** lighting *during* the active season?

Yes

34. Is there *any* suitable habitat **within** 1,000 feet of the location(s) where **temporary** lighting will be used?

Yes

35. Will the project install new or replace existing **permanent** lighting?

No

36. Does the project include percussives or other activities (**not including tree removal/trimming or bridge/structure work**) that will increase noise levels above existing traffic/background levels?

No

37. Are *all* of the project activities that will be conducted **greater than** 0.5 miles of a known Indiana bat and/or NLEB hibernaculum^[1] and **greater than** 300 feet from the existing road/rail surface^[2] limited to one or more of the following activities:

- maintenance of the surrounding landscape at existing facilities (e.g., rest areas, stormwater detention basins);
- wetland or stream protection activities associated with compensatory wetland/stream mitigation that will not clear suitable habitat (i.e. tree removal/trimming);
- involves slash pile burning;
- within an area with negative presence/probable absence (P/A) summer surveys^[3];
- limited to activities that **DO NOT** cause any stressors to the bat species, including, but not limited to those described in the BA/BO (i.e. do not involve habitat removal, tree removal/trimming, bridge or structure activities, temporary or permanent lighting, or use of percussives) (e.g., lining roadways, unlighted signage , rail road crossing signals, signal lighting, and minor road repair such as asphalt fill of potholes, etc.))?

[1] For the purpose of this consultation, a hibernaculum is a site, most often a cave or mine, where bats hibernate during the winter (see suitable habitat), but could also include bridges and structures if bats are found to be hibernating there during the winter.

[2] Road surface is defined as the actively used [e.g. motorized vehicles] driving surface and shoulders [may be pavement, gravel, etc.] and rail surface is defined as the edge of the actively used rail ballast. (example activities include road line painting)

[3] See the Service's [summer survey guidance](#) for our current definitions of suitable habitat.

Yes, all of the project activities that are greater than 0.5 miles from a hibernaculum and greater than 300' from the road/rail surface are limited to one or more of these activities

38. Are *all* project activities that are **not associated with** habitat removal, tree removal/trimming, bridge and/or structure activities, temporary or permanent lighting, or use of percussives, limited to actions that DO NOT cause any additional stressors to the bat species?

Examples: lining roadways, unlighted signage , rail road crossing signals, signal lighting, and minor road repair such as asphalt fill of potholes, etc.

Yes

39. Will the project raise the road profile **above the tree canopy**?

No

40. Are the project activities that are not associated with habitat removal, tree removal/trimming, bridge and/or structure activities, temporary or permanent lighting, or use of percussives consistent with a No Effect determination in this key?

Automatically answered

Yes, other project activities are limited to actions that DO NOT cause any additional stressors to the bat species as described in the BA/BO

41. Is the habitat removal portion of this project consistent with a Not Likely to Adversely Affect determination in this key?

Automatically answered

Yes, because the tree removal/trimming that occurs outside of the Indiana bat's active season occurs greater than 0.5 miles from the nearest hibernaculum, is less than 100 feet from the existing road/rail surface, includes clear demarcation of the trees that are to be removed, and does not alter documented roosts and/or surrounding summer habitat within 0.25 miles of a documented roost.

42. Is the habitat removal portion of this project consistent with a Likely to Adversely Affect determination in this key?

Automatically answered

Yes, because the tree removal that occurs outside the Indiana bat's active season is 100-300 feet from the existing road/rail surface, and is not in documented roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors.

43. Is the habitat removal portion of this project consistent with a Not Likely to Adversely Affect determination in this key?

Automatically answered

Yes, because the tree removal/trimming that occurs outside of the NLEB's active season occurs greater than 0.5 miles from the nearest hibernaculum, is less than 100 feet from the existing road/rail surface, includes clear demarcation of the trees that are to be removed, and does not alter documented roosts and/or surrounding summer habitat within 0.25 miles of a documented roost.

44. Is the habitat removal portion of this project consistent with a Likely to Adversely Affect determination in this key?

Automatically answered

Yes, because the tree removal that occurs outside the NLEB's active season is 100-300 feet from the existing road/rail surface, and is not in documented roosting/foraging habitat or travel corridors.

45. Is the bridge removal, replacement, or maintenance activities portion of this project consistent with a No Effect determination in this key?

Automatically answered

Yes, because the bridge has been assessed using the criteria documented in the BA and no signs of bats were detected

46. **General AMM 1**

Will the project ensure *all* operators, employees, and contractors working in areas of known or presumed bat habitat are aware of *all* FHWA/FRA/FTA (Transportation Agencies) environmental commitments, including all applicable Avoidance and Minimization Measures?

Yes

47. Tree Removal AMM 1

Can *all* phases/aspects of the project (e.g., temporary work areas, alignments) be modified, to the extent practicable, to avoid tree removal^[1] in excess of what is required to implement the project safely?

Note: Tree Removal AMM 1 is a minimization measure, the full implementation of which may not always be practicable. Projects may still be NLAA as long as Tree Removal AMMs 2, 3, and 4 are implemented and LAA as long as Tree Removal AMMs 3, 5, 6, and 7 are implemented.

[1] The word “trees” as used in the AMMs refers to trees that are suitable habitat for each species within their range. See the USFWS’ current summer survey guidance for our latest definitions of suitable habitat.

Yes

48. Tree Removal AMM 3

Can tree removal be limited to that specified in project plans and ensure that contractors understand clearing limits and how they are marked in the field (e.g., install bright colored flagging/fencing prior to any tree clearing to ensure contractors stay within clearing limits)?

Yes

49. Lighting AMM 1

Will *all* **temporary** lighting be directed away from suitable habitat during the active season?

Yes

50. For Indiana bat, if applicable, compensatory mitigation measures are required to offset adverse effects on the species (see Section 2.10 of the BA). Please select the mechanism in which compensatory mitigation will be implemented:

6. *Not Applicable*

Project Questionnaire

1. Have you made a No Effect determination for *all* other species indicated on the FWS IPaC generated species list?

N/A

2. Have you made a May Affect determination for *any* other species on the FWS IPaC generated species list?

N/A

3. How many acres^[1] of trees are proposed for removal between 0-100 feet of the existing road/rail surface?

[1] If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0.61

4. How many acres^[1] of trees are proposed for removal between 100-300 feet of the existing road/rail surface?

[1] If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0.10

5. **Please verify:**

All tree removal will occur greater than 0.5 mile from any hibernaculum.

Yes, I verify that all tree removal will occur greater than 0.5 miles from any hibernaculum.

6. Is the project location 0-100 feet from the edge of existing road/rail surface?

Yes

7. Is the project location 100-300 feet from the edge of existing road/rail surface?

Yes

8. **Please verify:**

No documented Indiana bat roosts or surrounding summer habitat within 0.25 mile of documented roosts will be impacted between May 1 and July 31.

Yes, I verify that no documented Indiana bat roosts or surrounding summer habitat within 0.25 mile of documented roosts will be impacted during this period.

9. **Please verify:**

No documented NLEB roosts or surrounding summer habitat within 150 feet of documented roosts will be impacted between June 1 and July 31.

Yes, I verify that no documented NLEB roosts or surrounding summer habitat within 150 feet of documented roosts will be impacted during this period.

10. Please describe the proposed bridge work:

The existing 48 inch CMP (STR 101) that carries Pope O'Connor Ditch under CR 1100 North is located approximately 0.08 mile east of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East. STR 101 will be extended 5 feet north to accommodate for the new shared-used path. No other work will occur to STR 101. The existing 30 inch CMP (STR 102) that carries drainage under CR 1100 North is located approximately 0.12 mile east of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East. STR 102 will be extended 3 feet north to accommodate for the new shared-used path. No other work will occur to STR 102. A 54-foot-long, 12 inch Type 2 Storm Sewer Pipe (STR 103) will be constructed under the new shared-use path, adjacent to CR 1100 North. STR 103 will be located approximately 0.16 mile east of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East. A 80-foot-long, 15 inch Type 2 Storm Sewer Pipe (STR 104) will be constructed under the new shared-use path, adjacent to CR 1100 North. STR 104 will be located approximately 0.15 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East. A 30-foot-long, 15 inch Type 3 Pipe (STR 105) will be constructed under an existing driveway, adjacent to CR 1100 North. STR 105 will be located approximately 0.12 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East. A 36-foot-long, 60 inch Type 1 Pipe (STR 106) will carry UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch under the new shared-used path. STR 106 will be located approximately 0.13 mile east of CR 1100 North.

11. Please state the timing of all proposed bridge work:

All construction work will occur between April 2023 and November 2023.

12. Please enter the date of the bridge assessment:

August 3, 2021

Avoidance And Minimization Measures (AMMs)

This determination key result includes the commitment to implement the following Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs):

LIGHTING AMM 1

Direct temporary lighting away from suitable habitat during the active season.

TREE REMOVAL AMM 3

Ensure tree removal is limited to that specified in project plans and ensure that contractors understand clearing limits and how they are marked in the field (e.g., install bright colored flagging/fencing prior to any tree clearing to ensure contractors stay within clearing limits).

GENERAL AMM 1

Ensure all operators, employees, and contractors working in areas of known or presumed bat habitat are aware of all FHWA/FRA/FTA (Transportation Agencies) environmental commitments, including all applicable AMMs.

TREE REMOVAL AMM 1

Modify all phases/aspects of the project (e.g., temporary work areas, alignments) to avoid tree removal.

Determination Key Description: FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Consultation For Transportation Projects Affecting NLEB Or Indiana Bat

This key was last updated in IPaC on April 22, 2021. Keys are subject to periodic revision.

This decision key is intended for projects/activities funded or authorized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and/or Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which may require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for the endangered **Indiana bat** (*Myotis sodalis*) and the threatened **Northern long-eared bat** (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*).

This decision key should only be used to verify project applicability with the Service's [February 5, 2018, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects](#). The programmatic biological opinion covers limited transportation activities that may affect either bat species, and addresses situations that are both likely and not likely to adversely affect either bat species. This decision key will assist in identifying the effect of a specific project/activity and applicability of the programmatic consultation. The programmatic biological opinion is not intended to cover all types of transportation actions. Activities outside the scope of the programmatic biological opinion, or that may affect ESA-listed species other than the Indiana bat or NLEB, or any designated critical habitat, may require additional ESA Section 7 consultation.



United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service



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March 15, 2022

Karstin Carmany-George
Federal Highway Administration
575 N. Pennsylvania St. Room 254
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
(sent via email)

IPAC Project Code: 2022-0018270

RE: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Des. No. 1902832 Porter County, Indiana

Dear Ms. Carmany-George:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is responding to your request dated January 24, 2022, to verify that the proposed Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (the Project) may rely on the February 5, 2018, Programmatic Biological Opinion (BO) for federally funded or approved transportation projects that may affect the federally listed endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and/or federally listed threatened northern long-eared bat (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*). We received your request and the associated LAA Consistency Letter on March 9, 2022.

This letter provides the Service's response as to whether the Federal Highway Administration may rely on the BO to comply with Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) for the Project's effects to the Indiana bat and/or NLEB.

The Federal Highway Administration has determined that the Project is *likely to adversely affect* the Indiana bat and/or the NLEB.

Conclusion

The Service has reviewed the effects of the proposed Project, which includes the Federal Highway Administration's commitment to implement any applicable mitigation measures as indicated on the LAA Consistency Letter. We confirm that the proposed Project's effects are consistent with those analyzed in the BO. The Service has determined that projects consistent with the conservation measures and scope of the program analyzed in the BO are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Indiana bat and/or the NLEB. In coordination with your agency and the other sponsoring Federal Transportation Agencies, the Service will reevaluate this conclusion annually in light of any new pertinent information under the adaptive management provisions of the BO.

Incidental Take

Indiana Bat

The Service anticipates that tree removal associated with the proposed Project will cause incidental take of Indiana bats. As described in the Incidental Take Statement (ITS) of the BO, such taking will be difficult to detect. The Service determined that it is appropriate to measure the amount or extent of incidental taking resulting from BO projects using the proposed acreage of tree removal from Indiana bat suitable habitat as a surrogate for the numbers of individuals taken.

The proposed Project will remove/trim **0.71 acre(s)** of trees from habitat that is suitable for the Indiana bat. All tree removal will occur in winter (October 1 – March 30) and comply with all other conservation measures in the BO. Based on the BO, **0.61 acre(s)** of the removal are within 100 feet of the edge of pavement and therefore not anticipated to result in any adverse effects; **0.10 acre(s)** are within 100-300 feet and expected to result in adverse effects.

The Federal Highway Administration will use the mitigation ratio of **1.75** from Table 3 of the BO¹ to calculate the compensatory mitigation required to offset these adverse impacts for a total of **0.175 acres²** of trees that is suitable for the Indiana bat.

To comply with the mitigation requirements of the BO, the Federal Highway Administration will contribute **\$1,636.95** to TCF, the Program Sponsor, within 1 year of this letter or prior to the start of construction, whichever is earliest. These calculations are based on the mitigation identified above² and the 2020-2021 Land Use Values in Table 2 of Exhibit E in TCF's ILF Instrument. If payment is made later than 1 year from the date of this letter, the mitigation cost may change because of updated land use values in Table 2 of Exhibit E³. At the time of payment, the Federal Highway Administration or designated non-federal representative shall notify the Service of compliance with the compensatory mitigation requirements as described above. **The Federal Highway Administration or non-federal representative must notify TCF at least five days prior to payment so TCF can verify that the appropriate land value has been used.**

The purchase of species conservation credits and/or in-lieu fee contributions shall occur prior to construction of a transportation project covered under this programmatic consultation. Exceptions to this program stipulation include emergency projects that do not require a letting prior to construction. In these cases, purchase of credits and/or in-lieu fee contributions shall occur within three months of completion of the project. This timeframe allows for measuring the acres of habitat affected by the emergency project and for financial processing.

The Service will add the acreage of Project-related tree removal to the annual total acreage attributed to the BO as a surrogate measure of Indiana bat incidental take and exempted from the prohibitions of Section 9 of the ESA. Such exemption is effective as long as your agency

¹ https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/fhwa/pdf/IBAT_ILF_ratios_transportation_agencies.pdf

² XX acres * XX ratio

³ https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/fhwa/pdf/IBAT_ExhibitE_Table2_FeeSchedule_LandValues.pdf

implements the reasonable and prudent measure (RPM) and accompanying terms and conditions of the BO's ITS. The sole RPM of the BO's ITS requires the Federal Transportation Agencies to ensure that State/Local transportation agencies, who choose to include eligible projects under the programmatic action, incorporate all applicable conservation measures in the project proposals submitted to the this RPM require the Federal Transportation Agencies to offer training to appropriate personnel about using the BO, and promptly report sick, injured, or dead bats (regardless of species) or any other federally listed species located in project action areas.

Northern Long-eared Bat

The Service anticipates that tree removal associated with the Project will cause incidental take of NLEBs. However, the Project is consistent with the BO, and such projects will not cause take of NLEB that is prohibited under the ESA section 4(d) rule for this species (50 CFR §17.40(o)). Therefore, the incidental take of NLEBs resulting from the Project does not require exemption from the Service.

Reporting Dead or Injured Bats

The Federal Highway Administration, its State/Local cooperators, and any contractors must take care when handling dead or injured Indiana bats and/or NLEBs, or any other federally listed species that are found at the Project site to preserve biological material in the best possible condition and to protect the handler from exposure to diseases, such as rabies. Project personnel are responsible for ensuring that any evidence about determining the cause of death or injury is not unnecessarily disturbed. Reporting the discovery of dead or injured listed species is required in all cases to enable the Service to determine whether the level of incidental take exempted by this BO is exceeded, and to ensure that the terms and conditions are appropriate and effective. Parties finding a dead, injured, or sick specimen of any endangered or threatened species must promptly notify this Service Office.

Reinitiation Notice

This letter concludes consultation for the Project, which qualifies for inclusion in the BO issued to the Federal Transportation Agencies. To maintain this inclusion, a reinitiation of this Project-level consultation is required where the Federal Highway Administration discretionary involvement or control over the Project has been retained (or is authorized by law) and if:

1. the amount or extent of incidental take of Indiana bat is exceeded;
2. new information reveals that the Project may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in the BO or in the Project information that supported Service concurrence with NLAA determinations; or
3. the Project is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to listed species or designated critical habitat not considered in the BO or in the Project information that supported Service concurrence with NLAA determinations; or
4. a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that the Project may affect.

Per condition #1 above, the anticipated incidental take is exceeded when:

- the Project removes more than **0.10 acre(s)** of habitat suitable for the Indiana bat between 100-300 feet from the edge of pavement during the inactive season

In instances where the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded, the Federal Highway Administration is required to immediately request a reinitiation of this Project-level consultation.

We appreciate your continued efforts to ensure that this Project is fully consistent with all applicable provisions of the BO. If you have any questions regarding our response or if you need additional information, please contact Robin McWilliams Munson at Robin_Mcwilliams@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

SCOTT PRUITT Digitally signed by SCOTT PRUITT
Date: 2022.03.15 10:56:41 -04'00'

Scott Pruitt
Field Supervisor

Cc: (via email)

Sandy Bowman, INDOT, Indianapolis, IN

Stewart Michels, INDOT, LaPorte, IN

Ibat ILF coordinator – to be sent by INDOT at later date



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

5600 American Blvd West, Suite 990
Bloomington, Minnesota 55437-1458

IN REPLY REFER TO:

FWS/R3/ES-ARD/DTS 078395

Ms. Emily Biondi
Director, Office of Project Development and Environmental Review
Federal Highway Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Biondi,

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your request dated December 12, 2022, to reinstate consultation on projects within the scope of the Service's February 5, 2018, Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat and Northern Long-eared bat (BO)¹. As stated in the transportation agencies' original programmatic biological assessment in 2016, the primary objectives of the consultation have been to streamline consultation process and to bring about better conservation outcomes for the two bat species.

Reinitiation was requested to address changes in the take prohibitions that apply to the northern long-eared bat (NLEB), as explained in the next two paragraphs. This reinitiation addresses future project-specific actions that will be implemented within the scope of the 2018 programmatic BO, as well as 350 actions that have already undergone consultation on the NLEB under this programmatic consultation, but whose activities have not yet been implemented.

The Service listed the NLEB as a threatened species on April 2, 2015 (80 FR 17974) and issued a species-specific 4(d) rule on January 14, 2016 (81 FR 1900). Under the 4(d) rule, incidental take of the NLEB was not prohibited (81 FR 1900, 50 CFR 17) except in certain situations described in the rule. Your request is in response to the reclassification of the NLEB as an endangered species on November 30, 2022 (87 FR 73488) that has resulted in a change to the take prohibitions that apply to the species, which become effective on March 31, 2023.

The 350 actions proposed by the transportation agencies and previously addressed by the 2018 BO specifically excluded any actions that would have resulted in incidental take that would have

¹ <https://www.fws.gov/media/programmatic-biological-opinion-transportation-projects-range-indiana-bat-and-northern-long>

been prohibited under the 4(d) rule. With the promulgation of the new listing rule for the NLEB, however, the incidental take expected to occur because of these actions would now be prohibited. Therefore, in response to your request for reinitiation, the Service is providing an Incidental Take Statement (ITS) with terms and conditions to ensure that the incidental take of the NLEB that occurs as a result of the 350 actions previously addresses by the 2018 BO, as well as future proposed actions implemented within the scope of the amended 2018 programmatic BO are not prohibited when the new listing rule becomes effective on March 31, 2023. This incidental take will not be prohibited because it is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the NLEB and because the transportation agencies will implement the terms and conditions of the ITS.

This enclosed document responds to your request and constitutes an amendment to the Service's 2018 programmatic BO for the 350 projects identified in the table below, as well as future proposed actions within its scope. The amended 2018 programmatic BO includes an updated Status of the Species section for NLEB, updated jeopardy analysis for NLEB (conclusion section in amendment below), a combined ITS for the Indiana bat and NLEB, and a Reinitiation Notice. The proposed action for each of these 350 projects and for future projects implemented under the amended 2018 programmatic BO remains unchanged from the initial section 7 consultation as described in the 2016 biological assessment and the 2018 programmatic BO. The projects are within the scope of the programmatic action as described in the 2018 BO, including all applicable avoidance and minimization measures (AMMs²).

It is the Service's Opinion that the action, as proposed, is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the NLEB. This concludes consultation on the identified list of projects (350) that are likely to adversely affect the NLEB, but whose activities have not yet been implemented, and future implementation of the Program within the scope of the Service's amended 2018 programmatic BO. No further correspondence is necessary for project reinitiation except for conditions outlined in the Reinitiation Section of the enclosed amendment to the 2018 PBO.

For further information, please contact Catherine Liller, FWS National Transportation Liaison at Catherine_Liller@fws.gov or Brian Yanchik, FHWA Lead Ecologist at Brian.Yanchik@dot.gov.

² <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/appendix-c-avoidance-and-minimization-measures-february-2018.pdf>

SIGNATURE PAGE

LORI NORDSTROM Digitally signed by LORI
NORDSTROM
Date: 2023.03.23
08:33:58 -05'00'

Lori H. Nordstrom Date

Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services, Region 3

FHWA	Indiana	I65 Added Travel Lanes SR 32 to SR 47 Boone Co Des 1802967	Indiana bat and NLEB	1.90	active season	undocumented
FHWA	Indiana	SR 37 pipeliner Perry Co Des 2000732	Indiana bat and NLEB	0.519	inactive season	undocumented
FHWA	Indiana	SR 235 Sm Struct replc Jackson Co Des 1700113	Indiana bat and NLEB	0.04	active season	undocumented
FHWA	Indiana	SR 258 Sighth Dist Correction Jackson Co Des 1298633	Indiana bat and NLEB	1.20	inactive season	undocumented
FHWA	Indiana	US20 Road Improv Added lanes des 1702993 LaPorte Co	Indiana bat and NLEB	0.45	inactive season	undocumented
FHWA	Indiana	Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 Des 1902832 Porter Co	Indiana bat and NLEB	0.10	inactive season	undocumented
FHWA	Indiana	Des 2001624 2001625 US 50 over Patrict Dunn Ditch Scour protect Knox Co	Indiana bat and NLEB	0.068	inactive season	undocumented
FHWA	Indiana	State Road 46 HMA Overlay-Minor Structural Des No 1900331, 2001983, 2001973,	NLEB	10.00	inactive season	documented

State of Indiana
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Early Coordination/Environmental Assessment

DNR #: ER-18169-1

Request Received: February 3, 2021

Requestor: American Structurepoint, Inc
Kylie Bright
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Project: Westchester-Liberty Trail (Phase 3) extension along CR 1100 North from 5th Street to CR 100 East, and also south generally along the west and south side of the Tamarack subdivision, ending at the existing Wabash Corridor Trail, Town of Chesterton; Des #1902832

County/Site info: Porter

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has reviewed the above referenced project per your request. Our agency offers the following comments for your information and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

If our agency has regulatory jurisdiction over the project, the recommendations contained in this letter may become requirements of any permit issued. If we do not have permitting authority, all recommendations are voluntary.

*NOTE: This project is within the Lake Michigan Coastal Program's boundary; therefore, it may be subject to Federal Consistency (FC) review. Please go to <http://www.in.gov/dnr/lakemich/files/20070214-IR-312070085NRA.xml.pdf> (Section III, pages 8-16) to see the federal activities that require a project to go through the FC process which is outlined at <http://www.in.gov/dnr/lakemich/6041.htm>.

Regulatory Assessment: This proposal will require the formal approval for construction in a floodway under the Flood Control Act, IC 14-28-1. Please submit a copy of this letter with the permit application.

Natural Heritage Database: The Natural Heritage Program's data have been checked. To date, no plant or animal species listed as state or federally threatened, endangered, or rare have been reported to occur in the project vicinity. However, Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve (Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy) is located within 1/2 mile southeast of the project area.

Fish & Wildlife Comments: Avoid and minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources to the greatest extent possible, and compensate for impacts. Consider a trail alignment that would avoid or reduce impacts to forested and wetland habitat in the project area. Eliminating the new trail segment proposed along Laurel Creek Drive and the western edge of the Tamarack Subdivision would significantly reduce impacts to forested and wetland habitats as well as the need for habitat mitigation and a crossing structure that meets current IDNR requirements. A connecting trail along CR 100 East from Rail Road to CR 1100 North is an option for trail connectivity that would avoid impacting fish, wildlife, and botanical resources in the area west of the Tamarack Subdivision. The following are recommendations that address potential impacts identified in the proposed project area:

A) Stream Crossing Design:

The crossing over Pope O'Connor Ditch along the north side of CR 1100 North could likely be completed as an extension or modification of the existing structure. The modified crossing structure, and any bank stabilization under or around the structure, must not create conditions that are less favorable for wildlife passage when compared to existing conditions. Upgrading wildlife passage for modified structures is

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recommended whenever possible to improve wildlife/vehicle safety. If the structure must be replaced, then upgrading wildlife passage must be included as part of the Construction in a Floodway permit application. All new structures proposed in areas where no crossing has previously existed (west side of Tamarack Subdivision) must incorporate White-tailed deer passage into the design of the structure if a Construction in a Floodway permit is required. Minimum structure dimensions for white-tailed deer passage are 20 feet of width clearance (overall size of the structure span) and 8 feet of height clearance measured from the OHWM to the low chord elevation. Bank lines must be restored within structures to allow for wildlife passage above the ordinary high water mark. All wildlife passage designs must include a smooth level pathway a minimum of 1-2 feet in width composed of natural substrate (soil, sand, gravel, etc.) or compacted aggregate fill over riprap (#2, #53, #73, etc.) tied into existing elevations both upstream and downstream. Crossings must maintain the natural stream substrate within the structure (natural stream substrate must be replaced in sumped box and pipe culverts up to the existing flowline). Scour protection at the inlet and outlet must not extend above the existing flowline elevation. Stream depth, channel width and water velocities in the crossing structure during low-flow conditions must approximate those in the natural stream channel.

For purposes of maintaining fish and wildlife passage through a crossing structure, the Environmental Unit recommends bridges rather than culverts and bottomless culverts rather than box or pipe culverts. Multiple culverts or culverts with multiple openings are not recommended. These types of structures are often problematic for fish and wildlife passage as they tend to accumulate debris and become blocked. If box and pipe culverts are used, the culvert bottoms should be sumped a minimum of 6" (or 20% of the culvert height or diameter, whichever is greater up to a maximum of 2') below the stream bed elevation. Sumping is not required for bridges or three-sided culverts. Crossings must span the entire channel width (a minimum of 1.2 times the ordinary high water mark width).

There are a number of techniques and materials for incorporating wildlife passage into the design of a crossing structure. Coordination with a Regional Environmental Biologist to address wildlife passage issues before submitting a permit application (if required) is encouraged to avoid delays in the permitting process. The following links are good resources to consider in the design of stream crossing structures to maintain fish and wildlife passage: <http://www.fs.fed.us/wildlifecrossings/library/>, https://roadeology.ucdavis.edu/files/content/projects/DOT-FHWA_Wildlife_Crossing_Structures_Handbook.pdf, https://www.fs.fed.us/biology/nsaec/fishxing/aop_pdfs.html, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/engineering/hydraulics/pubs/11008/hif11008.pdf>.

B) Riparian & Urban Tree Habitat:

If tree removal is needed, the Division of Fish & Wildlife recommends avoiding removing urban trees to the greatest extent possible and replacing trees that must be removed. Street trees are important to fish and wildlife resources in urban areas. Indiana's street trees also provide millions of dollars of tangible benefits to Indiana communities by their presence in the urban environment. Their shade and beauty contribute to the quality of life. They provide significant increases in real estate values, create attractive settings for commercial businesses, and improve community neighborhood appeal. Trees decrease energy consumption by providing shade and acting as windbreaks. They reduce water treatment costs and impede soil erosion by slowing the runoff of stormwater. Trees also cool the air temperature, cleanse pollutants from the air, and produce oxygen while absorbing carbon dioxide. Trees are an integral component of the urban environment. Proactively managing and maintaining a street tree population will ultimately maximize the benefits afforded by their aesthetic and ecological functions. The following links give a good overview of the benefits of a street tree program and how to select the right species to avoid the negative impacts of non-native invasive species such as the

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common and popular Bradford pear: <https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/3605.htm> > Community & Urban Forestry > Tree Species Lists.

We recommend a mitigation plan be developed (and submitted with the permit application) for any unavoidable habitat impacts that will occur. The DNR's Habitat Mitigation guidelines (and plant lists) can be found online at: <http://iac.iga.in.gov/iac/20200527-IR-312200284NRA.xml.pdf>.

Impacts to non-wetland forest of one (1) acre or more should be mitigated at a minimum 2:1 ratio. If less than one acre of non-wetland forest is removed in a rural setting, replacement should be at a 1:1 ratio based on area. Impacts to non-wetland forest under one (1) acre in an urban setting should be mitigated by planting five trees, at least 2 inches in diameter-at-breast height (dbh), for each tree which is removed that is 10" dbh or greater (5:1 mitigation based on the number of large trees) or by using the 1:1 replacement ratio based on area depending on the type of habitat impacted (individual canopy tree removal in an urban streetscape or park-like environment versus removal of habitat supporting a tree canopy, woody understory, and herbaceous layer). Impacts under 0.10 acre in and urban area may still involve the replacement of large diameter trees but typically do not require any additional mitigation or additional plantings beyond seeding and stabilizing disturbed areas. There are exceptions for high quality habitat sites however.

C) Wetland Habitat:

A formal wetland delineation should be conducted to determine the extent and types of wetland habitat found within the project area. Due to the presence or potential presence of wetlands on site, the Division of Fish and Wildlife recommends contacting and coordinating with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) 401 program and also the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) 404 program. Impacts to wetland habitat should be mitigated at the appropriate ratio according to the 1991 INDOT/IDNR/USFWS Memorandum of Understanding.

D) Trail Guidelines:

The following is a basic list of recommendations from IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife to consider when planning trails to minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources.

1. Place the trail in or adjacent to existing rights-of-way where possible to minimize significant impacts to natural resource habitat. Also, utilize previously disturbed or degraded areas. Align the trail along or near existing man-made edges or areas that have the potential to be restored or enhanced by trail construction (i.e. railroad corridors), rather than routing the trail through previously undisturbed areas.
2. When designing or constructing a trail, disturb as narrow an area as possible to help minimize negative impacts. Where significant impacts to fish, wildlife or botanical resources are likely due to the trail's width, reduce the width to help avoid those impacts. ADA accessibility standards allow departures from the standards under certain conditions, including substantial harm to natural features, habitat, or vegetation (see <http://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/1500/outdoor-rule.pdf>, Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas).
3. Do not focus only on the direct impact of the trail's width; also consider the trail's impact to the surrounding habitat. Trails can fragment larger habitat areas and reduce the overall usefulness of the site to fish, wildlife, or botanical resources (1 large habitat block is better than 2 small habitat blocks). Trails can cause significant impacts to forested areas, riparian forested corridors along creeks and rivers, and wetland areas. They also may cause sediment and erosion issues or introduce human disturbance into fairly isolated areas containing wildlife habitat.
4. Avoid unnecessary stream crossings. Instead, make use of or modify existing stream

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crossings or avoid crossing the stream altogether. Where stream crossings are unavoidable, pedestrian bridges with supports/abutments placed no less than 10 feet landward from the tops of the banks on each side of the waterway are recommended. Alternatively, a three-sided culvert may be used. Three-sided culverts should be oversized to allow terrestrial wildlife movement along the creek on unsubmerged dry land at normal water levels. Box-culvert or pipe-culvert crossings are not recommended.

5. Trails designed to follow a stream's course must be placed outside the stream's forested riparian buffer. Also, do not place the trail along the tops of the banks of a forested creek. Avoid perpendicular fragmentation of riparian areas (streamside habitat). Where the stream has little or no forested riparian buffer, the trail should be no closer than 15 feet from the tops of the banks.

6. Avoid elements identified in the Natural Heritage Database; trails may negatively affect species that require specific natural conditions (vegetation, light levels, moisture, etc.) that are altered as a result of trail construction. Rare and high quality habitats, and wildlife habitats that possess high wildlife abundance and diversity, should be avoided by placing the trail around the habitat and screening it from the trail and trail users with a buffer of native vegetation or another method as discussed below. Wetlands and karst features are but two examples of areas to avoid.

7. Raised boardwalks should be constructed in wet areas or near wetlands (trails through wetlands are not recommended). A material such as composite decking should be used rather than treated wood which can leach elements toxic to aquatic life.

8. Screen wildlife habitat from the trail corridor. Vegetation, topography, and fences can help reduce the impact of noise and line of site disturbances of trail users on wildlife. Walls can create wildlife movement barriers and potential impacts must be considered. Native grass buffers (2 to 3 feet tall) are recommended along the edge of trails near habitat such as wetlands.

9. Lighting should only be used when absolutely necessary. Lighting in forested areas and along creeks, streams, and rivers should be the lowest intensity feasible and shielded to cast light on the path and not diffused into the surroundings to avoid disturbing wildlife circadian rhythms and disorienting night-migrating birds.

10. Any plantings in the riparian areas should be locally native species, not exotic species or horticultural varieties (e.g. "Autumn Blaze" Red Maple). A list of appropriate native woody and herbaceous vegetation can be provided upon request.

11. Trail surfaces can have negative effects on surrounding natural areas and deter movement of some species across the trail. Some surface materials are more environmentally acceptable than others, such as mulch and mown grass which should be considered as the first options. Asphalt is not recommended as a trail surface in the floodway. The conventional maintenance for aging asphalt is to seal it with a blacktop or asphalt sealer. Research has shown that as these sealers break down over time, they move into the aquatic environment and are highly toxic to aquatic life. If asphalt is used then asphalt sealer should not be used for long-term maintenance and repair of the asphalt trail surface. In previously disturbed areas, concrete is an acceptable surface material, and porous concrete is preferred wherever it can be used.

12. Shoulders should be constructed using unconsolidated materials where possible. In some situations, solid shoulders are necessary. In those cases, shoulders should be constructed using porous concrete.

13. Trails that highlight natural resources should skirt the resource and utilize "pulloffs" at specific sites instead of letting the entire trail and traffic disturb the resource.

The additional measures listed below should be implemented to avoid, minimize, or compensate for impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources:

1. Revegetate all bare and disturbed areas that are not currently mowed and maintained with a mixture of grasses, sedges, and wildflowers native to Northern Indiana and specifically for stream bank/floodway stabilization purposes as soon as possible upon completion; turf-type grasses (including low-endophyte, friendly endophyte, and endophyte free tall fescue but excluding all other varieties of tall fescue)

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- may be used in currently mowed areas only. A native herbaceous seed mixture must include at least 5 species of grasses and sedges and 5 species of wildflowers.
2. Minimize and contain within the project limits inchannel disturbance and the clearing of trees and brush.
 3. Do not work in the waterway from April 1 through June 30 without the prior written approval of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.
 4. Do not cut any trees suitable for Indiana bat or Northern Long-eared bat roosting (greater than 5 inches dbh, living or dead, with loose hanging bark, or with cracks, crevices, or cavities) from April 1 through September 30.
 5. Do not construct any temporary runarounds, access bridges, causeways, cofferdams, diversions, or pumparounds.
 6. Use minimum average 6 inch graded riprap stone extended below the normal water level to provide habitat for aquatic organisms in the voids.
 7. Do not use broken concrete as riprap.
 8. Underlay the riprap with a bedding layer of well graded aggregate or a geotextile to prevent piping of soil underneath the riprap.
 9. Minimize the movement of resuspended bottom sediment from the immediate project area.
 10. Do not deposit or allow demolition/construction materials or debris to fall or otherwise enter the waterway.
 11. Appropriately designed measures for controlling erosion and sediment must be implemented to prevent sediment from entering the stream or leaving the construction site; maintain these measures until construction is complete and all disturbed areas are stabilized.
 12. Seed and protect all disturbed streambanks and slopes not protected by other methods that are 3:1 or steeper with erosion control blankets that are heavy-duty, biodegradable, and net free or that use loose-woven / Leno-woven netting to minimize the entrapment and snaring of small-bodied wildlife such as snakes and turtles (follow manufacturer's recommendations for selection and installation); seed and apply mulch on all other disturbed areas.

Contact Staff:

Christie L. Stanifer, Environ. Coordinator, Fish & Wildlife
Our agency appreciates this opportunity to be of service. Please contact the above staff member at (317) 232-4080 if we can be of further assistance.

Christie L. Stanifer

Date: March 5, 2021

Christie L. Stanifer
Environ. Coordinator
Division of Fish and Wildlife

Perry, Leah

From: Brian J Marciniak <Brian.Marciniak@amwater.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 9:49 AM
To: Perry, Leah
Subject: FW: Early Coordination Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Project- Source Water Area

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Good morning,

Indiana American Water does not anticipate that this project will impact our source or our facilities.

Thank you,
Brian

Brian J Marciniak
Supervisor – Water Quality and Environmental Compliance
Indiana American Water Company
Northwest Operations / Warsaw

From: Christina L Gosnell <Christina.Gosnell@amwater.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 8:53 PM
To: Brian J Marciniak <Brian.Marciniak@amwater.com>
Subject: FW: Early Coordination Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3, Project- Source Water Area

Please review and respond to Leah.

Thanks.

Christina Gosnell
Manager Water Quality and Environmental Compliance
Indiana American Water Company
153 N. Emerson Ave
Greenwood, IN 46143
Tel: 317-885-2408
Cell: 812-344-8436
Fax: 317-885-2406
E-mail: Christina.Gosnell@amwater.com

From: Perry, Leah <lperry@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 12:03 PM
To: Christina L Gosnell <Christina.Gosnell@amwater.com>

Minor Projects PA Project Assessment Form

Date: 5/26/2021

Project Designation Number: 1902832

Route Number: N/A

Project Description:

The Town of Chesterton with funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and administrative oversight by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) plans to proceed with a trail project located in Liberty and Westchester Townships in Porter County, Indiana.

The proposed project would consist of extending the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail to the east by completing the final three segments. The trail corridor (Segment 1) along the north side of E County Road (CR) 1100 N, between N CR 50 E and N CR 100 E, could extend a maximum of 30 feet (ft) from edge of pavement. The north/south Segment 2, between E CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive, could have a maximum corridor width of 50 ft. Segment 3 is on the west side of N CR 100 E, extending south from Laurel Creek Drive to Rail Road. Between Segments 2 and 3, the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, will be widened within the existing right-of-way (ROW).

The trail would be 8 feet in width, constructed of concrete on top of compacted aggregate. Curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along E. County Road (CR) 1100 N and N. CR 100 E. Culverts would likely be added at the stream crossing west of Tamarack and potentially along the trail corridor to allow for drainage underneath the trail. Additionally, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive will be removed and replaced with a new 8-foot-wide trail. New ROW is anticipated along the north side of E. CR 1100 N., otherwise the trail will remain within existing Chesterton owned property (See attached maps for project location information).

More than .05 acre of ROW is anticipated, but the exact locations and amounts have not been finalized.

Feature crossed (if applicable): N/A

City/Township: Chesterton/Liberty and Westchester

County: Porter County

Information reviewed (please check all that apply):

- General project location map USGS map Aerial photograph Interim Report
- Written description of project area General project area photos Soil survey data
- Previously completed historic property reports Previously completed archaeology reports
- Bridge Inspection Information SHAARD SHAARD GIS Streetview Imagery

Other (please specify): project information provided by Weintraut & Associates dated April 29, 2021 and on file at INDOT CRO;

Minor Projects PA Project Assessment Form

Graham, Colin D.

2021 A Phase Ia Reconnaissance for the Proposed Bike and Pedestrian Facilities for the Westchester-Liberty Trail, Liberty and Westchester Townships, Town of Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana, Des. No.: 1902832. Weintraut & Associates, Zionsville.

Please specify all applicable categories and condition(s) (conditions that are applicable are highlighted):

B 8. Construction of pedestrian facilities including trails, multi-use paths, greenways, and associated minor activities defined below, under the following conditions **[BOTH Condition A, which pertains to Archaeological Resources, and Condition B, which pertains to Above-Ground Resources, must be satisfied]**:

Condition A (Archaeological Resources)

One of the two conditions listed below must be met (*EITHER Condition i or Condition ii must be satisfied*):

- i. Work occurs within areas previously disturbed by vertical and horizontal construction activities, including existing roadway, sidewalk, or rail bed, and is not on, within or adjacent to a National Register listed or eligible site; *OR*
- ii. Work occurs in undisturbed soils and an archaeological investigation conducted by the applicant and reviewed by INDOT Cultural Resources Office determines that no National Register-listed or potentially National Register-eligible archaeological resources are present within the project area. If the archaeological investigation locates National Register-listed or potentially National Register-eligible archaeological resources, then full Section 106 review will be required. Copies of any archaeological reports prepared for the project will be provided to the DHPA and any archaeological site form information will be entered directly into the SHAARD by the applicant. The archaeological reports will also be available for viewing (by Tribes only) on INSCOPE.

Condition B (Above-Ground Resources)

Work does not occur adjacent to or within a National Register-listed or National Register-eligible district or individual above-ground resource.

Activities associated with this category include the following:

- Pavement surface installation, replacement, rehabilitation, resurfacing, and reconstruction work, including widening, laying down of crushed stone or gravel, shoulder treatments, pavement repair, seal coating, pavement grinding, pavement marking, etc.;
- Installation of new signals, signage, and other traffic control devices;
- Installation of new safety appurtenances such as guardrails and barriers;
- Installation of plant materials and hardscape landscaping elements, including, but not limited to bike racks, benches, trash cans, lighting, and other amenities;
- Trail heads and parking lots;
- Installation of pipes, culverts, and pedestrian bridges.

Are there any commitments associated with this project? If yes, please explain and include in the Additional Comments Section below. yes no

Does the project result in a de minimis impact to a Section 4(f) protected historic resource? If yes, please explain in the Additional Comments Section below. yes no

Additional Comments:

Minor Projects PA Project Assessment Form

Above-ground Resources

An INDOT Cultural Resources Office (CRO) historian, who met the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards as per 36 CFR Part 61, performed a desktop review, checking the Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures (State Register) and National Register of Historic Places (National Register) lists for Porter County. No listed sites were identified adjacent to the project area.

The Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory (IHSSI) was also consulted via the Indiana State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database (SHAARD) and the Indiana Historic Buildings, Bridges, and Cemeteries (IHBBC) map. There are no surveyed resources adjacent to the project area.

The trail extends through a primarily residential area. On Segment 1 on E CR 1100 N, the trail does pass by some early to mid-century resources, but none of these appear to have the requisite significance and/or integrity to be considered National Register eligible. The other segments extend through wooded areas and modern residential developments.

Therefore, based on the available information, as summarized above, no above-ground concerns exist as long as the project scope does not change.

Archaeological Resources

An INDOT-CRO archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards as per 36 CFR Part 61 reviewed the Phase Ia report prepared by Weintraut and Associates (Graham 2021). The reconnaissance examined approximately 5.8 acres of land through systematic shovel probing (n=93) and visual inspection of disturbed areas. No archaeological sites were identified during the survey and no further work was recommended. Therefore, there are no archaeological concerns as long as the project scope does not change.

Accidental Discovery: If any archaeological artifacts or human remains are uncovered during construction, demolition, or earth moving activities, construction within 100 feet of the find will be stopped, and the INDOT Cultural Resources Office and the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology will be notified immediately.

INDOT Cultural Resources staff reviewer(s): Patrick Carpenter and Matt Coon

****Be sure to attach this form to the National Environmental Policy Act documentation for this project. Also, the NEPA documentation shall reference and include the description of the specific stipulation in the PA that qualifies the project as exempt from further Section 106 review.*



**A Phase Ia Reconnaissance for the Proposed Bike and Pedestrian Facilities
for the Westchester-Liberty Trail,
Liberty and Westchester Townships, Porter County, Indiana
Des No.: 1902832**

Prepared for
**American Structurepoint and
Indiana Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration**

Prepared by
WEINTRAUT & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Principal Investigator: Craig R. Arnold

P.O. Box 5034 | Zionsville, Indiana | (317)733-9770 | carnold@weintrautinc.com

April 2021



**INDIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SHORT REPORT**

State Form 54566 (R2 / 11-20)

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ARCHAEOLOGY**

402 West Washington Street, Room W274

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2739

Telephone Number: (317) 232-1646

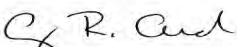
Fax Number: (317) 232-0693

E-mail: dhpa@dnr.IN.gov

Where applicable, the use of this form is recommended but not required by the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA).

Name(s) of author(s) Colin D. Graham, B.A.		Date (month, day, year) April 12, 2021
Title of project A Phase Ia Reconnaissance for the Proposed Bike and Pedestrian Facilities for the Westchester-Liberty Trail, Liberty and Westchester Townships, Town of Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana		
This document is being used to report on the results of: <input type="checkbox"/> Records check only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Records check and Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance <input type="checkbox"/> An addendum to a previous archaeological report. <i>For an addendum, provide the following information.</i>		
Name(s) of author(s) of previous report N/A		
Title of previous report N/A		
Date of previous report (month, day, year) N/A	DHPA number N/A	

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Description of project The Town of Chesterton with funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and administrative oversight by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) plans to proceed with a trail project located in Liberty and Westchester Townships in Porter County, Indiana (Figure 1). The proposed project would consist of extending the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail to the east by completing the final three segments. The trail corridor (Segment 1) along the north side of E County Road (CR) 1100 N, between N CR 50 E and N CR 100 E, could extend a maximum of 30 feet (ft) from edge of pavement. The north/south Segment 2, between E CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive, could have a maximum corridor width of 50 ft. Segment 3 is on the west side of N CR 100 E, extending south from Laurel Creek Drive to Rail Road. Between Segments 2 and 3, the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, will be widened within the existing right-of-way (ROW). The trail would be 8 feet in width, constructed of concrete on top of compacted aggregate. Curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along E CR 1100 N and N CR 100 E. Culverts would likely be added at the stream crossing west of Tamarack and potentially along the trail corridor to allow for drainage underneath the trail. Additionally, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek will be removed and replaced with the trail. New ROW is anticipated along the north side of E CR 1100 N.			
INDOT designation number(s) 1902832	Project number	DHPA number	DHPA plan number
Prepared for: (Company / Institution / Agency) American Structurepoint, Inc. (Structurepoint)			
Name of contact Briana Hope			
Address (number and street, city, state, and ZIP code) 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, IN			
Telephone number (317)547-5580	E-mail address bhope@structurepoint.com		
Name of principal investigator Craig R. Arnold, M.A.			
Name of company / institution Weintraut & Associates, Inc. (W&A)			
Address (number and street, city, state, and ZIP code) P.O. Box 5034 Zionsville, IN 46077			
Telephone number (317)733-9770	E-mail address carnold@weintrautinc.com		
Signature of principal investigator (Required) 		Date (month, day, year) April 12, 2021	

PROJECT LOCATION

County Porter	USGS 7.5' series topographic quadrangle Chesterton (Figure 2)	Civil township Liberty and Westchester
Legal Location		
Grid alignment SW Corner		

1/4	1/4	1/4	1/4	Section	Township	Range
		S1/2	SE	1	36N	6W
			NE	12	36N	6W

Comments
 This undertaking is located on the USGS 7.5-Minute series Chesterton, Indiana, topographic quadrangle map, in Sections 1 and 12, Township 36 North, Range 6 West. Segment 1 of the W&A survey area is located on the shared section line of Sections 1 and 12, or along the north side of CR 1100 north (see Figure 2). The project area is situated at the south end of the Town of Chesterton.

Property ownership (Check all that apply.)
 Private Local Government State Government Federal Government Other

Name of owner
 Town of Chesterton; Porter County; INDOT; Crossroads District of the Wesleyan Church Inc.; Nancy Hageman, Beth Hageman, and Dorothy Hageman; John and Karen Andershock; Dakota Sechrest and Shaina Reynolds; Colin Ragland and Christa Hoffman; Jovo Manojlovic; David and Marsha Ellis; James and Rene Martin; Janel Borsos; Vincent Kisala; Robert and Melissa Kania; Clarence Walsh; Jordyn Gorski

Address of owner (number and street, city, state, and ZIP code)
 1500 S Western Ave, Ste A, Marion, Indiana 46953
 P.O. Box 1065, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 P.O. Box 1065, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 89 E 1100 N, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 82 E 1100 N, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 1902 Catkin Cir, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 1904 Catkin Cir, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 76 E 1100 N, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 1908 Catkin Cir, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 1910 Catkin Cir, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 1912 Catkin Cir, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 208 Laurel Creek Dr, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 101 Laurel Creek Dr., Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 1072 N 100 E, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
 1490 Broadway, Chesterton, Indiana 46304

PROJECT AREA DETAILS

See Short Report instructions for required references to be consulted.

Size of project area (hectares) 2.3	Size of project area (acres) 5.8
Natural region Northwestern Morainal Natural Region (Indiana Department of Natural Resources/Division of Nature Preserves 2002)	Topography Flat to gently rolling within an urban setting (Limp 1978)
Soil(s) information Bourbon sandy loam (Br), somewhat poorly drained; Houghton muck, ponded (Hm), very poorly drained; Martinsville loam (MfA and MfB), 0-2% and 2- 6%, well drained; Milford silty clay loam (Mp), 0-2%, poorly drained; Rawson loam (RaB), 2-6%, moderately well drained; Whitaker loam (Wt), somewhat poorly drained (United States Department of Agriculture 2021)	Watershed Little Calumet-Galien (Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates 2002)

Current land usage
 Land use includes private residential parcels and a church property; areas of secondary woods and active drainages; a small park with open space; and roadway corridors with associated ditches and utilities.

Comments
 The project area contains three proposed segments of multi-use trail.

RECORDS CHECK

Records check only; no field investigation conducted. Date of records check (month, day, year)
 September 2 and December 30, 2020

Records consulted (Check all that apply.)

Archaeological site forms, reports in SHAARD, and SHAARD Archaeology and Structures Map Web Application

Cultural Resource Management reports, other research reports, etc., on file in locations other than SHAARD

Historical documents and maps from other institutions / resources

IHSSI / NRHP structures records in SHAARD

Cemetery records in SHAARD

Within the Project Area

Previously recorded archaeological sites (Include citations.)
N/A

Previous archaeological studies within the project area (Include citations.)
N/A

Name(s) of previously recorded cemetery(ies)
N/A

Cemetery registry number(s)
N/A

Outside the Project Area

Distance from boundary (Check one.)

Area researched was a half (½) mile radius from the boundary of the project area.

Area researched was a one (1) mile radius from the boundary of the project area.

Area researched was a two (2) mile radius from the boundary of the project area.

Previously recorded archaeological sites (Include citations.)
This review includes records obtained from the State Historic Architecture and Archaeology Database (SHAARD) provided by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (IDNR/DHPA). According to SHAARD, there are seven archaeological sites within 1.6 kilometers (km) (1 mile [mi]) of the project area (IDNR/DHPA 2020). These include both historic and precontact sites (Table 1).

Previous archaeological studies (Include citations.)
SHAARD records indicate 16 archaeology related investigations conducted within 1.6 km (1 mi) of the current project area (IDNR/DHPA 2020). The Stillwell (2004) literature review included a portion of the current survey area along CR 1100 N but no Phase Ia reconnaissance occurred in the survey area. See Table 2.

Name(s) of previously recorded cemetery(ies)
Saint Patrick's, 1051 South Calumet; Chesterton Cemetery, 300 E. Porter Ave (IDNR/DHPA 2020).

Cemetery registry number(s)
Cemetery Record (CR)-64-62, Indiana Historic Site and Structures Inventory (IHSSI) No. 127-108-05042; CR-64-60, IHSSI No. 127-108-09032

FIELD INVESTIGATION

Date(s) of field investigation (month, day, year)
November 4 and 5, 2020

Name of field supervisor
Craig R. Arnold and Colin D. Graham

Names of field crew
Jessica Simpson

Field Conditions

Surface visibility 0 percent	Factors affecting visibility Grass/vegetation/leaf litter
Slope Variable; 0 to 40 percent, visually estimated	Environmental (weather) conditions during the survey Late fall weather; sunny and warm

Methods

Surface survey (Check all that apply.)

Visual walkover Interval: Thirty (30) meters Other (Describe below.)

Pedestrian survey Interval: Five (5) meters Ten (10) meters Other (Describe below.)

Describe methods.
No surface survey was conducted beyond a casual inspection of the area while shovel probing.

Shovel probes (Check all that apply.)

Shovel probes Interval: Five (5) meters Ten (10) meters Fifteen (15) meters Other (Describe below.)

The standard is screened shovel probes using ¼" size mesh. If shovel probes were not screened, or a different size mesh was utilized, an explanation must be provided in the methods below.

Describe methods.
The project area was surveyed with shovel test probes (Figure 3). Shovel probing was employed in areas where the ground surface visibility was less than 30 percent and the terrain had less than a 20 percent slope. Shovel probes were placed at no greater than 15-m (49.2-ft) intervals, measured a minimum of 30 centimeters (cm), or 11.8 inches (in) in diameter, and extended to culturally sterile subsoil or to a maximum depth of 50 cm (19.7 in). W&A screened excavated soil through 0.25-in wire-mesh hardware cloth to ensure a uniform recovery of cultural materials. Shovel probes were then backfilled and

landscaped to match the surrounding conditions. A Trimble R1 GNSS receiver having the potential for sub-meter accuracy coupled with an Apple iPad utilizing a GIS-based program was used to collect probe locations and record field data. Figures 4 through 9 are representative photographs of field conditions at the time the survey was conducted.

Cores / auger probes (Check all that apply.)
 Cores / auger probes Interval: Five (5) meters Ten (10) meters Fifteen (15) meters Other (Describe below.)

The standard is screened cores / auger probes using ¼" size mesh. If cores / auger probes were not screened, or a different size mesh was utilized, an explanation must be provided in the methods below.

Describe methods.
 N/A

Additional field investigation comments

RESULTS

Summary of relevant regional culture background
 SHAARD lists over 800 archaeological sites that have been recorded within Porter County, Indiana. Given the environmental resources available for human exploitation in the project area and surrounding region, there was a potential for the project area to contain previously unrecognized archaeological sites.

Cultural manifestations near the project area reflect the general cultural sequence of northwestern Indiana from Paleoindian through historic American. Within Porter County, based on the SHAARD, there are: 7 Paleoindian; 12 Early Archaic; 6 Middle Archaic; 23 Late Archaic; 6 Early Woodland; 24 Middle Woodland; 18 Late Woodland; 2 Late Woodland/Mississippian; 3 Mississippian; 1 Protohistoric; over 500 Unidentified Prehistoric; and 150 Historic archaeological sites (IDNR/DHPA 2020).

Records check (Check all that apply.)
 The project area does not have the potential to contain archaeological resources. Provide explanation / justification.
 There are previously recorded archaeological resources within the project area, but those resources do not warrant additional archaeological investigation. Provide explanation / justification.
 The project area contains previously recorded archaeological resources that warrant additional investigation and/or the project area has the potential to contain archaeological resources. Provide explanation / justification.
 A cemetery is located within or adjacent to the project area.

Explanation / justification
 The project area is within an urban setting that contains residential and public property, woods, wetlands, and roadways. No cultural deposits or materials were identified during the current investigation.

Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance (Check all that apply.)
 No Phase Ia reconnaissance was conducted.
 Phase Ia reconnaissance located no archaeological resources.
 Previously recorded sites were in the project area.
 Artifacts and/or features at a previously recorded site(s) within the project area were not discovered. List the site(s) below.
 Phase Ia reconnaissance has identified landforms conducive to buried archaeological deposits. Describe below.

List sites.
 None

Describe landforms.
 None

Number of shovel probes excavated 93	Number of cores / auger probes None
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Describe disturbances. Attach photographs documenting disturbances.
 Utilities, roadways, sidewalks, and ditches (see Figures 4 to 9).

Actual area surveyed (hectares) 2.3	Actual area surveyed (acres) 5.8
<p><i>Explain results of fieldwork.</i></p> <p>A typical soil profile from the shovel test probes consisted of a very dark grayish brown (10YR 3/2) and black (10YR 2/1) sandy loam usually extending to a depth of approximately 25 cm (10 in) underlain by a dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/6) to yellowish brown (5/6) sandy clay loam. No cultural materials were recovered from the shovel probes, and no buried cultural horizons or alluvial soils were observed in their profiles.</p>	

RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>Records check (<i>Check all that apply.</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No archaeological investigation is recommended before the project is allowed to proceed because the records check has determined that the project area does not have the potential to contain archaeological resources.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance is recommended.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A cemetery development plan may be required under Indiana Code 14-21-1-26.5 because project ground disturbance will be within 100 feet of a cemetery.</p>	
<p>Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance (<i>Check all that apply.</i>)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It is recommended that the project be allowed to proceed as planned because the Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance has located no archaeological sites within the project area and/or previously recorded sites that were investigated warrant no additional investigation.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> It is recommended that Phase Ic archaeological subsurface reconnaissance be conducted before the project is allowed to proceed. The Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance has determined that the project area includes landforms which have the potential to contain buried archaeological deposits.</p>	
<p>Other recommendations / commitments</p> <p>No cultural materials or deposits were identified within the current survey area. Therefore, no further archaeology work is recommended as necessary prior to construction.</p>	

Pursuant to IC-14-21-1, if any archaeological artifacts or human remains are uncovered during construction, demolition, or earthmoving activities, state law (Indiana Code 14-21-1-27 and 29) requires that the discovery must be reported to the Department of Natural Resources within two (2) business days. In that event, please call (317) 232-1646.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Figure showing project location within Indiana</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USGS topographic map showing the project area (1:24,000 scale)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aerial photograph showing the project area, land use and survey methods</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographs of the project area, including, if applicable, photographs documenting disturbances</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Project plans (<i>if available</i>)</p>	
<p>Other attachments</p> <p>Information shown on maps is not warranted for accuracy or merchantability. GIS data used to create the maps are from the best-known sources existing at this time. However, experience shows that many national datasets are not all inclusive, have differing projections, precision and geographic control points. Use of maps should be limited to planning, and should not replace field review or background checks with other sources. It is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only. The maps created for this report do not represent a legal document.</p>	
<p>References cited (<i>See short report instructions for required references to be consulted.</i>)</p> <p>Arnold, Craig 2015 Phase Ia Archaeological Field Reconnaissance: Proposed Westchester-Liberty Trail Project on County Road 1100 North, Town of Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana, Des. No.: 1382657. Weintraut & Associates, Inc., Zionsville, Indiana.</p> <p>Balek, Cynthia 2007 Phase Ia Archaeological Reconnaissance of the 0.8-Acre Harris Bank Property Chesterton, Westchester Township Porter County, Indiana. Archaeology and Geomorphology Services, Westchester, Illinois.</p> <p>Bellis, James O. 1986 Report of the Archaeological Reconnaissance for the proposed site of the Replacement of Porter County Bridge #148, Chesterton, Indiana. Department of Anthropology, University of Notre Dame, South Bend.</p> <p>Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates 2002 WATERSHEDS_HUC08_CATALOG_UNITS_USGS_IN layer, digitized by Bernardin, Lochmueller and Associates from data derived from US Geological Survey, 1:24,000 Polygon Shapefile, https://maps.indiana.edu/, accessed September and December 2020.</p> <p>Burkett, Frank 1985 Archaeological Field Reconnaissance Chesterton: Water Main and Sewer Extension Porter County, Indiana. Archaeological Resources Management Services, Department of Anthropology, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana.</p>	

Dickson, Randy

2015 Phase Ia Archaeology Survey in Response to a Proposed Cell Tower Located at 2050 West 100 North Chesterton, Indiana, T36N, R6W, S2, Porter County. Midwest Archaeological Consultants, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.

Grob, Kaye and Veronica Parsell

2014 Phase Ia Archaeology Records Review and Reconnaissance for the Coffee Creek-Urschel Laboratories, Gateway Boulevard Extension, Porter County, Indiana. Cardno JFNew, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources/Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (IDNR/DHPA)

2020 Indiana State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database (SHAARD). GIS map of archaeological sites, structures, and cemeteries. Electronic document, available at <https://portalqa.gis.in.gov/gioportalqa/home/search.html?q=archaeology&t=content>, accessed September and December 2020.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources/Division of Nature Preserves

2002 NATURAL_REGIONS_IDNR_IN layer, digitized by Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Nature Preserves, Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center from map data in Michael A. Homoya, D. Brian Abrell, James Aldrich, and Thomas W. Post, 1985, The Natural Regions of Indiana. Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science 94:245-268, <https://maps.indiana.edu/>, accessed September and December, 2020.

Jackson, Christopher

2020 A Phase Ia Archaeological Records Review and Field Reconnaissance for the Proposed Improvements of the SR 49 and Porter Avenue Intersection that is approximately 1.2 Miles South of I-94 as well as the SR 49 and CR 1100 North Intersection that is approximately 1.2 Miles South of I-80 (Des 1801376) in the Town of Chesterton, Westchester and Liberty Townships, Porter County, Indiana. Green 3, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Jeske, Robert J.

1996 Chesterton Postal Station: An Archaeological Investigation in Porter County, Indiana. Northeast Indiana Archaeological Survey, Department of Sociology and Anthropology Indiana-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

King, Brad

2012 Replacement of Bridge No. 156 Carrying Porter Avenue over Coffee Creek in Porter County. Pioneer Consulting Inc., Muncie, Indiana.

Limp, W. Frederick

1978 ORACLE System User's Manual: Version 1.2, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Research Reports No. 3, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Pritchard, James C.

2003 Final Report: Phase I Cultural Resources Investigations for the ANR Pipeline Coffee Creek Line Change Project, Liberty Township, Porter County, Indiana. Gray and Pape, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Pritchard, James C., and Christy Wood Pritchard

2003 Draft: Addendum Report: Phase I Cultural Resources Investigations of 3 Additional Construction Work Areas for the ANR Pipeline Coffee Creek Line Change Project, Liberty Township, Porter County, Indiana. Gray and Pape, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Sipes, Erik D.

1997 An Addendum to an Archaeological Reconnaissance of 17.2 Miles of Proposed Gas Pipeline Corridors in Lake and Porter Counties, Indiana: Proposed Route Deviation Near the Intersection of I-80/90 and Indiana State Road 49, South of Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Sipes, Eric D. and Janis K. Kearney

1996 An Archaeological Reconnaissance of Approximately 17.2 Miles of Proposed Gas Pipeline Corridors in Lake and Porter Counties, Indiana. Glenn A. Black Laboratory, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Stillwell, Larry N.

1998 An Archaeological Reconnaissance of Six Proposed Wetland Mitigation Sites Near Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. Archaeological Consultants of Ossian, Muncie, Indiana.

2004 An Archaeological Literature Review of the Proposed Westchester-Liberty Multi-Use Trail in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. Archaeological Consultants of Ossian, Muncie, Indiana.

2005 An Archaeological Field Reconnaissance of the Proposed Portion of the Westchester-Liberty Multi-Use Trail Through Dogwood Park in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. Archaeological Consultants of Ossian, Muncie, Indiana.

United States Department of Agriculture
2021 Web Soil Survey, United States Department of Agriculture website.
<http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>,
accessed March 2021.

Comments

CURATION

Location of project documentation
W&A



M E M O R A N D U M

Date: May 07, 2021

To: Site Assessment & Management (SAM)
Environmental Policy Office - Environmental Services Division (ESD)
Indiana Department of Transportation
100 N Senate Avenue, Room N642
Indianapolis, IN 46204

From: Sarah J. Everhart
American Structurepoint, Inc.
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240
severhart@structurepoint.com

Re: RED FLAG INVESTIGATION
DES #1902832, Local Project
Westchester Trail Phase 3
Porter County, Indiana

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project proposes the extension of the existing Westchester-Liberty Shared-Use Trail located in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The project would extend the existing trail beginning along the north side of CR 1100 N at 5th Street and continuing east connecting to an existing sidewalk near CR North 100 E. Approximately 0.3 mile west of SR 49, the proposed trail would also extend south generally along the west edge of the subdivision, Tamarack, for approximately 0.26 mile until turning east and connecting with the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. At the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 N the trail corridor would continue south along the west side of the CR 100 N for approximately 0.06 mile before crossing CR 100 E and connecting with the existing Wabash Corridor Trail south of the CR 100 E and Rail Road intersection.

The project proposes an 8-foot wide shared-use trail that will connect to the existing trail at the 5th Street and CR 1100 North intersection and the existing trail at the CR 100 E and Rail Road intersection. A small culvert would be constructed where the trail crosses over a stream in the section of the trail running west of Tamarack. Pedestrian crosswalks and push buttons, as well as flashing signals, would be installed where the trail crosses CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Additionally, advanced warning pavement and way signage would be installed at those crossings.

Bridge and/or Culvert Work Included in Project: Yes No Structure # New Structure
If this is a bridge project, is the bridge Historical? Yes No , Select Non-Select

(Note: If the project involves a historical bridge, please include the bridge information in the Recommendations Section of the report).

Proposed right of way: Temporary # Acres _____ Permanent # Acres >0.5 Not Applicable

Type and proposed depth of excavation: Excavation is anticipated for the trail to a maximum depth of 2 feet and for the culvert to a maximum depth of 5 feet.

Maintenance of traffic (MOT): MOT is anticipated to include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are constructed adjacent to roadways.

Work in waterway: Yes No Below ordinary high water mark: Yes No

State Project: LPA:

Any other factors influencing recommendations: N/A

INFRASTRUCTURE TABLE AND SUMMARY

Infrastructure			
Indicate the number of items of concern found within the 0.5 mile search radius. If there are no items, please indicate N/A:			
Religious Facilities	3*	Recreational Facilities	3
Airports ¹	N/A	Pipelines	6
Cemeteries	1	Railroads	1
Hospitals	N/A	Trails	6
Schools	2	Managed Lands	1

¹In order to complete the required airport review, a review of public airports within 3.8 miles (20,000 feet) is required.

Explanation:

Religious Facilities*: Three (3) religious facilities (one mapped, two unmapped) are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest facility, The River Church, is adjacent to the northern arm of the project area. Coordination with The River Church will occur.

Cemeteries: One (1) cemetery is located within the 0.5 mile radius. St. Patrick’s Cemetery is located approximately 0.5 mile north of the project area. No impact is expected.

Schools: Two (2) schools are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest facility, Chesterton High School, is located approximately 0.25 mile west of the project area. No impact is expected.

Recreational Facilities: Three (3) recreational facilities are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest facility, Chesterton High School, is located approximately 0.25 mile west of the project area. No impact is expected.

Pipelines: Six (6) pipeline segments are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. Two (2) pipeline segments are located within the project area. Coordination with Northern Indiana Public Service Co. and Marathon Pipe Line Co. will occur.

Railroads: One (1) railroad segment is located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The railroad segment is mapped crossing the tip of the southern arm of the project area and is identified as inactive with an unknown owner. Based on publically available imagery, this railroad segment appears to have been removed and is not present at this location. No impact is expected.

Trails: Six (6) trail segments are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. Three (3) trail segments are located within the project area. Of these, two (2) are planned trail segments by Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department that are associated with this project and one (1) is a planned trail segment by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning

Commission. Coordination with Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department and Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission will occur.

Managed Lands: One (1) Managed Land is located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The managed land, Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve, is located approximately 0.26 mile southeast of the project area. No impact is expected.

WATER RESOURCES TABLE AND SUMMARY

Water Resources			
Indicate the number of items of concern found within the 0.5 mile search radius. If there are no items, please indicate N/A:			
NWI - Points	N/A	Canal Routes - Historic	N/A
Karst Springs	N/A	NWI - Wetlands	34
Canal Structures – Historic	N/A	Lakes	17
NPS NRI Listed	N/A	Floodplain - DFIRM	8
NWI-Lines	2	Cave Entrance Density	N/A
IDEM 303d Listed Streams and Lakes (Impaired)	5	Sinkhole Areas	N/A
Rivers and Streams	10*	Sinking-Stream Basins	N/A

Explanation:

NWI-Lines: Two (2) NWI-Line segments are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest NWI-Line segment is located approximately 0.17 mile east of the project area. No impact is expected.

IDEM 303d Listed Streams and Lakes (Impaired): Five (5) 303d Listed Streams and Lakes are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. One (1) 303d Listed Stream, Pope O’Conner Ditch, is located within the project area. Pope O’Conner Ditch is listed as impaired for nutrient concentrations and Impaired Biotic Communities (IBC). Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to avoid further degradation to the stream.

Rivers and Streams*: Ten (10) stream segments (nine mapped, one unmapped) are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. Two (2) stream segments (one mapped, one unmapped), Pope O’Conner Ditch and an Un-named Tributary (UNT) to Pope O’Conner Ditch, are located within the project area. A Waters of the US Report is recommended and coordination with the appropriate agency, if applicable, will occur.

NWI-Wetlands: Thirty-four (34) wetlands are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. Two (2) wetlands are located adjacent to the western termini of the project area. A Waters of the US Report is recommended and coordination with the appropriate agency, is applicable, will occur.

Lakes: Seventeen (17) lakes are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest lake, Chestnut Lake, is located approximately 0.03 mile south of the project area. No impact is expected.

Floodplain-DFIRM: Eight (8) floodplain polygons are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The project area is located within one (1) of the floodplain polygons. Coordination with the appropriate agency will occur.

MINING AND MINERAL EXPLORATION TABLE AND SUMMARY

Mining/Mineral Exploration			
Indicate the number of items of concern found within the 0.5 mile search radius. If there are no items, please indicate N/A:			
Petroleum Wells	N/A	Mineral Resources	N/A
Mines – Surface	N/A	Mines – Underground	N/A

Explanation: No mining and mineral resources were identified within the 0.5 mile search radius.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL CONCERNS TABLE AND SUMMARY

Hazardous Material Concerns			
Indicate the number of items of concern found within the 0.5 mile search radius. If there are no items, please indicate N/A:			
Superfund	N/A	Manufactured Gas Plant Sites	N/A
RCRA Generator/ TSD	1	Open Dump Waste Sites	N/A
RCRA Corrective Action Sites	N/A	Restricted Waste Sites	N/A
State Cleanup Sites	N/A	Waste Transfer Stations	N/A
Septage Waste Sites	N/A	Tire Waste Sites	N/A
Underground Storage Tank (UST) Sites	4	Confined Feeding Operations (CFO)	N/A
Voluntary Remediation Program	N/A	Brownfields	N/A
Construction Demolition Waste	N/A	Institutional Controls	2
Solid Waste Landfill	N/A	NPDES Facilities	2
Infectious/Medical Waste Sites	N/A	NPDES Pipe Locations	N/A
Leaking Underground Storage (LUST) Sites	1	Notice of Contamination Sites	N/A

Explanation:

RCRA Generator/TSD: One (1) RCRA Generator/TSD site is located within the 0.5 mile search radius. Although the icon for the site (Harbor Oldsmobile GMC Truck, 118 East 1100 North, AI ID# 50073) is mapped adjacent to the east of the project area, the site is actually located approximately 0.19 mile east of the project area. No impact is expected.

Underground Storage Tank (UST) Sites: Four (4) UST sites are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest site, Rush Hour Foods No. 55, 1598 Calumet Avenue, AI ID# 51678, is located approximately 0.14 mile northeast of the project area. IDEM conducted an Underground Storage Tank Inspection on March 15, 2016, and the facility was found to be in compliance with equipment operating, and maintenance requirements set forth in Indiana’s UST Rule 329 IAC 9. No impact is expected.

Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Sites: One (1) LUST site is located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The site, Kat Inc., 116 East 1100 North, AI ID# 50608, is located approximately 0.26 mile southeast of the project area. No impact is expected.

Institutional Controls: Two (2) Institutional Control sites are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest site, Harbor Oldsmobile, GMC Truck, 118 East 1100 North, AI ID# 50073, is located approximately 0.19 mile east of the project area. No impact is expected.

NPDES Facilities: Two (2) NPDES Facilities are located within the 0.5 mile search radius. The nearest site, Residences at Coffee Creek, SR 49 & Sidewalk Road, Permit# INR10N874, is located approximately 0.35 mile southeast of the project area. No impact is expected.

ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION SUMMARY

The Porter County listing of the Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center information on endangered, threatened, or rare (ETR) species and high quality natural communities are provided at https://www.in.gov/dnr/naturepreserve/files/np_porter.pdf. A preliminary review of the Indiana Natural Heritage Database by INDOT Environmental Services did indicate the presence of ETR species within the 0.5 mile search radius. Coordination with USFWS and IDNR will occur.

A review of the USFWS database did not indicate the presence of endangered bat species in or within 0.5 mile of the project area. The range-wide programmatic consultation for the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat will be completed according to the most recent "Using the USFWS's IPaC System for Listed Bat Consultation for INDOT Projects".

RECOMMENDATIONS SECTION

INFRASTRUCTURE:

Religious Facilities: The River Church is located adjacent to the project area. Coordination with The River Church will occur.

Pipelines: Two (2) pipeline segments are located within the project area. Coordination with Northern Indiana Public Service Co. and Marathon Pipe Line Co. will occur.

Trails: Three (3) planned trail segments are located within the project area. Coordination with Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department and Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission will occur.

WATER RESOURCES:

A Waters of the US Report is recommended and coordination with the appropriate agency, if applicable, will occur for the following features:

- Two (2) stream segments, Pope-O'Conner Ditch and a UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch, are located within the project area.
- Two (2) NWI-Wetlands are located adjacent to the project area.
- The project area is located within a floodplain. (Coordination Only)

IDEM 303d Listed Streams and Lakes (Impaired): Pope O'Conner Ditch is located within the project area. Pope O'Conner Ditch is listed as impaired for nutrient concentrations and Impaired Biotic Communities (IBC). Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to avoid further degradation to the stream.

MINING/MINERAL EXPLORATION: N/A

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL CONCERNS: N/A

ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION: Coordination with USFWS and IDNR will occur. The range-wide programmatic consultation for the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat will be completed according to the most recent "Using the USFWS's IPaC System for Listed Bat Consultation INDOT Projects".

**Nicole Fohey
Breting**

Digitally signed by
Nicole Fohey-Breting
Date: 2021.05.12
12:59:11 -04'00'

INDOT Environmental Services concurrence:

(Signature)

Prepared by:

Sarah J. Everhart

Environmental Scientist

American Structurepoint, Inc.

Graphics:

A map for each report section with a 0.5 mile search radius buffer around all project area(s) showing all items identified as possible items of concern is attached. If there is not a section map included, please change the YES to N/A:

SITE LOCATION: YES

INFRASTRUCTURE: YES

WATER RESOURCES: YES

MINING/MINERAL EXPLORATION: N/A

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL CONCERNS: YES

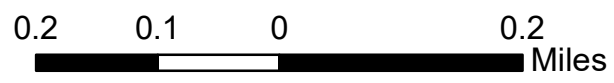
**NOTE: Site Location Map can be
found in Appendix B.**

Red Flag Investigation - Infrastructure Westchester Phase 3 Trail Des. No. 1902832 Porter County, Indiana



Sources:
Non Orthophotography Data - Obtained from the State of Indiana Geographical Information Office Library
Orthophotography - Obtained from Indiana Map Framework Data (www.indianamap.org)
Map Projection: UTM Zone 16 N **Map Datum:** NAD83

This map is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only. This information is not warranted for accuracy or other purposes.



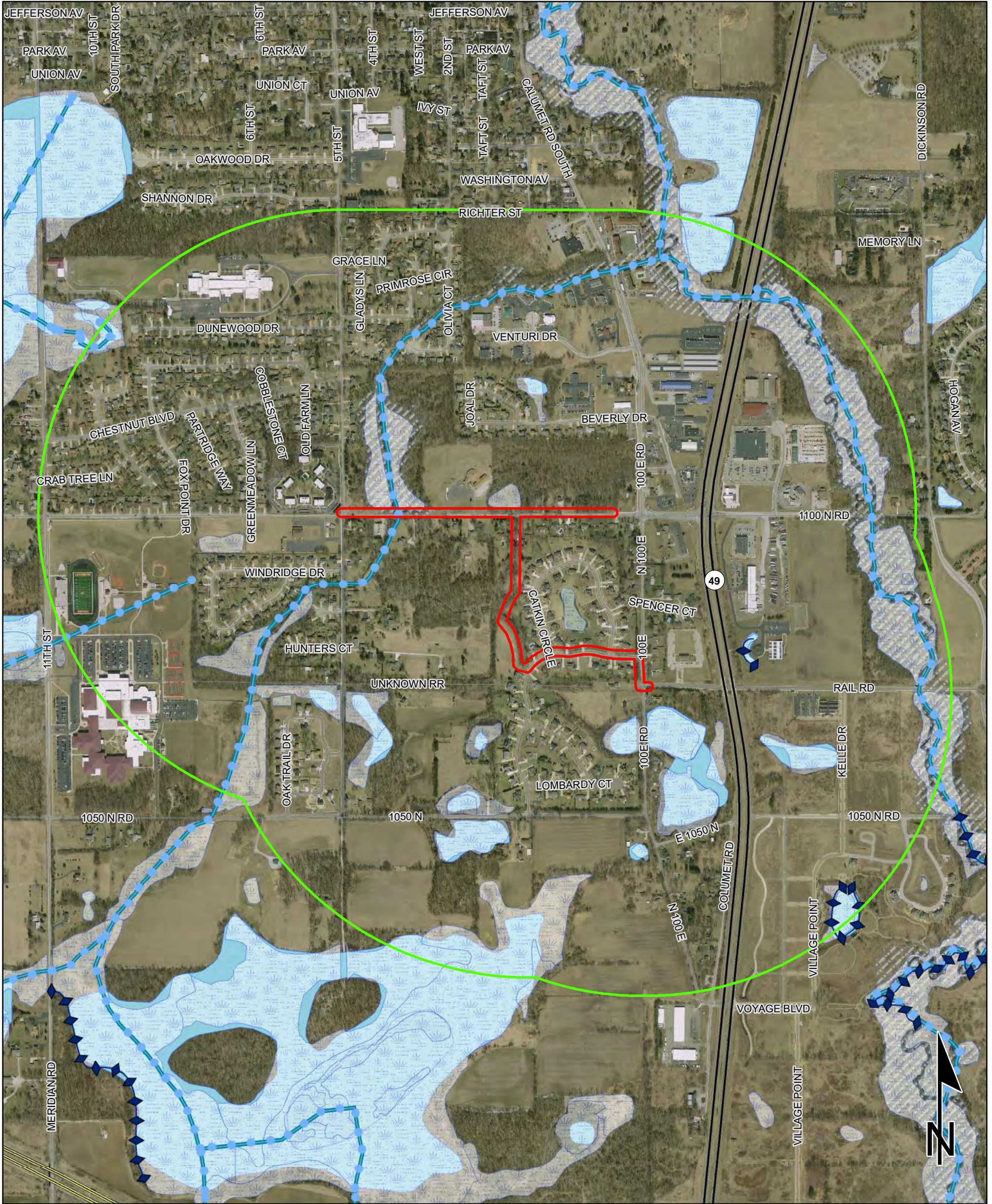
	Religious Facility		Recreation Facility		Project Area
	Airport		Pipeline		Half Mile Radius
	Cemeteries		Railroad		Toll
	Hospital		Trails		Interstate
	School		Managed Lands		State Route
	County Boundary				US Route
					Local Road

Red Flag Investigation - Water Resources

Westchester Phase 3 Trail

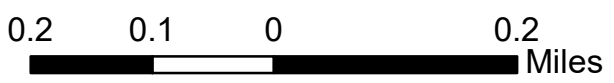
Des. No. 1902832























Porter County, Indiana



Sources:
Non Orthophotography
 Data - Obtained from the State of Indiana Geographical Information Office Library
Orthophotography - Obtained from Indiana Map Framework Data (www.indianamap.org)
Map Projection: UTM Zone 16 N **Map Datum:** NAD83

This map is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only. This information is not warranted for accuracy or other purposes.



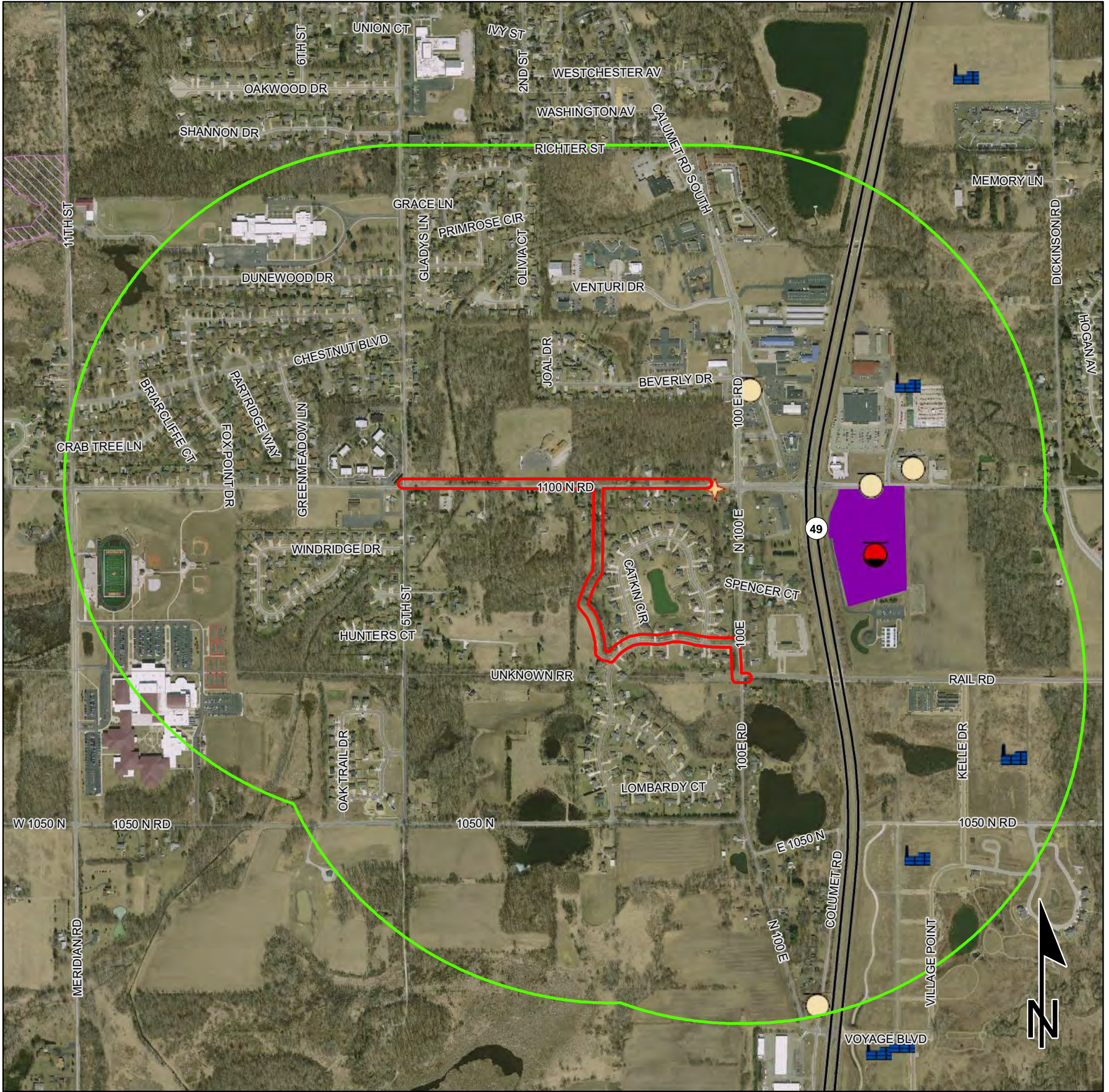
 NWI - Point	 Wetlands	 Project Area
 Karst Spring	 Lake	 Half Mile Radius
 NWI- Line	 Floodplain - DFIRM	 Toll
 Impaired_Stream_Lake	 Cave Entrance Density	 Interstate
 NPS NRI listed	 Sinkhole Area	 State Route
 River	 Sinking-Stream Basin	 US Route
 Canal Structure - Historic	 County Boundary	 Local Road
 Canal Route - Historic		































Red Flag Investigation - Hazardous Material Concerns

Westchester Trail Phase 3

Des. No. 1902832

Porter County, Indiana



	Brownfield		RCRA Generator/TSD		Institutional Controls
	RCRA Corrective Action Sites		Restricted Waste Site		County Boundary
	Confined Feeding Operation		Septage Waste Site		Project Area
	Notice_of_Contamination		Solid Waste Landfill		Half Mile Radius
	Construction/Demolition Site		State Cleanup Site		Toll
	Infectious/Medical Waste Site		Superfund		Interstate
	Leaking Underground Storage Tank		Tire Waste Site		State Route
	Manufactured Gas Plant		Underground Storage Tank		US Route
	NPDES Facilities		Voluntary Remediation Program		Local Road
	NPDES Pipe Locations		Waste Transfer Station		
	Open Dump Waste Site				

Appendix E
E-9

0.2 0.1 0 0.2
Miles

This map is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only. This information is not warranted for accuracy or other purposes.

Sources:
Non Orthophotography
Data - Obtained from the State of Indiana Geographical Information Office Library
Orthophotography - Obtained from Indiana Map Framework Data (www.indianamap.org)
Map Projection: UTM Zone 16 N **Map Datum:** NAD83

WETLAND DELINEATION AND WATERS REPORT

WESTCHESTER TRAIL PHASE 3
DES. NO. 1902832
CHESTERTON, PORTER COUNTY, INDIANA
41.593614/-87.053073



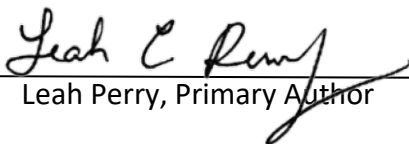
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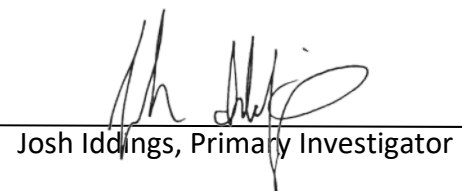
TOWN OF CHESTERTON
726 BROADWAY
CHESTERTON, INDIANA 46304

Prepared by:

AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT, INC.
9025 RIVER ROAD
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46240
(317) 547-5580

**NOTE: Duplicate mapping
and routine wetland
delineation data have
been removed to reduce
file size.**


Leah Perry, Primary Author


Josh Iddings, Primary Investigator

May 13, 2021



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- Appendix B - Routine Wetland Determination Data Forms**
- Appendix C - Quality Assessment Forms**
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- Appendix E - Photographs**
- Appendix F - Preliminary JD**

1.0 Introduction

American Structurepoint, Inc. was contracted by the Town of Chesterton to perform a wetland delineation on the Westchester Trail Phase 3 project located in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The investigated area is located on the Chesterton USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map in Section 12, Township 36 North, and Range 6 West. The investigated area extends along the north side of CR 1100 N at 5th Street east to an existing sidewalk near CR N 100 E. Approximately 0.30 mile west of SR 49, the investigated area extends south generally along the west edge of the Tamarack subdivision for approximately 0.26 mile until turning east and connecting with the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. At the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 N, the investigated area extends along the west side of CR 100 N for approximately 0.06 mile before crossing CR 100 E and connecting with the existing Wabash Corridor Trail, south of the CR 100 E and Rail Road intersection.

The location and approximate boundaries of the investigated area can be seen in the attached maps and aerial photographs (Appendix D).

Preliminary investigation of available data indicated the investigated area is primarily cleared land and forested area with some residential properties. The USGS Topographic Map depicts the investigated area as generally flat with some forested area, and urbanized area adjacent to the western boundary. The map also depicts a stream, Pope O'Conner Ditch, running through the investigated area. The investigated area is mapped within the FEMA 100-year floodway associated with the Pope O'Conner Ditch. The *1981 Porter County Soil Survey* indicates the same stream flowing south through the investigated area.

American Structurepoint staff visited the site on July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 to conduct a wetland delineation. The proposed project is located in Land Resource Region (LRR) K, L, and R as recognized by the US Department of Agriculture as such this wetland delineation was conducted in accordance with the *Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual* (Environmental Laboratory, 1987) and the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2011) for LRRs K, L, and R and Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) 149B in LLR S.

Six wetlands (Wetland A through F) totaling 0.869 acre and two streams totaling 840 linear feet (0.159 acre) were delineated within the investigated area. Pope O'Conner Ditch, UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch, and Wetlands A through F appear to have hydrologic connection to Little Calumet River, a Traditional Navigable Waterway (TNW). Therefore, it is anticipated that these features would be considered jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Waters of the U.S.

Waters of the U.S. are within the jurisdiction of the US Department of the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under the Clean Water Act of 1972, Section 404. “Waters of the US” is a broad term that describes all interstate waters and any water that affects interstate traffic or commerce. Included are wetlands and tributaries adjacent to navigable “waters of the US” and other waters where degradation or destruction could affect interstate or foreign commerce. This includes rivers, streams, wetlands, and many ditches where permits are required for the discharge of dredged or fill material pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

2.2 “Waters of the State” and Isolated Wetlands

“Waters of the State” include all intrastate waters and wetlands that are not hydrologically connected or adjacent to interstate waters. “Waters of the State” include isolated wetlands determined not to be “waters of the US” or jurisdictional wetlands under the January 9, 2001, US Supreme Court ruling [see *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) v. US Army Corps of Engineers*]. Isolated wetlands refer to those non-tidal “waters of the US” that are not part of a surface tributary in interstate/navigable waters and are not adjacent to such tributary water bodies.

2.3 Wetlands

Wetlands are “waters of the US” or “waters of the State”. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act defines wetlands as those areas inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and under normal conditions do support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

2.4 Regulatory Authority and Requirements

The USACE regulates the nation's waters for navigation and the full public interest for both the protection and utilization of water resources. The regulatory authorities and responsibilities of the USACE are based on the following laws:

- Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403) prohibits the obstruction or alteration of navigable waters of the United States without a permit from the USACE.
- Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Section 301 of this Act prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into “waters of the US” without a permit from the USACE.
- Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972, as amended (33 U.S.C. 1413) authorizes the USACE to issue permits for the transportation of dredged material for the purpose of dumping it into ocean waters.

If filling or dredging operations are proposed to occur with the boundary of a “waters of the US” a Section 404 permit must be obtained from USACE before those activities are conducted. Three types of permits are issued by USACE within the State of Indiana: nationwide permits, the Regional General Permit for Indiana, and Individual Permits. Nationwide permits have been developed for projects meeting specific criteria and have a minimal impact to the regulated resources. Minimal impacts are generally classified as less than 0.5 acre of permanent impacts or temporary impacts depending on the activity to be undertaken. The Regional General Permit (RGP) for Indiana has been developed for projects meeting specific criteria and has

a minimal impact to the regulated resources within the State of Indiana. The RGP authorizes activities associated with any construction activities impacting less than one acre of wetlands or less than 1,500 linear feet of regulated waterway. Individual Section 404 Permits (site specific permits) are required for any construction activities impacting greater than one acre of regulated resources.

All activities that require a Section 404 Permit from USACE will also require a Section 401 Water Quality Certification (or a waiver) from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). On December 12, 2014 IDEM issued a Water Quality Certification for projects meeting specific criteria and conditions for the Indiana RGP and on March 15, 2017 IDEM issued a Water Quality Certification for projects meeting specific criteria and conditions for multiple Nationwide Permits. The specific conditions limit these Water Quality Certifications to projects with less than 0.1 acre and 300 linear feet of impacts to wetlands and waterways. An Individual Section 401 Water Quality Certification is required for projects impacting greater than 0.1 acre or 300 linear feet of wetlands or waterways.

Under the 2001 US Supreme Court Ruling (SWANCC), filling or dredging of isolated wetlands does not require notification of USACE. However, it is necessary to notify the IDEM for such projects and obtain a permit from the agency under State Wetland Law. All activities affecting “waters of the State” that are not considered to be “waters of the US” will require a State Wetland Permit under IC 13-18.

3.0 Methodology

The study area was analyzed using methods outlined in the Routine Determination, On-site Inspection Necessary procedure in the *Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual* (Environmental Laboratory, 1987) and the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Midwest Region* (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2010). The 1987 USACE Manual and the Regional Supplemental Documents require wetland boundaries to be delineated using a 3-parameter approach: hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology.

3.1 Hydrophytic Vegetation

Hydrophytic vegetation criteria are met by the rapid test for hydrophytic vegetation, the dominance test, the prevalence index, or morphological adaptations.

The rapid test for hydrophytic vegetation is met if all dominated species across all strata are rated as obligate (OBL), or facultative wetland (FACW), or a combination based on a visual assessment.

The indicator status of plant species is based on the estimated probabilities of that species occurring in wetland conditions. The indicator status categories are defined as follows.

PLANT INDICATOR STATUS CATEGORIES
(Environmental Laboratory, 1987)

<u>INDICATOR CATEGORY</u>	<u>INDICATOR SYMBOL</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>
Obligate Wetland Plants	OBL	Plants that occur almost always (probability >99 percent) in wetland under natural conditions. Species rarely occur in non-wetland (probability <1 percent).
Facultative Wetlands Plants	FACW	Plants that usually occur in wetland (probability 67 to 99 percent) may also occur in non-wetland (probability 1 to 33 percent).
Facultative Plants	FAC	Plants that are equally likely to occur in wetland or non-wetland (probability 33 to 67 percent).
Facultative Upland Plants	FACU	Plants that sometimes occur in wetland (probability 1 to 33 percent) but occur more often in non-wetland (probability 67 to 99 percent).
Upland Plants	UPL	Plants that occur almost always (probability >99 percent) in non-wetland under natural conditions. Species rarely occur in wetland (probability <1 percent).

The dominance test for hydrophytic vegetation is met if more than 50 percent of the dominant plants species across all strata are rated OBL, FACW, or FAC.

If a community fails the Rapid Test and the Dominance Test, and both hydric soils and hydrology are present, then two additional wetland vegetation indicators should be assessed. These are the prevalence index and morphological adaptations. If either a prevalence of species noted in the sampling plot are hydrophytic or if morphological indicators are present, then the area is considered to have hydrophytic vegetation.

3.2 Hydric Soils

Hydric soils criteria are met with the presence of soils flooded for a long duration or very long duration during the growing season. Hydric soil indicators are formed predominately by the accumulation or loss of iron, manganese, sulfur, or carbon compounds in saturated and anaerobic conditions. Anaerobic conditions created by repeated or prolonged saturation or flooding result in permanent changes in soil color and chemistry, which are used to determine the presence of hydric soils.

Soils on a particular site are analyzed to determine whether they meet the hydric criteria. In the absence of groundwater, this analysis is performed by looking for acceptable indicators that suggest the soil is saturated, flooded, or ponded for a duration long enough to support anaerobic conditions near the surface. Field indicators of hydric soils, such as gleyed matrix, depleted matrix, redox dark surface or depressions, or depleted dark surface, are common hydric soil indicators in Indiana.

3.3 Wetland Hydrology

Wetland hydrology criteria is met or assumed by the presence of soils inundated or saturated under normal circumstances for periods long enough to support a prevalence of wetland vegetation. Hydrology is

controlled by such factors as rainfall patterns, local geology and topography, soil type, local water table, and drainage. Primary indicators of wetland hydrology include inundation, soil saturation, watermarks, sediment deposits, sparse vegetation, and inundation visible on the aerial photography. Secondary indicators include cracked soils, drainage patterns, and FAC-neutral vegetation. A single primary indicator or two secondary indicators are necessary to determine the presence of wetland hydrology.

All three parameters must be present for a site to be considered “waters of the State” or “waters of the US.”

3.4 Stream Habitat

The Qualitative Habitat Evaluation Index (QHEI) is used to determine existing stream impairments and aid in mitigating future impacts. The QHEI is composed of six metrics; substrate, in-stream cover, channel morphology, riparian zone and bank erosion, pool/glide and riffle run quality, and map gradient. Each metric is scored individually and then summed, resulting in a total QHEI score for the targeted reach of stream.

The primary Headwater Habitat Evaluation Index (HHEI) is used to determine existing impairments and aid in mitigating future impacts to primary headwater habitat streams. A primary headwater habitat stream is described as a jurisdictional surface water that has a defined bed and bank, with either continuous or periodical flowing water, with a watershed area less than or equal to one square mile, and maximum depth of water pools equal to or less than 40 cm. The HHEI is composed of three metrics: substrate, maximum pool depth, and bank full width. Each metric is scored individually, and then summed, resulting in a total HHEI score for the targeted reach of headwater stream.

Methodology described in the *Methods for Assessing Habitat in Flowing Waters: Using the Qualitative Habitat Evaluation Index* (QHEI) manual (OhioEPA, Division of Surface Water, 2006) was used for assessing streams. Additional methodology described in the *Field Evaluation Manual for Ohio’s Primary Headwater Habitat Streams* (Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, 2012) was used in assessing primary headwaters.

4.0 Site Characterization – Records Review

4.1 USGS Topographic Mapping

The 1:24,000-scale Topographic Quadrangle Map is the primary scale of topographic data produced by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Since the late 19th century, the USGS has been producing topographic quadrangle maps that show shape and elevation of the land, transportation networks, drainage patterns, vegetation, and buildings. These maps are used for a variety of purposes, including industrial site selection, highway planning, and recreation, and they are also a valuable source for local history. Features such as vegetation (green), water (blue) and densely built-up areas (gray or red) are shown as shaded areas on the map. Many features are shown by lines that may be straight, curved, solid, dashed, dotted, or in any combination. Colors of the lines usually indicate similar classes of information: topographic contours (brown); lakes, streams, irrigation ditches, and other hydrographic features (blue); land grids and important roads (red); and other roads and trails, railroads, boundaries, and other cultural features (black). Various point symbols are used to depict features such as buildings, campgrounds, springs, water tanks, mines, survey control points, and wells. Names of places and features are shown in a color corresponding to the type of feature.

The investigated area is located on the Chesterton USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map in Section 12, Township 36 North, and Range 6 West. The topographic map depicts the investigated area as generally flat with some forested area, and urbanized area adjacent to the western boundary. A railroad is depicted at crossing through the southern boundary of the investigated area. Pope O’Conner Ditch is mapped as a perennial stream (solid blue line) running through the western portion of the investigated area and was field verified during the July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 field investigations.

4.2 National Wetlands Inventory Mapping (NWI) Maps

For 25 years, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has provided federal and state agencies, the private sector, and citizens with scientific data on wetland location, extent, status, and trends. The USFWS’s National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) program works to complete baseline wetland mapping in the lower 48 states and Alaska. Most NWI maps were produced using photography from the 1980s. Maps for less than five percent of the nation were made using 1990s or more recent photography. Most NWI map products have not been field verified and are subject to regulatory review. However, these maps serve as a planning tool for service and non-profit wetland acquisition programs, fishery restoration, floodplain and watershed planning, endangered species recovery efforts, and to plan for energy resource and infrastructure development.

The NWI Mapping was reviewed for the investigated area. Two NWI wetlands are mapped adjacent to the northern portion of the investigated area. See the below NWI Summary table for more details:

NWI Summary		
Mapped NWI	Location	Field Verified
Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Seasonally Flooded, Partially Drained/Ditched (PEM1Cd)	North of CR 1100 N and east of 5 th Street	Yes, Wetland A was verified in this location.
Palustrine, Emergent Persistent, Semipermanently Flooded (PEM1F)	North of CR 1100 N and west of CR 100 E	Yes, Wetland B was verified in this location.
PEM1F	North of CR 1100 N and west of CR 100 E	Yes, Wetland C was verified in this location.

4.3 County Soil Survey

The Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) has prepared soil survey and mapping for each county. Soil surveys furnish soil maps and interpretations necessary to provide technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to be utilized in planning and land management. Soil surveys generally contain mapping of unique or potential areas of concern such as areas of peat or muck, steep slopes, wetlands, and drainage lines. In addition to the published soils surveys, information, spatial data, and mapping of soils is available through the NRCS Soil Data Mart, which provides the most current data about the soils. Spatial data available through the Soil Data Mart often does not contain information regarding areas of concern. As such, both the published soil survey and the up-to-date data available from the Soil Data Mart are included for reference.

The NRCS Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) was reviewed to determine soil classification within the investigated area. Soil types mapped within the proposed project right-of-way include:

Soil Map Unit Summary		
Map Unit Name	Map Unit Symbol	SSURGO Hydric Rating by Map Unit
Houghton muck, ponded	Hm	100
Bourbon sandy loam	Br	10
Martinsville loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	MfA	10
Martinsville loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	MfB	10
Milford silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Mp	98
Rawson loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	RaB	10
Whitaker loam	Wt	10

The 1981 Porter County Soil Survey was also reviewed to determine drainage features mapped within the investigated area. The survey depicts Pope O'Conner Ditch as an intermittent stream running through the

investigated area. The USGS Quadrangle mapping depicts this stream as perennial. Pope O’Conner Ditch was field verified during the July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 field investigations.

4.4 Aerial Photography

The Indiana Geographic Information Council (IGIC), in partnership with state and local agencies, sponsored a program that created high-resolution orthophotography for counties on a statewide basis to support homeland security, emergency management, and other business and government applications. Digital orthophotography provides all of the visual content of a photograph, while being as accurate as a map for measurements. These qualities allow for accurate distance measurements, area calculations, determination of feature shape, direction calculations, and determination of coordinates at a given location. Orthophotography provides a base map in a geographic information system (GIS) for emergency response planning and modeling, law enforcement, public health agencies, property management, census, tax assessment, flood mapping, planning, and economic development.

Aerial photography from 2005 and 2018 (IndianaMap) was reviewed for the investigated area. The aerials depict forested land within the investigated area northeast of the 5th Street and CR 1100 N intersection, and south of CR 1100 N. Residential developments are adjacent to the investigated area, south of CR 100 N. Two streams are visible within the project area, both intersecting CR 1110 N. Pope O’Conner Ditch and UNT to Pope O’Conner Ditch intersect the investigated area in both the 2005 and 2018 aerials. The 2018 aerial depicts the investigated area as encountered during the July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 field investigations.

4.5 Floodways and Floodplains

A "Regulatory Floodway" is the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Water regulates these floodways within the state. Mapping of the regulated floodway and the floodplain, if a floodway had

A FEMA designated floodplain associated with Pope O’Conner Ditch enters the northern portion of the investigated area approximately 0.06 mile east of the CR 1100 N/5th Street intersection.

4.6 Legal Drain

Some waterways in which the function of the channel is considered necessary to drain the landscape to protect the livelihood and safety of the general public are considered to be “legal drains.” These waterways often include a system of pipes and open ditches and are generally under the jurisdiction of the County Surveyor who is responsible for their continued maintenance and function. Funding for maintenance of legal drains is typically provided by assessments to the adjoining property owners.

Porter County’s Regulated Drain Map

(https://www.porterco.org/DocumentCenter/View/111/Enbridge_pipeline_map_2012-08-14?bidId) was accessed on August 10, 2020 to determine the presence of legal drains within the investigated area. Based on the information available, Pope O’Conner Ditch is mapped as a regulated drain within the investigated area.

5.0 Field Reconnaissance

Westchester Trail Phase 3 was examined for the presence of wetlands and “waters of the US” on the site. Data points were strategically placed to identify appropriate boundaries of delineated wetlands and to determine the presence or absence of jurisdictional wetlands and “waters of the US.” Six wetlands (Wetland A through F) totaling 0.869 acre and two streams totaling 458 linear feet were delineated within the investigated area. Data sheets and a map indicating the location of data points documenting the field investigation are included in the appendix.

5.1 Wetlands

5.1.1 Wetland A

Wetland A is an emergent wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N and west of Pope O’Conner Ditch. The wetland is located in a depressional area in the floodplain associated with Pope O’Conner Ditch. The Wetland begins 0.06 mile east of 5th Street extending east 0.026 mile, as well as extending north out of the investigated area. Wetland A directly abuts and is within the active floodplain of Pope O’Conner Ditch, which drains to Coffee Creek, which drains to Little Calumet River, a TNW. Therefore, it is anticipated that Wetland A would be considered a jurisdictional water of the U.S.

The dominant vegetation consisted of *Lonicera tatarica*, *Juglans nigra*, and *Acer negundo* within the sapling/shrub stratum and *Elymus riparius* and *Persicaria arundinacea* within the herbaceous stratum. Although the wetland included sapling/shrubs this was not a dominant component of the absolute cover of the wetland. The vegetation met the Dominance Test for hydrophytic vegetation. Hydrologic indicators included Drift Deposits (B3) and Inundation Visible on Aerial Imagery (B7). Hydric soil indicators included Histosol (A1), Depleted Below Dark Surface (A11), and Loamy Mucky Mineral (F1). Soil color and texture information are located in the table below:

Data Point	Depth (inches)	Soil Color	Soil Texture
DP 1	0-11	100% 2.5Y 2.5/1	Mucky Loamy/Clay
	11-18	97% 2.5Y 6/2 with 3% 10YR 6/6 as a concentration in the matrix	Muck

Wetland A would be considered palustrine, emergent, persistent, seasonally flooded/saturated (PEM1E) under the Cowardin Classification System. Wetland A is 0.108 acre and extends north out of the investigated area. Wetland A would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species. For reference to field data collected for this wetland see Data Point (DP) 1 included in the Appendix B. DP 2 included in Appendix B is representative of the upland area surrounding Wetland A. DP 2 did possess hydric soils, but lacked the hydrophytic vegetation and hydrology to be considered a wetland.

5.1.2 Wetland B

Wetland B is a forested wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N and east of Pope O’Conner Ditch. The wetland is located in a depressional area in the floodplain associated with Pope O’Conner Ditch. The Wetland begins 0.10 mile east of 5th Street extending east 0.056 mile, as well as extending north out of the investigated area. Wetland B directly abuts and is within the active floodplain of Pope O’Conner Ditch, which drains to Coffee creek, which drains to Little Calumet River, a TNW. Therefore, it is anticipated that Wetland B would be considered a jurisdictional water of the U.S.

The dominant vegetation consisted of *Ulmus americana* and *Populus deltoides* within the tree stratum, *Sambucus nigra* and *Lindera benzoin* within the sapling/shrub stratum, *Rudbeckia laciniata*, *Phalaris arundinacea*, and *Sanicula odorata* within the herbaceous stratum, and *Strophostyles helvola* within the vine stratum. The vegetation met the Dominance Test for hydrophytic vegetation. Hydrologic indicators included Drift Deposits (B3), Geomorphic Position (D2), and FAC-Neutral Test (D5). Hydric soil indicators included Depleted Dark Surface (F7). Soil color and texture information are located in the table below:

Data Point	Depth (inches)	Soil Color	Soil Texture
DP 3	0-18	90% 10YR 2/1 with 10% 2.5Y 4/1 as a depletion in the matrix	Loamy/Clayey

Wetland B would be considered palustrine, forested, broad-leaved deciduous, seasonally flooded/saturated (PFO1E) under the Cowardin Classification System. Wetland B is 0.244 acre and extends north out of the investigated area. Wetland B would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species but has been manipulated due to the excavation of Unnamed Tributary to Pope O’Connor Ditch and lacks the diversity to be considered higher quality. For reference to field data collected for this wetland see DP 3 included in the Appendix B. DP 4 included in Appendix B is representative of the upland area surrounding Wetland B. DP 4 did possess hydrophytic vegetation, but lacked the hydric soil and hydrology to be considered a wetland.

5.1.3 Wetland C

Wetland C is a forested wetland and is located north of CR 1100 N. The wetland is located in a depressional area and begins 0.20 mile west of N 100 E extending east 0.016 mile, as well as extending north out of the investigated area. The wetland extends north beyond the right-of-way and investigated area. Wetland C drains south to Wetland D via a culvert which carries water under CR 1100. Wetland D, as discussed in Section 5.1.4, is a Water of the U.S.; therefore, it is anticipated that Wetland C would be considered a jurisdictional water of the U.S.

The dominant vegetation consisted of *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* within the tree stratum, *Acer negundo* within the sapling/shrub stratum, and *Carex lacustris* within the herbaceous stratum. The vegetation met the Dominance Test for hydrophytic vegetation. Hydrologic indicators included Saturation (A3) at 12 inches, Inundation Visible on Aerial Imagery (B7), Geomorphic Position (D2), and FAC-Neutral Test (D5). Hydric soil indicators included Redox Dark Surface (F6). Soil color and texture information are located in the table below:

Data Point	Depth (inches)	Soil Color	Soil Texture
DP 5	0-12	90% 2.5Y 2.5/1 with 10% 2.5Y 3/2 as a depletion in the matrix	Loamy/Clayey
	12-18	93% 10YR 3/1 with 7% 10YR 5/2 as a depletion in the matrix	Loamy/Clayey

Wetland C would be considered PFO1E under the Cowardin Classification System. Wetland C is 0.033 acre and extends north out of the investigated area. Wetland C would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species. Wetland C would not be considered a good wetland due to its proximity to a roadway. For reference to field data collected for this wetland see DP 5 included in the Appendix B. DP 6 included in Appendix B is representative of the upland area surrounding Wetland C. DP 6 did possess hydric soil and hydrophytic vegetation, but lacked the hydrology to be considered a wetland.

5.1.4 Wetland D

Wetland D is a forested wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. The wetland is located in a depressional area and begins just south of CR 1100 N and extends south 0.053 mile. Wetland D is adjacent to Wetland E, a water of the U.S. (see Section 5.1.5); therefore, it is anticipated that Wetland D would be considered a jurisdictional water of the U.S.

The dominant vegetation consisted of *Ulmus americana* and *Populus deltoides* within the tree stratum, *Ulmus americana* and *Viburnum acerifolium* within the sapling/shrub stratum, *Toxicodendron radicans* within the herbaceous stratum, and *Toxicodendron radicans* and *Vitis labrusca* within the vine stratum. The vegetation met the Dominance Test for hydrophytic vegetation. Hydrologic indicators included Inundation Visible on Aerial Imagery (B7), Water Stained Leaves (B9), Saturation Visible on Aerial Imagery (C9), and FAC-Neutral Test (D5). Hydric soil indicators included Redox Dark Surface (F6). Soil color and texture information are located in the table below:

Data Point	Depth (inches)	Soil Color	Soil Texture
DP 7	0-4	100% 2.5Y 2.5/1	Loamy/Clayey
	4-18	95% 2.5Y 2.5/1 with 5% 2.5Y 4/4 as a concentration in the matrix	Loamy/Clayey

Wetland D would be considered PFO1E under the Cowardin Classification System. Wetland D is 0.180 acre and wholly contained within the investigated area. Wetland D would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species. For reference to field data collected for this wetland see DP 7 included in the Appendix B. DP 8 included in Appendix B is representative of the upland area surrounding Wetland D. DP 8 did possess hydrophytic vegetation, but lacked the hydric soil and hydrology to be considered a wetland.

5.1.5 Wetland E

Wetland E is a forested wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. The wetland is located in a depressional area and begins 0.08 mile south of CR 1100 N and extends south 0.053 mile, as well as extending west out of the investigated area. The wetland extends west beyond the right-of-way and investigated area. Wetland E drains south to UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch, which, as discussed below in Section 2.2.2, is considered a water of the U.S.; therefore, it is anticipated Wetland E would be considered a jurisdictional water of the U.S.

The dominant vegetation consisted of *Ulmus americana* and *Populus deltoides* within the tree stratum, *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* within the sapling/shrub stratum, and *Glyceria striata* and *Solanum dulcamara* within the herbaceous stratum. The vegetation met the Dominance Test for hydrophytic vegetation. Hydrologic indicators included Water Marks (B1), Drift Deposits (B3), Inundation Visible on Aerial Imagery (B7), Water Stained Leaves (B9), Geomorphic Position (D2), and FAC-Neutral Test (D5). Hydric soil indicators included Depleted Below Dark Surface (A11) and Depleted Matrix (F3). Soil color and texture information are located in the table below:

Data Point	Depth (inches)	Soil Color	Soil Texture
DP 9	0-5	100% 10YR 3/1	Loamy/Clayey
	5-9	90% 10YR 5/2 with 10% 10YR 5/6 as a concentration in the matrix	Loamy/Clayey
	9-18	95% 2.5Y 3/1 with 5% 10YR 4/6 as a concentration in the matrix	Loamy/Clayey

Wetland E would be considered PFO1E under the Cowardin Classification System. Wetland E is 0.298 acre and extends west out of the investigated area. Wetland E would be considered an average wetland due to the dominance of native species. For reference to field data collected for this wetland see DP 9 included in the Appendix B. DP 10 included in Appendix B is representative of the upland area surrounding Wetland E. DP 10 lacked the hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soil, and hydrology to be considered a wetland.

5.1.6 Wetland F

Wetland F is a scrub-shrub wetland and is located south of CR 1100 N. The wetland is located in a depressional area at the inlet of a storm sewer pipe and begins 0.24 mile south of CR 1100 N and extends south 0.006 mile, as well as extending west out of the investigated area. Wetland F directly abuts UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch, which drains to Coffee creek, which drains to Little Calumet River, a TNW. Therefore, it is anticipated that Wetland F would be considered a jurisdictional water of the U.S.

The dominant vegetation consisted of *Salix nigra* within the tree stratum, *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* and *Lonicera tatarica* within the sapling/shrub stratum, *Phalaris arundinacea* within the herbaceous stratum, and *Vitis labrusca* within the vine stratum. The vegetation met the Dominance Test for hydrophytic vegetation. Hydrologic indicators included Drift Deposits (B3), Water Stained Leaves (B9), and FAC-Neutral Test (D5). Hydric soil indicators included Depleted Below Dark Surface (A11). Soil color and texture information are located in the table below:

Data Point	Depth (inches)	Soil Color	Soil Texture
DP 11	0-5	100% 2.5Y 3/1	Loamy/Clayey
	5-7	95% 2.5Y 5/2 with 5% 2.5Y 5/6 as a concentration in the matrix	Loamy/Clayey

****Restrictive riprap layer after 7 inches**

Wetland F would be considered palustrine, scrub-shrub, broad-leaved deciduous, seasonally flooded/saturated (PSS1E) under the Cowardin Classification System. Wetland F is 0.006 acre and extends west out of the investigated area. Wetland F would be considered a poor wetland due to the dominance of invasive species (*Phalaris arundinacea* and *Lythrum salicaria*). A continuous defined bed and bank or ordinary high water mark (OHWM) was not observed during the site investigation. For reference to field data collected for this wetland see DP 11 included in the Appendix B. DP 12 included in Appendix B is representative of the upland area surrounding Wetland F. DP 12 did possess hydric soil, but lacked the hydrophytic vegetation and hydrology to be considered a wetland.

5.2 Drainage Features, Streams, and Other Potential “Waters of the US”

5.2.1 Pope O’Conner Ditch

Pope O’Conner Ditch enters the investigated area at a culvert along the south side of CR 1100 N, approximately 0.09 mile east of 5th Street. The stream flows north 80 linear feet (0.015 acre) before exiting the investigated area. The stream is mapped as perennial on the USGS Topographic Map and intermittent on the 1981 Porter County Soil Survey. Stream Stats (<https://water.usgs.gov/osw/streamstats/>) reports the upstream drainage area of Pope O’Conner Ditch is approximately 1.70 square miles. Based on stream flow observed during the site investigation and average drainage area, the stream flow is anticipated to be perennial. The stream is a County Legal Drain.

Pope O’Conner Ditch appears to drain north to Coffee Creek (a perennial stream), which drains to Little Calumet River, a TNW. Therefore, it is anticipated that Pope O’Conner Ditch would be considered a jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

Pope O’Conner Ditch is conveyed under CR 1100 N and into the investigated area. The stream was flowing during the site investigation. The ordinary high water mark (OHWM) of Pope O’Conner Ditch at the assessment location was 8 feet wide by 0.6 foot deep. Top-of-bank appeared to be the same as the OHWM width and depth. Pope O’Conner Ditch would be considered a poor stream due to poor substrate material, no channel sinuosity, and poor channel development. Pope O’Conner Ditch would be classified as a Riverine, Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Mud (R2UB3) habitat using the Cowardin Classification System.

A Qualitative Habitat Evaluation was conducted for Pope O’Conner Ditch north of CR 1100 N (QHEI 1). The overall QHEI score for the 200 foot sampled creek segment was 39. This is a poor narrative rating in the manual. Pope O’Conner Ditch scored highest for *Riparian Zone (10/10)* and *Gradient (8/10)*. However, the poor *Channel Morphology* may be a limiting factor to the macrohabitat of the stream.

5.2.2 UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch

UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch enters the investigated area approximately 0.09 mile west of Catkin Circle and 0.01 mile north of Laurel Creek Drive. The stream flows northwest for 510 linear feet (0.132 acre) before exiting the investigated area. UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch reenters the investigated area at a culvert along the south side of CR 1100 N, approximately 0.12 mile east of 5th Street. The stream flows northwest 250 feet (0.012 acre) and into Pope O'Conner Ditch. The stream is not mapped on the USGS Topographic Map or the 1981 Porter County Soil Survey. Stream Stats (<https://water.usgs.gov/osw/streamstats/>) reports the upstream drainage area of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch is approximately 0.06 square mile. Based on stream flow observed during the site investigation and smaller drainage area, the stream flow is anticipated to be intermittent. The stream is not a County Legal Drain.

UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch appears to drain west to Pope O'Conner Ditch (an intermittent stream), which drains north to Coffee Creek, which drains to Little Calumet River, a TNW. Therefore, it is anticipated that UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch would be considered a jurisdictional water of the U.S.

A QHEI point was taken at each of the stream crossings. OHWM of the UNT at the first assessment point (QHEI 2, north of CR 1100 N) was 2.1 feet wide by 0.3 foot deep. The OHWM of the UNT at the second assessment point (QHEI 3, east of Catkin Circle) was 11.3 feet wide by 1.2 feet deep. Top-of-bank at assessment location one was 22 feet wide. Top-of-bank at assessment location two was 32 feet wide. UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch would be considered a poor stream due to poor substrate material, low channel sinuosity, and poor channel development. UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch would be classified as R4SB5 habitat using the Cowardin Classification System.

Two Qualitative Habitat Evaluations were conducted for UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch north of CR 1100 N (QHEI 2), and east of Catkin Circle (QHEI 3). The overall QHEI scores for the 200 foot sampled creek segments were 40 and 37. These are poor narrative ratings in the manual. UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch scored highest for *Riparian Zone (8/10)* and *Gradient (8/10)*. However, the poor *Pool/Glide and Riffle Quality* may be a limiting factor to the macrohabitat of the stream.

6.0 Conclusions

Six wetlands (Wetland A through F) totaling 0.869 acre and two streams totaling 840 linear feet (0.159 acre) were delineated within the investigated area. Pope O'Conner Ditch, UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch, and Wetlands A through F appear to have hydrologic connection to Little Calumet River, a Traditional Navigable Waterway (TNW). Therefore, it is anticipated that these features would be considered jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

All jurisdictional wetlands are under the regulatory authority of the USACE under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Impacts to less than one acre of wetland are generally permitted under the RGP for Indiana. Impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and impacts to isolated wetlands are also under the regulatory authority of the IDEM under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act or the Indiana Isolated Wetlands Act.

Impacts to the wetlands identified in this report would require a determination of jurisdictional status by the USACE.

7.0 References

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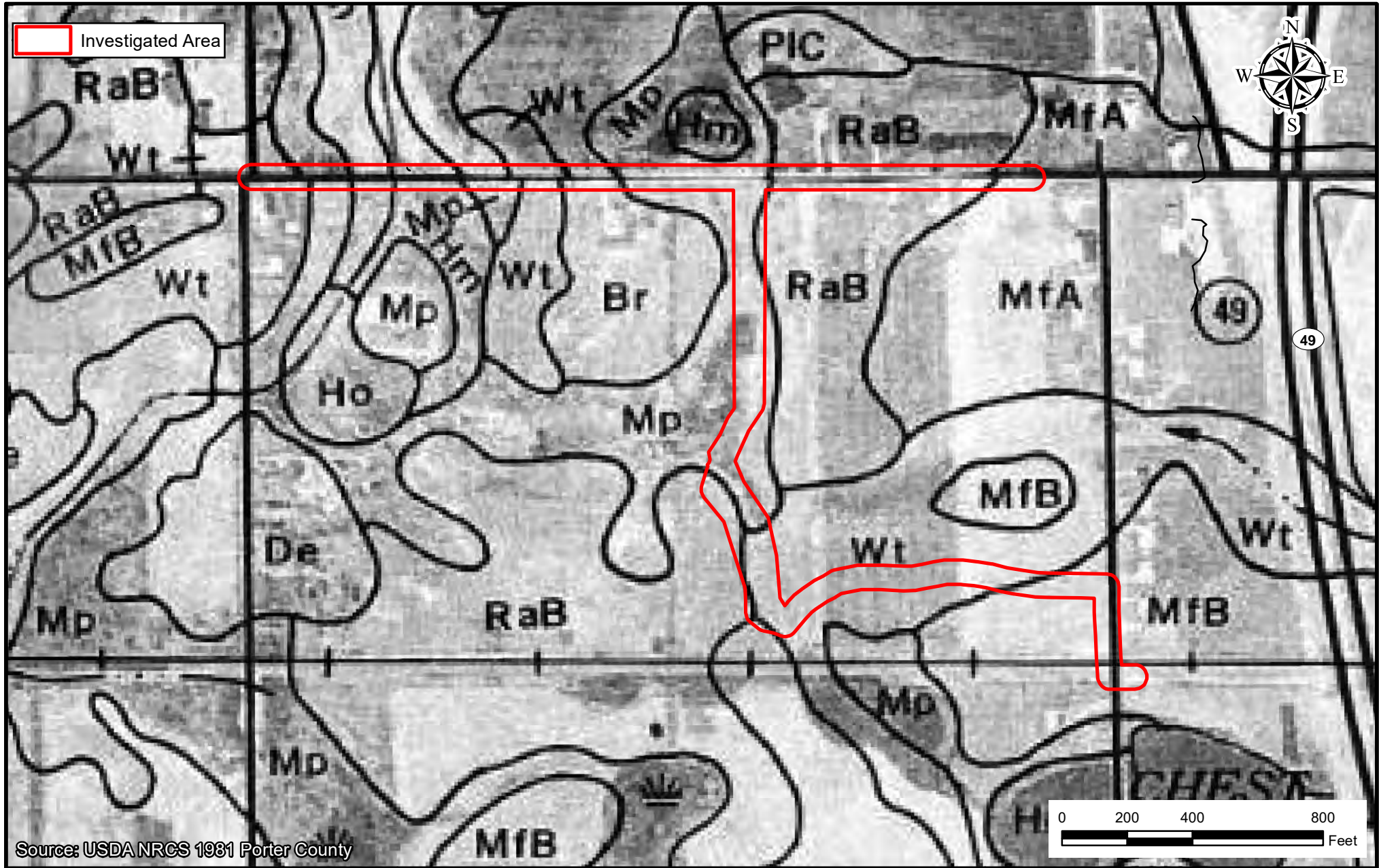
Table 1 – Data Points Summary

Data Points Summary							
Data Point	Photos	Lat/Long	Water Resource	Hydrophytic Vegetation	Hydric Soils	Wetland Hydrology	Within a Wetland
1	9-10	41.593711/ -87.056072	Wetland A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	13-14	41.593686/ -87.056069	Upland of Wetland A	No	Yes	No	No
3	25-26	41.593696/ -87.054720	Wetland B	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	29-30	41.593676/ -87.054637	Upland of Wetland B	Yes	No	No	No
5	45-46	41.593716/ -87.051771	Wetland C	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	41-42	41.593686/ -87.051829	Upland of Wetland C	Yes	Yes	No	No
7	65-66	41.592802/ -87.051733	Wetland D	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	69-70	41.592743/ -87.051754	Upland of Wetland D	Yes	No	No	No
9	75-76	41.593447/ -87.051726	Wetland E	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
10	72	41.593504/ -87.051762	Upland of Wetland E	No	No	No	No
11	90	41.590116/ -87.051756	Wetland F	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
12	92	41.590096/ -87.051739	Upland of Wetland F	No	Yes	No	No

Table 2 – Aquatic Resources Summary

Aquatic Resources Summary: Wetlands						
Delineated Resource	Photos	Lat/ Long	Type	Quality	Jurisdiction	Total Acreage
Wetland A	8-11, 16	41.593709/ -87.055889	PEM1E	Average	water of the U.S.	0.108
Wetland B	22-25	41.593701/ -87.054955	PFO1E	Average	water of the U.S.	0.244
Wetland C	44-48	41.593728/ -87.051724	PFO1E	Average	water of the U.S.	0.033
Wetland D	62-67	41.592975/ -87.051755	PFO1E	Average	water of the U.S.	0.180
Wetland E	74-82	41.592198/ -87.051764	PFO1E	Average	water of the U.S.	0.298
Wetland F	89-92	41.590056/ -87.051737	PSS1E	Average	water of the U.S.	0.006
Total						0.869

Aquatic Resources Summary: Streams										
Delineated Resource	Photos	Lat/ Long	USGS Blue Line	OHWM Width	OHWM Depth	Quality	Flow Regime	Substrate	Likely Jurisdiction	Total Linear Feet
Pope O'Conner Ditch	17-18	41.593730/ -87.055603	Dashed, intermittent	8'	0.6'	Poor	Per.	Silt	water of the U.S.	80
UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch	19-21, 83-84, 108-110	41.593693/ -87.055212	N/A	2.1'/ 11.3'	0.3'/ 1.2'	Poor	Int.	Silt	water of the U.S.	760
Total										840



Source: USDA NRCS 1981 Porter County

AMERICAN
STRUCTUREPOINT
INC.

Figure 3: 1981 Porter County Soil Survey Map

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832
Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana
Appendix F
F-20
Date: 05/11/2021

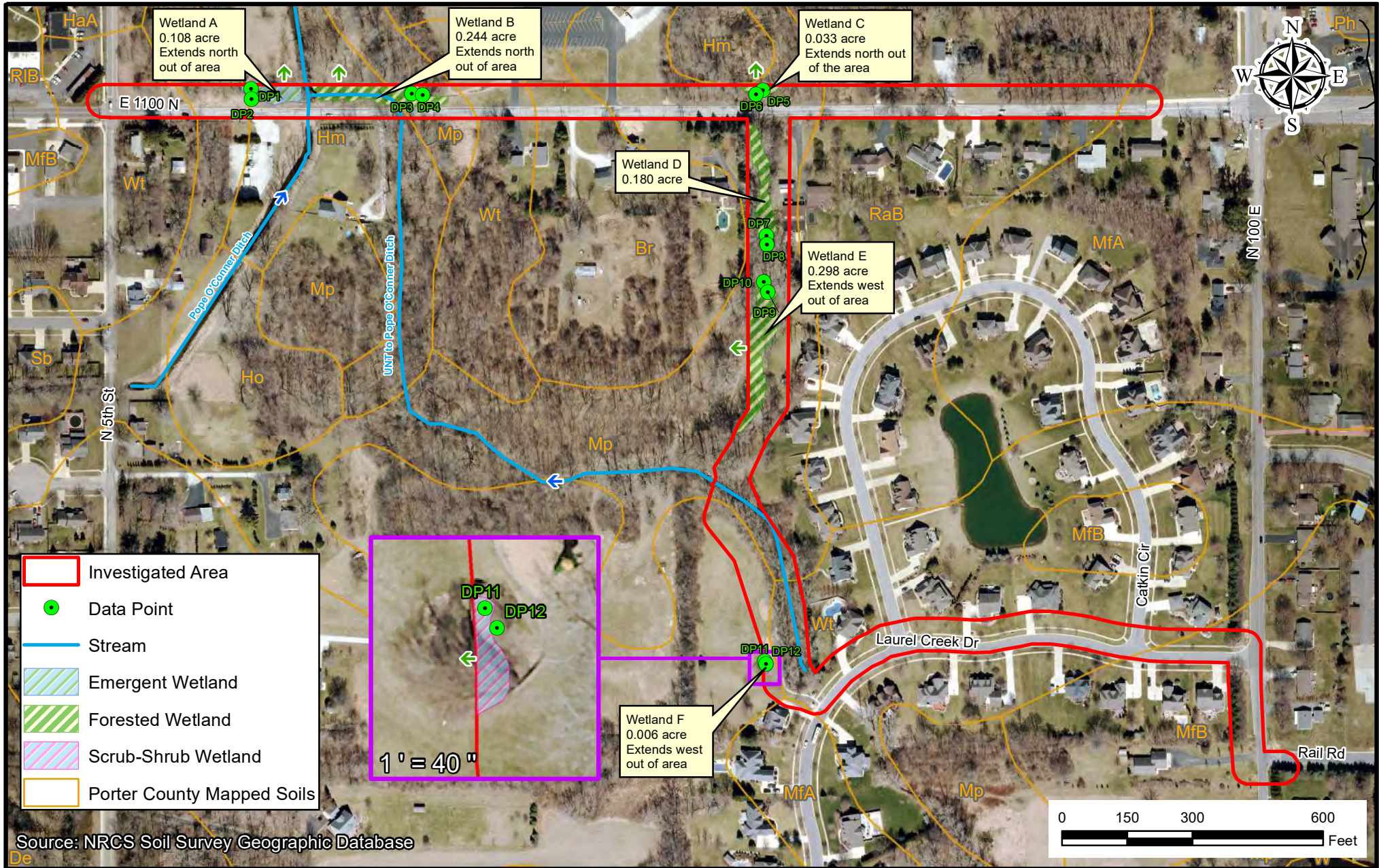


Figure 4: Porter County Mapped Soils - SSURGO

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix F
F-21

Date: 05/13/2021



Hydric Rating by Map Unit

Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Br	Bourbon sandy loam	10	0.3	3.0%
Hm	Houghton muck, ponded	100	0.6	6.5%
MfA	Martinsville loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	10	0.2	1.8%
MfB	Martinsville loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	10	1.0	10.5%
Mp	Milford silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	98	3.0	32.9%
RaB	Rawson loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	10	1.7	18.7%
Wt	Whitaker loam	10	2.4	26.5%
Totals for Area of Interest			9.2	100.0%

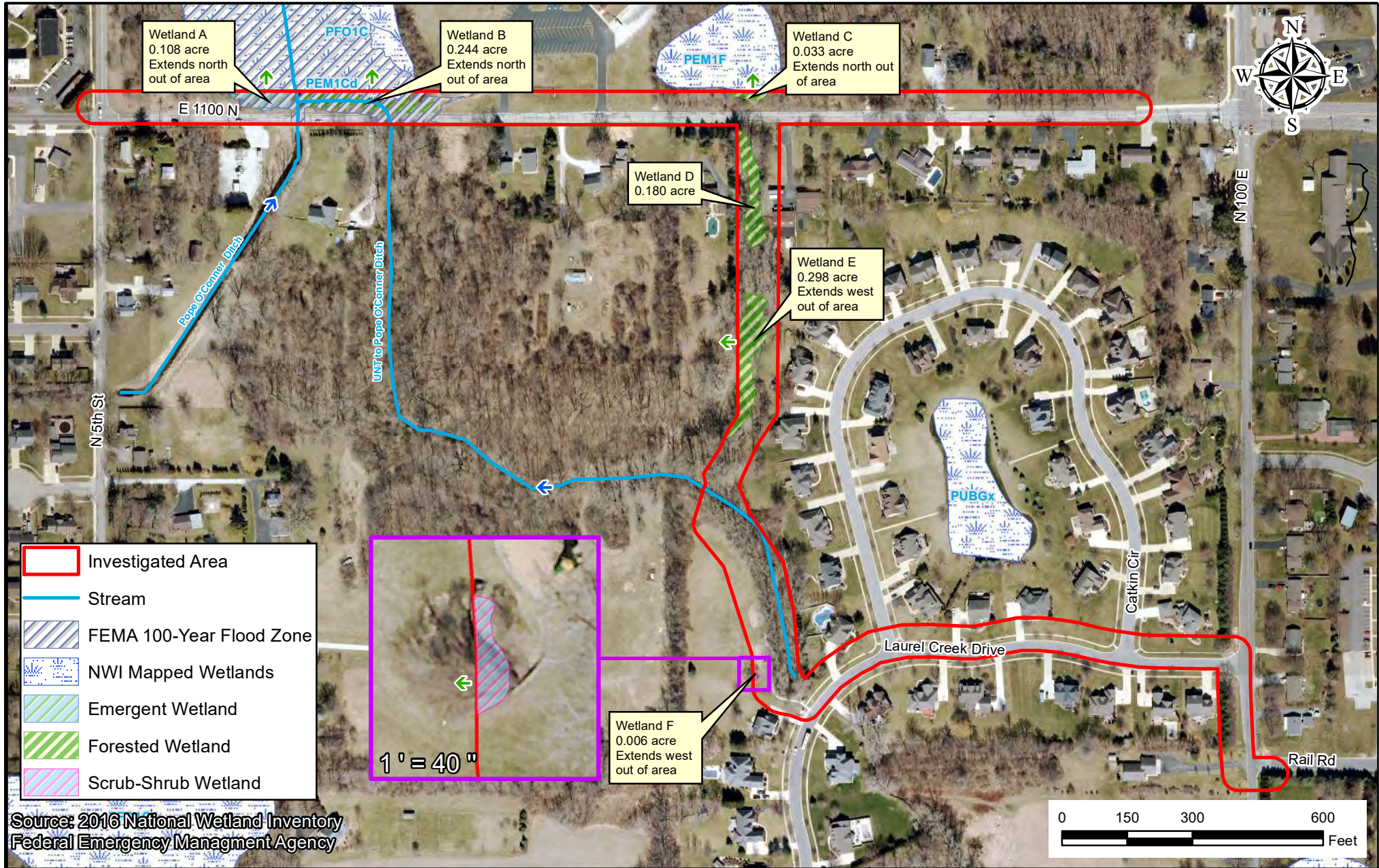


Figure 5: NWI Wetlands & FEMA 100-Year Floodplain Map



Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix F
F-23

Date: 05/13/2021

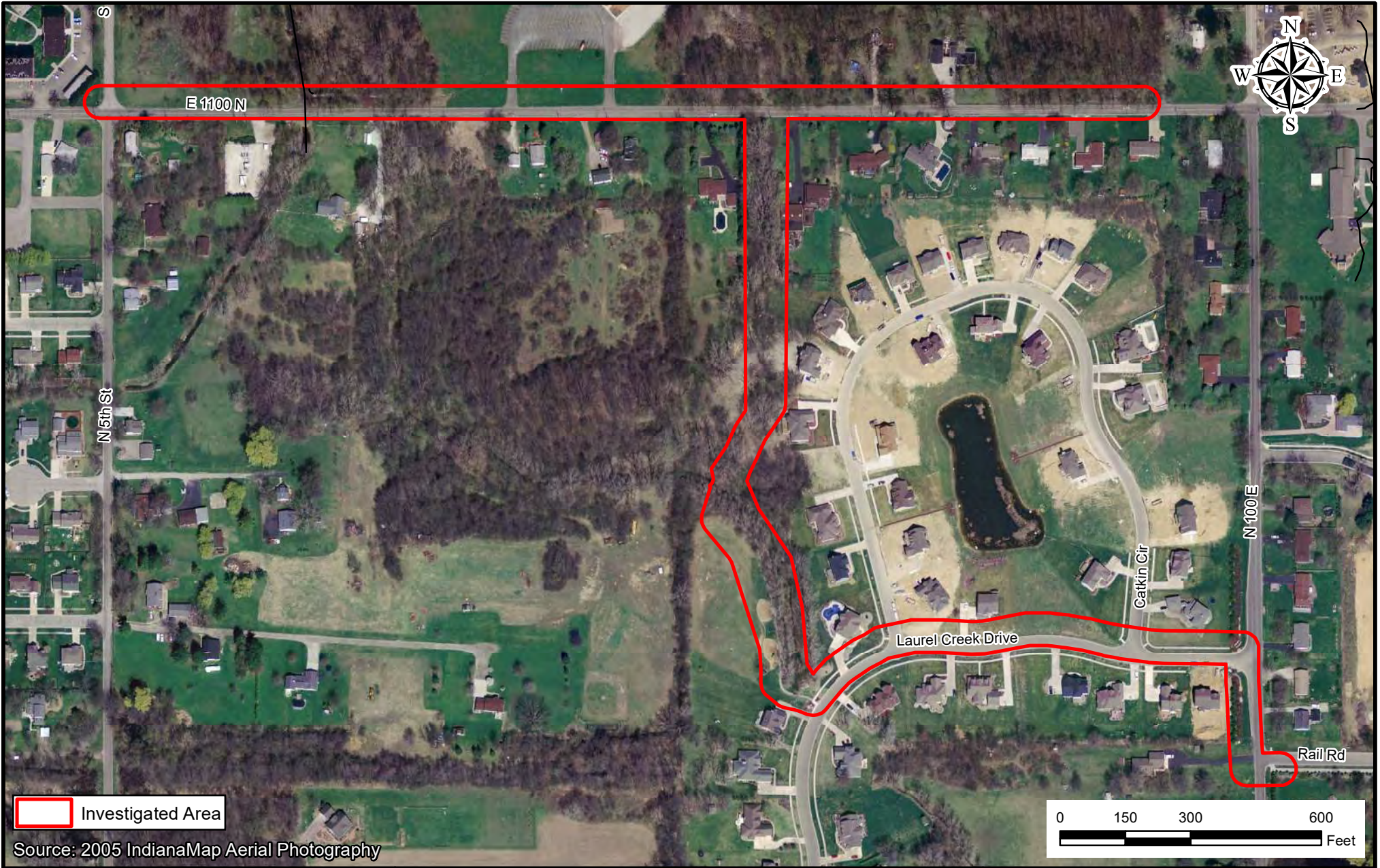


Figure 6: 2005 Aerial Photography

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832
Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix F
F-24

Date: 05/13/2021

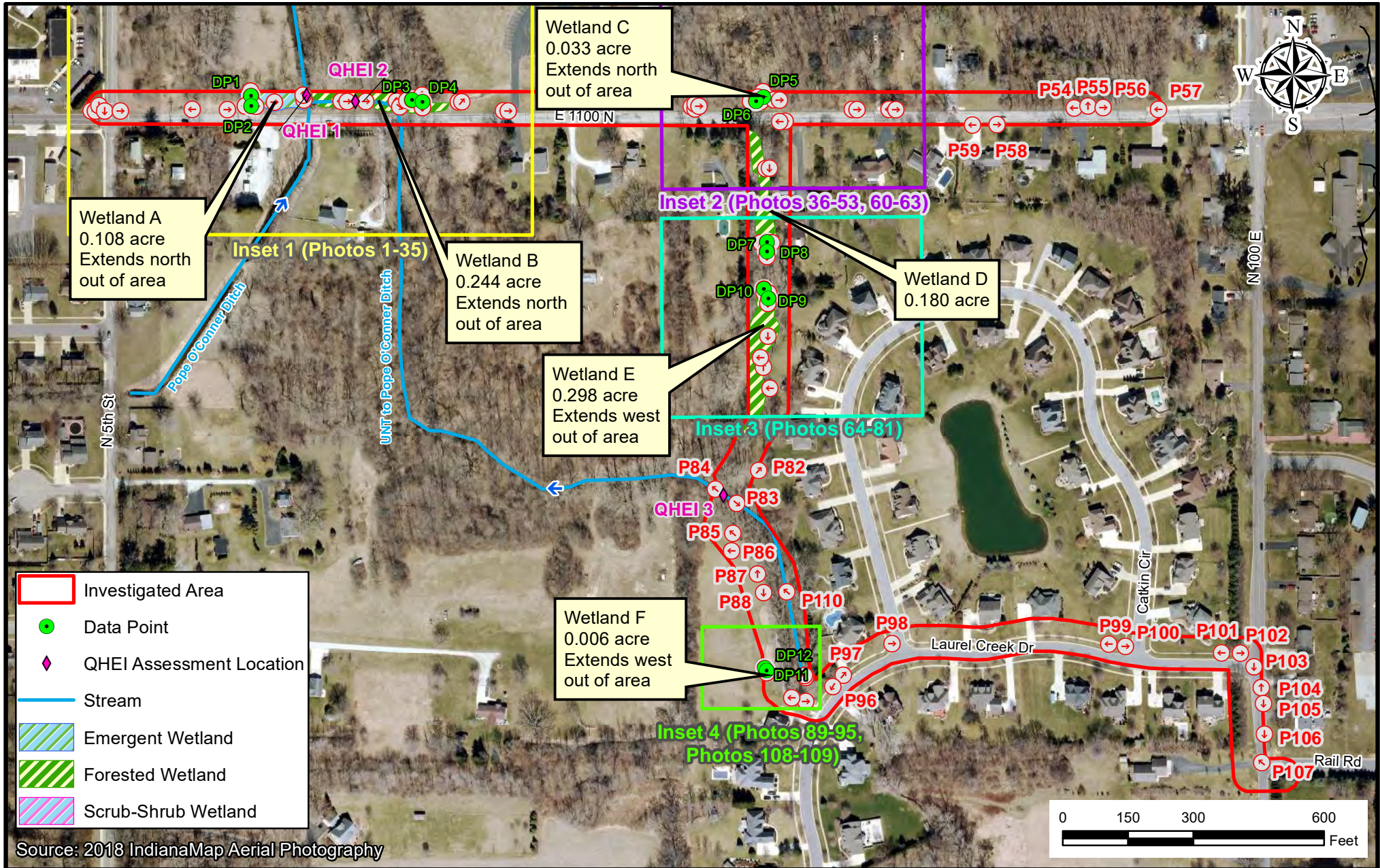


Figure 7: Field Investigation and Photo Location Map



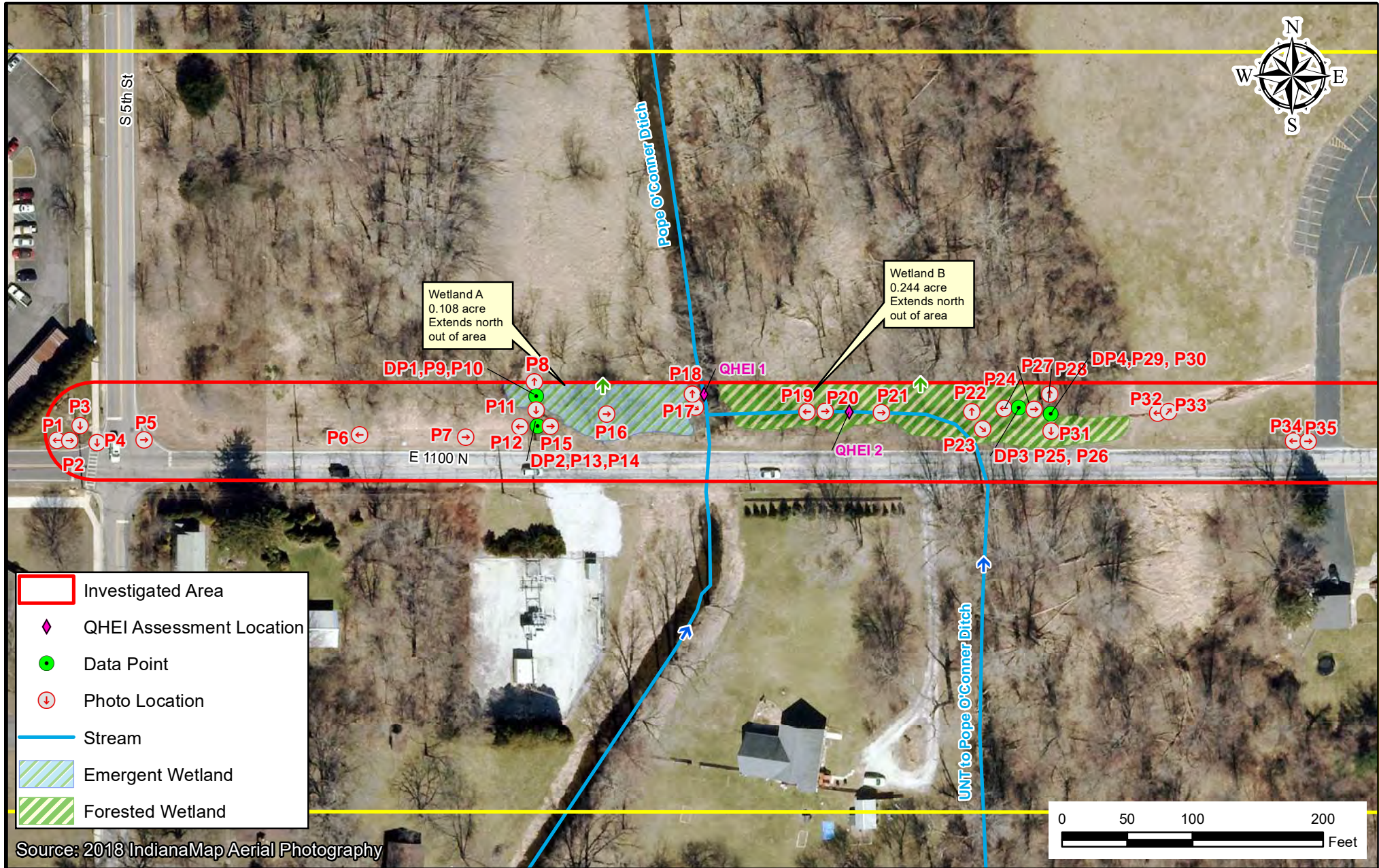
Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix F
F-25

Date: 05/13/2021



Source: 2018 IndianaMap Aerial Photography



Figure 7: Field Investigation and Photo Location Map
Inset 1

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix F
F-26

Date: 05/13/2021

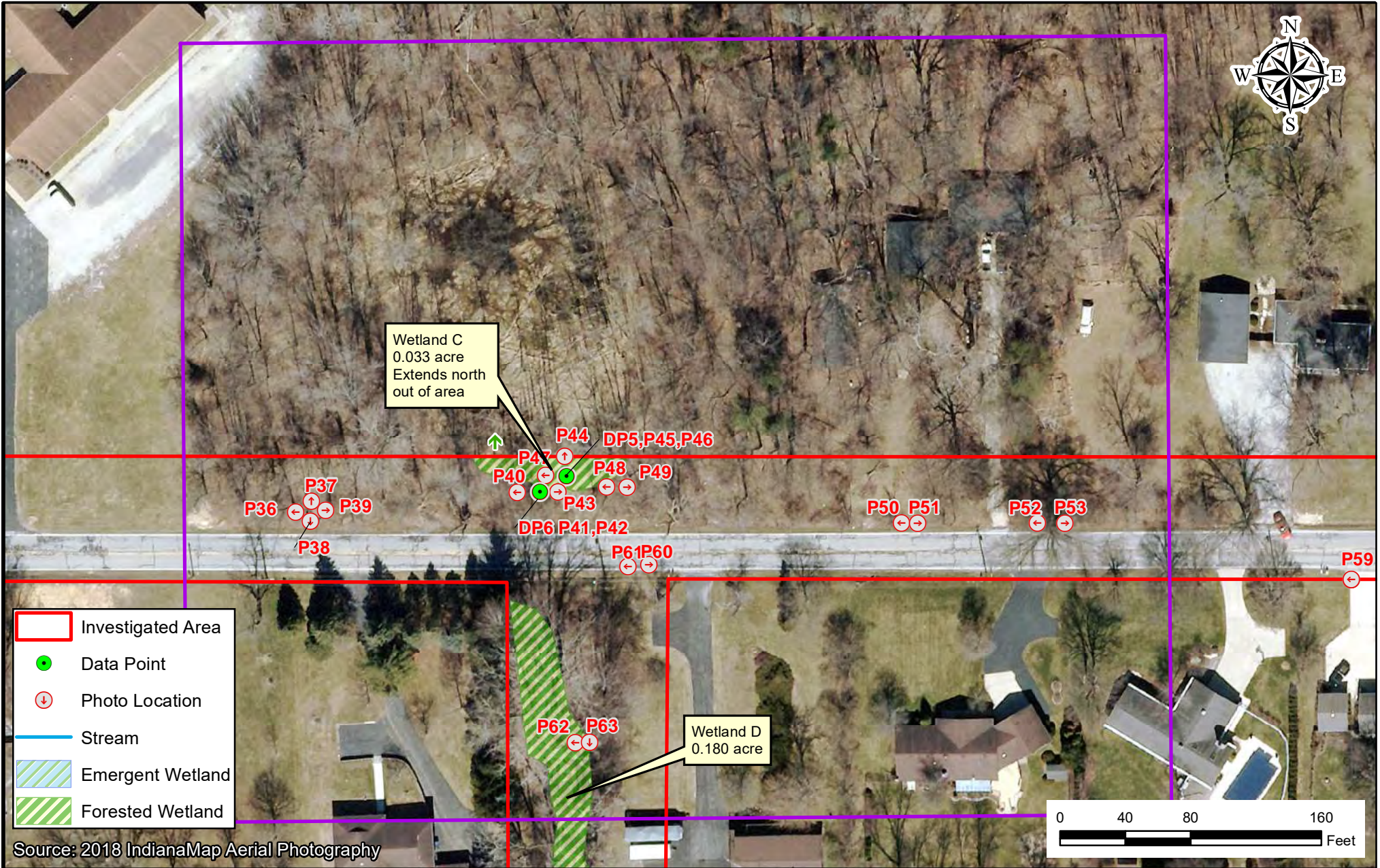


Figure 7: Field Investigation and Photo Location Map
Inset 2



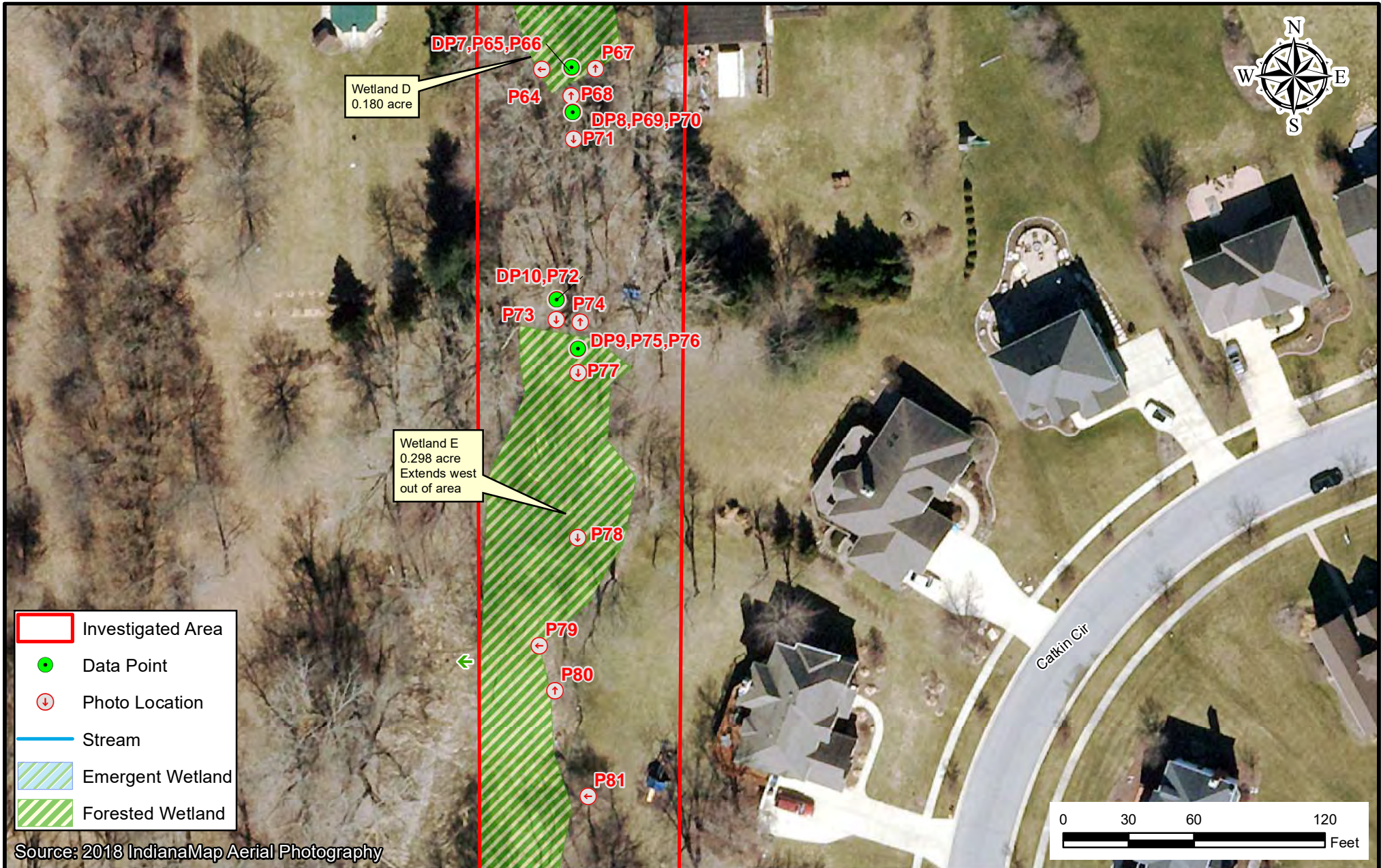
Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix F
F-27

Date: 05/13/2021



Source: 2018 IndianaMap Aerial Photography

Figure 7: Field Investigation and Photo Location Map
Inset 3



Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Appendix F
F-28

Date: 05/13/2021



- Investigated Area
- Data Point
- Photo Location
- Stream
- Emergent Wetland
- Forested Wetland
- Scrub-Shrub Wetland

Source: 2018 IndianaMap Aerial Photography

Figure 7: Field Investigation and Photo Location Map
Inset 4

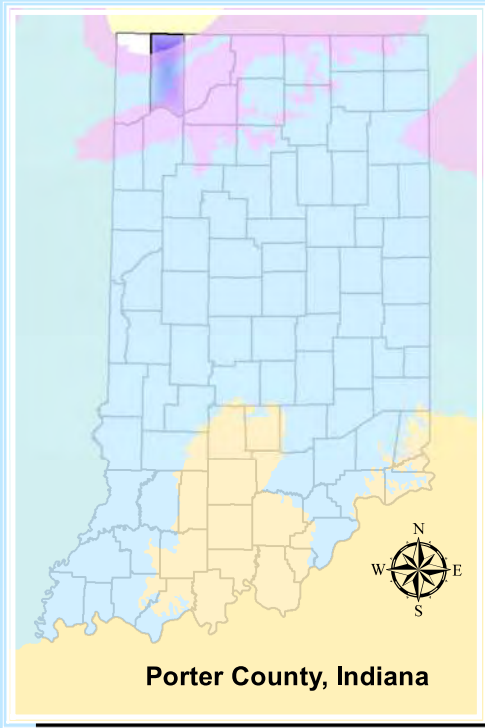
Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832
Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

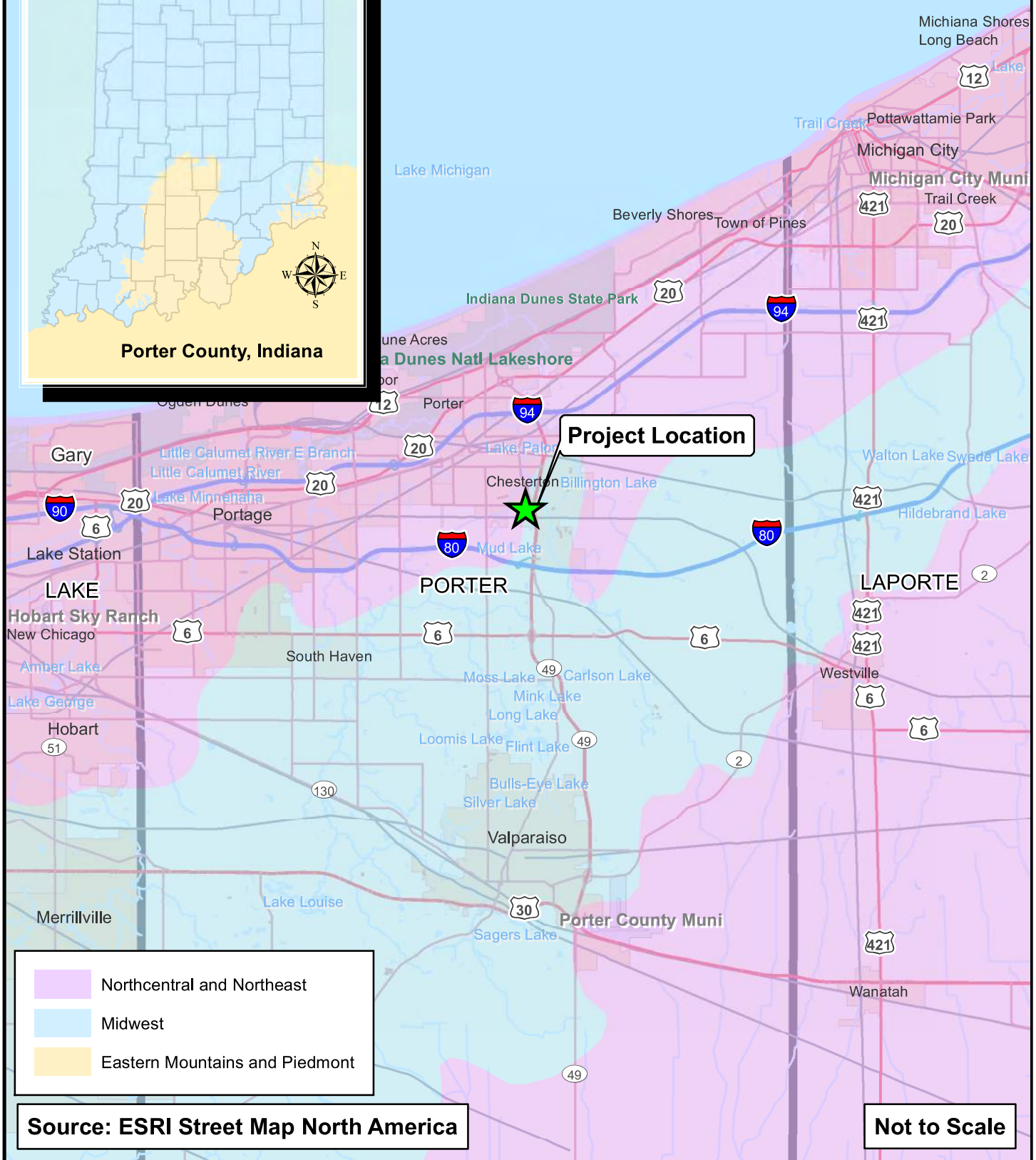
Appendix F
F-29

Date: 05/13/2021





Porter County, Indiana



Project Location

- Northcentral and Northeast
- Midwest
- Eastern Mountains and Piedmont

Source: ESRI Street Map North America

Not to Scale

Path: \\ndy\SAN\P\Projects\2018\02818\D. Drawings\ArcView\Westchester Phase 3 Trail\Waters\Exhibits\2018.02818.EV\2020-07-29.RegSup.Westchester.krb.mxd Date: 8/6/2020 User: kbright



Figure 8: Regional Supplement Map

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832
Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana
Appendix F
F-30

Date: 07/28/2020



Photo 1. Looking west along CR 1100 N from the western boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 2. Looking east along CR 1100 N from the western boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 3. Looking south at a culvert located at the 5th Street/CR 1100 N Intersection from the western boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 4. Looking south along 5th Street from the western boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 5. Looking east along CR 1100 N from the 5th Street/CR 1100 N intersection.



Photo 6. Looking west along CR 1100 N.



Photo 7. Looking east along CR 1100 N.



Photo 8. Looking north from DP1 at Wetland A located west of Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 9. Looking at DP 1 and the soil profile.



Photo 10. Looking at DP 1 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 11. Looking south from DP 1 at Wetland A located west of Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 12. Looking west from DP 2 at the upland area around Wetland A located west of Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 13. Looking at DP 2 and the soil profile.



Photo 14. Looking at DP 2 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 15. Looking east from DP 2 at the upland area around Wetland A located west of Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 16. Looking east at Wetland A located west of Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 17. Looking southeast, upstream at Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 18. Looking north, downstream at Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 19. Looking west, downstream at UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 20. Looking east, upstream at UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 21. Looking east, upstream at UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 22. Looking north at Wetland B located north of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 23. Looking southeast at Wetland B located east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 24. Looking west from DP 3 at Wetland B located east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 25. Looking at DP 3 and the soil profile.



Photo 26. Looking at DP 3 and surrounding vegetation.



Photo 27. Looking east from DP 3 at Wetland B located east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 28. Looking north from DP 4 at the upland area around Wetland B located east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 29. Looking at DP 4 and the soil profile.



Photo 30. Looking at DP 4 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 31. Looking south from DP 4 at the upland area around Wetland B located east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 32. Looking west at a ditch east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 33. Looking east at a ditch east of UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 34. Looking west along CR 1100 N from the northern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 35. Looking east along CR 1100 N from the northern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 36. Looking west along CR 1100 N from the northern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 37. Looking north along CR 1100 N from the northern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 38. Looking south along CR 1100 N from the northern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 39. Looking east along CR 1100 N from the northern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 40. Looking west from DP 6 at the upland area around Wetland C located north of CR 1100 N.



Photo 41. Looking at DP 6 and the soil profile.



Photo 42. Looking at DP 6 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 43. Looking east from DP 6 at the upland area around Wetland C located north of CR 1100 N.



Photo 44. Looking north from DP 5 at Wetland C located north of CR 1100 N.



Photo 45. Looking at DP 5 and the soil profile.



Photo 46. Looking at DP 5 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 47. Looking west from DP 5 at Wetland C located north of CR 1100 N.



Photo 48. Looking west at Wetland C located north of CR 1100 N.



Photo 49. Looking east at the upland area around Wetland C located north of CR 1100 N.



Photo 50. Looking west along CR 1100 N.



Photo 51. Looking east along CR 1100 N.



Photo 52. Looking west along CR 1100 N.



Photo 53. Looking east along CR 1100 N.



Photo 54. Looking west along CR 1100 N at the eastern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 55. Looking north along CR 1100 N at the eastern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 56. Looking east along CR 1100 N at the eastern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 57. Looking west along CR 1100 N at the western boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 58. Looking east along CR 1100 N.



Photo 59. Looking west along CR 1100 N.



Photo 60. Looking east along CR 1100 N where investigated area begins to extend south.



Photo 61. Looking west along CR 1100 N where investigated area begins to extend south.



Photo 62. Looking west at Wetland D located south of CR 1100 N.



Photo 63. Looking south at Wetland D located south of CR 1100 N.



Photo 64. Looking west from DP 7 at Wetland D.



Photo 65. Looking at DP 7 and the soil profile.



Photo 66. Looking at DP 7 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 67. Looking north from DP 7 at Wetland D.



Photo 68. Looking north from DP 8 at the upland area around Wetland D.



Photo 69. Looking at DP 8 and the soil profile.



Photo 70. Looking at DP 8 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 71. Looking south from DP 8 at the upland area around Wetland D.



Photo 72. Looking at DP 10 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 73. Looking south from DP 10 at the upland area around Wetland E.



Photo 74. Looking north from DP 9 at Wetland E.



Photo 75. Looking at DP 9 and the soil profile.



Photo 76. Looking at DP 9 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 77. Looking south from DP 9 at Wetland E.



Photo 78. Looking south at Wetland E.



Photo 79. Looking west at the boundary of Wetland E.



Photo 80. Looking north along the boundary of Wetland E.



Photo 81. Looking west into Wetland E.



Photo 82. Looking northeast along the boundary of the investigated area south of Wetland E.



Photo 83. Looking southeast at UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 84. Looking northwest at UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 85. Looking northwest along the southwestern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 86. Looking west along the southwestern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 87. Looking north along the southwestern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 88. Looking south along the southwestern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 89. Looking northwest from DP 11 at Wetland F located in the southwestern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 90. Looking at DP 11 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 91. Looking west from DP 11 at Wetland F located in the southwestern boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 92. Looking at DP 12 and the surrounding vegetation.



Photo 93. Looking southeast from DP 12 at the upland area around Wetland F.



Photo 94. Looking west along the existing trail.



Photo 95. Looking east along the existing trail.



Photo 96. Looking southwest along Laurel Creek Drive on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 97. Looking northeast along Laurel Creek Drive on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 98. Looking east along Laurel Creek Drive on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 99. Looking west along Laurel Creek Drive on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 100. Looking east along Laurel Creek Drive and Catkin Circle on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 101. Looking west along Laurel Creek Drive on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 102. Looking east along Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E on the existing sidewalk.



Photo 103. Looking south along CR 100 E at the southeast boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 104. Looking north along CR 100 E at the southeast boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 105. Looking south along CR 100 E at the southeast boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 106. Looking south along CR 100 E at the southeast boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 107. Looking northwest along CR 100 E at the southeast boundary of the investigated area.



Photo 108. Looking southwest at where UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch enters the investigated area.



Photo 109. Looking northeast along UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.



Photo 110. Looking northeast along UNT to Pope O'Conner Ditch.

Appendix 2 - PRELIMINARY JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION (PJD) FORM

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. REPORT COMPLETION DATE FOR PJD: June 21, 2022

B. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON REQUESTING PJD: Alexa Helms, American Structurepoint, Inc.
9025 River Road, Suite 200 Indianapolis, IN 46240

C. DISTRICT OFFICE, FILE NAME, AND NUMBER:

D. PROJECT LOCATION(S) AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

American Structurepoint, Inc. was contracted by the Town of Chesterton to proceed with the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 project Wetland Delineation, located in Chesterton, Westchester and Liberty Township, Porter County, Indiana. More Specifically, the investigated area is located on the Chesterton USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map in Section 12, Township 36 North, Range 6 West. The investigated area extends south generally along the west edge of the Tamarack subdivision for approximately 0.26 mile until turning east and connecting with the exiting sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. At the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 N, the investigated area extends along the west side of CR 100 N for approximately 0.06 mile before crossing CR 100 E and connecting with the existing trail, south of CR 100 E and Rail Road intersection. Proposed work includes construction of a new shared-use path. Six wetlands, Wetlands A through F (0.869 acre), and two streams, UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch and Pope O'Connor Ditch (840 linear feet) were delineated on the July 21, 2020 and April 15, 2021 site visits.

(USE THE TABLE BELOW TO DOCUMENT MULTIPLE AQUATIC RESOURCES AND/OR AQUATIC RESOURCES AT DIFFERENT SITES)

State: Indiana County/parish/borough: Porter City: Chesterton

Center coordinates of site (lat/long in degree decimal format):

Lat.: 41.593614°N Long.: 87.053073°W

Universal Transverse Mercator: 16 T 495576.77 E 4604658.61 N

Name of nearest waterbody: Pope O'Connor Ditch

E. REVIEW PERFORMED FOR SITE EVALUATION (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

Office (Desk) Determination. Date:

Field Determination. Date(s):

TABLE OF AQUATIC RESOURCES IN REVIEW AREA WHICH “MAY BE” SUBJECT TO REGULATORY JURISDICTION.

Site number	Latitude (decimal degrees)	Longitude (decimal degrees)	Estimated amount of aquatic resource in review area (acreage and linear feet, if applicable)	Type of aquatic resource (i.e., wetland vs. non-wetland waters)	Geographic authority to which the aquatic resource “may be” subject (i.e., Section 404 or Section 10/404)
Wetland A	41.593709	-87.055889	0.108 acre	Wetland	Section 401/404
Wetland B	41.593701	-87.054955	0.244 acre	Wetland	Section 401/404
Wetland C	41.593728	-87.051724	0.033 acre	Wetland	Section 401/404
Wetland D	41.592975	-87.051755	0.180 acre	Wetland	Section 401/404
Wetland E	41.592198	-87.051764	0.298 acre	Wetland	Section 401/404
Wetland F	41.590056	-87.051737	0.006 acre	Wetland	Section 401/404
Pope O'Connor Ditch	41.593730	-87.055603	80 linear feet (0.015 acre)	Non-wetland	Section 401/404
UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch	41.593693	-87.055212	760 linear feet (0.0132 acre)	Non-wetland	Section 401/404

- 1) The Corps of Engineers believes that there may be jurisdictional aquatic resources in the review area, and the requestor of this PJD is hereby advised of his or her option to request and obtain an approved JD (AJD) for that review area based on an informed decision after having discussed the various types of JDs and their characteristics and circumstances when they may be appropriate.
- 2) In any circumstance where a permit applicant obtains an individual permit, or a Nationwide General Permit (NWP) or other general permit verification requiring "pre-construction notification" (PCN), or requests verification for a non-reporting NWP or other general permit, and the permit applicant has not requested an AJD for the activity, the permit applicant is hereby made aware that: (1) the permit applicant has elected to seek a permit authorization based on a PJD, which does not make an official determination of jurisdictional aquatic resources; (2) the applicant has the option to request an AJD before accepting the terms and conditions of the permit authorization, and that basing a permit authorization on an AJD could possibly result in less compensatory mitigation being required or different special conditions; (3) the applicant has the right to request an individual permit rather than accepting the terms and conditions of the NWP or other general permit authorization; (4) the applicant can accept a permit authorization and thereby agree to comply with all the terms and conditions of that permit, including whatever mitigation requirements the Corps has determined to be necessary; (5) undertaking any activity in reliance upon the subject permit authorization without requesting an AJD constitutes the applicant's acceptance of the use of the PJD; (6) accepting a permit authorization (e.g., signing a proffered individual permit) or undertaking any activity in reliance on any form of Corps permit authorization based on a PJD constitutes agreement that all aquatic resources in the review area affected in any way by that activity will be treated as jurisdictional, and waives any challenge to such jurisdiction in any administrative or judicial compliance or enforcement action, or in any administrative appeal or in any Federal court; and (7) whether the applicant elects to use either an AJD or a PJD, the JD will be processed as soon as practicable. Further, an AJD, a proffered individual permit (and all terms and conditions contained therein), or individual permit denial can be administratively appealed pursuant to 33 C.F.R. Part 331. If, during an administrative appeal, it becomes appropriate to make an official determination whether geographic jurisdiction exists over aquatic resources in the review area, or to provide an official delineation of jurisdictional aquatic resources in the review area, the Corps will provide an AJD to accomplish that result, as soon as is practicable. This PJD finds that there "*may be*" waters of the U.S. and/or that there "*may be*" navigable waters of the U.S. on the subject review area, and identifies all aquatic features in the review area that could be affected by the proposed activity, based on the following information:

SUPPORTING DATA. Data reviewed for PJD (check all that apply)

Checked items should be included in subject file. Appropriately reference sources below where indicated for all checked items:

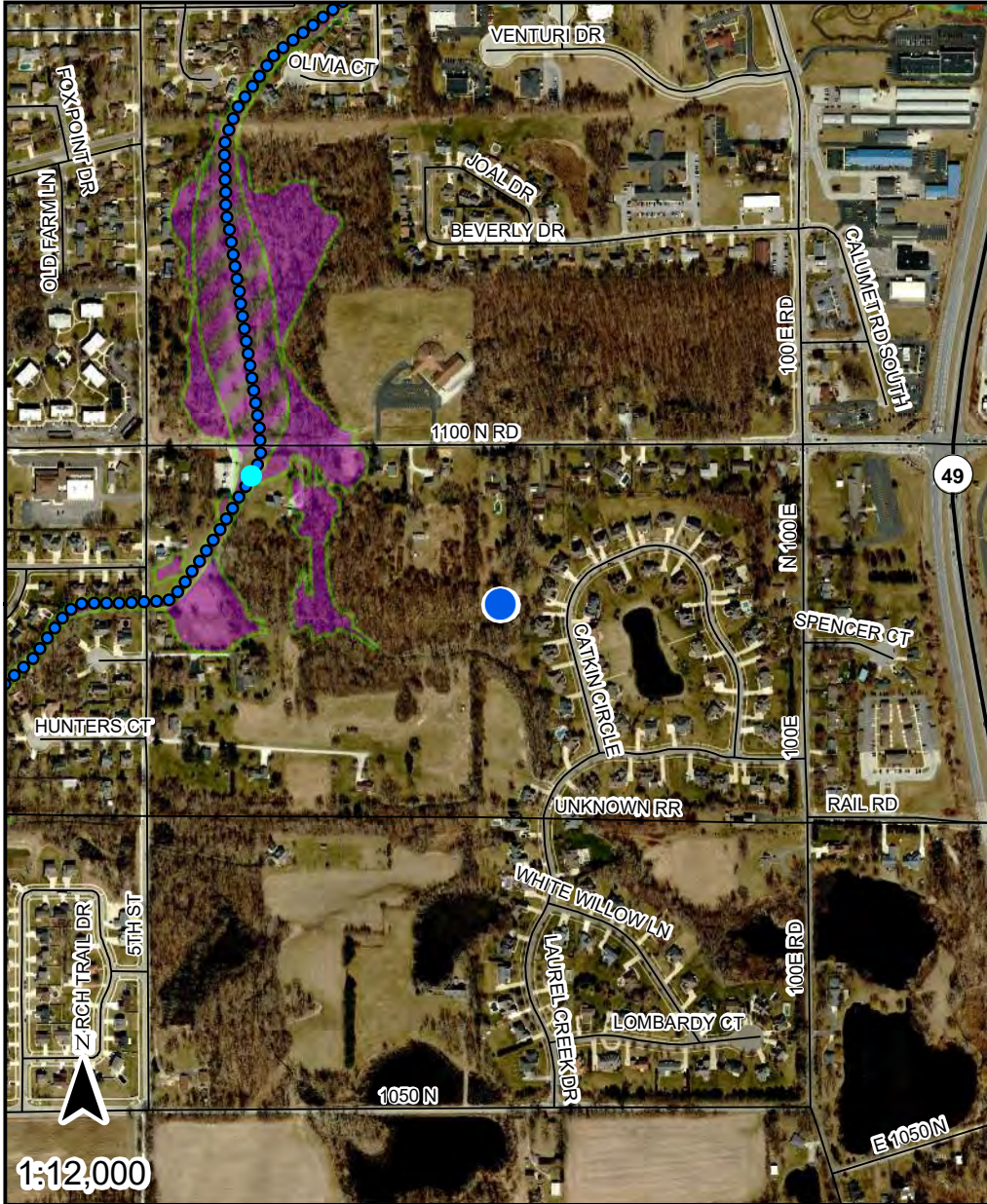
- Maps, plans, plots or plat submitted by or on behalf of the PJD requestor:
Map: State Location, Topo, NWI&FEMA, and Field Investigation
- Data sheets prepared/submitted by or on behalf of the PJD requestor.
 - Office concurs with data sheets/delineation report.
 - Office does not concur with data sheets/delineation report. Rationale: _____
- Data sheets prepared by the Corps: _____
- Corps navigable waters' study: _____
- U.S. Geological Survey Hydrologic Atlas: HUC-12: 040400010403
 - USGS NHD data.
 - USGS 8 and 12 digit HUC maps.
- U.S. Geological Survey map(s). Cite scale & quad name: 7.5 Min Chesterton Quadrangle
- Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey. Citation: Porter County Mapped SSURGO Soils
- National wetlands inventory map(s). Cite name: 2016 National Wetland Inventory
- State/local wetland inventory map(s): _____
- FEMA/FIRM maps: FEMA 100-Year Floodplain Mapping
- 100-year Floodplain Elevation is: _____ (National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929)
- Photographs: Aerial (Name & Date): See Wetland Delineation Report; 2018 IndianaMap Aerial Photography
or Other (Name & Date): Field Photos 6/21/20 and 4/15/21
- Previous determination(s). File no. and date of response letter: _____
- Other information (please specify): _____

IMPORTANT NOTE: The information recorded on this form has not necessarily been verified by the Corps and should not be relied upon for later jurisdictional determinations.

Signature and date of
Regulatory staff member
completing PJD

Alexa B. Helms 6/21/22
Signature and date of
person requesting PJD
(REQUIRED, unless obtaining
the signature is impracticable)¹

¹ Districts may establish timeframes for requestor to return signed PJD forms. If the requestor does not respond within the established time frame, the district may presume concurrence and no additional follow up is necessary prior to finalizing an action.



- Point of Interest
- Base Flood Elevation Point
- Flood Elevation Points**
 - STUDIED STREAM
- Rivers and Streams at least 1 square mile**
- Drainage Area (sq. miles)**
 - 1 - 10
- FEMA Zone AE Floodway; FEMA Administrative Floodway
- DNR Approximate Floodway
- DNR Approximate Fringe

Point of Interest Coordinates (WGS84)
 Long: -87.0520684982
 Lat: 41.5918456086

The information provided below is based on the point of interest shown in the map above.

County: **Porter**

Approximate Ground Elevation: **639.8 feet (NAVD88)**

Stream Name:
Oconner Ditch

Base Flood Elevation: **636.6 feet (NAVD88)**

Drainage Area: **Not available**

Best Available Flood Hazard Zone: **Not Mapped**

National Flood Hazard Zone: **Not Mapped**

Is a Flood Control Act permit from the DNR needed for this location? **no, see following pages**

Is a local floodplain permit needed for this location? **Contact your local Floodplain Administrator-**

Floodplain Administrator: **Bob Thompson, Executive Director, Plan Commission**

Community Jurisdiction: **Porter County, County proper**

Phone: **(219) 465-3540**

Email: **rthompson@porterco.org**

US Army Corps of Engineers District: **Chicago**



May 18, 2020

COLIN J RAGLAND & CHRISTA D HOFFMAN
OR CURRENT RESIDENT
1902 CATKIN CIR
CHESTERTON, IN 46304

Re: Notice of Survey
Westchester-Liberty Trail Project
Chesterton, Indiana

Dear Property Owner:

American Structurepoint, Inc., has been retained by the Town of Chesterton to perform a survey and environmental work for a transportation project along CR 1100 N between CR 50 E and CR 100 E. In addition, the project will proceed south from CR 1100 N through property owned by the Town of Chesterton to Laurel Creek Drive, then east along Laurel Creek Drive to CR 100 E, then south along CR 100 E to Rail Road.

Our information indicates you either own or occupy property near this proposed improvement project. Our employees will begin conducting a topographic survey and environmental survey of the project area in the near future and may continue for several weeks. It may be necessary for us to enter onto your property (exterior only) to complete this work. Our employees have been instructed to identify themselves to you, if you are available, before they enter onto your property. If you no longer own this property, or it is currently occupied by someone other than yourself, please let us know the name and/or address of the new owner or occupant so we may contact them about the survey.

Please be advised that you have the right to be compensated for damage that occurs to your property as a result of the entry upon, over, or under your property or work performed during the entry.

Please be assured of our sincere desire to cause you as little inconvenience as possible during this survey. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (317) 547-5580.

Very truly yours,
American Structurepoint, Inc.

Eric Wolverson, PE
Project Development Director

ERW:mgn



April 8, 2021

MARY T MACHURA & DAVID J KOLARCZYK
OR CURRENT RESIDENT
1098 N 100 E
CHESTERTON, IN 46304

Re: Notice of Survey
Westchester-Liberty Trail Project
Chesterton, Indiana

Dear Property Owner:

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Very truly yours,
American Structurepoint, Inc.

Eric Wolverson, PE
Project Development Director

ERW:mgn

Opportunity for Comment or Request a Public Hearing

LEGAL NOTICE OF PLANNED IMPROVEMENT

DES. NO. 1902832

The Town of Chesterton is developing plans for the proposed Westchester-Liberty Trail (WLT) Phase III project (Des. No. 1902832) which would construct a new shared-use path connecting previously constructed segments of the Westchester Liberty Trail in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana.

The project would connect WLT 1 and WLT 2, and consists of the construction of 0.99-mile long, 8-foot wide, shared-use paths over three connected segments. The first segment (Segment 1) begins at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East and extends approximately 0.45 mile east along the north side of CR 1100 North before ending where an existing sidewalk begins. This segment includes modification to two existing roadway stream crossings. The second segment (Segment 2) exists between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive, beginning 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment through a wooded area before connecting to Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision Park. This segment would include construction of an 8-foot wide boardwalk through portions of the forested area and includes a new stream crossing. The third segment (Segment 3) begins where Segment 2 ends, along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and extends east 0.20 mile to the intersection of North CR 100 East and Laurel Creek Drive. The existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive will be removed and replaced with the shared-use path. Segment 3 then extends south approximately 0.05 mile along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road where it will end. ADA-compliant curb ramps and crosswalks will be constructed as needed.

The proposed construction of this project will require 1.60 acres of new permanent right-of-way, 0.006 acre of temporary right-of-way, and the reacquisition of 0.68 acre of right-of-way. No relocations are anticipated. The cost associated with this project is approximately \$1,942,000.

The maintenance of traffic (MOT) plan will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. There will also be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area. Access to all properties will be maintained throughout construction. School corporations and emergency services will be notified of closures prior to construction. Construction is anticipated to occur in Spring 2024.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and INDOT have agreed this project falls within the guidelines of a Categorical Exclusion (CE) Level 3 environmental document. Preliminary design plans along with the CE document and other project documents are available for review at the following locations:

1. In-Person at:
Chesterton Town Hall Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
Westchester Public Library, 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. Website:
<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>

Persons with limited internet access may request the project information be mailed, please contact Meghan Hinkle at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com. A copy of the CE may also be mailed upon request to interested persons.

All interested persons may request a public hearing be held and/or submit comments to the attention of Meghan Hinkle, of American Structurepoint, Inc, 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240, (317) 547-5580, or mhinkle@structurepoint.com on or before March 1, 2023.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons and/or groups requiring project information be made available in alternative formats are encouraged to contact Meghan Hinkle at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com. In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, persons and/or groups requiring project information be made available in another language are encouraged to contact Meghan Hinkle at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com.

This notice is published in compliance with: 1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1)) stating, “Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a 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 and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate.”; and 3) The *INDOT Project Development Public Involvement Procedures* approved by the Federal Highway Administration on July 7, 2021.

*** Proof of Publication ***

State of Indiana)
) ss:
Porter County)

Personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county and state, the undersigned Nicole Muscari who, being duly sworn, says that She/he is Legal Clerk of the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper of general circulation printed and published in the English language in the City of Valparaiso in state and county afore-said, and that the printed matter attached hereto is a true copy, which was duly published in said paper for 2 time(s), the date(s) of publication being as follows:

Feb 15 + 22, 2023

AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT INC. /Legals
Sarah Johnson - AP Specialist
9025 RIVER ROAD, SUITE 200
INDIANAPOLIS IN 46240

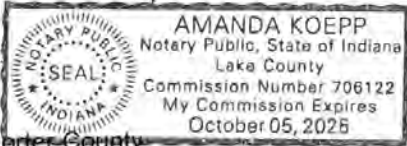
ORDER NUMBER 111204

The undersigned further states that the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper maintains an Internet website, which is located at www.nwi.com website and that a copy of the above referenced printed matter was posted on such website on the date(s) of publication set forth above.

Nicole Muscari, Legal Clerk
By: [Signature]

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 22 day of Feb, 2023

[Signature]
Notary Public



My commission expires _____
Section: Legals
Category: 199 Legal - Porter County

PUBLISHED ON: 02/15/2023, 02/22/2023

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***** Proof of Publication *****

**LEGAL NOTICE OF PLANNED
IMPROVEMENT
DES. NO. 1902832**

The Town of Chesterton is developing plans for the proposed Westchester-Liberty Trail (WLT) Phase III project (Des. No. 1902832) which would construct a new shared-use path connecting previously constructed segments of the Westchester Liberty Trail in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The project would connect WLT 1 and WLT 2, and consists of the construction of 0.99-mile long, 8-foot wide, shared-use paths over three connected segments. The first segment (Segment 1) begins at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East and extends approximately 0.45 mile east along the north side of CR 1100 North before ending where an existing sidewalk begins. This segment includes modification to two existing roadway stream crossings. The second segment (Segment 2) exists between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive, beginning 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment through a wooded area before connecting to Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision Park. This segment would include construction of an 8-foot wide boardwalk through portions of the forested area and includes a new stream crossing. The third segment (Segment 3) begins where Segment 2 ends, along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and extends east 0.20 mile to the intersection of North CR 100 East and Laurel Creek Drive. The existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive will be removed and replaced with the shared-use path. Segment 3 then extends south approximately 0.05 mile along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road where it will end. ADA-compliant curb ramps and crosswalks will be constructed as needed.

The proposed construction of this project will require 1.60 acres of new permanent right-of-way, 0.006 acre of temporary right-of-way, and the reacquisition of 0.68 acre of right-of-way. No relocations are anticipated. The cost associated with this project is approximately \$1,942,000.

The maintenance of traffic (MOT) plan will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. There will also be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area. Access to all properties will be maintained throughout construction. School corporations and emergency services will be notified of closures prior to construction. Construction is anticipated to occur in Spring 2024.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and INDOT have agreed this project falls within the guidelines of a Categorical Exclusion (CE) Level 3 environmental document. Preliminary design plans along with the CE document and other project documents are available for review at the following locations:

1. In-Person at:
Chesterton Town Hall Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave
Chesterton, IN 46304
Westchester Public Library, 200 W
Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. Website:
<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>

Persons with limited internet access may request the project information be mailed, please contact Meghan

***** Proof of Publication *****

hinkle at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com. A copy of the CE may also be mailed upon request to interested persons.

All interested persons may request a public hearing be held and/or submit comments to the attention of Meghan Hinkle, of American Structurepoint, Inc. 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240, (317) 547-5580, or mhinkle@structurepoint.com on or before March 1, 2023.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons and/or groups requiring project information be made available in alternative formats are encouraged to contact Meghan Hinkle at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com. In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, persons and/or groups requiring project information be made available in another language are encouraged to contact Meghan Hinkle at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com.

This notice is published in compliance with: 1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1)) stating, "Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a 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 and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate."; and 3) The INDOT Project Development Public Involvement Procedures approved by the Federal Highway Administration on July 7, 2021.

2/15,2/22 - 111204 HSPAXLP

Opportunity for Comment or Request a Public Hearing Mailing List

Name	Attention	Agency/Company	Address 1	Address 2	City	State	Zip	Delivery Method
		Porter County Highway Engineering	1955 South State Road 2		Valparaiso	Indiana	46385	Mail
Board Members		Porter County Drainage Board	Development and Storm Water	155 Indiana Ave Suite 311	Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Council President		Chesterton Town Council	Town Hall	726 Broadway	Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Sheriff Jeffrey Balon		Porter County Sheriff	Porter County Sheriff's Office	2755 State Road 49	Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Mr. Kevin Breitzke	County Surveyor	Porter County Surveyor	Surveyor's Office	155 Indiana Avenue, Suite 303	Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Mr. Chip Pettit	Superintendent	Duneland School Corporation	Administration Center	601 West Morgan Ave	Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Mark O'Dell	MS4 Superintendent		1490 Broadway, Suite 3		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Lance Bella	Director	Porter County EMA	1995 South State Road 2		Valparaiso	Indiana	46385	Mail
Mr. Tyler McLead	Superintendent	Town of Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department	1490 Broadway, Suite 6		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Tim Richardson	Police Chief	Chesterton Police Department	790 Broadway		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Eric Camel	Fire Chief	Chesterton Fire Department	702 Broadway		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Renee Jeffries and Robin Russell	Property Managers	1st America Property Management Company, Inc.	3408 Enterprise Avenue		Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Porter County Commissioners			155 Indiana Ave		Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Aspen Pines Apartments			500 W 1100 North		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Northwest Indiana Inc			521 W 1100 North		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Sandra K Gersna	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Helen M Misner-Sadler	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Northern Indiana Public Service Co			52 E 1100 North		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Thomas Darrell Jr Shumate	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Richard P Demkovich	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Scott B Sjaheim	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
SBC Properties LLC			PO Box 2365		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Crossroads District of the Wesleyan Church Inc			75 E 1100 N		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Nancy Ann and Beth Ann Hageman	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Dorothy, Nancy Ann, and Beth Ann Hageman	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail

John A Sr and Karen Andershock	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
David and Marsha Ellis	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Dakota Austin and Shaina Sechrest	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
DeLeon C Victoria Living Trust and Ms. Candice Saunders	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Dan R and Kimberly M Miller	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Charles E and Audrey M Jakerst	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Michael G and Victoria Hickle	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Gary and Wanda Sims	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Martin and Lydia Sandoval	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Town of Chesterton				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Sylvia E Soto	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Colin and Michelle Smith	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Timothy and Katie Whalen	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Barry and Jenna Siqueira	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Michael and LouAnne Rone	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Timothy W and Theresa Buehler	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Ryan and Scarlet Spain	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Jeffery D and Michelle Gilbertsen	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Daniel K and Hayley C Wadowski	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Clarence Walsh	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Bobbi-Lynn Caparella	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Frank and Kimberly Goldak	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
David R and Terrim Nicholson	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Pernard D Michaels	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Gilbert and Ruth Bos	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Shivu and Ujwala Puranik	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
David N and Christina N Turner	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Anthony M and Amanda M McCrovitz	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Jeffrey M and Erika K Van Wagner	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Swati Agarwal	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Robert A and Melissa Kania	Or Current Resident			Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail

Vincent and Magnolia Kisala	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Janel R Borsos	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
James W and Renea Martin	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Enzer Matthew I Trust	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Jovo I and Deanner Manojlovic	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Colin J Ragland and Christa D Hoffman	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail

**Opportunity for Comment or
Request a Public Hearing**

WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL PHASE III

Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana

Des. No. 1902832

PROJECT INFORMATION PACKET



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

February 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 1, 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 Categorical Exclusion (CE) document and other project documents are available for review at the following locations:

1. In-Person at:
Chesterton Town Hall Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
Westchester Public Library, 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. Website:
<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>

The Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III Project Team thanks you for your participation in this project.

Project Description

The Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III Project (Des. No. 1902832) is in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The total length of the project is 0.99 mile. Specifically, the project consists of three connected segments. The first segment (Segment 1) begins at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East and extends approximately 0.45 mile east along the north side of CR 1100 North before ending where an existing sidewalk begins. The second segment (Segment 2) exists between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive, beginning 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment through a wooded area before connecting to Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision Park. The third segment (Segment 3) begins where Segment 2 ends, along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and extends east 0.20 mile to the intersection of North CR 100 East and Laurel Creek Drive. Segment 3 then extends south approximately 0.05 mile along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road where it will end.

The need for Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project is evidenced by the current connectivity between the two existing Westchester-Liberty Trail corridor sections and existing sidewalks located in the northeast quadrant of the project area, along CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East. The existing project area is reliant on pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. This results in potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles between existing corridors of the Westchester-Liberty Trail. The first existing corridor section of the Westchester-Liberty Trail I begins at the intersection of the Prairie Duneland Trail and 23rd Street and extends south for approximately 1.0 mile before extending east along CR 1100 North for approximately 1.0 mile and terminating at the intersection with CR 50 North (also locally known as 5th Street). The second existing corridor section of the Westchester-Liberty Trail II begins at the intersection of North CR 100 East and Rail Road and extends east for approximately 0.30 mile before extending south along Keller Drive for approximately 0.30 mile and connecting to the Coffee Creek Preserve.

Generally, the project proposes to construct an 8-foot-wide shared-use path, connecting Westchester-Liberty Trail I to Westchester-Liberty Trail II, and existing sidewalks.

Segment 1

The new paved shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of CR 1100 North, from the intersection of North CR 50 East to the existing eight-foot-wide concrete sidewalk which begins approximately 250 feet west of North CR 100 East. There will be crosswalks added at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East to connect the new shared-use path to Westchester-Liberty Trail I. Two culvert pipe extensions (STR 101 and STR 102) will be necessary and consist of adding new pipes of the same size to the outlet of each structure. STR 101 would be extended five feet north and STR 102 would be extended three feet north, carrying streams Pope O'Connor Ditch and unnamed tributary (UNT) to Pope O'Connor Ditch, respectively. In the area of STR 101 and 102, the new shared-use path would be bordered by a guardrail to the south and a pedestrian handrail to the north. Additionally, inlets, storm sewers, and driveway culverts will be installed as necessary to facilitate drainage along CR 1100 North.

Segment 2

This segment would include construction of an 8-foot wide boardwalk through portions of the forested area and includes a new stream crossing. A small culvert (STR 106) would be constructed where the new shared-use path crosses over UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch in the wooded area between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive. The new shared-use path would then enter the Tamarack Subdivision Park and be constructed adjacent to the existing four-foot-wide gravel sidewalk.

Segment 3

The new paved shared-use path would exist along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive and continue south along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection of Rail Road, where it would connect with Westchester-Liberty Trail II. The existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with a new eight-foot-wide shared-use path. ADA-compliant curb ramps would be constructed at

all intersections as needed. There would be crosswalks added at the intersection of North CR 100 East and Rail Road to connect the new shared-use path to Westchester-Liberty Trail II.

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 1.600 acres of permanent right-of-way from residential, commercial, forested, wetland, and institutional properties. The overall project requires approximately 0.006 acre of temporary right-of-way from residential property. Additionally, the project will reacquire property from residential, commercial, and institutional properties. Typical existing right-of-way in Segment 1 is edge of pavement along CR 1100 North. Segment 2 exists within a 60-ft wide corridor and land associated with the Tamarack Subdivision Park which are both owned by the Town of Chesterton. Typical existing right-of-way in Segment 3 is 30 feet wide along Laurel Creek Drive and North CR 100 East.

Des. No. 1902832			
Amount (acres)			
Land Use Impacts	Permanent	Temporary	Reacquisition
Residential	0.430	0.006	0.320
Commercial	0.420	0	0.360
Agricultural	0	0	0
Forest	0.130	0	0
Wetlands	0.200	0	0
Other: Institutional	0.420	0	0.180
TOTAL	1.600	0.006	0.860

Maintenance of Traffic

The maintenance of traffic for the project will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. Flagging will be utilized to provide roadway access for large construction vehicles. There will also be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area. Signage and temporary curb ramps will be utilized for all pedestrian facility closures.

The sidewalk located along CR 1100 North will remain open while the new shared-use path is constructed and connected to it. The end of Westchester-Liberty Trail II, which dead ends at Rail Road, will be closed for approximately five days for the construction of an ADA-compliant curb ramp at the intersection of Rail Road and North CR 100 East. The sidewalk located along the north side of Laurel Drive will be closed for approximately 1 to 3 months for the removal and replacement of the sidewalk with the new shared-use path. An additional route will not be provided for pedestrians at this location as the sidewalk located to the south of Laurel Creek Drive will remain open and will provide access to all the facilities within the area. Additionally, crosswalk pavement markings for a pedestrian detour along Laurel Creek Drive will be utilized. Lastly, a portion of the gravel path located within the Tamarack Subdivision Park, will be closed temporarily for approximately 2 to 4 weeks for the construction of the new shared-use path. Access throughout the park will be maintained as the majority of the gravel path will be unaffected. Signage will be placed at all closures.

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, emergency services, and pedestrians) 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 CE Level 3 Document prepared by American Structurepoint, Inc. for this project and released the document for public involvement on January 26, 2023. The CE evaluates the impact of the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III 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.” Two streams and six wetlands were identified within the project area as potentially regulated resources. It is anticipated that the preferred alternative will impact approximately 152.25 linear feet of streams and 0.20 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 streams and wetlands. Mitigation will likely be needed and will be determined during permitting.

In addition, formal application for a Construction in a Floodway Permit from the IDNR will be required due to the proposed work within the 100-year floodplain of Pope O’Connor Ditch. The proposed project will also require formal approval from the Porter County Drainage Board due to the project crossing Pope O’Conner Ditch, which is a regulated drain.

Terrestrial Habitat

The proposed project area was examined for the presence of terrestrial habitat resources. It is anticipated that the preferred alternative will impact approximately 2.51 acres of terrestrial habitat due to the construction of the new shared-use path. It is anticipated that the clearing of approximately 0.71 acre of trees will be required for the development of the shared-use path throughout the wooded area between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive. Of the 2.51 acre of terrestrial habitat impact, 1.60 acres is maintained right-of-way, 0.03 acre is emergent wetland, 0.17 acre is forested wetland, and 0.71 acre is trees. Tree removal will occur during bat inactive season (between October 1st and March 31st).

Coordination occurred with US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and a “May Affect Likely to Adversely Affect” determination was received for tree clearing impacts. This project will require mitigation due to the tree clearing impacts. Mitigation will likely be needed and will be determined during permitting.

4(f) Resources

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the use of certain public and historic lands for federally funded transportation facilities unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. The law applies to significant publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges, and National Register for Historical Places (NRHP) eligible or listed historic properties regardless of ownership. Lands subject to this law are considered Section 4(f) resources. There are four Section 4(f) resources located within or adjacent to the project area.

Westchester-Liberty Trail I

Westchester-Liberty Trail I is an existing trail corridor section that serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. This section ends along the south side of CR 1100 North, at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East. In order to provide connectivity between Westchester-Liberty Trail I and the new shared-use path, crosswalks will be added at the intersection. Westchester-Liberty Trail I will not be closed for any time during the construction and no permanent right-of-way will be purchased adjacent to or within Westchester-Liberty Trail I. Therefore, no use is expected.

Westchester-Liberty Trail II

Westchester-Liberty Trail II is an existing trail corridor section that serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. This section ends along the south side of Rail Road, at the intersection of Rail Road and North CR 100 East. In order to provide connectivity between Westchester-Liberty Trail II and the new shared-use path, a new ADA-compliant curb ramp will be installed at the intersection of North CR 100 East and Rail Road. For this reason, Westchester-Liberty Trail II will be temporarily impacted and closed for approximately 5 days during construction. During the remainder of construction, Westchester-Liberty Trail II will be unaffected by the installation of the new shared-use path. No permanent right-of-way will be

purchased adjacent to or within Westchester-Liberty Trail II. The installation of the ADA-compliant curb ramp at Westchester-Liberty Trail II is considered a transportation enhancement activity and constitutes a no use under Section 4(f). The official with jurisdiction (OWJ), Town of Chesterton, concurred with the transportation enhancement.

Tamarack Subdivision Park

Tamarack Subdivision Park is an existing publicly-owned park and serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. The Tamarack Subdivision Park is located north of Laurel Creek Drive. There is a four-foot-wide gravel path along the eastern edge of the park that will be temporarily impacted for the construction of the new shared-use path and will be closed for approximately 2 to 4 weeks during construction. All access to the park will be maintained and open to the public during this time. No permanent right-of-way will be purchased adjacent to or within the park. The installation of the new shared-use path will result in connectivity between Westchester-Liberty Trail I and Westchester-Liberty Trail II to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Therefore, the project is considered a transportation enhancement activity and constitutes a no use under Section 4(f). The official with jurisdiction (OWJ), Town of Chesterton, concurred with the transportation enhancement.

Dunes-Kankakee Trail

The Dunes-Kankakee Trail is a future planned trail that will serve as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. The Dunes-Kankakee Trail will be located to the east of the project area, and would connect to Westchester-Liberty Trail II near the intersection Rail Road and SR 49. As the planned trail is located outside of the construction limits, it is not anticipated to be impacted by this project; therefore, no use expected.

Community Impacts

The proposed project will construct an 8-foot-wide shared-use path, connecting Westchester-Liberty Trail I to Westchester-Liberty Trail II, and to existing sidewalks. This project would result in an increase in recreational facilities in the area and is therefore a net benefit for the community. The proposed project will positively impact community cohesion by increasing the availability of shared recreational facilities and connecting existing trails in the surrounding area. The proposed project would also add ADA-compliant facilities throughout the project area, which increases non-motorized accessibility. Traffic will be maintained along the existing roadway during construction. The only potential impacts to motor traffic would be temporary lane closures or restrictions for road markings at trail crossings. The Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project meets the town's current Comprehensive Plan, meets the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) *2050 Plan*, and is identified as a High Priority Corridor in the NIRPC's *Greenways and Blueways 2020 Regional Plan, Priority Trail Corridors Map*.

Public Facilities and Services

There is one religious facility, The River Church, adjacent to the project area. Two pipeline segments, associated with Northern Indiana Public Service Co. and Marathon Pipe Line Co., are located within the project area. There will be no impacts to the pipeline segments. Right-of-way will be acquired from the River Church, as noted in the right-of-way table above.

The maintenance of traffic for the project will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. Flagging will be utilized to provide roadway access for large construction vehicles. There will also be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area. Signage and temporary curb ramps will be utilized for all pedestrian facility closures. Access to all properties will be maintained throughout construction. The lane restrictions and detours will pose a temporary inconvenience to traveling motorists within the overall project; however, no significant delays are anticipated, and all inconveniences will cease upon project completion.

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 \$1,942,000 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 Begin of Construction Date	Spring 2024

Opportunity for Comment or Request a Public Hearing Comments and Responses

Opportunity for Public Comment or Request a Public Hearing February 15, 2023 to March 15, 2023

	Name	Date	Comment	Response
1	Amanda McCrovitz	2/13/2023	I am requesting a public hearing on this matter. I am not in favor of this path cutting through our neighborhood. What other plans and or possible routes were explored for this path? I will follow up with a formal letter before March 1, 2023. Thank you.	<p>Thank you for submitting a comment and we will keep an eye out for your formal letter. Your property is located [REDACTED] 46304 and, as currently proposed, temporary right of way would be required from your parcel to reconstruct your driveway to accommodate the trail. The driveway reconstruction would consist of flattening the slope of your driveway. It currently appears that your driveway is at about 8% grade and driveway would be flattened to accommodate the trail and meet American with Disability Act requirements for slope. The drive and trail would be reconstructed out of concrete and post construction the area of temporary right of way would revert back to your ownership. No permanent right of way from your property is required. Details of the driveway reconstruction are attached and can be found on page 10 of the <i>Project Plans</i> that are currently posted online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. These plans can also be found in Appendix B in the Categorical Exclusion available online or in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. If you would like to discuss this project further the project team is available for virtual meetings and phone calls. We appreciate the feedback and would like to ensure you are getting the information you are requesting regarding this project.</p>
		2/21/2023	<p>On the plan it looks like the trail is going to be concrete along Laurel Creek as is the existing side walk. I also see that the existing sidewalk will be widened. Will the new trail/sidewalk start at the existing sidewalk closest to the homes and then extend 8ft towards the street?</p> <p>My questions are:</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project team and Town do appreciate your feedback. We are currently completing public involvement to gather information from the community. The design is not final. As you note below, concerns from the Tamarack Subdivision community have been voiced and are being considered. There are many reasons the preferred alternative was chosen and is currently being presented. We have detailed some of the decisions which resulted in the trail being laid out to go through the Tamarack Subdivision and why it is preferred below. Additionally, the National</p>

Opportunity for Public Comment or Request a Public Hearing February 15, 2023 to March 15, 2023

		<p>1. Will the new sidewalk be concrete along the homes on Laurel Creek where the trail comes out of Tamarack Park, and then runs East to 100 E?</p> <p>2. Will there be any green grass on the south side/street side of the trail?</p> <p>3. Can you explain to me how this will look with the existing curbs along the street?</p> <p>4. The end of my driveway has the curb cut away, this will still be the case post construction, correct?</p> <p>5. Will our HOA be reimbursed for all the trees that will be removed?</p> <p>6. Based on other trails in the area how much traffic is expected to traverse through Tamarack?</p> <p>7. From the previous email response I received it seems this route has been chosen simply as the path of least resistance and least expense to the town. Why can't the town and county do this as a joint venture and continue the side walk that is already started on the the northwest end of the 1100 N/100E intersection?</p> <p>As I think about the future development of our town the issue of a sidewalk down 1100N to connect to 5th street will still be something to be considered as well as a sidewalk down 100E to connect to Calumet into the downtown area. I would like to propose that the new trail stop at the entrance from Tamarack Park into the neighborhood, and the existing sidewalks, be left as is, then a the trail could join at 100E, to connect to Railroad, as well as extend North to connect 100E to Calumet, the current dead end sidewalk on the northwest corner could then extend down 1100 N to connect to the rest of the trail. Just because one option seems logically the path of least resistance does not mean it should be the preferred path. What about the cost benefit factor long term for our town and community as Chesterton continues to grow and develop? I really do not want to increase traffic through our neighborhood and lose the beautiful symmetry of the sidewalks and tress lining the road. It is especially beautiful in the Spring time when the trees bloom. I know there are other neighbors who are opposed to the trail for other reasons as well, I hope they will voice there concerns and ask their questions as well. Thank you for your time.</p>	<p>Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features, information on effects to property values, and information on studies which have shown trails do not increase crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways. In general, the trail is being widened towards the curb line. Widening of the trial will occur entirely within the existing Town owned right of way within the Tamarack Subdivision.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes the new sidewalk will be concrete. 2. Yes, there will be a grass buffer strip between the edge of the sidewalk and curb of the street. 3. Please see the attached plan sheet. Page one is a cross section view, I have called out the trail and buffer strip. Page 2 is a plan view (top down look) at the proposed project. 4. Yes the end of your drive will still be cut into the curb. 5. The sidewalk and trees are within Town of Chesterton existing right of way. This means they are owned by the Town. No reimbursement to the HOA will occur for tree removal. Landscape design is not yet complete but the Town is evaluating relocating or replacing existing trees into the new buffer to match the existing spacing and retain the subdivisions landscape layout and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. 6. Information on volume of trail users is not currently available. The Town has noted that the Westchester Liberty Trail is not a high volume trail. 7. There are many reasons why this alternative is preferred. Impacts to residents, and associated costs, of land acquisition is a consideration but it is not the only one which lead to the preferred alternative layout. The preferred alternative also has the added benefit of increasing connectivity to the Tamarack Subdivision Park, a Town of Chesterton public facility. The preferred alternative also eliminates the need for a trail crossing at CR 1110N at CR 100 E. A crossing at that intersection would be 48-ft wide and pedestrians would need to cross three lanes of traffic and watch for turning vehicles not only from CR 1100N but also from CR 100 E. The preferred alternative eliminates this cross walk and provides a mid-block crossing on CR 1100N between 5th and CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing is only 23 ft in width and pedestrians will only need to watch for east and west bound traffic on CR 1100 N and not have to watch or consider the potential turn movements as there is no intersections or driveways near this crossing. Additionally, advance warning lights and signs along with pavement markings will be provided at the crossing warning drivers of pedestrians crossing the road. Finally,
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				<p>crossing into unincorporated Porter County is a consideration. Although an agreement could be made between the Town and County, the preferred alternative eliminates the need for this and eliminates the need for permanent right-of-way from unincorporated properties in Porter County. This is a benefit to both communities.</p> <p>The proposed alternative will accommodate pedestrian traffic to places along Calumet Avenue (CR 100 E) as the trail will be run along the north side of CR 1100 N to the existing sidewalk which dead ends just west of CR 100 E. Therefore, the Town is addressing this consideration with the preferred alternative as well. The existing sidewalk is only 4-ft in width. This is not wide enough to accommodate the multiple types of pedestrian users on the trail (such as bikes, strollers, runners, etc.) and bidirectional traffic without pedestrians needing to step off the trail or walk/run/ride in the adjacent yards. We encourage you to reach out to the project team or Town representatives (who are copied here) to discuss your concerns further. We are available to chat by phone or virtually as well.</p>
		2/22/2023	<p>Thank you for your prompt response. Since there has been a public hearing requested by myself and others, when will we receive notice of the hearing date? I am not overly concerned about crime, yet other neighbors along the park have raised the issue of drug deals, which have previously taken place at the entrance to the park along Laurel Creek Drive. I do firmly believe that the trail going in front of my home will significantly decrease our property value. This should be of concern to all our neighbors, not just those impacted by the trail. Can you explain to me who benefits from this trail going through Tamarack versus connecting 1100N with 100E to go south and connect with Railroad other than a cost, town/county issue? I also had another question, what will happen to my mailbox? Once again, thank you for your time.</p>	<p>The Town and project team are offering the public the opportunity to view preliminary plans and environmental documents at this time. All information gathered, comments received, and concerns regarding the project are being included as part of the project’s environmental documentation, and being considered and responded to by the project team as they are being received. Currently, a public hearing is not scheduled. This does not preclude the Town from holding a hearing, or alternatively a public information meeting, for the project in the future regarding this project. Adjacent property owners, including yourself, and local stakeholders would be notified of any plans to hold such meetings ahead of the meeting. More information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p> <p>If a hearing is held, the formal public hearing process for a federal highway funded project includes an opportunity for the public to verbally present comments for the project record. However, the project team does not present formal answers to comments submitted during the hearing or during the comment period. All comments received during the formal public hearing process are compiled and answers will be provided in writing after the approval of the project. A notice of the availability of responses to comments will be sent out only after the approval of the project. Therefore, we are offering the public an opportunity to review preliminary plans and the environmental document in a format more conducive to conversation at this time.</p> <p>The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago. The vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail and sidewalk network. When compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town</p>

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				<p>owned right of way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. This is a benefit to the community at large.</p> <p>The existing mailboxes are located at the roadway curb line. No impacts are expected to the existing mailboxes, however, if they are impacted, they will be replaced in kind. Refer to the <i>Public Facilities</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>We want to re-iterate that the design is not final, and that the team (including the Town – who are copied herein - and INDOT) will review the comments received to determine next steps. Additionally, offering this opportunity for hearing and to review and comment, does not preclude the team from holding a formal public hearing or public meeting in the future. We are available for phone calls and virtual meetings and if one would be conducive to further this discussion let us know.</p>
		2/23/2023	<p>Again thank you for getting back to me and explaining the process. Is there anyway to extend the public comment period in order to allow time for several of the homeowners to retain an attorney to attend a virtual meeting on in person meeting to discuss the design? There are several families that are out of town, or left town today. The bottom line is that there are Tamarack residents both in support of and against the trail running down Laurel Creek Drive. One homeowner stated that they did not get notice of the project in the mail, and found out from another neighbor who approached them. The trail will run behind their property down the side and in front of their property, so they for sure are a stakeholder. We would like to be able to better organize our comments and get a better understanding of this project. I know many people have reached out concerning the project and commented, but if we are all just doing this individually we are not aware of others questions, concerns, or support for the trail. I also have requested a meeting with our HOA Board, and have not gotten a response yet. The March 1st deadline is approaching quickly, and I am afraid we will run out of time to effectively comment and express our viewpoint. The bottom line is that I DO NOT WANT THIS TRAIL RUNNING ALONG THE FRONT OF MY PROPERTY. I can state many reasons why I have come to this conclusion. I do not need to be convinced this a good plan or of benefit, changes the property I know and love, the feel of my neighborhood and I just do not want to look at at 8ft strip of concrete in front of my home where there used to be trees. I also so not believe it is the residents of Tamarack's responsibility to figure out an alternative solution for the town, but I strongly believe that an alternative MUST be found. Some of the issues I have heard raised in addition to my own are:</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Yes, the public comment period will stay open for an additional 2 weeks. All the materials on the website and the comment form will remain active. Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were notified. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No. The current preferred alternative is the least impactful to residential properties and community overall. There are many reasons why the current preferred alternative was chosen over the CR 100 E. These have been previously covered in emails below. 2. The preferred alternative minimizes right of way takes, minimizes the number of residents which are impacted by right of way takes, and provides a crossing of CR 1100 N which minimizes risks to pedestrians when compared to the CR 100 E alternative. The preferred alternative also provides shorter connections to and between public facilities such as the Boys and Girls Club, High School, Middle School, Bailey Elementary School, Dogwood Park, Westchester Migratory Bird Sanctuary, and Chesterton Park when compared to an alternative which utilizes CR 100 E. 3. A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees (predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N) will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was also laid out

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		<p>1. Is this a town versus county issue? Is that the main issue that the town doesn't want to work with the county?</p> <p>2. Who benefits from the trail going through Tamarack versus the trail going around Tamarack?</p> <p>3. There is roughly 2.4 wooded acres that will be removed by construction through the park, there are many birds and other wildlife that reside in the woods, has a study been done to make sure none of the wildlife is on the endangered species list?</p> <p>4. The issue of effective Notice has been raised.</p> <p>5. Chesterton is listed as Tree City USA on signage off of Hwy 49. We are killing alot of trees without a replacement plan.</p> <p>6. What is the process after public comment should the town still want to proceed with the trail cutting through Tamarack down Laurel Creek Drive?</p> <p>I apologize for all the emails, I know that you are reading each and everyone to respond. I think it is helpful to have the public hearing process explained. I also think it is important for the residents who want to seek legal representation to be allowed time to do so by extending the period for public comment beyond March 1st, as well as allowing time for a special board meeting to be held with our HOA board. Therefore, I respectfully request that the March 1, 2023 deadline for public comment be extended. Kind Regards,</p>	<p>with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing, avoid clearing large trees, and minimize wetland impacts. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. Further, the proposed boardwalk is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and forest. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs. In fact, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees and wetlands on this project. The Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act requires any project that has federal funding to evaluate impacts on protected species and impacts to their habitat. Coordination occurred with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and it was determined no state threatened, endangered, or rare species have been reported in the project area. Additionally, coordination occurred with US Fish and Wildlife Service and two federally listed species, and their habitat may be present in this project area, the endangered Indiana bat, and the threatened northern long-eared bat. The monarch butterfly, a candidate species, and its habitat may also be present within this project area. At this time candidate species do not require additional coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Service. Impacts to the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and the bats habitat were coordinated with US Fish and Wildlife Service. This project received a may affect, likely to adversely affect determination for impacts to the Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat. Mitigation for a portion of the tree clearing is required for this project. US Fish and Wildlife concurred with this determination and mitigation and no further coordination is required at this time. Refer to the <i>Protected Species</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>4. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. This included mailing Notice of Survey and Notices of Planned Improvements to all adjacent property owners, local elected and appointed officials, and within the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p> <p>5. See response to #3 above. The replacement or replanting of existing street trees removed along Laurel Creek Drive is currently being considered but is dependent on utility locations. This has been added as a for consideration commitment to the project. The Tamarack</p>
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				<p>Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project.</p> <p>6. Pending the results of this opportunity for comment and to request a formal hearing the project team, Town, and INDOT will discuss next steps. It is anticipated that further public involvement will be completed. If additional public meetings or a public hearing is held, notice of such meeting will be sent to all adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and published in the Northwest Indiana Times (as required) by the most recent INDOT guidance documentation and standards. Additionally, notices will be sent to all those who provided contact information during this comment period.</p>
2	Michelle Gilbertsen	2/14/2023	<p>I am writing to vehemently oppose the construction of this trail through Laurel Creek Drive of the Tamarack Subdivision. A public hearing should absolutely be held to offer opposition to this. As a 20-year Realtor with [REDACTED] and, a resident of Tamarack living on Laurel Creek Drive, this “new 8’ sidewalk,” replacing the one right in front of my home – and my neighbor’s homes - is nothing short of complete destruction of our property values! This subdivision is one of the finest in Chesterton, and it upholds itself well due to the Homeowners Association’s covenants and restrictions. Properties here have always been well-kept and values have always been intact with some of the most prominent in our town. It is extremely common for Realtors to hear that Tamarack is a very popular and well sought-after subdivision for prospective buyers. To put a larger sidewalk through our yards offers NOTHING positive to us, except more traffic/trash, AND horrible curb appeal for future values. Our subdivision would not be the same at all. All downhill from here. Property values to all homeowners here would plummet. I believe this is a very selfish proposition, not taking homeowners’ into consideration at all. How many people who want this path would choose to do it straight through their own front yards??</p>	<p>We want to provide you with additional details to answer your questions. Can you confirm your address is [REDACTED] so that we can ensure we are providing complete information to you? As part of the design development process, alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E.</p> <p>If you would like to discuss this project further the project team is available for virtual meetings and phone calls. We appreciate the feedback and would like to ensure you are getting the information you are requesting regarding this project.</p>
		2/15/2023	<p>Thank you for explaining, but this does not resolve the “Laurel Creek Drive” problem. Whether the 8’ “trail” is on the north side or south side of the street, it is still directly in front of a street of homes currently valued \$500-\$700k+. With all due respect, if any of</p>	<p>The existing sidewalk along the north shoulder of Laurel Creek Drive is 4-ft in width. This is not wide enough to accommodate different types of pedestrians (bikes, strollers, runners, and walkers) without users stepping off the sidewalk to pass each other or using the adjacent lawn to walk/ride when passing. The</p>

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			<p>these homes were where YOU lived, what do you think will happen to your price-point when you decide to one day sell? Again as a Realtor, I guarantee that should I bring a Buyer to view any home along this street – post-trail – their VERY FIRST QUESTION would be “why does that sidewalk look like that?” And my answer to 9/10 Buyers would now serve as a deterrent to that sale because the lot/yard, curb appeal, and confined internal traffic, is forever affected. The price just went down. And all surrounding property values are now negatively affected.</p> <p>Let me add, please, that I’m all for parks and walking trails. I love Coffee Creek and all of our Duneland trails. I bike and hike often, utilizing all of them. But, I just don’t see why yet another one HAS to be done through our beautiful subdivision - - any subdivision for that matter. What would be the reason that the current sidewalk already in place can’t be utilized for this same purpose? I look forward to learning more and will research the information available to me. Thank you.</p>	<p>existing sidewalk is also not compliant with American with Disability Act requirements. The preferred alternative would construct an 8-ft wide path is designed to accommodate all types of pedestrians and will meet ADA standards. This is a benefit to all users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack Park. The trail within the Tamarack Subdivision has also been designed to have a sodded buffer between the existing curbline and edge of the trail which is an aesthetically pleasing design consistent with the current layout of the sidewalk which also provides a sodded buffer between the curb and edge of sidewalk. Please let us know if there are any questions.</p>
		2/20/2023	<p>Thank you for the response. I am only one person, I know, but still, after looking through all of the drawings and considering all scenarios as subjectively as possible, I am of the strong “no’s.” All in all, I just do not believe that there is such an overwhelming genuine “need” for this trail, that it justifies a shift in market trajectory for Tamarack <i>for the first time ever</i>. A trail that invites more outside traffic past \$600,000 homes is never a selling feature. This is very unfortunate for all of us here. Tamarack is now going backwards. In fairness, however, I will wait out the process of others’ feedback. Thanks again for all correspondence.</p>	<p>No additional response.</p>
3	Christina Turner	2/20/2023	<p>I live in Tamarack and have many questions/concerns about the proposed path. As a runner, I have many times questioned why there is NO SIDEWALK on 100, from Laurel Creek to 1100. We need a safe passage on this short segment of road, which would increase foot traffic to our amazing downtown area. This is the RIGHT PATH TO USE for the proposed trail....it would solve the missing sidewalk problem on this segment of road as well as be the easiest path to get to from 1100 to Rail Rd. The proposed meandering path behind/through Tamarack decreases the safety of the Tamarack community, specifically all of the young children who freely play outside in a secluded community within a small network of familiar families. Directing public traffic through Tamarack seems not to take the well-being of its homeowners into consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR</p>

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				<p>100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area, as you have noted below. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs. Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on your destination in Chesterton and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. For example, the preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, and the Middle School. While the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).</p> <p>The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered, including additional pedestrian traffic you mention. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right of way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. The railing along the boardwalk will act as a buffer to contain people and deter trail users from walking off the trail onto private property. The existing street, sidewalks, and park are existing public resources where children play freely, and that will not change due to this project. Children play freely in these public resources today under appropriate adult supervision. Responsibility of children and how they play is at the discretion of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) and how they determine appropriate adult supervision. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p>
		2/23/2023	<p>Please know....we would love a path...just needs some adjustment before building it without additional planning and consideration.</p> <p>A few more comments after your response: -The length of the path to head south and then east through Tamarack is far longer than just coming straight down 100E from</p>	<p>The length from the current terminus of Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1 to the current terminus of Westchester Trail Phase 2 following the path outlined under the preferred alternative is approximately 0.80 mile. The same length from WLT 1 to WLT 2 under the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative is the same distance, 0.80 mi. The preferred alternative includes a connection along the north side of CR 1100 N to the existing sidewalk that dead ends just west of CR</p>

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		<p>1100 (since the sidewalk on 1100 is part of your plan already). The materials for your proposed path would be greater.</p> <p>-The trees needed to be removed behind all of the houses on Catkin/Laurel.....is not only expense, but a shame. Is there no protection of trees in Chesterton? (as well as the beautiful parkway trees to be removed in front of the Laurel homes) Will you replace trees so that the homes that path runs behind will not be fully exposed to the path? The effected backyards will be devalued, exposed (lose privacy/safety) and unprotected (potential damage to their own land)will you put up a fence to secure their properties (or replace trees along the path's edge)?</p> <p>-The number of homes affected is FAR LESS coming down 100E than your proposal through Tamarack if you look at the number of back yards and driveways overall.</p> <p>-WE NEED A SAFE PATH from Laurel Creek to 1100..... this could dually serve your needs as well as provide everyone access to walk to downtown Chesterton...which should be a priority as well in an overall Town plan. The County homes that are on 100E (I think there are 4 on the west side?) should have a sidewalk anyway.</p> <p>-To put a pedestrian crossing in the middle of 1100, where there will be no stoplight for cars (assume unless you push a button)....is far more dangerous to pedestrians than adjusting the crosswalk button that already exists at 1100 and 100. Cars will not always have to stop at the pedestrian crosswalk you propose and therefore will not always be paying attention when passing through. Cars already expect to stop at 1100 and 100 stroplight and the cross walk signal there could be easily adjusted to increase the safety (which, btw, no one is concerned about until now??? We have all been using the existing cross walk signal there for years). And the cost to construct a pedestrian crosswalk where one does not exist would be far greater than modifying the one that currently exists at 1100 and 100.</p> <p>-what is the overall cost of your proposal vs the cost to just come down 100E? Are the taxpayers of Chesterton comfortable with the cost of your proposal vs the cost to come down 100E?</p> <p>We urge you to take pause, plan this with long term benefits.....go through the red tape with the county and make this right.</p>	<p>100 E which increases total trail proposed to be constructed to 0.99 mile. This connection enhances connectivity to residents along CR 1100 N and provides connections to the trail to CR 100 E and Calumet Ave. Trail length is not the only factor which went into consideration of the development of the preferred alternative. There are added benefits when comparing the preferred alternative to the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative. These include enhanced access to Tamarack Subdivision Park (a Town of Chesterton Public Facility), minimization of right of way, minimization of impacts to residential properties, a crossing of CR 1100 N which minimized risks to pedestrians, and avoidance of the need to cross into unincorporated Porter County. These are also discussed in the email below.</p> <p>The project will result in a total of 0.71 acre of tree clearing over the entire project. This is predominantly focused on the north side of CR 1100 N but does include selective cutting within existing Town owned property in Tamarack Subdivision and Tamarack Subdivision Park. The portion of the trail through the grassed area of the park will result in removal of select trees and some of the brush currently along tree line but this project will not result in removal of the entire tree/brush line. Therefore, the properties that back up to the trail will not lose the existing tree line.</p> <p>Segment 2 of the trail which extends south from CR 1100 N to an Unnamed Tributary of Pope O'Connor Creek will be a raised boardwalk with railings. The project team has met with the US Army Corps of Engineers to lay out this portion of the trail through the forest to avoid tree clearing where possible and prioritize cutting of immature trees where avoidance is not possible. Meetings included walkthrough of the project to identify a corridor through this wooded area on Town property, behind homes on Catkins Circle, that minimized clearing and impacts to wetlands. In fact, both the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management have applauded efforts to avoid tree clearing, minimize impacts to wetlands in this area, and the use of the boardwalk. Post construction the portion of the trail which is boardwalk will still have canopy cover, be in a wooded setting, and has been designed to work with the existing landscape to retain the trees. The boardwalk in Segment 2, as noted above, will have a railing and is predominantly through wetland areas which have standing water during parts of the year. The railing along the boardwalk will act as a buffer to contain people and deter trail users from walking off the trail onto private property and reduce tree clearing exposing residential yards. The boardwalk was chosen by the Town following conversations with adjacent property owners on Catkins Circle and is an added amenity to minimize potential for pedestrians to leave the trail and navigate onto private property along the reach. The boardwalk also minimizes clearing and allows the Town to retain more trees and provides the adjacent residents to retain more of a buffer. Additionally, the Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive, but is dependent on utilities. This has been added as a for consideration</p>
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				<p>commitment to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project.</p> <p>Please see the information on property values at the following link https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways. As a result of the proposed undertaking there is no permanent right of way that will be purchased from the Tamarack Subdivision or its residents. All improvements in this stretch of trail are occurring within Town owned property. Additionally, the trail has been designed to retain trees and allows for a grass buffer strip between the curb line and front of the trail. This is an aesthetically pleasing feature.</p> <p>Coming down CR 100 E would impact additional residential properties as noted below. The CR 100 E alternative more than doubles the number of residential properties which are impacted by right-of-way acquisition. As currently proposed the preferred alternative makes use of Town owned property and right-of way to navigate from CR 1100 N to CR 100 E without the need to purchase any additional permanent right-of-way.</p> <p>The current proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing. The mid-block crossing will also have advance warning signs and warning lights and will have pavement markings warning drivers of the crossing.</p> <p>Regardless of the existing crossing at CR 100 E, the proposed mid-block crossing reduces potential risks to pedestrians along the trail. The preferred alternative also has added benefits when compared to the CR 100 E alternative as noted below and in the bullet points above.</p> <p>The project team is currently presenting preliminary plans and the environmental document for comment. All information gathered, comments received, and concerns regarding the project are being included as part of the project's environmental documentation, and being considered and responded to by the project team as they are being received.</p>
4	James Martin	2/20/2023	<p>I acknowledge the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town owns the land Northwest of the Tamarack neighborhood running South from 1100. 2. The four (4) homes located on the West side of 100E running South from 1100 are not on Town Property. Nevertheless, common sense would dictate the the path should continue on 1100 running East to 100E and then South to Railroad. Multiple reasons exist to do so. 	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment, you mention some great points which we have clarified below. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred</p>

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following the path will be much easier for its users. 2. Less street crossings: safer for users. 3. Less disruption for an existing, quiet neighborhood. 4. The Tamarack neighborhood would then have a viable route to access downtown Chesterton immediately from the neighborhood. <p>The Town is taking the path of least resistance rather than doing the right thing. I am requesting that the route of the path be changed to continue on 1000N East to 100E and then South on 100E to Railroad. The logistics can be worked out. The parties just need to make the effort. I am sure many residents of Tamarack would be willing to do any grunt work necessary to assist.</p>	<p>alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area, as you have noted below. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.</p> <p>As you point out the preferred alternative does require cross walks to be installed or improved at 6 points along the trail. Three of these crosswalks are proposed to be within the Tamarack Subdivision (One at each of the two crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive; one at Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E). By taking the trail down CR 1100 N to CR 100 E you could eliminate both of the crossings of Catkins Circle, which does reduce the number of crossings. However, you would add a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E and remove the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N between 5th and CR 100 E. The current mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon assembly at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. Catkins Circle is a low volume, local road, with posted speed limit of 20 mph and there are currently pedestrian crossings at both of these intersections which serve the Tamarack Subdivision as well as the public in general wishing to walk to the Tamarack Subdivision Park, a Town of Chesterton public facility. The preferred alternative will result in improved access to Tamarack Subdivision Park and improve the crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive to be American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant. The enhanced connectivity to the public park and ADA improvements are a net benefit to the community.</p> <p>Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on your destination in Chesterton and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. For example, the preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, and the Middle School. While the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E</p>
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				<p>alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).</p> <p>The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered, including additional pedestrian traffic you mention. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right of way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. If you would like to discuss further we can set up a virtual meeting or phone call with the project team.</p>
		2/22/2023	<p>Thank you for your prompt and thorough response. The rationale and reasons for the proposed route you provided seem sound. I have some follow-up questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the existing playground equipment in the park remain intact? 2. When will trees designated for removal be marked? 3. Approximately how many trees will be removed on the park land? 4. Approximately how close will the path run to the creek (UNT to Pope O’Connor Ditch) as passes by my backyard (██████████)? I cannot determine that distance from the plans. 5. When and where will the public meeting about this project be held? <p>Thank you,</p>	<p>Thank you for the feedback. We are here to help you and your community. Please let us know if there are any additional questions. As previously noted, the project team and town (copied on all replies) are available for calls or virtual meetings to discuss further.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No, the playground equipment will not be impacted by the proposed project. Please see the Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) discussion on page 21 of the Categorical Exclusion available at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt for more information about impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. 2. Tree removal would be completed by the contractor following award of the project. Prior to the initiation of the project, the contractor will request survey to stake out the limits of the work and mark trees for removal. Construction is anticipated to begin in the Spring of 2024. 3. A total of 0.71 acre of trees will be cleared for the entire project. Please see page 16 of the Categorical Exclusion available online in the Terrestrial Habitat section for more information. 4. UNT to Pope-O’Connor Ditch is approximately 30 feet from the back of your property line, at the center of your property. The trail will be approximately 30 feet west of your property line. 5. A Public Hearing or Meeting is currently not scheduled. This does not preclude the Town from holding one at a future time. The project team and Town are currently providing the public at large the opportunity to comment on the preliminary plans and environmental document.
		3/13/2023	<p>I have not yet received a response to the questions posed to Joshua Iddings below (2/22/2023). After further review of the plan, I still strongly believe that the proper route would be East on 1100 North to 100 East, then South on 100 East to Coffee Creek. The justifications provided by Joshua do not outweigh the simplicity and safety of this route.</p>	<p>The email response back to you regarding your questions is attached to this email and included the responses in blue to your questions below (previous answers in cell above provided in email response). According to our records the response was sent on February 22, 2023.</p> <p>Thank you for your comments. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The</p>

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			<p>In addition, I'm sure the costs of the trail would be less. The plan already includes linking to the existing sidewalk on the North side of 1100 North at 100 East. The cost of a straight sidewalk going South on 100 East must be substantially less than cutting numerous trees, building a bridge over the ditch and pouring a zigzagging sidewalk through the park.</p> <p>Concerning safety, crossing 1100 North at the point designated in the plan, in my opinion, is more dangerous than crossing at the light at 1100 N and 100 E.</p> <p>Please respond with your comments.</p>	<p>design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p>
5	Alexis Metcalf	2/20/2023	<p>As a resident of Tamarack and top local realtor, I wanted to share my thoughts of this plan. Running this path through Tamarack is going to hinder property values in the second highest property valued subdivision in the city limits. Running this path from the existing sidewalk on the north end of Laurel Creek East to then North up the west side of 100e to 1100 N seems to be there better choice. Properties along 100e could use the walk ability to improve their property values and add to curb appeal. It was be wise for town and county to work together and go for the more direct, less expensive version along 100e. That becomes a win for cost and for adding value to these homes. Executing this path through Tamarack doesn't serve as much value to the residents as the town thinks, residents would'be delighted to have access to it along 100E</p>	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require new permanent right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon assembly at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for new permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes the amount of right-of-way needed from residential properties. The current alignment only requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs. The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by</p>

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				prioritizing use of existing Town owned right-of-way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.
6	Tiffany Bozovich	2/20/2023	Please consider keeping the trail on 100east and not going through Tamarack subdivision. This trail would decrease home values in a neighborhood but it would increase those on 100east and provide a safe walkway along that road which does not exist currently.	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require new permanent right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for new permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes the amount of right-of-way needed from residential properties. The current alignment only requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.</p> <p>The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right-of-way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and</p>

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				traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.
7	Katie Whalen	2/20/2023	This project appears to be cutting down several existing trees in peoples yards along laurel creek drive in tamarack. This subdivision prides ourselves on having uniform crab-apple trees lining all of the streets. I want to make sure the project scope plans to replace any trees that are cut down. I know the town of Chesterton claims to be tree-friendly and that they are supposed to plant one every time they remove one, so I would think that would apply here. It would look really terrible to have a stretch of 5 houses with no trees...and making the owners pay for tree replacements doesn't seem fair because they didn't ask for this widening.	Thank you for submitting your comment. Tree removal was included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the <i>Environmental Document</i> that is currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt . The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. The Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision was sent a Notice of Survey letter. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process and will be taken into consideration during the advancement and approval process. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.
8	Dave Turner	2/20/2023	As this reads, it seems like a lot of work while avoiding the area where it is needed, which is the westside of 100 from 1100 to Laurel Creek. This is going to increase traffic in an established neighborhood that is not set up for it, was given no voice in the matter and will increase stress for the residents. Not to mention safety issue and decreased property values. Also, isn't it wrong to remove all of those beautiful trees? Isn't that some kind of environmental violation? More time needs to be spent and the neighborhood consulted prior to this paradigm shift in our home values.	Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways . An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require new permanent right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but

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				<p>also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for new permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes the amount of right-of-way needed from residential properties. The current alignment only requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.</p> <p>Tree removal was included and evaluated in the project’s Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the <i>Environmental Document</i> that is currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the relocation or replacement of trees once construction has been completed and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM.</p> <p>To date, coordination with the neighborhood has included distribution of a Notice of Survey. The Town has also talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years. Currently, preliminary plans and environmental documentation have been developed and we are providing an opportunity to comment. This included notifying the Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision, adjacent landowners, local stakeholders, and the public at large of the proposed project. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process and will be taken into consideration during the advancement and approval process.</p> <p>The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered, including additional pedestrian traffic you mention. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of</p>
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				existing Town owned right-of-way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.
9	Deanne Manojlovic	2/21/2023	I request a public hearing on the Westchester-Liberty Trail project phase III. Yes, I do have many questions and concerns regarding the project but I do not want to discuss this in a one on one virtual meeting or phone call. I would like a public meeting to discuss the questions and concerns I and my neighborhood community have. Thank you.	<p>Are there any specific questions or concerns you have regarding the project that we could answer?</p> <p>Project information and documentation can be found online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>At this time, the project team is gathering information, comments, and concerns regarding the project but are not holding any public meetings. This does not preclude the Town from holding a public meeting or public hearing in the future. More information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/. All information gathered, comments received, and concerns regarding the project are being included as part of the project's environmental documentation and being considered and responded to by the project team as they are being received.</p> <p>The formal public hearing process for a federal highway funded project includes an opportunity for the public to verbally present comments for the project record. However, the project team does not present formal answers to comments submitted during the hearing or during the comment period. All comments received during the formal public hearing process are compiled and answers will be provided in writing after the approval of the project. A notice of the availability of responses to comments will be sent out only after the approval of the project. Therefore, if you have questions and concerns, we encourage you to reach out to the team or Town (copied on all replies) to discuss in a format more conducive to conversation.</p>
		2/27/2023	Your original notification states that "all interested persons may request a public hearing be held" but when I and others request ;a public hearing we are told that you are "not holding any public meetings." Please explain the meaning of this discrepancy and denial. Thank you.	Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. We have not indicated nor implied that a hearing or public information meeting cannot be held. We have indicated there are not currently any scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future.
		3/1/2023	We have many questions and concerns regarding the Westchester-Liberty Trail that the Town of Chesterton intends to install through our beautiful, well-established neighborhood, disrupting and	Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and

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		<p>destroying the peace, harmony, safety, and privacy that prompted us to build and/or move into Tamarack. In no particular order, below please find the questions and comments of concern that we and others in our neighborhood have in regards to the Town of Chesterton’s intent to violate our subdivision, one of the most sought after in our town.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why was this the only pathway considered? The more logical and straightforward pathway would be to continue the path from the already professionally installed corner of 1100 and 100 E to Railroad Road and 100 E. The electronic crosswalk is already there (and paid for) to be utilized, as are the ADA ramps and landscaping, and it would be the safest place to cross 1100.. Continuing down 100 makes the most sense. If that path was actually investigated, please provide the dates of when this was done, who was contacted and participated in the discussion, what was discussed, and who decided that that pathway was not “feasible”. No one would provide Deanne with that information when she asked. Numerous excuses have been thrown around as to why they want to infringe on the homeowners in Tamarack. 2. The Town of Chesterton is known as a tree AND bird town and yet they are choosing to unnecessarily cut down about 3/4 acre of trees, homes to countless wildlife, to divert this pathway so it will go through the center of our established neighborhood. We are devastated that the wildlife and their habitat that we see and hear on a DAILY basis are going to be impacted and destroyed-deer, fox, opossum, chipmunks, squirrels, groundhogs, raccoons, coyotes, and more, as well as untold birds including at least 5 species of woodpeckers (including the protected red headed woodpecker), owls, cranes, a variety of waterfowl, orioles, blue birds, cardinals and more. 3. Why does the Town of Chesterton feel entitled to infringe on the rights, safety and privacy of the residents in our established neighborhood in order to install a walking path THROUGH it, right up the middle of the subdivision entrance, disturbing the aesthetics and continuity of the neighborhood and going against the Homeowners Association covenants. 4. The intended path from 1100 to the Tamarack Park must be a raised platform as it is running through wetlands. The area is wet year round and serves as overflow for the existing creek. During peak water levels it even encroaches 	<p>your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23- feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project. This project would connect to the existing sidewalks and trails in the area. 2 Tree removal and protected species impacts were included and evaluated in the project’s Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal and protected species impacts can be found on pages 16-18 of the <i>Environmental Document</i> that is currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt . The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the relocation or replacement of trees once construction has been completed and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to
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			<p>on current property lines. The homeowners whose properties are adjacent to that intended path should not have water diverted into their yards because of the installation of an unnecessary path.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Is the town prepared to care for and maintain that raised platform properly? Will installation of that path disrupt the natural flow of groundwater and the underground water pathway that is currently there? 6. We have NEVER seen an 8 foot walking path installed through an already established neighborhood, disrupting the aesthetics and continuity of those homes. Walking paths, especially 8 foot wide ones, are generally behind homes or part of a pre-planned community. 7. We are concerned about the safety of crossing 1100 in the middle of the roadway. The plan to install a crosswalk in the middle of this insanely busy road seems careless and reckless when the crossing could be at an established, light controlled crosswalk and continue in a straight path to the next intersection at Railroad Road.. 8. We are also extremely concerned that a walking path bringing strangers right past our backyards and homes jeopardizes the safety of us and our children, not to mention our homes. Directing strangers through the woods where they can discreetly peer into our backyards and homes and leading them to a secluded park is a dangerous, irrational choice. Then continuing the path in front of our private homes where again strangers have the opportunity to invade their privacy is a safety concern for our neighborhood. We have many young children who will be left vulnerable by this ill-proposed plan. Law enforcement is well aware of the activities that walking paths harbor and that are detrimental to the safety and security of neighborhoods, be it our children or our property and possessions. The residents of Tamarack did not buy their homes knowing the privacy, safety, and beauty of their homes would be jeopardized by inviting strangers to wander it. 9. Current walking paths in Chesterton are riddled with trash that the town does not remove. The Town of Chesterton already has difficulty keeping up the sidewalks we already have. The town does not properly maintain the existing trails and yet wants to install an 8 foot atrocity through the yards of Tamarack homeowners. Will the town maintain those properly? What about the landscaping and trees that they plan to remove? Will the town be clearing 	<p>the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3 The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. Under current conditions, there is nothing preventing the public at large from using said resources. The Homeowners Associations covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision and steps have been taken to provide a trail design which is aesthetically pleasing. The eight-foot-wide trail will be concrete to match existing concrete drives, sidewalks, and curb ramps in the subdivision. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. However, this does not mean that these topics are not being discussed. The point of these conversations is to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the preliminary plans. 4 There will be no disruption of water as we are using a boardwalk that requires no excavation to place. The proposed boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the ground and is fully adjustable (up or down) to allow the uninterrupted passage of water. The trail crosses areas of wetlands which hold water well into the growing season based on field observations. Areas which currently flood or hold water will continue to do so post construction, there will be no change in the drainage of these areas as a result of the trail. 5 The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted at the following website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. The proposed trail construction is not to a depth which would affect the flow of groundwater. Please see info presented above. 6 Thank you for your comment. 7 See response to question #1 above. 8 The safety and security is under the jurisdiction of the Police Department. The National Association of Realtors has information
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			<p>the walking paths through the seasons including snow and ice? We assume the Town of Chesterton is responsible for any accidents that occur on the walking path as opposed to the homeowner.</p> <p>10. According to FHWA-Indiana Environmental Document CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION / ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The “opportunity for a public hearing is required” and yet we have requested and been denied that opportunity. a. “The shared-use path would then extend south along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road...” and “... would increase impacts to residential and commercial properties and would extend beyond the limits of the Town of Chesterton and into an unincorporated portion of Porter County.” This was mentioned at least a couple times but there are no commercial properties along the west side of 100 where the path would go so it makes us wonder why it was worded that way. Along the segment from 1100 to Railroad Road there are 5 houses that are unincorporated. The remaining land (and the majority of that segment) belongs to Tamarack Subdivision. As far as we know, no one has explored the opportunity for the town of Chesterton and Porter County to work together to install this walking trail down 100, the most reasonable, non-intrusive, environmentally friendly, common sense place to construct it. <p>11. There is a pipeline that runs through the woods on the path from 1100 to the park. How will that be handled?</p> <p>Based upon their expertise and experience, 80% of the real estate agents/brokers I spoke to believe that the installation of this trail THROUGH our neighborhood could negatively impact our property values. Why is the town infringing on the residents of our subdivision when other viable alternatives are available.</p>	<p>available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>9 The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted at the following website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. The Town will snow plow the trail route when they have completed plowing all existing parks in the Town or assisting other departments with snow plow duties. If an accident occurs on the trail, it should be reported to the police and the incident will be investigated by the police department as appropriate.</p> <p>10 The opportunity to request a public hearing and submit comments is currently occurring and was extended to March 15th. Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. We have not indicated nor implied that a hearing or public information meeting cannot be held. We have indicated there are not currently any scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. Information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 East Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>Coordination with utility companies to identify potential conflicts and relocation of the appropriate facilities, if needed, has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project.</p> <p>The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p>
	3/14/2023		<p>If that path was actually investigated, please provide the dates of when this was done, who was contacted and participated in the discussion, what was discussed, and who decided that that pathway was not “feasible”. Which properties are you referring to? There are</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. No commercial properties will be impacted or require any right-of-way for any alternative chosen. The preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties by purchasing residential right-of-way throughout the project. The preferred alternative minimizes the amount</p>

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		<p>6 residential properties along Laurel Creek and 6 + the corner house again on Catkin Circle that would be directly affected by the trail. On the other hand, there are 5 residential homes if the trail is put on 100. Why does this matter? Does the Town of Chesterton have difficulty working together with the county? This states the trail on 100 would “increase impacts to residential and commercial properties..” There are <u>no</u> commercial properties there; there are 5 houses, less than would be affected in Tamarack. At 1100 and 5th St. trail users will cross the street to the north side of 1100/west side of 5th St. and then cross the street again to the east side of 5th St. Structure Point does not seem concerned about the traffic movements at that 4 way stop intersection. Did Structure Point actually investigate the proposed mid-block crossing or did you just look at drawings? Crossing mid-block on 1100 is very dangerous; vehicles going west crest over a hill close to the crossing as do vehicles going east. 1100 is a very busy road; it is much, much safer to cross at the traffic light with pedestrian signals. Is that accurate? 2 lanes of traffic is 23 feet while 3 lanes is over twice as much? Just verifying. Not that it matters what they are in favor of, but we’re sure they weren’t in favor of the trail only if it went through Tamarack. We still disagree that crossing in the middle of a busy road is safer than crossing at a corner with a stop light and pedestrian signals. Our comment pointed out that the Town of Chesterton claims to support and celebrate trees and birds while in practice they continue to disrupt and destroy them unnecessarily. Your answer basically says that the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management deemed it okay to destroy the trees and habitats so the Town of Chesterton and Structure Point find it acceptable to do as well. Pleasing to whom? Structure Point who doesn’t live here? It is NOT pleasing! And the town’s desire to gut and intrude upon one of the most desired subdivisions in Chesterton is detrimental and appalling. This will be unsightly! We don’t want or need <u>more</u> concrete in our neighborhood! An 8 foot concrete trail up the entryway of our neighborhood and the removal of our matching trees does NOT match the feel and layout of our subdivision. ¾ of an acre of trees is minimal to you? Not to us! That is the concern as the town does not seem to have enough personnel to handle the existing trails and parks. See above as well. Not being a local company, perhaps Structure Point does not realize how busy 1100 is and how dangerous it will be. We find it hard to believe that anyone would advocate that crossing in the middle of a busy road with hills on both sides is safer than crossing at a stoplight with pedestrian signals! It will be difficult for the Police Department to secure the</p>	<p>of right-of-way needed from residential properties. The current alignment only requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.</p> <p>The Town police department performs patrol routes as assigned, however, there are no bike or walking patrol officers. If specific safety issues are submitted or called in, the police will respond as appropriate.</p> <p>Coordination with utility companies to identify potential conflicts and relocation of the appropriate facilities, if needed, has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. Future expansion of utilities or installation of new utilities would be completed independent of this project. There are not any impacts anticipated to the existing pipelines as part of this project. Refer to the <i>Public Facilities and Services</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Your comments have been documented and will be taken into consideration.</p>
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			<p>secluded park and extended stretch of woods. The information on that site is all fluff and opinion pieces- if people <u>thought</u> their homes would sell for more, if they <u>thought</u> the path increased their value, etc. Over 80% of the realtors I spoke to said it will negatively impact our property values and ability to sell our homes. We assume the Town of Chesterton is responsible for any accidents that occur on the walking path as opposed to the homeowner. As previously stated, they are understaffed but thank you for passing the buck again. No, you did not say it CANNOT be held, but when you tell us we can request a public meeting and we do and then you tell us there is not one planned but we can call with questions, well, that is a denial. You did not offer to set one up for all of us who requested one; you offered to talk individually or answer emails. So the town didn't pursue the path down 100 because the county did not have money to contribute to it? Chesterton didn't bother to look into the availability of easements because they didn't want to pay for the sidewalks that they wanted to install? If the Town of Chesterton <u>wants</u> the path, <u>they</u> should pay for the path. Installing the path down 100 is the cheaper, more logical, more beneficial and safer route. Again please explain as that is inaccurate; more property owners will be infringed upon by the path gutting its way through Tamarack. Our question regarding Marathon Pipeline was ignored.</p>	
10	Amy Morgan	2/23/2023	<p>Hello, we are very concerned about this project and the unexpected, inconsistent (very few were notified in our neighborhood), last minute and incomplete notification we have been given. This is an unfair short notice we as home owners are being given in Tamarack to respond. We need a hearing that is both plenty of time to prepare and get word out as well as given widespread notification to ALL who live here. This feels sneaky and as though the town is trying to get something through slyly when they have not been forthcoming. There remain many questions and with these details above, there remains the need for a highlighted map to be printed and given to those who are in our neighborhood. The clarification of purpose? For instance, the roads 1050 and 1100 have been in need of safe passage for students to get to school and if 1100 will not have a full sidewalk, kids will stay on 1100 even more now instead of heading into a wooded path, through a neighborhood that goes south, when they need to go north on Calumet. This seems like another short sighted, segmented design like the disjointed sidewalks all over Chesterton. Visitors are not going to want to go through a neighborhood - I will not want my children walking to school, even HS through the woods alone. Not to mention how this will scar Tamarack, add unknown visitors and traffic to the playground which we allow our young children to play</p>	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration. Regarding notification of the public, the Town has talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years and have sent out Notice of Surveys to adjacent property owners that engineering work is ongoing. The public involvement for this project included notifying the Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision, adjacent landowners, local stakeholders, and the public at large of the proposed project through publication of two Public Notices in the Northwest Indiana Times, the most widely distributed newspaper in the area. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement, which is an additional step taken by the Town to get the word out. If this is the first time you are hearing about the project, plans are not final and your feedback is a valuable part of the project. There is still time to review preliminary plans and environmental documentation and provide feedback. Comments are being accepted through March 1. Project information including the Categorical Exclusion environmental document and project plans are currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester</p>

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			<p>at - (is there talk of how this will look for our playground and path there?) For cost purposes, since we were told that Chesterton won't pay for a sidewalk on 1100 or 1050 because it is a Country road...Then simply for cost purposes, how is the uprooting of trees and sidewalk in Tamarack and the building of a boardwalk through the woods in comparison to a straight sidewalk on 1100?? People coming from Coffee Creek, are they supposed to go west through Tamarack and then what? Go to 5th street to get to DT for diner or the Farmers market or USPS? Why in the world would we not add a sidewalk for THIS foot traffic hazard? People will continue to walk on 1100 between 5th and Calument and along 100/ Calumet. There will be continued and even greater concern for that danger as you just increased the traffic that would not want to waste time and energy to go through a neighborhood - esp if you are on a bike or walking. *** This hearing we need must be AFTER Spring Break as you know we want to be here for it and to be fair and forthcoming we all need more time to prepare and make the hearing in person. Thank you.</p>	<p>Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). Information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/.</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. An alternative utilizing CR 1050 was not considered because it would not connect to existing sidewalks or trails in the area.</p> <p>Regarding the cost, the construction of all the trail segments (including the CR 1100 N segment) is included in one total cost of the project. Only constructing the CR 1100 N portion of the trail does not meet the Purpose and Need of the project, therefore, the project costs were not separated by segment.</p> <p>Regarding students walking to school, this project would connect to the existing sidewalks and trails in the area by the high school filling the gap of missing sidewalks/trails from the Tamarack Subdivision, and the end of Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 section.</p> <p>Regarding the playground equipment, no impacts will occur to the playground from this project.</p> <p>Regarding tree impacts, and the boardwalk in the wooded area, tree removal and constructing the boardwalk was included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the <i>Environmental Document</i> that is currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. The project is still evaluating the relocation or replacement of trees once construction has been completed and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM.</p>
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				<p>Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. Currently no public meetings are scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p>
		<p>3/14/2023</p>	<p>Hello again, I wonder if this three phase Trail plan actually has the potential to be executed separately? The Public is asking for the reasons we are not facing the continual need for 1100 to connect along North CR 100 East to the intersection of Rail Road- there will continue to be pedestrian traffic along CR100 that is dangerous and cutting through Laurel Creek does not serve the neighboring community – who has asked the opinion of those who are over on Rail Road and Kelle Dive what they think? Do they care to be connected to Tamarack or do they walk in Tamarack to avoid the busy and unsafe roads of Cr 100 and 1100? Many folks may be divided on this Trail project and the support and frustration is unhelpful when the communication is unclear; when all three phases are lumped together and the shade is cast upon Tamarack, we lose sight of a long term benefit to sidewalks and bike paths. I do not know of any opposition to the 1100 Sidewalk. All of Chesterton needs to get from the East Side of Calumet and 49 to the Schools, which will soon have more traffic with the addition onto WIS of 7&8th grade... so why would we not direct the plans to the ultimate good which is to have connected sidewalks through all of Chesterton, including CR 1050 where many High schoolers walk home from since it is shorter that was, and students of all schools run along? Is it not a wasted opportunity to face this need now for a sidewalk along Cr100, and a waste of time and money on the ripping up of trees and perfectly good sidewalks in Tamarack on Laurel Creek? Our HOA has been charged to maintain these trees and sidewalk areas that we love, yet we are now told that was not ours to protect? And then they will pave over this all with 8 feet of sidewalk? There is already 8 feet total of cement sidewalks on both sides of the road. There is no need to provide a bikepath width of cement to deem this a worthy trail system. As a biker and trail user, I do not want to go along homes where dogs can come right up to me... this path will also increase traffic on a sidewalk where our children play and hangout, often unaware of traffic already. Also, a main reason the homeowners are upset is that the trail through Tamarack was originally rumored to be a mere trail cutting through to the high school and vaguely directed behind the park, not clearly mentioned that it would cut right THROUGH the park, behind homes and then using Laurel Creek to check a box of saying they have connected the WLT. If this trail goes through phase three, the town loses a huge opportunity they will have to face eventually,</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Construction for all 3 segments of this project is anticipated to begin in spring 2024.</p> <p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments together and connect to the existing sidewalk segments in the area. Westchester Liberty Trail 1 terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E. The existing sidewalk terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then the sidewalk continues north from the intersection along CR 100 E. Westchester Liberty Trail 2 terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. This project fills that need by providing a connection to CR 100 E along CR 1100 N. This is a benefit to the community and all trail users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack Park.</p> <p>Once this trail is constructed to connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E which turns into Calumet Ave.</p> <p>Yes, opportunities for the public at large have been offered and the community outside the Tamarack Subdivision has overwhelmingly supported</p>

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		<p>which is to make the sidewalk along CR100 for the growing occupants on 49 East. The sidewalks in Chesterton need to be maintained, with a master plan that is cohesive, not segmeting them further and then having a huge removal of already established trees – I thought that 25Chesterton is a member of Tree Town Usa, so why would they even consider doing that? The list of pros vs Cons has been presented and collected by your organization, however, why are you not providing a public notice of the need for the better solution to come together? A trail For the Town should be done For the Town, by those who live here. No one expects to have a trail run through their front yard in a development where building the home included paying for a s2Sidewalk and maintaning that area and trees - of course the owners of homes along a county road matter as well, however that is a consideration all homeowners25 take when chosing to live along a busy, public County Road as opposed to a quiet neighborhood with a sidewalk to maintain and enjoy. Lastly, it is upsetting to read the snarky comments by anyone, however we need to remember that the lack of upfront communication is where the defensive and agresive tones are coming from. A trail through the woods is FAR different from a Trail through your front yard and distruped driveway!!! Now that this has begun to stir up so many upset people, I hope Strucutrepoint will be professional and show a clear leadership here to unite a town instead of literally ripping it up and leaving it worse than it was before.</p>	<p>the project. The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment. The Town has also talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years. Notices to adjacent property owners were sent out on February 15th and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement and Chesterton has posted info on their facebook page, which are additional steps taken by the Town to get the word out. The Town Council has also hosted concerned residents at Town Council Meeting listening to concerns and attended HOA meeting to gather information specifically from the Tamarack Subdivision Residents.</p> <p>The recognition of the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission of this trail as a “High Priority” is largely attributed to the significance to provide connectivity to existing and planned trail connections in the community at large. This trail connection is an important step in filling the literal gap in connectivity for pedestrians wishing to travel in Chesterton.</p> <p>The need for the project is to connect Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1 to Phase 2 and fill the gap in connectivity. The project is discussed as three segments in the Categorical Exclusion document only to organize and ease the communication. To be clear, this project will be constructed all at once. CR 1050 N is outside the project area for this project. The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1, Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2, and the existing sidewalk which terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Once this trail is constructed to connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave and Downtown Chesterton from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E which turns into Calumet Ave.</p> <p>Once this trail is constructed to connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St. From this intersection, there are existing trails and pedestrian facilities, including cross walks, that lead to the High School, Chesterton Middle School, Bailey Elementary School, and Chesterton Intermediate School. From this same intersection the public can use existing pedestrian facilities to access various parks and the local Boys and Girls Club.</p>
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				<p>It is almost always the case that homeowners and adjacent property owners are charged with mowing and maintaining public right of way in front of their homes. This is not unique to Tamarack Subdivision and is often due to covenants and restrictions included in the agreement between the Town and Subdivision. If there are specific concerns about the maintenance of the right of way, Town representatives are copied on this response.</p> <p>The proposed installation of an 8-ft wide concrete trail along Laurel Creek Drive will not remove all grass. There will remain a 4-6-ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing curb line and front edge of the trail. Additionally, the trail is being widened towards the curb to minimize impacts to homeowners. Additionally, although not currently shown on the preliminary plans, the Town is investigating landscaping along Laurel Creek Drive to relocate or replace lost street trees and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project.</p> <p>The Homeowners Association’s covenants do not restrict trail construction and do not apply to Town right of way or property.</p> <p>There is currently a 4 foot wide sidewalk on the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and a 4 foot wide sidewalk on the south side of Laurel Creek Drive. The existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive is not wide enough to accommodate different types of pedestrians (bikes, strollers, runners, and walkers) without users stepping off the sidewalk to pass each other or using the adjacent lawn to walk/ride when passing. The existing sidewalk is also not compliant with American with Disability Act requirements. The preferred alternative would construct an 8-foot wide path which is designed to accommodate all types of pedestrians and will meet ADA standards. This is a benefit to all users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack Park.</p> <p>Town of Chesterton code requires dogs be leashed, and prohibits their running at large (Chapter 4 of the Chesterton Town Code 4-1 and 4-2). Please contact your local official regarding any specific dog concerns as there are existing Town Codes to handle these situations.</p> <p>The proposed project will not change the ability of Tamarack Subdivision residents to use the public right of way. They will still be able to hang out on the trail but should be aware of their surroundings regardless of the location or situation. The proposed improvements include specific improvements to reduce risks for pedestrians using the trail. This includes providing Americans with Disabilities Act compliant facilities and marked cross walks with advance warning signs and high visibility paint.</p> <p>The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading</p>
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				<p>to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways. The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. The Town is copied on this comment and response and The Town of Chesterton has a Comprehensive Plan (2010) which includes trail planning.</p>
11	Robert Kania	2/23/2023	<p>I am totally outraged by all of this. I have never received a letter regarding any of these plans and my house is one of the ones to be most affected. We only knew about it, when they were marking lines in my yard and after two days, we finally got a worker to tell us what was going on. People in the neighborhood mentioned getting things in the mail, but we never did. This project is absolutely absurd. I want to address several of these issues. 1. I do not understand the need for this project at all. I have heard from other people that you received funding and need to spend the money. I run every day through the roads of Chesterton and see all the potholes, flooded streets and segmented sidewalks that need repair, maybe this money could be used more for these things instead. I do not understand the need to create a trail from 1100, in the middle of 1100 mind you, crossing one of the most dangerous streets we have without a stop sign or stop light, to create a path to Coffee Creek. Yes, it might be a way to get Tamarack people to the high school, but I would not want my kids crossing 1100 without any stop sign or stoplight to help. 2. If you are already planning on putting in a full sidewalk all the way down 1100 to the corner by Teachers Credit Union, then you should just build a sidewalk from there down to Rail Road to connect the two. You have a stoplight there already with a crosswalk and signal buttons. We have needed a safe sidewalk there for years for Tamarack residents to get to the Round the Clock and other places. With your plan, we have to walk all the way through the park, cross 1100, again with no stop sign or stoplight and walk all the way back to the TCU corner, it makes no sense whatsoever. 3. The plans you have cut around the back of my property and they cut immediately around my property to start the trail of terror through Tamarack. You are going to take one of the best neighborhoods in Chesterton and gut it for an 8 ft. "trail" through peoples front yards. I have run the Duneland Trail and notice it goes behind subdivisions, not through them. If I wanted a trail in my neighborhood I would have stayed in Villages of Sand Creek. One of the reasons we left was we didn't like people walking</p>	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration. Our records indicate a Notice of Survey and a Legal Notice of Planned Improvement was sent to Robert and Melissa Kania at [REDACTED], which was based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. Could you confirm that is your address? Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The Town has talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years and have sent out Notice of Surveys to adjacent property owners that engineering work is ongoing. Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p> <p>1 Repairs to the existing streets and sidewalks are not included in this project. The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments (Westchester Liberty Trail 1 and Westchester Liberty Trail 2) together, and to existing sidewalk segments in the area. The proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advance warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.</p> <p>2 An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This</p>

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		<p>through our yard at all times with their sidewalk system. We chose Tamarack for the beauty and charm of the quiet neighborhood. Now you want to allow anyone and everyone to wander through using this trail just to cut through to Coffee Creek. You are making people cut down their trees, remove sprinkler systems, move electrical boxes and other things just to have people go through their yard. I know those things are owned by the Town easements, but they were already there when we moved in during 2010. I can't help that they were already there, but you want to remove trees to replace them with concrete, not a beautiful addition. People in Tamarack take pride in their homes and their yards. We work really hard to make sure it is as nice as possible. You tore up all our yards with Fiber Optic Cable last summer that nobody wanted. Now I have 3 ugly green boxes in my yard thanks to that. A few summers ago you tore up my yard to do water line repairs across Laurel Creek. Who knows what else you will do to continue to tear apart one of Chesterton's nicest subdivisions. The simple answer is don't. Go around it, it is the easiest path and will have the least effect on houses. 4. People say that property values will not decrease as a result, but I know this is not the case. These house are over half a million dollars and rising. Do you think we want anyone and everyone filing through? Who is going to patrol this "trail?" Who will monitor who is on it, back in the woods where anything can happen? Who is going to make sure that people don't do damage to the properties you are out to hurt? The answer is nobody. No one will monitor these trails. No one will keep them up. Nobody will care once this money is spent. Build the trail and connect and be done with it. I know this for a fact, on phase II nobody monitors the overgrowth of trees that covers half of the trail that leads to coffee creek, so I am sure it will continue with this phase as well. As upkeep goes away, so do our property values. I know for a fact, I would not buy the house I have now if it would have had a "trail" going right through the front yard. I can't believe this isn't a joke, making a trail going through people's front yards. Whoever chose this idea was insane. 5. Concrete trails. As a runner, I can tell you that concrete trails are absolutely terrible for knees and joints. No runner would ever use these trails. I run all over this city and never use the trails by the boys and girls club. They are awful on body joints. This means that the trail is for bicyclists I guess. If you have ever tried to bike in coffee creek you realize how useless of an endeavor this is, so again what is the purpose. I don't want people zipping past my house at all hours on their bikes. You don't monitor kids on bikes ever. I have been through downtown Chesterton with kids zipping in and out of traffic all the time. Now you want them to zip all through our front yards</p>	<p>alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.</p> <p>3 The trail alignment through the park and along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners. As a result of this project no landowners within Tamarack Subdivision will be required to cut down trees on their private property. These trees are within the Town right-of-way. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. No permanent right of way will be acquired within the Tamarack Subdivision and all work will occur within existing town owned right of way in the subdivision. Please let us know where sprinkler line exists within town owned right of way for your property. If a sprinkler line is encountered during construction, the contractor will coordinate with the Town of Chesterton and property owner to mitigate for impacts, which has been added as a firm commitment to the project. Coordination for all impacts to utilities impacted by the project has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The previous fiber optic cable and water line projects are not related to this project.</p> <p>4- The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton's responsibility. The town is copied on this comment and response. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted at the following website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. The safety and security is under the jurisdiction of the Police Department. If there is a specific issue you can submit a "Report a Concern" at the following website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>Regarding property values, the National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p>
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			<p>on your "trails." Dumb 6. Public Nuisances. Looking up law statues I have found the Nuisance per se. These show that if a trail causes a public nuisance it can be blocked or redone. I know you don't think it will be a nuisance. I know certain people on our board or on the other side of the neighborhood won't either. But the truth is, this doesn't affect them. This affects the houses you are about to tear through and the people that will be bothering them from this point on. I know for a fact that we have had to call the police a few times for people walking through the neighborhood or things going on at the park. You are just encouraging more of these things to happen. In conclusion, this trail is an outrage to the Tamarack Community. We received no letter, no mention or anything. From what I have heard, we are so far into the process there is nothing we can do. That is a travesty and makes me want to contact my lawyer immediately. We received no information, most of the stuff I have mentioned is things I heard from other people who were either informed or think they were. So if some of things were false please clarify. Just know that you are violating my rights as a homeowner in the town. We chose Tamarack as a secluded neighborhood without the gates and security of Sand Creek. It is a wonderful neighborhood, but this is going to ruin the seclusion and peace that makes it so great. Like I said I run through Chesterton every day, usually 10-11 miles a day. I have no problem running on the roads every day. If you feel a trail is a necessity then it should be through the path of least resistance. It should be from 1100 straight down to Rail Road. it should not tear up one of the best communities you have. I request a formal meeting where I will have no problem addressing these issues in person. Thank you.</p>	<p>5-This trail is being designed to be consistent with the existing trails and sidewalks in the area. The eight-foot-wide trail will be concrete to match existing concrete drives, sidewalks, portions of the Westchester Liberty Trail, and curb ramps in the subdivision. This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic.</p> <p>6- Is there a specific law or statute you are referring to? If so, could you please send that to me?</p> <p>The plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details. Your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p> <p>The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. The Homeowners Association's covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor do any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. Pending the results of this opportunity for comment and to request a formal hearing the project team, Town, and INDOT will discuss next steps. It is anticipated that further public involvement will be completed. If additional public meetings or a public hearing is held, notice of such meeting will be sent to all adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and published in the Northwest Indiana Times (as required) by the most recent INDOT guidance documentation and standards. Additionally, notices will be sent to all those who provided contact information during this comment period.</p>
		3/7/2023	<p>I can confirm that is our address, but I never received anything from Structure Point or the Town regarding the plans since maybe 2020? The last we knew it was one of 3 proposals and from what everyone has told us, this was the path chosen.</p>	<p>Thank you for confirming your address.</p>

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12	Melissa Kania	2/23/2023	<p>I am following up to secure a Public Hearing in regards to the Westchester Liberty Trail (WLT) Project. This will need to be made after April 3rd of this year to ensure the entire community is available for proper communication on the proposal of this project. Please contact me asap in regard to this request and the anticipated timeline our Tamarack Community can expect. This email that was sent Feb. 21st 2022 of the proposed trail is the FIRST I am hearing of this and it is widely disputed on being placed in my yard and in our private community, Not to mention there are much more suitable options. This trail DOES NOT meet the needs of this community and is heavily disputed.</p>	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration. Our records indicate a Notice of Survey and a Legal Notice of Planned Improvement was sent to Robert and Melissa Kania at [REDACTED] which was based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. Could you confirm that is your address? Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. Pending the results of this opportunity for comment and to request a formal hearing the project team, Town, and INDOT will discuss next steps. It is anticipated that further public involvement will be completed. If additional public meetings or a public hearing is held, notice of such meeting will be sent to all adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and published in the Northwest Indiana Times (as required) by the most recent INDOT guidance documentation and standards. Additionally, notices will be sent to all those who provided contact information during this comment period. Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p>
		2/27/2023	<p>HOW IS THIS PROJECT MOVING TOWARDS CONSTRUCTION?!? NO PROPER NOTIFICATION HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO ME OR ANY MEMBER OF OUR HOUSEHOLD LOCATED AT [REDACTED] IN TAMARACK SUBDIVISION UNTIL THE EMAIL FEB 21ST 2023 BY OUR SUBDIVISION PROPERTY MANAGER. NO OTHER CONTACT OR NOTIFICATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO US BY THE TOWN OF CHESTERTON. I WOULD LIKE THE COPIES OF THE PUBLIC NOTICES THAT HAVE BEEN SENT OUT ON BEHALF OF THIS TRAIL PROJECT EMAILED TO ME IMMEDIATELY. THIS CONSTRUCTION PLAN HAS THE TRAIL SLATED TO RUN COMPLETELY AROUND THE BACK, SIDE AND FULL FRONT YARD OF OUR HOME. THEN THROUGH THE CENTER OF OUR LONG-ESTABLISHED BEAUTIFUL SUBDIVISION FLANKED WITH CRABAPPLE TREES. WHICH WILL BE DESOLATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS TRAIL. I HAVE BEEN A</p>	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration. Our records indicate a Notice of Survey and a Legal Notice of Planned Improvement was sent to Robert and Melissa Kania at [REDACTED] which was based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. Could you confirm that is your address? Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. The Homeowners</p>

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			<p>HOMEOWNER IN THIS TAMARACK SUBDIVISION SINCE 2010. THE SOLE PURPOSE THAT WE CHOSE THIS LOCATION WAS BASED ON ITS TRANQUILITY AND PRIVATE LOCATION. OUR PREVIOUS HOME WAS SITUATED ON A TRAIL THAT RAN BEHIND OUR HOME AT VILLAGES OF SAND CREEK AND IT WAS BUSY, LOUD, AND VERY DISRUPTIVE. BUILDING THIS TRAIL IN THE TAMARACK SUBDIVISION WILL BE NO LESS DISRUPTIVE AND NOT TO MENTION INTRUSIVE ON 3 SIDES OF OUR RESIDENCE. WE PAY HEAVY TAXES ON THIS HOME AND WE WOULD LIKE TO ENSURE WE MAINTAIN THE PRIVACY THAT WE REQUIRE FOR OUR FAMILY AND HOME. WE DISPUTE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS TRAIL ON EVERY LEVEL. THE OMISSION OF NOTIFICATION ABOUT THE PLANS OF THIS TRAIL FROM ANYONE APPEARS DEVIOS, INCONSIDERATE AND A DELIBERATE TACTIC TO IMPLEMENT AN 'UNWANTED' NEIGHBORHOOD TRAIL. THE ENGINEER AND THE SINGLE HOME OWNER ON THE HOA IN FAVOR OF THIS CONSTRUCTION APPEARS TO HAVE COLLABORATED AN INITIATIVE TO PUSH THIS THROUGH WITHOUT PROPER NOTIFICATION TO OUR TAMARACK COMMUNITY. I AM ASKING FOR YOU YOUR ASSISTANCE TO EXTEND THE TIMELINE ON THE COMMUNITY COMMENTS SO THERE CAN BE PROPER COMMUNICATION FOR THIS PROJECT FULLY WITHIN THE AFFECTED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY. THE MAJORITY IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD DEEM THIS PROJECT A PUBLIC NUISANCE SITUATED IN THE CENTER OF A PRIVATE COMMUNITY. AND OPPOSE IT COMPLETELY.</p>	<p>Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p> <p>Attached is the Notice of Planned Improvement that was sent out.</p> <p>The trail alignment through the park and along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners.</p> <p>These trees are the jurisdiction of the Town and within the Town right-of-way. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision.</p> <p>The public comment period will stay open for an additional 2 weeks. All the materials on the website and the comment form will remain active.</p>
13	Jenna Siqueira	2/23/2023	<p>While I love the idea of a bike trail in town, I don't love that it's going through my neighborhood. I have 3 small children and will not feel comfortable letting them play outside if we have more foot traffic in and out of the neighborhood. There are lots of small kids in the neighbor and having this trail will put myself, and other parents, on edge. I would appreciate if this trail existed outside of Tamarack.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and this will be taken into consideration.</p>
14	John Sparks	2/24/2023	<p>As a runner and cyclist who lives in Tamarack, I believe this will be a nice addition for our town. It will be much safer for the high school cross country teams than running on 1050 as well. I often run in Valpo because of their more interconnected neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
		3/10/2023	<p>I initially supported this project as a runner who runs on 1050 to go west. I guess I didn't realize that the plan included an 8 feet wide path through neighbors' yards. I should have read the plan more closely. I now understand the concerns people have with the potential for cyclists riding at a rapid rate on what was once a sidewalk where kids play, and the encroachment on my neighbors' property. I hope the town can use 1100 as an alternative since this is an established thoroughfare.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The trail alignment along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing Town owned right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners. The trail will follow the existing sidewalk and be widened primarily towards the existing curb line to avoid any impacts to the residential properties. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the</p>

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				<p>existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision.</p> <p>This project is including a trail construction along CR 1100 N on the north side of the road from CR 50 E to the existing dead-end sidewalk just west of CR 100 E. If you are referring to a trail being constructed along CR 100 E, that alternative was evaluated and dismissed. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p>
15	Brent Martinson	2/24/2023	I am the Principal of Chesterton High School and we are very excited about this project! From a running perspective, this is huge for boys' and girls' programs so we can access the wonderful coffee creek trails safely without running on public roads. This gives us so many more options for our student athletes to train. In addition, this is important for the safety of our student athletes. Instead of running on roads around town or west of Chesterton, this gives our student athletes direct access to numerous miles of trails without having to run on roadways. It is a game changer for training. Sincerely, Brent Martinson - Principal	Thank you for your comment.
16	Timothy Whalen	2/25/2023	For reference, I am currently serving as the President of the Tamarack Subdivision Board of Directors. We have received multiple inquiries regarding the WLT project (DES. No. 1902832), and on behalf of our residents we would like to request that a public hearing be held in response to the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement. This will permit our residents to learn more about the project and provide an additional forum for review of the project documents. While our residents are most interested in Segment 3, hearing about the full project limits and the potential	<p>Thank you for your comment. All requests for a hearing have been received, documented, and will be taken into consideration. Currently no public meetings are scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and this will be taken into consideration.</p> <p>In regards to project information, the Categorical Exclusion environmental document and project plans are currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. The Environmental Document can</p>

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			<p>alternatives studied will be beneficial. A near-universal concern raised by our residents is how the tree impacts along Segment 3 will be mitigated by the project. We understand there is a commitment in the CE Document, however it does not explain how the trees will be replaced. Our subdivision has established parkway trees, and strongly desires to maintain the existing aesthetics both for the individual homeowners and the community at large by having the trees either left in place or replaced in kind at or about the same locations as the existing. For reference, our neighborhood covenants require a minimum of two (2) parkway trees per homestead. Thank you.</p>	<p>also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The full project limits and the project alternatives considered are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion environmental document.</p> <p>In regards to the trees being removed, the Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project.</p>
17	Barry Siqueira	2/25/2023	<p>As a resident of Tammarack I do not understand why the trail has to come through the neighborhood when it could easily continue down E 1100 N to N 100 E. This will bring unnecessary foot traffic into Tammarack and likely lower property values. Also losing the crab apple trees that line Laurel Creek will destroy the aesthetic of the street. Going through county property outside of the neighborhood would be best for all involved.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans, and this will be taken into consideration. In regards to the trees being removed, the Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project.</p> <p>Regarding property values, the National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p>
		3/2/2023	<p>After having more time to think about it I really just have 3 main concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there anyway to keep or replant the crab apple trees on the north side of the road so the neighborhood doesn't lose too much of its original look? I understand this is under review and would appreciate a communication when a decision is made. - Will the outdated swingset in the park just north of Laurel creek be replaced? - Will any markings be added to the road where the path crosses Catkin Circle to improve safety? Thinking crosswalk lines so car traffic stops short of where people could be walking. 	<p>Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the</p>

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				<p>subdivision. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. The HOA president and property owners will be notified of the landscaping decision once it is finalized.</p> <p>Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org is copied on this email and you can address any questions you have about the equipment to him. The Town has noted that updates to the park equipment will be included in the Town's list with the Park Board's upcoming bond cycle as park funding is available. The cycle starts in 2025 and lasts for 5 years. Keep in mind the replacement or upgrade of park equipment is not part of the current undertaking.</p> <p>All curb ramps will be replaced with American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant curb ramps, and pavement crosswalk makings will be added across Catkin Circle.</p>
18	Michelle Smith	2/26/2023	<p>We definitely need a trail, but this is not the way to do this. We have asked the police department multiple times to watch Laurel Creek Drive as people "fly" down the road. We have a tree in our front yard that was hit by a teen cutting through to the high school. The "crosswalk" that you are proposing will be extremely dangerous - CR100 is a speedway as well. This is such a dangerous road - we try and cross on bikes, and I have my children get off and walk their bikes. No one stops for anyone. I live on South LCD, so this trail wouldn't affect me directly. The problem of how to get to the high school would still exist. The problem of getting down 100 would still exist. This is not a solution to the problems that our town faces. Get with the county and find a good solution. One where children riding their bikes to the high school don't get run off the road into a ditch (yes, this has happened to my family several times.) Give us sidewalks down 100 and to the high school that are a much better solution. This is not a solution to Chesterton's trail issues.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users.</p> <p>This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads. Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection. The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments together and connect to the existing sidewalk segments in the area. Westchester Liberty Trail 1 terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E.</p> <p>The existing sidewalk terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then the sidewalk continues north from the intersection along CR 100 E. Westchester Liberty Trail 2 terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. This project fills that need by providing a connection to CR 100 E along CR 1100 N.</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred</p>

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				<p>alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p>
		3/1/2023	<p>I am writing to express my concern over the proposed Westchester Trail extension. The plan does not meet the needs of the town residents. We need a sidewalk that runs N/S on CR 100 to connect to the existing sidewalk, in addition to sidewalks that go down 1050 to allow students to reach the high school. Putting a trail through an existing subdivision as well as crosswalks on 100 is a dangerous proposition. The area for the crosswalk would still remain dangerous. High school students drive down this road very often. They drive down CR 1050 very often. Why not make a safer connection and a place for students to connect safely to their schools? This is not a viable solution to a traffic problem</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection. This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads. Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.</p>
		3/13/2023	<p>I grew up in Chesterton. My parents still live at that home on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Sadly, this was part of the first phase of the Westchester Trail. I remember what a huge mess it was and how upset my parents were. I remember the homeless man who lived on the trail having to be moved. I remember my sister being "flashed" by a man in a trench coat. I remember the used condom wrappers laying near their yard and I remember the used syringes on the side of the trail. My husband's best friend was in charge of the clean up each day on the trail. The stories that he tells are horrible. He would be happy to share those with you. I have lived through what the first phase of this trail did. I have seen it first hand. I currently live on [REDACTED] Ironically, we moved</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further. If there are specific safety, security, and speeding concerns of the neighborhood, sidewalks/trails, or roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. The Town is responsible for maintaining the trails through the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific</p>

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			<p>her from our home near my parents house. We specifically moved here because it was in town, but there was minimal thru traffic and we felt it was a safe area for our children to grow up. We all watch out for each other in Tamarack. I wish every child could grow up in a neighborhood like ours. Your proposed plans, however, will change this. It will increase the traffic, decrease the safety, and take away the security that we have here. I have seen first hand what will happen. The worst problem is that it solves nothing. It doesn't allow any children to safely get down 100. A crosswalk will do nothing - there are still no sidewalks that will connect to Calumet Avenue. This is a street used by many high schoolers to get to school. SR 100 is a speedway and unless you plan on having someone patrol 24/7, a child will get hurt. There is a real problem, but this is not a viable solution. Give people a safe way to get down 100, give kids a safe way to get to the high school. A "Trail" through an existing neighborhood will only create problems. I could maybe understand if this solved the problem, but it doesn't. The money that you are proposing to spend on this could be used in so many ways that are better. Please solve the travel problem a different way. Ruining a neighborhood, and that's what this trail will do, serves no good purpose.</p>	<p>maintenance concerns they can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways. Once this trail is constructed to connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E which turns into Calumet Ave. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County. The crosswalk added at the mid-block crossing across CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and high visibility pavement markings along with flashing beacons at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadways. The crosswalk added at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road will include high visibility pavement markings. Pedestrians will yield to oncoming traffic at both crosswalk locations. The proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing. Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. Once this trail is constructed to connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St.</p>
		3/15/2023	<p>Every member of my family wrote their own personal email to you. I am curious if they were read? We all got the same exact "form" email in return.</p>	<p>Yes, all comments received are being reviewed and responded to individually and accordingly. Responses are similar because the questions being asked are common frequent questions that include the same project details for responses. All comments received are also being compiled together with all responses to be considered for the project. The project team, including the</p>

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				Town of Chesterton, has been copied on all comments and responses being sent out.
19	Jeff Hamstra	2/26/2023	Thanks, Mark. This trail would be a game changer for us. If you need anything else, please don't hesitate to ask. We really appreciate you and your efforts on getting this in!	No additional response.
20	Theresa Carroll	2/27/2023	I have three main concerns about this proposed project. 1. What plans are in place to maintain the safety and security of the neighborhood with this trail in place? Right now the children who reside in Tamarack are able to ride bikes and walk along sidewalks to each others homes without much issue and I would like things to stay that way. Specifically, what plans are there for lighting along the trail? I am uncomfortable with the trail being left dark. This is also a concern if high school student were to ride home from sports practices in the Fall/Winter when it is dark around 4-5pm. I'd like to request that there is adequate lighting along the trail. Additionally, is there a plan for increased Chesterton police presence in Tamarack or near the trail to ensure that the trail does not become a gathering place for people to engage in unsafe behavior or a quick getaway from Tamarack after engaging in questionable behavior. 2. How does this trail affect the Tamarack playground? It is important to me to have a playground at that park, for my own young children and the other young children in the neighborhood. Additionally, that playground is in desperate need of an update. I doubt that the playground meets contemporary safety standards. With the construction of the trail and more Chesterton residents being able to visit the Tamarack Park/Playground, could we prioritize a renovation of the Tamarack playground for the safety and enjoyment of children in Tamarack and Chesterton? 3. Please re-plant the crabapple trees that will need to be removed to construct the path. It is important to me to have the consistency of crabapple trees lining the streets of Tamarack. Additionally, would the town consider planting additionally landscaping to provide privacy to those neighbors whose homes will be directly in front of the path?	Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further. The safety and security falls under the jurisdiction of the Police Department. Currently, additional lighting is not planned along the trail, but this comment will be taken into consideration by the design team. No impacts will occur to the playground or the equipment present due to this project. Updates to the park equipment will be included in the Town's list with the Park Board's upcoming bond cycle as park funding is available. The cycle starts in 2025 and lasts for 5 years. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. However, this does not mean that these topics are not being discussed. Thank you for your comment and it will be taken into consideration by the design team
21	Maureen Hurst	2/27/2023	I do not support the trail going through the Tamarack subdivision.	Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and this will be taken into consideration.
22	Linda Schwab	2/27/2023	I am not opposed to the Trail in theory, but I am opposed to the path and implementation of the Trail. I am opposed to the path the proposed Trail would take through the Tamarack Neighborhood and Park. The proposed path for the trail is inconsistent with rest of the Trail that currently winds through the Town of Chesterton, in that the other segments of the Trail do NOT go through the heart of neighborhood subdivisions and do not cut across the paths of residential driveways and the front sides of homes in subdivisions. The only places where current segments of the Trail cross	Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further. Thank you for your comment. This project is only evaluating the proposed project alignment and impacts of the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III portion of the trail. As part of the design development process alternatives

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		<p>residential driveways and frontages is where those drives are adjacent to major arterial corridors. Furthermore, by cutting through the heart of the Tamarack neighborhood, this Trail would cause a visually unpleasant and unbalanced aesthetic and destroy the homogenous look that Tamarack has built and maintained over the past 20 years. The design and covenants of the Tamarack neighborhood have been meticulously adhered to, and this pathway would make it impossible for those standards to be maintained. The proposed path of the Trail before and after entering the Tamarack Park and Neighborhood creates additional hazards and dangers for the users of the path. It would require users to cross CR1100N from the South side to the North side at the intersection of CR 50 E/5th Street. From there, the users would travel along the North side of CR1100N for approximately 1/3-mile where they would then need to cross CR1100 N again to access the trail on the South side of CR1100N where it enters a Town-owned easement and then into the wooded park area of the Tamarack Neighborhood. This mid-road crossing is extremely dangerous for users, as CR1100N is a heavily-traveled main corridor leading from SR 49 to the Chesterton High School, and serving many other residential and business areas along the way. A high volume of traffic, both local and from out of town, travel this stretch of CR1100N. Furthermore, the access point of the trail crossing comes at a location that is at the base of a hill/depression on CR1100N, creating a hazard for drivers traveling westbound to slow down and stop for crossings. Users trying to access the proposed trail path from Railroad will also find themselves in a tricky situation, needing to cross CR100E at an awkward place with heavy traffic. I'd like to offer an alternative proposed path: extend the trail along the North side of CR1100N all the way from 5th Street to the intersection with CR100E/Calumet Avenue, where there is a well-regulated traffic light and an existing 8-foot sidewalk. At this point, the Trail could proceed South across CR1100N and along the West side of CR100E (there is even a broad unused area adjacent to the Tamarack Neighborhood which could be utilized for part of it) to the south side of Railroad where a more natural and safer crossing of CR100E could be made to meet up with the existing trail along Railroad. Safer, for sure. And this gives the Town of Chesterton an added benefit and opportunity: at the intersection of CR1100N and CR100e/Calumet Avenue, users of the Trail could choose to turn north along Calumet Avenue and head into the South Calumet Business District and into the Downtown Chesterton area. The residences and neighborhoods along CR100E would be easily connected to Downtown as well as to CHS. A final note I'd like to make is this: I served on the Tamarack HOA Board of Directors</p>	<p>were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision. The Homeowners Associations covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property.</p> <p>The intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St is a 4-way stop sign-controlled intersection. There is already a north south pedestrian crossing on the west side of the intersection with pedestrian crosswalk signage and striping. This trail connection will add a pedestrian crossing from the northwest corner of the intersection to the northeast corner of the intersection with crosswalk striping and signage.</p> <p>Adding this mid-block crossing is a benefit to trail users to safely cross CR 1100 N and access the Tamarack Park between the long stretch from CR 50 E to CR 100 E. Without adding this mid-block crossing trail users would only have the pedestrian crossings at CR 50 E and CR 100 E to cross to the south side of CR 1100 N and then share the roadway with motorists. Adding this mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when crossing CR 1100 N The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advance warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. See plan sheets pages B-25 and B-26 for additional information.</p> <p>The vehicle stopping sight distance at the mid-block crossing location on CR 1100 N was evaluated per INDOT requirements. Adequate stopping sight distance is present at this location, and this crossing will not create a hazard to motorists.</p>
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		<p>approximately 14 years ago. At that time, the playground equipment in Tamarack Park needed repairs for safety. We approached the Town and the Park Department, but were DENIED because the Town said that they did not own the Park, but that the HOA owned it and it was our problem and responsibility. We fixed the equipment and have maintained that park area, including mowing the grass, for at least the past 14 years and I believe longer. So to have the Town suddenly claim/acknowledge ownership of Tamarack Park is jarring. The Town has taken NO responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the Park for over 14 years, and now we are to believe that they will maintain it and the trail they propose to build there is insulting and unrealistic. I worked as a Planner for the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (now CMAP) and as an environmental consultant. This Trail proposal lacks foresight and knowledge of the uses of the surrounding areas; it can be better and it should be better.</p>	<p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>This project would fill the missing connection between Westchester Liberty Trail 1 (terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E), the existing sidewalk (terminates approximately 250 feet west of the CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection), and Westchester Liberty Trail 2 (terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road). Therefore, this trail would provide a connection to CR 100 E/Calumet Avenue that is currently missing.</p> <p>To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.</p> <p>Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. To connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection.</p> <p>The Town is aware that the playground equipment is in need of an update and has been copied on this email. Updates to the park equipment will be included</p>
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				<p>in the Town’s list with the Park Board’s upcoming bond cycle as park funding is available. The cycle starts in 2025 and lasts for 5 years.</p> <p>The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton’s responsibility. If there are specific maintenance concerns and or questions regarding the trail and park they can be submitted under the “Report a Concern” website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.</p>
23	Theresa Buehler	2/28/2023	<p>I am a resident of the Tamerack neighborhood. I am not against a multiuser trail. I do not feel it serves the best interest of our community to tear out existing sidewalks when we really need a sidewalk along 100 east so that people can walk to the businesses on south Calumet and for the more adventurous to even walk to the post office and businesses on Broadway. I also believe that taking out our trees and expanding the side walk is going to significantly change the look of our neighborhood. I would like to request the rendering of our street that structure point should have available to us.</p>	<p>*Note: All comments responded to in one email.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. We have combined all of your submitted comments in this email. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. There are currently sidewalk/trails along CR 100 E/South Calumet that extend north from the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. To get to CR 100 E trail users coming from Laurel Creek Drive would need to head north through Tamarack Park to CR 1100 N and then head east on the trail on the north side of CR 1100 N to CR 100 E. Then the user can head north and access all amenities on CR 100 E. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. Attached is a project plan sheet showing trail rendering along Laurel Creek Drive.</p>

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				Tree removal was included and evaluated in the project’s Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the <i>Environmental Document</i> that is currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt .
		2/28/2023	I would like to understand your rationale that crossing county road 1100 mid block is safer than using the pedestrian crossing with a walk button at the 100 east intersection. It seems to me that crossing mid block on a street that is a main thoroughfare of the town is not the best option for pedestrians and people on bicycles. Also the students going to the boys and girls club and the high school have to cross to the north side of the busy street only to cross back over the busy street to get to their destination.	The mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long.
		2/28/2023	I would like to advise that a better route to get into the town from Laurel Creek drive and 100 east is to go directly north on 100 east rather than a third of a mile west then north then a third of a mile back east to access the businesses of South Calumet. It is quite a distance out of our way to go to the businesses that we want to visit. This includes people who come from south and east of our neighborhood such as coffee creek and the Eagles crossing apartments. We do have residents of our neighborhood who walk to the European market and the extra distance is a little bit of a bother when carrying market purchases.	An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. There are currently sidewalk/trails along CR 100 E/South Calumet that extend north from the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. To get to CR 100 E trail users coming from Laurel Creek Drive would need to head north through Tamarack Park to CR 1100 N and then head east on the trail on the north side of CR 1100 N to CR 100 E. Then the user can head north and access all amenities on CR 100 E.
		2/28/2023	I was looking at the route through the Tamerack park and it wasn’t clear to me where the trail will go. Is it going to impact our playground equipment? Are you going to have to remove the bushes that are growing along the tree line?	Attached is a plan sheet showing the trail alignment through the park. No impacts will occur to the playground equipment present due to this project. Yes tree and brush removal will occur as part of this project. The portion of the trail through the grassed area of the park will result in removal of some of the brush currently along the gravel path but this project will not result in removal of the entire tree/brush line.
		3/3/2023	I just drove through Valparaiso, a neighboring community to Chesterton. As I drive I noticed that all of the wide multi use trails were along the busy streets and they connected neighborhoods instead of cutting through the residential neighborhood. If the proposed trail were along 100 east between CR 1100 and Railroad Rd it would accomplish the goal of connecting neighborhoods. Additionally I am having a difficult time understanding where the trail will run near the playground equipment. Is it between the	This project is only evaluating the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III alignment and impacts. See additional response to other questions regarding trail alignment. The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments together and connect to the existing sidewalk segments in the area. Westchester Liberty Trail 1 terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E. The existing sidewalk terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Westchester Liberty Trail 2 terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. This project would fill the

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			<p>playground and the ditch? Are the trees growing there part of the 2 acres of trees being removed? Thank you Theresa</p>	<p>missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads.</p> <p>A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing and avoid clearing large trees. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees.</p>
		3/6/2023	<p>Hi, I would like to voice my concern about what I saw in an aerial picture that is in your information binder. I noticed that it does not show the luxury Apartment complex Eagle Creek. As a resident of Tamerack who does try to walk along 100 east to access the business district of south Calumet, I have noticed a considerable increase in traffic due to these apartments. They can't make an easy left turn from Indiana 49 so they turn right into 1100 make a left onto 100east then a left onto Railroad rd to get to their homes. It has increased the number of cars on this small segment of road. I would like you to reconsider not having the multi use trail on this increasingly busy segment of road. Are the Eagle creek apartments a part of your traffic study? The coffee creek townhouses are continuing to add to traffic also as well as other new homes being built. They don't use 100 East's as much to go North because they have easy access to northbound 49. At the 1100 and 100 east light the pedestrian cross button is not affected by the left turns since they turn left at the light. There is a button to push for the crosswalk to allow Pedro cross safety. Thank you</p>	<p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. There are currently sidewalk/trails along CR 100 E/South Calumet that extend north from the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. To get to CR 100 E trail users coming from Laurel Creek Drive would need to head north through Tamarack Park to CR 1100 N and then head east on the trail on the north side of CR 1100 N to CR 100 E. Then the user can head north and access all amenities on CR 100 E. No traffic study was completed for this project.</p> <p>The mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long.</p>
		3/6/2023	<p>This is regarding the ability to walk only one half mile to the businesses of South Calumet Business district. My daughter visited from out of town and had a breakfast at Round the Clock with her husband's family She would have walked to the restaurant but didn't feel comfortable sharing the road with all the cars. She lives in a community share they can walk to all their needs and she</p>	<p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town</p>

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			<p>stated that it doesn't make sense that we don't have a sidewalk on 100 east. Easy access to town and safer access to railroad rd to walk the trails at coffee creek center.</p>	<p>owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>There are currently sidewalk/trails along CR 100 E/South Calumet that extend north from the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This project will fill the missing sidewalk/trail connection gap from Westchester Liberty Trail 1 (terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E), the existing sidewalk (terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E), and Westchester Liberty Trail 2 (terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road). To get to CR 100 E and Round the Clock on Calumet, trail users coming from Laurel Creek Drive would need to head north through Tamarack Park to CR 1100 N and then head east on the trail on the north side of CR 1100 N to CR 100 E. Then the user can head north and access all amenities on CR 100 E. To get to Coffee Creek, trail users would need to head east along Laurel Creek Drive and follow the trail south along CR 100 E before crossing Rail Road and jumping on existing Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2 which leads to Coffee Creek Center.</p> <p>Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on the destination in Chesterton trail users are after, and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. The preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, Chesterton High School, and the Middle School. The CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).</p>
		<p>3/6/2023</p>	<p>I am having trouble understanding where the trail is going through the park once it is no longer board walk. Are you going to remove the large trees along the the ravine and also the trees at the entrance to our park. Also on the drawing it says sidewalk closed next to the sewage station. Is that permanent?</p>	<p>Attached is a plan sheet showing the trail alignment through the park. The boardwalk will only be used through the park and wetland area to avoid wetland impacts. Could you clarify this question?</p> <p>As currently laid out, we are avoiding large trees where possible. A small street tree will be impacted by the entrance. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing and avoid clearing large trees. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees.</p>

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				No. This sidewalk is marked as "sidewalk closed" only during construction while the trail is being constructed. This "sidewalk closed" is indicated on the maintenance of traffic project plan sheets. Once construction is completed the sidewalk will reopen for pedestrians.
		3/6/2023	I would like to hear from you	Response sent to all previous comment on 3/7/2023
		3/9/2023	I would like to know if the boardwalk is going to have a rail along both sides. I would also like to know why if this is a state project why it matters that a part of it would be in the unincorporated county. I still feel it better serves our community to add additional sidewalk/multiuser trail I stead of tearing up existing sidewalks just to make them wider. We actually have eight feet of sidewalk we just have a street that runs between the 2 4' sections. Bicyclist's currently use out street to ride and I don't see them using the trail with the boardwalk for their rides. Walkers use the sidewalks.	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Yes there will be cable style railings along the boardwalk through the wooded area. The trail crossing across Pope O'Conner Ditch and an unnamed tributary along CR 1100 N will have a double-faced guardrail on one side (adjacent to the roadway) and a wooden rail fence on the other side.</p> <p>This is not a state project. It is a locally sponsored project of the Town of Chesterton which is receiving federal funding for the project. As federal oversight, the state (INDOT) is only reviewing project documentation to ensure compliance with the federal NEPA process and regulations.</p>
24	John Komenas	2/28/2023	I love the idea and the ability to connect the community to more parks and greens spaces. This will also allow greater walkability for citizens of the community, but also students at the local schools. The path would also make it safer for the community as 1100 is currently a dangerous street to walk with a large amount of traffic, no shoulder, and small hills.	Thank you for your comment.
25	Lawrence Kirchner	2/28/2023	I am writing in support of the proposed Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III extension connecting the Tamarack subdivision to the larger Porter County bike trail network. I have lived in Tamarack for more than 25 years and raised our children here. Tamarack is "land-locked" between three separate, high traffic roadways with no provision for cyclists or pedestrians. For this very reason, our children rarely left the subdivision to meet with friends or to attend nearby activities. The proposed bike trail will provide Tamarack children with safe routes to Chesterton High School, Dogwood Park, Coffee Creek, and other destinations. I have read some opponents are concerned about the impact to their property values. I believe these concerns are unfounded. The website of the National Association of Realtors states: Property values are of utmost importance to homeowners, and living near a park, trail, or greenway may is certainly something to take into consideration. The good news is that recent studies have confirmed living near trails and greenways will likely raise your property value an average of 3-5% and sometimes even as high as 15%. There is also not correlation that trails increase crime in their surrounding areas. Another concern is impact to the wooded area, already owned by	Thank you for your comment.

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			<p>the town of Chesterton. The draft Categorical Exclusion document shows a typical 8'-0" hard surface path and a 750' boardwalk through areas of drainage or environmental concern. This treatment is similar to what we treasure in facilities like Dune State Park and Coffee Creek. Plus, it is a more subdued cross-section than the Prairie Duneland Trail. Regarding traffic, I doubt there will be many users outside of nearby Chesterton and Tamarack residents. An 8'-0" wide boardwalk is not the kind of path that will attract long-distance users. The primary use of this path will likely be origin/destination trips by Tamarack residents and their guests. I look forward to seeing this improvement constructed and to using it regularly.</p>	
26	Catherine Sparks	2/28/2023	<p>I would love to be able to run and bike more easily from my house. Sounds great!!</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
27	Lisa Filipek	2/28/2023	<p>It would make more sense to acquire the land from 5 homes on 100 E to extend the side walk down 100E. This would allow easier access to a larger population and provide safe passage across 1100N via the already established crosswalk button at the intersection of 100 and 1100. Also, this would be less dangerous for pedestrians than crossing 5 intersections as the plan suggests. The removal of 2.5 acres of trees in a swampy area is also ridiculous. Not only is it neglectful to our environment, but it may lead to drainage issues and loss of habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including the protected red headed woodpecker. As far as safety, a path on 1100N and 100 E is more easy to patrol than a park path that is not easily accessible by car. As far as maintenance goes, Tamarack owns half of the land on 100E and it will be maintained by the landscape company and the other half, 5 houses, would be in grassy, non-landscaped areas of the easement for those 5 houses. The path in the park would need to be maintained by someone-don't know who. The original park land was supposed to be donated and the trail was supposed to go to the park. The extension through an established neighborhood was not part of the original plan. Again, I want to stress how absolutely unsafe it is to cross 1000N. In the middle of the street at the base of the hill. Someone will be severely hurt or killed doing this because people speed through that area. The 100 E. Route is safer and will accomplish the same goal of connecting the trails while not disrupting an established neighborhood, providing easier accessibility for more people, providing a higher degree of safety because of easier access to patrol, and not disrupting the natural flora and fauna of the area.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>As you point out the preferred alternative does require cross walks to be installed or improved at multiple points along the trail. Three of these crosswalks are proposed to be within the Tamarack Subdivision (One at each of the two crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive; one at Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E). By taking the trail down CR 1100 N to CR 100 E you could eliminate both of the crossings of Catkins Circle, which does reduce the number of crossings. However, you would add a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E and remove the proposed mid-block crossing between 5th and CR 100 E. The current mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at</p>

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				<p>CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. Catkins Circle is a low volume, local road, with posted speed limit of 20 mph and there are currently pedestrian crossings at both of these intersections which serve the Tamarack Subdivision as well as the public in general wishing to walk to the Tamarack Subdivision Park, a Town of Chesterton public facility. The preferred alternative will result in improved access to Tamarack Subdivision Park and improve the crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive to be American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant. The enhanced connectivity to the public park and ADA improvements are a net benefit to the community.</p> <p>A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees, predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N, will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing, avoid clearing large trees, and minimize wetland impacts. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. Further, the proposed boardwalk is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and forest. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs. In fact, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees and wetlands on this project.</p> <p>Tree removal and protected species impacts were included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal and protected species impacts can be found on pages 16-18 of the <i>Environmental Document</i> that is currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the relocation or replacement of trees once construction has been completed and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to</p>
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				<p>the project. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM.</p> <p>If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood and/or trails it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. We are not aware of this. Do you have original documentation of the plan, you can submit to me?</p> <p>The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.</p>
28	Shawn Fitzpatrick	3/4/2023	<p>To start, segment 1 along the north side of E 1100 N is not in question and is a logical path to connect the existing paths. However, segments 2 & 3 seem to be an unnecessary detour through a neighborhood and wooded area. If the point of the new path is to connect the paths at Rail Rd and along E 1100 N, then the logical route would be along the east side of N 100 E. No other portions of the existing paths cut through an established neighborhood and primarily parallel public roads. Before building an 8-foot wide path through an existing neighborhood, I would defer to those residents needs (especially when that proposed path is not the most logical or even safest for the intended users of the trail). Thank you for the opportunity to comment and please take this into consideration when making your final decision.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>This project is only evaluating the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III project alignment and impacts. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave</p>

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				Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). Thank you for your comment.
29	Tom Fieffer	3/4/2023	I think the trail is a wonderful idea. Many places are trying to make their towns more walkable. As Chesterton looks at a parking issue. More trails would encourage walking to downtown.	Thank you for your comment.
30	Colin Smith	3/4/2023	My name is Colin Smith, but I go by “Cole.” I am [REDACTED] and have grown up on Laurel Creek Drive. It is the best place ever to live. We are a family that supports each other. We know everyone and I have always felt safe here. We know if there are strangers. One mom noticed an unusual car in our neighborhood when I was 10. It turned out that I am asking you to please not build this trail. My grandparents have the bike path near their house. I have seen what that is like. Garbage, used syringes, condom wrappers. I do not want that for the children growing up in Tamarack. That isn’t fair. Please take a step back and ask yourself. Would you want the place where your children are growing up to all of a sudden have increased traffic. I am sorry, my computer glitched and this is the rest of my comment: When I was 10, there was a strange car. One of the mom’s watched a drug deal take place. She called the police, and and a gentleman was arrested that was selling to minors. Please don’t take this away from us. Ask yourself if you would want your children to all of a sudden not feel safe, to have increased traffic, and strangers running around your house. Taking a quiet neighborhood and running a “trail” through it is not a viable answer to this problem. We still won’t be able to get to Calumet Avenue. This doesn’t allow us to safely walk or ride bikes to the highschool. It really doesn’t solve anything. In fact, it creates more issue. Why can’t we solve the issue properly instead of putting a bandaid on a problem that needs surgery. Please stop and find a better solution to the problem that exists. Making my home unsafe with increased traffic is not the answer. Thank you	Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways . If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the “Report a Concern” website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report . If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted under the “Report a Concern” website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report . This project would fill the missing connection between Westchester Liberty Trail 1 (terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E), the existing sidewalk (terminates approximately 250 feet west of the CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection), and Westchester Liberty Trail 2 (terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road). Therefore, this trail would provide a connection to CR 100 E/Calumet Avenue. To connect to CR 100 E from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N. Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads. To connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5 th St. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection.
31	BobbiLynn Caparella	3/6/2023	I oppose the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III through the Tamarack neighborhood! This quiet neighborhood holds a community feel where neighbors know neighbors. The residents are familiar with each other, even if they don’t know them personally. Building a public through-way for pedestrians, skateboarders and bicyclists, et al, is not in line with the lifestyle in which homeowners invested. Creating a boardwalk that passes directly in someone’s front yard does not evoke a feeling of security and safety that Tamarack residents have come to know. There is no need to disrupt the everyday lifestyles of families and friends by opening up the	Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further. Thank you for your comment. The boardwalk portion of the trail will be constructed through the wetland portion of Tamarack Park and not through residential front yards along Laurel Creek Drive. The trail alignment through the park and along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing right-of-way to

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			<p>neighborhood to random trail visitors. What’s more, people that want to avoid crossing 1100 on the trail will have parking in Tamarack as an option. This quiet neighborhood is then vulnerable to people parking on the street to enter the trail at the unnamed tributary and park near Pope O’Conner Ditch, or near 100 N on Lauren Creek. I fully oppose connecting the Phase III to the Phase II trail section via the Tamarack neighborhood. As one who enjoys the trails, it is uncomfortable to ride or walk through established neighborhoods with families and young children. I would much rather enjoy trails that avoid those routes. Continuing the path on 1100 to 100 N, where there is a very wide shoulder is much less disruptive to the community of Tamarack. It is a safe option for people! The neighborhood will lose its sense of security and community with strangers tramping through on unnecessary broad sidewalks. I can only imagine the debris that will be left behind, however accidentally. (Kids lose things. People drop wrappers and cans and trash. Things fall out of pockets and bags and carryalls. It is a reality that cannot be overlooked). Who will be responsible for maintaining this waste? The homeowners themselves? Further, this opens the option for trail users to ride their bikes, skateboards and the like on the street because it is an open invitation once exiting the O’Connor Ditch tributary. I do not oppose connecting the trails! I only strongly oppose using Tamarack neighborhood as a conduit for connecting the trails. Connecting through Tamarack would be an unfortunate and unwelcome project. Please reconsider!!!</p>	<p>completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners and reducing impacts to residential properties. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways. Through coordination with the Town, there are no current parking issues along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision for people accessing the Tamarack Park. There are no future parking issues anticipated along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision as a result of this project. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County. If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood or trail it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the “Report a Concern” website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. The Town will be responsible for maintaining the trail. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted under the “Report a Concern” website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic. Therefore, this project will provide trail uses, bikes, skateboards, etc. a separated alternative than using the roadway.</p>
32	Glenn Peterson	3/7/2023	<p>Elimination of the mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N would be beneficial to all parties in the corridor. Since the route is a primary access route to the Schools in the area, there are backups in this area and high peak volumes during the school year. The peak volumes would also likely coincide with the heaviest usage of the trail. If feasible, the route that is included in the Town’s 2010 Comprehensive Plan (page I-12) is an option to eliminate the mid-</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further. Adding the mid-block crossing is a benefit to trail users to safely cross CR 1100 N and access the Tamarack Park between the long stretch from CR 50 E to CR</p>

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			<p>block crossing. If the route is to remain in place, enhanced pedestrian crossing elements should be added to the project.</p>	<p>100 E. Without adding this mid-block crossing trail users would only have the pedestrian crossings at CR 50 E and CR 100 E to cross to the south side of CR 1100 N and then share the roadway with motorists. The mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid-block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. Pedestrians will yield to traffic at this crosswalk location. Therefore, no impacts to current traffic patterns are anticipated. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.</p>
33	Tom Shumate	3/8/2023	<p>I was quite disappointed and shocked to read that the planned pathway is proposed to go across 1100 and into the forest. I thought that it was going up to Calumet/100 E and go south until the entrance of Tamarack. My concerns are first for the safety of anyone crossing the road at that location since I busy road. I can definitely foresee accidents happening. Why not go down to the intersection at 1100 and 100 where there are already lights in place and a crosswalk? Secondly the amount of trees and vegetation that will need to be cleared is unnecessary when you can just put a normal sidewalk right along 100. Why do we need to clear out a forest for an eight foot pathway? I know either way you go people will be upset. I think the route to the intersection is the better of the two because it makes the most sense. If it doesn't then explain why. I hop' you'll consider my comments and any others you may</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential</p>

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		<p>receive and change course. Although nowadays it seems like p'op51ecludednerns'aren't very important.</p>	<p>properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>The mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long.</p> <p>A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees, predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N, will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. Most of the terrestrial habitat impacts for this project will be grass and shrub type bushes.</p> <p>The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing, avoid clearing large trees, and minimize wetland impacts. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain a canopy cover as large trees are preserved.</p> <p>The proposed boardwalk through the wetland portion of the wooded area is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and forest. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees and wetlands on this project through the wooded area. The project coordinated and evaluated all impacts and obtained the necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management, which included tree clearing.</p>
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				Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.
34	Charlotte Morgan	3/8/2023	<p>I would like to comment that this trail is not a good idea and the reasons given are not what makes sense for us kids. We enjoy our neighborhood and being able to play safely with the neighbors that we know. We are a close neighborhood and I will not be allowed or feel safe playing at the playground if there is another access point that w' can't see. Also the trail from our [Tamarack] playground will not be safe since i52ecludeduld and our family will not use it to get to school even though my brothers and I all go to the schools here. Biking on a boardwalk gets sli'pery and the path will not be lit up and will be too hidden to travel on our own to school. Who will keep the area clean? How will you not destroy our playground that has swings that you need to stand behind when pushing someone? The crossing in the middle of the road is too dangerous for biking to the bike path and school so we would still have to ride the bus or have my mom come get me. And we like to bike and walk to Chesterton but would continue to go [on CR 100 N] towards town and this plan does not help anyone who needs that. I was born and grew up in Coffee Creek and we always wanted to bike and walk to downtown Chesterton. This plan [ignores this need]. Also, who will take care of the park and the parking when people come to play at the playground? The bike path has trash along it and so does Rail Road and the other one [Kelle Rd] and they are overgrown and yo' can't ride your bike without getting hit by the overgrown stuff or going over broken glass. I am upset that the town is not considering the children who live here in Tamarack and what we think. We love our beautiful neighborhood and bike, scooter, rollerblade and walk freely around and are not happy we are losing more grass and trees and getting more celt ...'why can't we leave Laurel Creek alone and spend that money on more sidewalks and trees in Chesterton. How much are you spending to rip up Laurel Creek and make an 8 foot wide path?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>Lighting is not currently included in the project scope, and may be considered to be added in the future. The boardwalk section will be constructed out of pressure treated lumber and will drain much better than an at grade trail. It will be elevated, and water will drain between the boards. If the trail were constructed at grade, it would be subjected to significantly increased ponding during and after rain events.</p> <p>The Town will be responsible for maintaining the trails and park. If there are specific maintenance concerns or questions they can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>Adding this mid-block crossing is a benefit to trail users to safely cross CR 1100 N and access the Tamarack Park between the long stretch from CR 50 E to CR 100 E. Without adding this mid-block crossing trail users would only have the pedestrian crossings at CR 50 E and CR 100 E to cross to the south side of CR 1100 N and then share the roadway with motorists. Adding this mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when crossing CR 1100 N. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.</p> <p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into</p>

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				<p>unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on the destination in Chesterton trail users are after, and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. The preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, Chesterton High School, and the Middle School. The CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).</p> <p>To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.</p> <p>Through coordination with the Town, there are no current parking issues along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision for people accessing the Tamarack Park. There are no future parking issues anticipated along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision as a result of this project. See response above about maintenance of the trails and park.</p> <p>This project is adding more sidewalks in the Town of Chesterton. Please see additional response above regarding tree impacts.</p> <p>The estimated cost for this project is \$1,942,000 which includes preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction. Federal and local funding will be used for this project. Additional information about the project costs are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on pages 10 and 23. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p>
35	Madison Smith	3/8/2023	My name is Madison Smith. My friends call me Madi and I just turned [REDACTED] My address is [REDACTED]. in	Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and

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		<p>Chesterton, IN. I am sure that you recognize the name of the street that I live on.</p> <p>I am writing to ask you to please reconsider your plans for the Westchester Trail. My family moved to Tamarack when I was 18 months ol'. I don't remember every living anywhere else. This is my home. My backyard has a view of the park. Everyone at the park can see my house and can see the pool where my friends and I spend our whole su'mer. It's been okay though, because only our neighborhood uses the park. Even when some baseball teams use it for prac'ice, it's okay, because we know who those people are. If you put a trail through there,</p> <p>I am very scared that I am no longer going to be able to play with my friends and feel safe' We can't put up fences, s' we won't have any privac'. I don't think that this is righ'. I don't understand what the problem is that this is going to solve. I think it creates more safety issues.</p> <p>My neighbors and I try to ride to Coffee Creek sometimes. I had to quit doing it though, because I almost got hit b—a car - for real. There is no good way to get to that sidewalk on 100. I guess th't I don't understand how a crosswalk is going to stop this. There is no sidewalk for us to ride on to get to the sidewalk on RailRoad. Based on your proposal, this is going to be even worse' It isn't safe.</p> <p>I am really sad that I am not going to be able to roam around my neighborhood and that strangers are going to be riding through. There is no way that my mom is going to let me be outside at night playing the tag games that we play here at night. We are like a big family in Tamarack. Why are you trying to change that? If you have children, would you want this for them? To not feel safe? Pl'ase don't do this!</p>	<p>your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>If there are specific safety and security concerns of the neighborhood, sidewalks/trails, or roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.</p> <p>the Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.</p> <p>This project will add a trail along Laurel Creek Drive, south along CR 100 E, and a crosswalk will be added across CR 100 E to connect to the sidewalks and trails along Rail Road. The crossing will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.</p>
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36	Jodi Thielemann	3/10/2023	<p>We oppose a trail being built through our subdivision. The “trail” is only a sidewalk through many parts and we already have a sidewalk! Why do we need an 8 foot wide trail when a sidewalk is sufficient for other parts? The trail’s supposed purpose is to prevent human vehicle conflict, but how much conflict has there been? What about the conflict that will occur when all the young children who are learning to ride bikes and scooters in our neighborhood are now exposed to cyclists who notoriously only lookout for themselves and don’t follow the laws of the road. The people of our subdivision have worked hard to make this both a beautiful and safe community and this trail threatens both the beauty of our streets and safety of our families .it is obvious that the people who live here do not want this, what is not obvious is who does? Who does this benefit? It is highly unusual for a trail to be placed in the front yards of homes through the middle of an established neighborhood. This will be an eyesore and a problem for this community.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The existing sidewalk along the north shoulder of Laurel Creek Drive is 4-feet in width. This is not wide enough to accommodate different types of pedestrians (bikes, strollers, runners, and walkers) without users stepping off the sidewalk to pass each other or using the adjacent lawn to walk/ride when passing. The existing sidewalk is also not compliant with American with Disability Act requirements. The preferred alternative would construct an 8-foot wide path which is designed to accommodate all types of pedestrians and will meet ADA standards. This is a benefit to all users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack Park. The existing sidewalk on north side of CR 1100 N approximately 0.04 mile west of the CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection is already 8-feet-wide which meets ADA standards.</p> <p>The project area has pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. This results in potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles between existing corridors of the Westchester Liberty Trail (Phase 1 and Phase 2). This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic. Therefore, this project will provide trail uses, bikes, skateboards, etc. a separated alternative than using the roadway, which reduces potential for conflict.</p> <p>If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood or roadways it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the “Report a Concern” website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.</p> <p>The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading</p>
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				<p>to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic. Therefore, this project will provide trail uses, bikes, skateboards, etc. a separated alternative than using the roadway.</p>
		3/15/2023	<p>The answer to my first question was not sufficient. My question has to do with the fact that other than through our neighborhood, the path is just a sidewalk. To get to the trail or to get off of the trail, mere feet from our neighborhood are just sidewalks. So why does it need to be wider and more accessible just in our neighborhood?</p>	<p>No additional response sent due to this comment being answered in the 3/10/2023 response provided.</p>
37	UJ Puranik	3/12/2023	<p>This project may decrease the property value, place children at risk, spoil the beautiful tree line street. The trail traffic will also interfere with a quite, kid and elderly friendly neighborhood we so dearly enjoy.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features, information on effects to property values, and information on studies which have shown trails do not increase crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>Additionally, the trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.</p>
38	Laura O'Dell	3/13/2023	<p>I remember visiting Minneapolis, Minnesota when my kids were young, and I was so impressed by all the trails that were available to the residents there. The large quantities of trails throughout created a sense of community and promoted healthy activity for families young and old. Chesterton could be a community that could benefit from a trail system throughout the town. To have the connection to our beautiful state park and national park, as well as the wonderful European market that our town has to offer would be a benefit to our town and neighborhood. I feel that the</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

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		<p>Tamarack trail is a proactive start to this goal. Wandering through the beautiful wooded area behind this neighborhood would be a touch of Coffee Creek and State Park trails at our immediate access. How many times have we seen the Chesterton High School cross country and track teams running on 1050 to get through this neighborhood? How many have worried for those kids as they put themselves in danger considering 1050 is prime access to CHS. This road is heavily travelled by teen drivers possibly on their cell phones, let alone adult drivers with similar bad habits. From my own personal experience, my children would take that same road to get over to 5th street in the summers so that they could ride their bikes to the Chesterton Park Program offered at the park on 5th and Morgan. Thankfully, they were never injured while riding their bikes. Unfortunately, my youngest did get into an accident on this very road as a teen driver plowed into the back of his Honda Fit and totaled the vehicle. He and his classmate were both shaken, not injured physically, but that does not mean they were not injured mentally. This trail would provide a safe route for all kids which I would think would be in everyone's best interest. My family enjoys walking through our neighborhood, but we are often walking in the road because the narrow sidewalks do not promote the ability to converse while on our walk. It would be nice to have a wider sidewalk throughout our neighborhood so that families can enjoy exercising together. The residents remonstrating against the plan of the trail located behind their property is understandable, but during the summer when trees are in full bloom, I am curious how much someone on the trail would be able to see. I noticed in the newspaper that the residents on the corner lot were complaining about how the trail is on three sides of their property. I am not sure how it is on three sides, two perhaps, but also, they fail to say that their back yard is fenced in due to their inground pool on their property. I am not sure how much of their privacy is compromised with the trail. In addition, the residents are tagging the trees that will be cut down. One is already dead, so the town would be doing that homeowner a favor, as it has been left standing, dead, for over a year, which is an eye sore. It is my understanding that Chesterton is part of Tree City USA. From what I know, when trees are removed, they are replaced. I also find it confusing to see signs in neighbors' yards who were in favor of a connection to the town via sidewalk. The residents don't know all that has gone into this trail or the reasons for the location, but I am certain that if they were able to use land that belonged to them they would choose that over purchasing unowned land at a much greater expense. Speaking of eyesores, a trail through Tamarack connecting to Dogwood park would give kids a safe way to get to the parks so that they can enjoy</p>	
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39	Colin Smith	3/13/2023	<p>My wife and I moved to Tamarack to get away from the issues that happen near the first part of the trail. My supervisor and best friend, Jeff Eckert, used to clean up on the existing trail. What a mess. There were people that tried to live on the trail, homelessness, drugs, sex. Would you want that in your front or back yard? We should have been informed of this as my backyard can be seen from this proposed trail. No one even told us. We had to find out from neighbors. That is negligence on your part. Building a trail through our neighborhood is negligence as well- not to mention it doesn't help the sidewalk problem that everyone has. Kids are going to get hurt. Accidents are going to happen on 100. A cross walk isn't going to stop cars from speeding past. Please reconsider this project. It isn't a good solution and the residents of Tamarack don't deserve to have the town of Chesterton ruin their homes. Those that are proposing this should have the trail through their yards if they want it. We do not. Please find a better solution,.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The Town is responsible for maintaining the trails through the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>Notices to adjacent property owners were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. We have verified that Notice of Surveys and Notices for the Opportunity for Hearings have been sent to Colin and Michelle Smith Or Current Resident at [REDACTED]. Can you confirm your address is complete and accurate? Mailings come in pre addressed envelopes with American Structurepoint printed return address. Please look for these envelopes in the future as you will continue to get notices mailed to your address. Local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement and Chesterton has posted info on there facebook page, which are additional steps taken by the Town to get the word out. If this is the first time you are hearing about the project, plans are not final and your feedback is a valuable part of the project. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p> <p>The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.</p>

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				<p>The crosswalk added at the mid-block crossing across CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and high visibility pavement markings along with flashing beacons at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadways. The crosswalk added at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road will include high visibility pavement markings. Pedestrians will yield to oncoming traffic at both crosswalk locations. The proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing.</p> <p>If there are specific safety and speeding concerns on the roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p>
40	Angeline Swiech	3/14/2023	I would to attend a next meeting, or receive information regarding the proposed Trail. Thank you	<p>Thank you for your comment. I have ensured you are added to our email and mailing lists for the project to receive all additional legal notices being sent out for the project. Mailings come in a pre-addressed envelope with American Structurepoint printed in the return address. Please look out for these envelopes. Additionally, project information will be updated and posted on the project website at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt as available. All legal notices will also be posted in the Northwest Indiana Times twice, 15 days prior and 7 days prior to any meeting held for the project.</p>
41	Scarlet Spain	3/14/2023	Hi there, An important update was brought up regarding drainage easements and the intended pathway. Can you please show according to official records where these easements lie? Also, we have been obligated to maintain certain aspects of our homes including trees, etc. This trail will knock out established trees and pieces of property as homeowners that we have been required to maintain. I do not plan on living in my home "forever" and out of curiosity asked others if they would buy a home with a trail across from it. The answer from everyone I asked was "absolutely not". The town needs to find a better path for this that does not go through home owners' established spaces....	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>There is a utility and drainage easement on the property behind the sidewalk in front of your house. This utility and drainage easement is located entirely within private property of the residential properties along Laurel Creek Drive. All trail construction along Laurel Creek Drive will stay within the Town owned right-of-way and not impact private property, or this utility and drainage easement. This drainage easement can be found on the Secondary Plat for Tamarack Phase 3 or the personal deed to your property.</p> <p>If there are any private water lines for your property within Town owned right-of-way, please let us know where they exist.</p> <p>The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way, and the trail has been laid out to stay entirely within this right-of-way to minimize impacts to adjacent property owners. All tree clearing along Laurel Creek Dive will occur within existing</p>

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				<p>Town owned right-of-way. The covenants held by the Homeowners Association do not apply to Town right-of-way or property. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p>
42	Tim Buehler	3/14/2023	<p>There needs to be traffic studies done on alternate routes. It is likely that sidewalk utilization placed on N100E will benefit the entire community - Tamerack, Eagle Crossing, Downtown Chesterton, etc. We know that the study has not been done but it needs to be completed before decisions are made.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Traffic studies were not completed or required for this project. Traffic data is shown on the project plan sheets as N/A or Not Applicable because this project is for a new multi-use trail. This does not preclude project designers from considering appropriate design parameters (such as line of sight) in the trail design.</p> <p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the</p>

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				<p>time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on the destination in Chesterton trail users are after, and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. The preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, Chesterton High School, and the Middle School. The CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).</p> <p>To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.</p>
43	Jose and Olga Solis	3/14/20/23	<p>We do not want a trail in our subdivision. Tearing up sidewalks and trees is unacceptable just for a trail. Also, it would be a safety issue of bikers and walkers crossing onto 100E. As it is, vehicles drive pretty fast on 100E. Then we the residents come in and out quite frequently from Tamarack. I think this trail will increase the possibility of accidents. I've seen many near misses already.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The existing sidewalks within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. The Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.</p> <p>The crosswalk added at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road will include high visibility pavement markings to notify motorists of the trail crossing. Pedestrians will yield to oncoming traffic at the crosswalk location.</p> <p>If there are specific safety and speeding concerns on the roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p>
44	Ed Virgil	3/14/2023	<p>I am a resident of Tamarack and I am opposed to segment 2 & 3 of the Westchester-Liberty Trail going through the Tamarack</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team</p>

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		<p>subdivision outlined in the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project plan. There are many issues with this proposal and I, like many of the residents in Tamarack, have many concerns. Safety point #1: a path crossing CR1100 in the middle of this stretch of road is an enormous safety hazard. I live on the North side of Tamarack and can see and hear traffic flow on CR1100. I can assure you, there are many, many people who speed excessively down this stretch of road. Allowing children to cross in the middle of a busy street with cars traveling way too fast is recipe for a fatality. This may be the single most ill thought out component of this segment. Why would anyone think crossing the middle of the road is a safe idea when there already exists pathways leading to the crosswalk at the intersection of CR1100 & CR100 with dedicated traffic and pedestrian lights. It' not if there will be an accident, it's when. Safety point #2. Increased traffic bicycling or running on a sidewalk through a residential neighborhood heightens the threat of crashing into a car. Sidewalks make bicyclists invisible to motorists who don't expect to see them at driveways and crosswalks. This is certainly true when you have a path going down a residential sidewalk running through a neighborhood vs implementing a dedicated lane in the street or simply building the path around the subdivision. It's perplexing how proponents for this project can think this is an option at all, not to mention a good one. There are no other trails, here in Chesterton, or elsewhere, where the trail runs through the middle of a sub-division. In every other community the bike paths are near or around a neighborhood - not through it. While typically, bike and jogging paths do not negatively impact home values, they also never run directly through a neighborhood. In this instance, This will likely have an adverse effect on home values with how it is currently being planned. Particularly for those most directly impacted on Laurel Creek. Again, there's a good reason paths are normally engineered to go around, and complement a neighborhood, but not through it. This clearly is being forced on the people who call this subdivision home because of the unwillingness of the people directly involved in the planning not wanting to take the time and allocate the necessary resources to build this correctly down unincorporated CR100. The solution is easy, build the path. Just install the first segment of the plan. There is absolutely no reason this cannot be done. Segment two and three is completely unnecessary and irrational considering there is a safer and more logical way to build the path along CR1100 and CR100. Ed</p>	<p>and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>If there are specific safety and speeding concerns on the roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report. This project is only evaluating the proposed project alignment and impacts of the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III portion of the trail.</p> <p>The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features, information on effects to property values, and information on studies which have shown trails do not increase crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.</p> <p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p>
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45	Jen Soffin	3/14/2023	<p>First let me say, I LOVE trails. I am all for constructing trails to connect and allow safe passage for residents. I am very opposed to the proposed route through Tamarack. AmericanTrails.org has a guideline of staying 100ft from adjacent landowners. Why not consider continuing the partial 1100 link to connect directly to 100? It's a more direct route, better lighted and more traveled. There is also a sidewalk on 100 that comes from the north that stops on the north side of 1100/100 intersection. There is also much more greenspace along 1100 as the homes are set further back from the roadway. The proposed idea to start the 1100 portion on the north side, only to cut back across a very busy, highly traveled road to cut through an established neighborhood doesn't seem ideal. In closing, is there another case in which your company has implemented a public trail in an established, small neighborhood 30 feet from residents front doors and if so, how did that fare? While trails are a wonderful way to connect people, places and nature, I do believe there's a more sensible route available. Eliminate Tamarack and continue the 1100 trail direct to 100, then on to Rail Road.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Thank you for this information.</p> <p>As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.</p> <p>The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.</p> <p>This project is only evaluating the proposed project alignment and impacts of the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III portion of the trail. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>Trail, multi-use path, and shared-use path alignments vary greatly and depend on many things including funding conditions, design conditions, environmental impacts, and the existing landscape to name a few. One example of a trail through a neighborhood is The Iron Horse Heritage trail that runs through Portage, Indiana. It enters the "Four Seasons On the Lake" subdivision and runs down Lakeshore Drive.</p>
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46	Jonathan Morgan	3/14/2023	<p>Hello, I am writing as a [REDACTED] in Tamarack who enjoys playing at our playground but I am nervous about using our swings. How will we swing if the person on the trail is right there? How will moms push their kids while the trail is right there? Why would it not go around the park instead of through it? We play tag here a lot and when we go to the park at our friends near Porter Cove, the people on the bike path have fences and we dont have to worry about how fast bikers go there because it is separate from the neighborhood. This is too close to feel safe.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The proposed trail alignment next to the playground equipment will be far enough away for the playground equipment to be used. No impacts will occur to the existing playground equipment as a result of this project.</p> <p>An alternative to go around the wooded area and Tamarack Park utilizing CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.</p> <p>As currently proposed, the trail is just inside the brush line along the east edge of the park, in a part of the park not currently used for recreation. By installing the trail in this location there is no loss of recreation space and its location on the far eastern side of the park provides park patrons the option to use portions of the park far away from the trail to avoid the situations you are describing.</p>
47	Karen Cobbs	3/14/2023	<p>We are a private subdivision. A walking trail should go around us, not through us. We all have worked hard to afford houses in Tamarack. To be in this quiet, safe community is expensive. We chose this subdivision for these reasons. We all deserve privacy and the people walking in our neighborhood to be residents of the actual subdivision. It should not be a "pass through" for any random person who wants to walk the trail. The people living in front of the trail should not have to see lots of random walkers and bikers out their front window or incur potential noise at any time of the day or night. I am not against a trail around the subdivision, but to funnel random people through our personal subdivision that we pay so much money to live in is wrong. I understand it saves the county and state money, but it is not the correct thing to do. I can't imagine you or the people working on this project would want this to happen to your subdivision. If we wanted a catch all of random people at any hour of the day, we would have lived in an apartment complex. Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. Laurel Creek Drive and the Tamarack Subdivision Park are town owned and maintained properties/roads that are open to the public at large currently for use. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways.</p> <p>If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood or trail it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p>
48	Jenny Orsburn	3/14/2023	<p>I support this project and the route, connecting to Rail Road will also help connect walkers, runners and bike riders to Coffee Creek</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team</p>

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			<p>Watershed Preserve. This trail type is also consistent with the rest of town trails, however I hope extra effort is given by the town to communicate to the residents of Tamarack to not park on the shared portions of the trail or block the trail with vehicles or yard waste (leaves and brush), I also encourage that construction has minimal impact to the wetlands, and waterways UNT, Pope O Conner ditch.</p>	<p>and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>Through coordination with the Town, there are no current parking issues along any portion of the existing trails. There are no future parking issues anticipated along as a result of this project.</p> <p>The Town is copied on this response, and the maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>A wetland delineation for this project has been completed identifying and mapping resources like streams, ponds, and wetlands. A site visit in 2021 also included the US Army Corps of Engineers walking the project area. Along CR 1100 N two pipe extensions would be installed on the existing culverts to facilitate the trail crossings at Pope O'Connor Ditch and an unnamed tributary. To minimize impacts to environmental resources along this stretch of trail, the trail will be shifted south towards CR 1100 N and gabion baskets will be used to create a retaining wall to minimize impacts further.</p> <p>The proposed boardwalk through the wooded area and Tamarack Park is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and the forest. A new stream crossing will be installed over an unnamed tributary to Pope O'Connor Ditch in the portion of Tamarack Park towards Laurel Creek Drive. It will be an 8-ft wide by 5-ft tall reinforced box culvert.</p>
49	Aneeqa Virgil	3/14/2023	<p>Segment 2 and Segment 3 are not viable options for the reasons below: 1. It would be a safer alternative to have the trail cross at an intersection of 1100. With the traffic on 1100 (for example, during high school events), it could be considered a danger to cross where currently proposed. The safety of the users of the trail should be a high priority. 2. The trail would be within 50 ft of a number of private residences in Tamarack. It is my understanding that there are guidelines for public trails to be at least 100 ft from private residences. The trail would be a nuisance for the residence of Tamarack. 3. Notification was not given to residences that would be directly impacted by the trail. Not only residences on Laurel Creek, but the entire subdivision would be impacted negatively by the trail. 4. The proposal does not make sense to divide through an existing subdivision. There are viable that would not disrupt our subdivision and accomplish the same goal of connect to railroad.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The crosswalk added at the mid-block crossing across CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and high visibility pavement markings along with flashing beacons at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadways. The proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing.</p>

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				<p>The guidance you are referring has been provided by another resident and is discussing considerations that were taken when designing trails for state parks. Trails in urban areas must be integrated into the community and this includes the possibility that trails will be run through residential neighborhoods.</p> <p>Notices to adjacent property owners were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners to the trail alignment were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. Local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement and Chesterton has posted info on their facebook page, which are additional steps taken by the Town to get the word out. If this is the first time you are hearing about the project, plans are not final and your feedback is a valuable part of the project. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p>
50	Barb Rabesa	3/14/2023	<p>Please include us in your communications, as we are new residents and we would like to be notified of progress on this matter. We have grandchildren on Laurel Creek Avenue and will welcome a safer pathway to connect us all, to be able to walk/bike between homes and schools and parks will be great. Hoping all issues will be resolved quickly. Thank you</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. I have added you to our email and mailing lists for the project to receive all additional legal notices being sent out for the project. Mailings come in a pre-addressed envelope with American Structurepoint printed in the return address. Please look out for these envelopes. Additionally, project information will be updated and posted on the project website at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt as available. All legal notices will also be posted in the Northwest Indiana Times twice, 15 days prior and 7 days prior to any meeting held for the project.</p>
51	Jared O'Dell	3/14/2023	<p>I love the idea of the trail, growing up in Tamarack it was always dangerous to ride my bike to the highschool on 1050. This trail will connect it to the schools and the town and create a safe path for bikers and pedestrians</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We are glad you are looking forward to this trail being constructed.</p>
52	Dakota Sechrest	3/15/2023	<p>Hello my name is Dakota Sechrest I own the property at [REDACTED] 4. I was informed that a bike trail walking path will be constructed between my home and my neighbors home. This is very concerning to me. I have 3 small children that frequently play in my driveway, and I don't want strangers being 20ft off my property hindering my family's privacy. Also the disruption it would cause with my dogs constantly seeing strangers near the property and the disruption for the deer and wildlife that frequent the wooded area around the property. The proposed location for crossing is not a great location there is a hill on either side and it is a great safety issue for anyone who would cross there. These are the concerns I have with this project thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.</p> <p>The trail in this location has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property. A boardwalk will also be constructed in this location with cable style railings to maintain trail users on the boardwalk from navigating onto private land or into wetlands.</p> <p>Is this referencing the proposed mid-block pedestrian crossing across CR 1100 N? If so, this mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic</p>

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				<p>movements trail users need to watch for when crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block). In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The vehicle stopping sight distance at the mid-block crossing location on CR 1100 N was evaluated per INDOT requirements. Adequate stopping sight distance is present at this location, and this crossing will not create a hazard to motorists.</p>
53	James/ Gayle Vogan	3/15/2023	<p>We purchased our lot in 1997. We completed our home in 1999 and moved in. We looked for building lots for over 5 years searching for a quiet neighborhood with nice lots, curbs, sidewalks, and trees. We were happy when we found Tamarack which met all of our criteria. This trail was never in any plans we saw when we purchased and built our home 26 years ago. This bike trail will disrupt our “quiet” neighborhood, unfairly impacting the Tamarack residents when there are other options for this trail. The proposed trail with an entrance off 1100 N is unsafe. It is at the bottom of a dip in the road where cyclists would be crossing from the north side of 1100 N. A better route would be down 1100 N to the stoplight at 100 E, down 100 E to Rail Road. Also Chesterton is a designated Tree City USA for the last 12+ years but many trees, upwards of 50 will be lost to this trail. There is also the safety factor of strangers riding through “our” neighborhood park and through the front yards of our homes! I strongly urge American Structurepoint to use an alternate route for this bike path! Thank you in advance for your attention to this very important neighborhood changing proposal.</p>	<p>No individual response sent. Comment received by mail. All comments provided have been included and are being considered for the project.</p>

Amanda McCrovitz comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: ["Amanda McCrovitz"](#)
Cc: [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Mark O'Dell](#); [Matt Gavelek](#); [Iddings, Joshua](#)
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 2, 2023 3:11:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. McCrovitz,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



From: Amanda McCrovitz [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 5:03 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>; Iddings, Joshua <Jlddings@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>
Subject: Re: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Dear Josh,
Again thank you for getting back to me and explaining the process. Is there anyway to extend the public

comment period in order to allow time for several of the homeowners to retain an attorney to attend a virtual meeting or in person meeting to discuss the design? Yes, the public comment period will stay open for an additional 2 weeks. All the materials on the website and the comment form will remain active.

There are several families that are out of town or left town today. The bottom line is that there are Tamarack residents both in support of and against the trail running down Laurel Creek Drive. One homeowner stated that they did not get notice of the project in the mail, and found out from another neighbor who approached them. The trail will run behind their property down the side and in front of their property, so they for sure are a stakeholder. Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were notified. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd.

We would like to be able to better organize our comments and get a better understanding of this project. I know many people have reached out concerning the project and commented, but if we are all just doing this individually we are not aware of others questions, concerns, or support for the trail.

I also have requested a meeting with our HOA Board, and have not gotten a response yet. The March 1st deadline is approaching quickly, and I am afraid we will run out of time to effectively comment and express our viewpoint.

The bottom line is that I DO NOT WANT THIS TRAIL RUNNING ALONG THE FRONT OF MY PROPERTY. I can state many reasons why I have come to this conclusion. I do not need to be convinced this a good plan or of benefit, changes the property I know and love, the feel of my neighborhood and I just do not want to look at at 8ft strip of concrete in front of my home where there used to be trees.

I also do not believe it is the residents of Tamarack's responsibility to figure out an alternative solution for the town, but I strongly believe that an alternative MUST be found.

Some of the issues I have heard raised in addition to my own are:

1. Is this a town versus county issue? Is that the main issue that the town doesn't want to work with the county? Absolutely not. The current preferred alternative is the least impactful to residential properties and community overall. There are many reasons why the current preferred alternative was chosen over the CR 100 E. These have been previously covered in emails below.
2. Who benefits from the trail going through Tamarack versus the trail going around Tamarack? The preferred alternative minimizes right of way takes, minimizes the number of residents which are impacted by right of way takes, and provides a crossing of CR 1100 N which is minimizes risks to pedestrians when compared to the CR 100 E alternative. The preferred alternative also provides shorter connections to and between public facilities such as the Boys and Girls Club, High School, Middle School, Bailey Elementary School, Dogwood Park, Westchester Migratory Bird Sanctuary, and Chesterton Park when compared to an alternative which utilizes CR 100 E.
3. There is roughly 2.4 wooded acres that will be removed by construction through the park, there are many birds and other wildlife that reside in the woods, has a study been done to make sure none of the wildlife is on the endangered species list? This is not true. A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was also laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing, avoid clearing large trees, and minimize wetland impacts. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. Further, the proposed boardwalk is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to

sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and forest. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs. In fact, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees and wetlands on this project.

4. The issue of effective Notice has been raised. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. This included mailing Notice of Survey and Notices of Planned Improvements to all adjacent property owners, local elected and appointed officials, and within the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>

5. Chesterton is listed as Tree City USA on signage off of Hwy 49. We are killing alot of trees without a replacement plan. See response to #3 above. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents.

6. What is the process after public comment should the town still want to proceed with the trail cutting through Tamarack down Laurel Creek Drive? Pending the results of this opportunity for comment and to request a formal hearing the project team, Town, and INDOT will discuss next steps. It is anticipated that further public involvement will be completed. If additional public meetings or a public hearing is held, notice of such meeting will be sent to all adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and published in the Northwest Indiana Times (as required) by the most recent INDOT guidance documentation and standards. Additionally, notices will be sent to all those who provided contact information during this comment period.

I apologize for all the emails, I know that you are reading each and everyone to respond. I think it is helpful to have the public hearing process explained. I also think it is important for the residents who want to seek legal representation to be allowed time to do so by extending the period for public comment beyond March 1st, as well as allowing time for a special board meeting to be held with our HOA board. Therefore, I respectfully request that the March 1, 2023 deadline for public comment be extended.

Kind Regards,
Amanda McCrovitz

On Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 07:04:26 AM CST, Iddings, Joshua <jiddings@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Amanda,

The Town and project team are offering the public the opportunity to view preliminary plans and environmental documents at this time. All information gathered, comments received, and concerns regarding the project are being included as part of the project's environmental documentation, and being considered and responded to by the project team as they are being received. Currently, a public hearing is not scheduled. This does not preclude the Town from holding a hearing, or alternatively a public information meeting, for the project in the future regarding this project. Adjacent property owners, including yourself, and local

stakeholders would be notified of any plans to hold such meetings ahead of the meeting. More information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>.

If a hearing is held, the formal public hearing process for a federal highway funded project includes an opportunity for the public to verbally present comments for the project record. However, the project team does not present formal answers to comments submitted during the hearing or during the comment period. All comments received during the formal public hearing process are compiled and answers will be provided in writing after the approval of the project. A notice of the availability of responses to comments will be sent out only after the approval of the project. Therefore, we are offering the public an opportunity to review preliminary plans and the environmental document in a format more conducive to conversation at this time.

We want to re-iterate that the design is not final, and that the team (including the Town – who are copied herein - and INDOT) will review the comments received to determine next steps. Additionally, offering this opportunity for hearing and to review and comment, does not preclude the team from holding a formal public hearing or public meeting in the future. We are available for phone calls and virtual meetings and if one would be conducive to further this discussion let us know.

Thank you,

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

From: Amanda McCrovitz <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 11:12 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>; Iddings, Joshua <Jlddings@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Wolverson, Eric <ewolverson@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>
Subject: Re: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Thank you for your prompt response. Since there has been a public hearing requested by myself and others, when will we receive notice of the hearing date?

I am not overly concerned about crime, yet other neighbors along the park have raised the issue of drug deals, which have previously taken place at the entrance to the park along Laurel Creek Drive. I do firmly believe that the trail going in front of my home will significantly decrease our property value. This should be of concern to all our neighbors, not just those impacted by the trail.

Can you explain to me who benefits from this trail going through Tamarack versus connecting 1100N with 100E to go south and connect with Railroad other than a cost, town/county issue?

I also had another question, what will happen to my mailbox?

Once again, thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Amanda McCrovitz

On Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 08:54:11 AM CST, Iddings, Joshua <jiddings@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Amanda,

Thank you for your comment. The project team and Town do appreciate your feedback. We are currently completing public involvement to gather information from the community. The design is not final. As you note below, concerns from the Tamarack Subdivision community have been voiced and are being considered. There are many reasons the preferred alternative was chosen and is currently being presented. We have detailed some of the decisions which resulted in the trail being laid out to go through the Tamarack Subdivision and why it is preferred below. Additionally, the National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features, information on effects to property values, and information on studies which have shown trails do not increase crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

We encourage you to reach out to the project team or Town representatives (who are copied here) to discuss your concerns further. We are available to chat by phone or virtually as well.

Thank you,

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

From: Amanda McCrovitz <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 8:22 PM
To: Iddings, Joshua <jiddings@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>

Subject: Re: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Good Evening,

On the plan it looks like the trail is going to be concrete along Laurel Creek as is the existing side walk. I also see that the existing sidewalk will be widened. Will the new trail/sidewalk start at the existing sidewalk closest to the homes and then extend 8ft towards the street?

- In general, the trail is being widened towards the curb line. Widening of the trail will occur entirely within the existing Town owned right of way within the Tamarack Subdivision.

My questions are:

1. Will the new sidewalk be concrete along the homes on Laurel Creek where the trail comes out of Tamarack Park, and then runs East to 100 E?

- Yes the new sidewalk will be concrete.

2. Will there be any green grass on the south side/street side of the trail?

- Yes, there will be a grass buffer strip between the edge of the sidewalk and curb of the street.

3. Can you explain to me how this will look with the existing curbs along the street?

- Please see the attached plan sheet. Page one is a cross section view, I have called out the trail and buffer strip. Page 2 is a plan view (top down look) at the proposed project.

4. The end of my driveway has the curb cut away, this will still be the case post construction, correct?

- Yes the end of your drive will still be cut into the curb.

5. Will our HOA be reimbursed for all the trees that will be removed?

- The sidewalk and trees are within Town of Chesterton existing right of way. This means they are owned by the Town. No reimbursement to the HOA will occur for tree removal. Landscape design is not yet complete but the Town is evaluating relocating existing trees into the new buffer or replanting new crab apple trees to match the existing spacing and retain the subdivisions landscape layout.

6. Based on other trails in the area how much traffic is expected to traverse through Tamarack?

- Information on volume of trail users is not currently available. The Town has noted that the Westchester Liberty Trail is not a high volume trail.

7. From the previous email response I received it seems this route has been chosen simply as the path of least resistance and least expense to the town. Why can't the town and county do this as a joint venture and continue the side walk that is already started on the the northwest end of the 1100 N/100E intersection?

- There are many reasons why this alternative is preferred. Impacts to residents, and associated costs, of land acquisition is a consideration but it is not the only one which lead to the preferred

alternative layout. The preferred alternative also has the added benefit of increasing connectivity to the Tamarack Subdivision Park, a Town of Chesterton public facility. The preferred alternative also eliminates the need for a trail crossing at CR 1100N at CR 100 E. A crossing at that intersection would be 48-ft wide and pedestrians would need to cross three lanes of traffic and watch for turning vehicles not only from CR 1100N but also from CR 100 E. The preferred alternative eliminates this cross walk and provides a mid-block crossing on CR 1100N between 5th and CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing is only 23 ft in width and pedestrians will only need to watch for east and west bound traffic on CR 1100 N and not have to watch or consider the potential turn movements as there is no intersections or driveways near this crossing. Additionally, advance warning lights and signs along with pavement markings will be provided at the crossing warning drivers of pedestrians crossing the road. Finally, crossing into unincorporated Porter County is a consideration. Although an agreement could be made between the Town and County, the preferred alternative eliminates the need for this and eliminates the need for permanent right-of-way from unincorporated properties in Porter County. This is a benefit to both communities.

As I think about the future development of our town the issue of a sidewalk down 1100N to connect to 5th street will still be something to be considered as well as a sidewalk down 100E to connect to Calumet into the downtown area.

- The proposed alternative will accommodate pedestrian traffic to places along Calumet Avenue (CR 100 E) as the trail will be run along the north side of CR 1100 N to the existing sidewalk which dead ends just west of CR 100 E. Therefore, the Town is addressing this consideration with the preferred alternative as well.

I would like to propose that the new trail stop at the entrance from Tamarack Park into the neighborhood, and the existing sidewalks, be left as is, then a the trail could join at 100E, to connect to Railroad, as well as extend North to connect 100E to Calumet, the current dead end sidewalk on the northwest corner could then extend down 1100 N to connect to the rest of the trail.

- The existing sidewalk is only 4-ft in width. This is not wide enough to accommodate the multiple types of pedestrian users on the trail (such as bikes, strollers, runners, etc.) and bi-directional traffic without pedestrians needing to step off the trail or walk/run/ride in the adjacent yards.

Just because one option seems logically the path of least resistance does not mean it should be the preferred path. What about the cost benefit factor long term for our town and community as Chesterton continues to grow and develop?

- The preferred alternative minimizes impacts to the community by prioritizing use of existing available Town right of way. Additionally, the preferred alternative provides a crossing of CR 1100 N which reduces the traffic movements pedestrians need to yield to before crossing and minimizes the distance they must travel across the cross walk. This is a benefit for the community, especially children who might use the trail to navigate to public facilities like the Boys and Girls Club, schools, and Chesterton Park. Finally, the preferred alternative has the added benefit of increasing connectivity to and providing American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park, a Town of Chesterton public facility. The increased pedestrian traffic within the Tamarack Subdivision is a consideration. However, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts compared to the added right of way costs, increased impacts to residential properties, not ideal crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E, and need to cross into unincorporated Porter County under the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative. Therefore it is currently being proposed.

I really do not want to increase traffic through our neighborhood and lose the beautiful symmetry of the sidewalks and trees lining the road. It is especially beautiful in the Spring time when the trees bloom. I know there are other neighbors who are opposed to the trail for other reasons as well, I hope they will voice there concerns and ask their questions as

well.


- This project is not finalized and the Town is completing public involvement to gather information on the preferred alternative. We appreciate your feedback and will take the concerns of the Tamarack Subdivision into consideration as the project advances. The Town is currently considering options for landscaping which include potential use of crab apple trees. Additionally, the preferred alternative will result in widening the existing sidewalk by 4 feet and there will still be a grassed buffer strip between the curb and trail, which is an aesthetically pleasing feature.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Amanda McCrovitz

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**Yahoo Mail**

Take a trip into an upgraded, more organized inbox with Yahoo Mail. Login and start exploring all the free, orga...

On Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 10:13 AM, Iddings, Joshua <Jlddings@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Ms. McCorvitz,

Thank you for submitting a comment and we will keep an eye out for your formal letter. Your property is located [REDACTED] Chesterton, IN 46304 and, as currently proposed, temporary right of way would be required from your parcel to reconstruct your driveway to accommodate the trail. The driveway reconstruction would consist of flattening the slope of your driveway. It currently appears that your driveway is at about 8% grade and driveway would be flattened to accommodate the trail and meet American with Disability Act requirements for slope. The drive would be reconstructed out of concrete and post construction the area of

temporary right of way would revert back to your ownership. No permanent right of way from your property is required. Details of the driveway reconstruction are attached and can be found on page 10 of the *Project Plans* that are currently posted online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. These plans can also be found in Appendix B in the Categorical Exclusion available online or in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E.

If you would like to discuss this project further the project team is available for virtual meetings and phone calls. We appreciate the feedback and would like to ensure you are getting the information you are requesting regarding this project.

Thank you,

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

9025 River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 OFFICE

structurepoint.com WEB



From: Amanda McCrovitz <reply-to+28ee70c35d73@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2023 9:23 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Amanda McCrovitz just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Amanda
Last Name: McCrovitz
Address: [REDACTED]
Email 2: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I am requesting a public hearing on this matter. I am not in favor of this path cutting through our neighborhood. What other plans and or possible routes were explored for this path? I will follow up with a formal letter before March 1, 2023. Thank you.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

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Michelle Gilbertsen comments

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Cc: [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "[Matt Gavelek](#)"; "[Mark O'Dell](#)"
Subject: RE: Chesterton Liberty Trail - Comments to Review
Date: Monday, February 20, 2023 12:43:47 PM

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Thank you for the response. I am only one person, I know, but still, after looking through all of the drawings and considering all scenarios as subjectively as possible, I am of the strong "no's." All in all, I just do not believe that there is such an overwhelming genuine "need" for this trail, that it justifies a shift in market trajectory for Tamarack *for the first time ever*. A trail that invites more outside traffic past \$600,000 homes is never a selling feature. This is very unfortunate for all of us here. Tamarack is now going backwards. In fairness, however, I will wait out the process of others' feedback.

Thanks again for all correspondence.
Michelle Gilbertsen

PS) In the drawings, it shows our home as owned by John and Karen Giordano. We bought from them 10 years ago.

From: Iddings, Joshua <JIddings@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 10:43 AM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>
Subject: RE: Chesterton Liberty Trail - Comments to Review

Michelle,

The existing sidewalk along the north shoulder of Laurel Creek Drive is 4-ft in width. This is not wide enough to accommodate different types of pedestrians (bikes, strollers, runners, and walkers) without users stepping off the sidewalk to pass each other or using the adjacent lawn to walk/ride when passing. The existing sidewalk is also not compliant with American with Disability Act requirements. The preferred alternative would construct an 8-ft wide path is designed to accommodate all types of pedestrians and will meet ADA standards. This is a benefit to all users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack Park. The trail within the Tamarack Subdivision has also been designed to have a sodded buffer between the existing curblin and edge of the trail which is an aesthetically pleasing design consistent with the current layout of the sidewalk which also provides a sodded buffer between the curb and edge of sidewalk. Please let us know if there are any questions.

Thank you,
JOSH IDDINGS
Environmental Project Manager

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 3:55 PM
To: Iddings, Joshua Jlddings@structurepoint.com; Hinkle, Meghan mhinkle@structurepoint.com
Cc: Lorig, Greg glorig@structurepoint.com; Wolverton, Eric ewolverton@structurepoint.com; 'Mark O'Dell' modell@chestertonin.org; 'Matt Gavelek' mgavelek@chestertonin.org
Subject: RE: Chesterton Liberty Trail - Comments to Review

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Thank you for explaining, but this does not resolve the “Laurel Creek Drive” problem. Whether the 8’ “trail” is on the north side or south side of the street, it is still directly in front of a street of homes currently valued \$500-\$700k+. With all due respect, if any of these homes were where YOU lived, what do you think will happen to your price-point when you decide to one day sell? Again as a Realtor, I guarantee that should I bring a Buyer to view any home along this street – post-trail – their VERY FIRST QUESTION would be “why does that sidewalk look like that?” And my answer to 9/10 Buyers would now serve as a deterrent to that sale because the lot/yard, curb appeal, and confined internal traffic, is forever affected. The price just went down. And all surrounding property values are now negatively affected.

Let me add, please, that I’m all for parks and walking trails. I love Coffee Creek and all of our Duneland trails. I bike and hike often, utilizing all of them. But, I just don’t see why yet another one HAS to be done through our beautiful subdivision - - any subdivision for that matter.

What would be the reason that the current sidewalk already in place can’t be utilized for this same purpose?

I look forward to learning more and will research the information available to me.

Thank you.

From: Iddings, Joshua <Jlddings@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 1:45 PM

To: [REDACTED] Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>
Subject: RE: Chesterton Liberty Trail - Comments to Review

Ms. Gilbertsen,

Thank you for confirming that location information, the proposed project will not result in any right-of-way being acquired from your parcel. The trail will be across the street along the north shoulder of Laurel Creek Drive. I am pointing this out for the benefit of everyone on the design team and it is not meant to offend if you are already aware.

Would you like to meet next week over the phone or via a virtual Microsoft Teams meeting to discuss the project further? Just let us know what would be a good time.

Thank you,
JOSH IDDINGS
Environmental Project Manager

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 2:26 PM
To: Iddings, Joshua <jiddings@structurepoint.com>
Subject: RE: Chesterton Liberty Trail - Comments to Review

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Yes, that is my address.

From: Iddings, Joshua <jiddings@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 10:13 AM
To: [REDACTED] Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>
Subject: FW: Chesterton Liberty Trail - Comments to Review

Michelle Gilbertsen,

We are sorry to hear you are against the project as currently proposed but do want to provide you with additional details to answer your questions. Can you confirm your address is [REDACTED] so that we can ensure we are providing complete

information to you?

As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E.

If you would like to discuss this project further the project team is available for virtual meetings and phone calls. We appreciate the feedback and would like to ensure you are getting the information you are requesting regarding this project.

Thank you,

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

[<image001.png>](#)

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[<image014.png>](#)

[<image015.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

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[<image017.png>](#)

[<image018.png>](#)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2023 2:33 PM

To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: Chesterton Liberty Trail

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

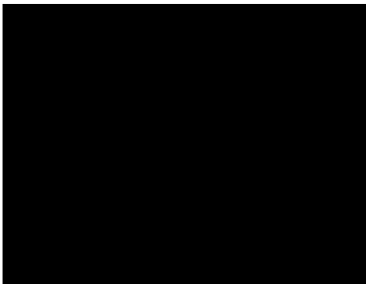
I am writing to vehemently oppose the construction of this trail through Laurel Creek Drive of the Tamarack Subdivision. A public hearing should absolutely be held to offer opposition to this. As a 20-year Realtor [REDACTED] and, a resident of Tamarack living on Laurel Creek Drive, this “new 8’ sidewalk,” replacing the one right in front of my home – and my neighbor’s homes - is nothing short of complete destruction of our property values! This subdivision is one of the finest in Chesterton, and it upholds itself well due to the Homeowners Association’s covenants and restrictions. Properties here have always been well-kept and values have always been intact with some of the most prominent in our town. It is extremely common for Realtors to hear that Tamarack is a very popular and well sought-after subdivision for prospective buyers. To put a larger sidewalk through our yards offers NOTHING positive to us, except more traffic/trash, AND horrible curb appeal for future values. Our subdivision would not be the same at all. All downhill from here. Property values to all homeowners here would plummet.

I believe this is a very selfish proposition, not taking homeowners’ into consideration at all. How many people who want this path would choose to do it straight through their own front yards??

Thank you,

Michelle Gilbertsen

Michelle E. Gilbertsen



Christina Turner comments

From: [Iddings, Joshua](#)
To: [Chris Turner](#); [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Cc: [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O'Dell](#); [Matt Gavelek](#); [Amanda Mccrovitz](#)
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, February 23, 2023 9:40:09 AM
Attachments:

Chris,

Please see the responses below.

Thank you,

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

From: Chris Turner <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 7:52 AM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Iddings, Joshua <JIddings@structurepoint.com>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>; Amanda Mccrovitz <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Good morning,

Please know....we would love a path...just needs some adjustment before building it without additional planning and consideration.

A few more comments after your response:

-The length of the path to head south and then east through Tamarack is far longer than just coming straight down 100E from 1100 (since the sidewalk on 1100 is part of your plan already). The materials for your proposed path would be greater.

- The length from the current terminus of Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1 to the current terminus of Westchester Trail Phase 2 following the path outlined under the preferred alternative is approximately 0.80 mile. The same length from WLT 1 to WLT 2 under the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative is the same distance, 0.80 mi.

- You are correct that the preferred alternative includes a connection along the north side of CR 1100 N to the existing sidewalk that dead ends just west of CR 100 E which increases total trail proposed to be constructed to 0.99 mile. This connection enhances connectivity to residents along CR 1100 N and provides connections to the trail to CR 100 E and Calumet Ave.
- Trail length is not the only factor which went into consideration of the development of the preferred alternative. There are added benefits when comparing the preferred alternative to the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative. These include enhanced access to Tamarack Subdivision Park (a Town of Chesterton Public Facility), minimization of right of way, minimization of impacts to residential properties, a crossing of CR 1100 N which minimized risks to pedestrians, and avoidance of the need to cross into unincorporated Porter County. These are also discussed in the email below.

-The trees needed to be removed behind all of the houses on Catkin/Laurel....is not only expense, but a shame. Is there no protection of trees in Chesterton? (as well as the beautiful parkway trees to be removed in front of the Laurel homes) Will you replace trees so that the homes that path runs behind will not be fully exposed to the path? The effected backyards will be devalued, exposed (lose privacy/safety) and unprotected (potential damage to their own land)will you put up a fence to secure their properties (or replace trees along the path's edge)?

- The project will result in a total of 0.71 acre of tree clearing over the entire project. This is predominantly focused on the north side of CR 1100 N but does include selective cutting within existing Town owned property in Tamarack Subdivision and Tamarack Subdivision Park. Segment 2 of the trail which extends south from CR 1100 N to an Unnamed Tributary of Pope O'Connor Creek will be a raised boardwalk with railings. The project team has met with the US Army Corps of Engineers to lay out this portion of the trail through the forest to avoid tree clearing where possible and prioritize cutting of immature trees where avoidance is not possible. Meetings included walkthrough of the project to identify a corridor through this wooded area on Town property, behind homes on Catkins Circle, that minimized clearing and impacts to wetlands. In fact, both the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management have applauded efforts to avoid tree clearing, minimize impacts to wetlands in this area, and the use of the boardwalk. Post construction the portion of the trail which is boardwalk will still have canopy cover, be in a wooded setting, and has been designed to work with the existing landscape to retain the trees.
- The boardwalk in Segment 2, as noted above, will have a railing and is predominantly through wetland areas which have standing water during parts of the year. The boardwalk was chosen by the Town following conversations with adjacent property owners on Catkins Circle and is an added amenity to minimize potential for pedestrians to leave the trail and navigate onto private property along the reach. The boardwalk also minimizes clearing and allow the Town to retain more trees and provides the adjacent residents to retain more of a buffer.
- Additionally, the Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant flowering crab apple trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents.
- Please see the information on property values at the following link <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>. As a result of the proposed undertaking there is no permanent right of way will be purchased from the Tamarack Subdivision or its residents. All improvements in this stretch of trail are occurring within Town owned property. Additionally, the trail has been designed to retain trees and allows for a grass buffer strip between the curb line and front of the trail. This is an aesthetically pleasing feature.

-The number of homes affected is FAR LESS coming down 100E than your proposal through Tamarack if you look at the number of back yards and driveways overall.

-WE NEED A SAFE PATH from Laurel Creek to 1100..... this could dually serve your needs as well as provide everyone access to walk to downtown Chesterton...which should be a priority as well in an overall Town plan. The County homes that are on 100E (I think there are 4 on the west side?) should have a sidewalk anyway.

- This is not true, coming down CR 100 E would impact additional residential properties as noted below. The CR 100 E alternative more than doubles the number of residential properties which are impacted by right-of-way acquisition. As currently proposed the preferred alternative makes use of Town owned property and right-of-way to navigate from CR 1100 N to CR 100 E without the need to purchase any additional permanent right-of-way.

-To put a pedestrian crossing in the middle of 1100, where there will be no stoplight for cars (assume unless you push a button)....is far more dangerous to pedestrians than adjusting the crosswalk button that already exists at 1100 and 100. Cars will not always have to stop at the pedestrian crosswalk you propose and therefore will not always be paying attention when passing through. Cars already expect to stop at 1100 and 100 stoplight and the cross walk signal there could be easily adjusted to increase the safety (which, btw, no one is concerned about until now??? We have all been using the existing cross walk signal there for years). And the cost to construct a pedestrian crosswalk where one does not exist would be far greater than modifying the one that currently exists at 1100 and 100.

- This is not true. The current proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing. The mid-block crossing will also have advance warning signs and warning lights and will have pavement markings warning drivers of the crossing.
- Regardless of the existing crossing at CR 100 E, the proposed mid-block crossing reduces potential risks to pedestrians along the trail. The preferred alternative also has added benefits when compared to the CR 100 E alternative as noted below and in the bullet points above.

We urge you to take pause, plan this with long term benefits.....go through the red tape with the county and make this right.

- The project team is currently presenting preliminary plans and the environmental document for comment. All information gathered, comments received, and concerns regarding the project are being included as part of the project's environmental documentation, and being considered and responded to by the project team as they are being received.

Chris Turner



On Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 03:37:22 PM CST, Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Good Afternoon Ms. Turner,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area, as you have noted below. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.

Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on your destination in Chesterton and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. For example, the preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, and the Middle School. While the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).

The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered, including additional pedestrian traffic you mention. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right of way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Thank you,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Christina Turner <reply-to+733bb518e2f1@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 12:00 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Christina Turner just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Christina

Last Name: Turner

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I live in Tamarack and have many questions/concerns about the proposed path. As a runner, I have many times questioned why there is NO SIDEWALK on 100, from Laurel Creek to 1100. We need a safe passage on this short segment of road, which would increase foot traffic to our amazing downtown area. This is the RIGHT PATH TO USE for the proposed trail....it would solve the missing sidewalk problem on this segment of road as well as be the easiest path to get to from 1100 to Rail Rd. The proposed meandering path behind/through Tamarack decreases the safety of the Tamarack community, specifically all of the young children who freely play outside in a secured community within a small network of familiar families. Directing public traffic through Tamarack seems not to take the well-being of its homeowners into consideration.

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James Martin comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: "Rene Martin"
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: RE: Re: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission - Mr. Martin
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 8:56:00 AM
Attachments: [RE FW Environmental PI Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission - Mr. Martin.msg](#)
[image001.png](#)

Mr. Martin,

I am sorry you were not aware of the email response back to you regarding your questions. I have attached it to this email and included the responses in blue to your questions below. According to our records the response to your questions was sent on February 22, 2023.

Thank you for your comments. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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From: Rene Martin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 10:33 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Fwd: Re: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission - Mr. Martin

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Ms. Hinkle,

I have not yet received a response to the questions posed to Joshua Iddings below (2/22/2023).

After further review of the plan, I still strongly believe that the proper route would be East on 1100 North to 100 East, then South on 100 East to Coffee Creek. The justifications provided by Joshua do not outweigh the simplicity and safety of this route. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

In addition, I'm sure the costs of the trail would be less. The plan already includes linking to the existing sidewalk on the North side of 1100 North at 100 East. The cost of a straight sidewalk going South on 100 East must be substantially less than cutting numerous trees, building a bridge over the ditch and pouring a zigzagging sidewalk through the park. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Concerning safety, crossing 1100 North at the point designated in the plan, in my opinion, is more dangerous than crossing at the light at 1100 N and 100 E. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Please respond with your comments.

Jim Martin



----- Original Message -----

From: Rene Martin <[\[REDACTED\]](#)>

To: "Iddings, Joshua" <Jiddings@structurepoint.com>, "Hinkle, Meghan" <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Cc: Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>, Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>, "Lorig, Greg" <glorig@structurepoint.com>, "Wolverton, Eric" <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>

Date: 02/22/2023 2:11 PM

Subject: Re: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission - Mr. Martin

Josh,

Thank you for your prompt and thorough response. The rationale and reasons for the proposed route you provided seem sound.

I have some follow-up questions:

1. Will the existing playground equipment in the park remain intact?
 - a. [No, the playground equipment will not be impacted by the proposed project. Please see the Section 4\(f\)/Section 6\(f\) discussion on page 21 of the Categorical Exclusion available at \[www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt\]\(http://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt\) for more information about impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision Park.](#)
2. When will trees designated for removal be marked?
 - a. [Tree removal would be completed by the contractor following award of the project. Prior to the initiation of the project, the contractor will request survey to stake out the limits of the work](#)

and mark trees for removal. Construction is anticipated to begin in the Spring of 2024.

3. Approximately how many trees will be removed on the park land?
 - a. A total of 0.71 acre of trees will be cleared for the entire project. Please see page 16 of the Categorical Exclusion available online in the Terrestrial Habitat section for more information.
4. Approximately how close will the path run to the creek (UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch) as passes by my backyard ([REDACTED] Circle)? I cannot determine that distance from the plans.
 - a. UNT to Pope-O'Connor Ditch is approximately 30 feet from the back of your property line, at the center of your property. The trail will be approximately 30 feet west of your property line.
5. When and where will the public meeting about this project be held?
 - a. A Public Hearing or Meeting is currently not scheduled, however, additional public involvement for this project is being discussed with the Town of Chesterton. Additional next steps of the public involvement will be available on the project website (listed above), mailed to adjacent property owners, and advertised in the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper. The project team and Town are currently providing the public at large the opportunity to comment on the preliminary plans and environmental document.

Thank you,

Jim Martin
[REDACTED]

On 02/21/2023 11:26 AM Iddings, Joshua <jiddings@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Mr. Martin,

Thank you for submitting your comment, you mention some great points which we have clarified below.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area, as you have noted below. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel

to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it requires right-of-way from 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.

As you point out the preferred alternative does require cross walks to be installed or improved at 6 points along the trail. Three of these crosswalks are proposed to be within the Tamarack Subdivision (One at each of the two crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive; one at Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E). By taking the trail down CR 1100 N to CR 100 E you could eliminate both of the crossings of Catkins Circle, which does reduce the number of crossings. However, you would add a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E and remove the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N between 5th and CR 100 E. The current mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon assembly at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. Catkins Circle is a low volume, local road, with posted speed limit of 20 mph and there are currently pedestrian crossings at both of these intersections which serve the Tamarack Subdivision as well as the public in general wishing to walk to the Tamarack Subdivision Park, a Town of Chesterton public facility. The preferred alternative will result in improved access to Tamarack Subdivision Park and improve the crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive to be American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant. The enhanced connectivity to the public park and ADA improvements are a net benefit to the community.

Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on your destination in Chesterton and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. For example, the preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, and the Middle School. While the CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).

The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered, including additional pedestrian traffic you mention. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right of way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E.

If you would like to discuss further we can set up a virtual meeting or phone call with the project team.

Thank you,

JOSH IDDINGS
Environmental Project Manager

9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
structurepoint.com WEB



From: James Martin <reply-to+4baa7e8cc084@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 11:44 AM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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James Martin just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: James

Last Name: Martin

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I acknowledge the following: 1. The Town owns the land Northwest of the Tamarack neighborhood running South from 1100. 2. The four (4) homes located on the West side of 100E running South from 1100 are not on Town Property. Nevertheless, common sense would dictate the the path should continue on 1100 running East to 100E and then South to Railroad. Multiple reasons exist to do so. 1. Following the path will be much easier for its users. 2. Less street crossings: safer for users. 3. Less disruption for an existing, quiet neighborhood. 4. The Tamarack neighborhood would then have a

viable route to access downtown Chesterton immediately from the neighborhood. The Town is taking the path of least resistance rather than doing the right thing. I am requesting that the route of the path be changed to continue on 1000N East to 100E and then South on 100E to Railroad. The logistics can be worked out. The parties just need to make the effort. I am sure many residents of Tamarack would be willing to do any grunt work necessary to assist. Jim Martin [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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<https://www.structurepoint.com/>

Alexis Metcalf comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; [Matt Gavelek](#)
Subject: Comment Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 2:46:00 PM
Attachments:

Good Afternoon,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require new permanent right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon assembly at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for new permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it impacts 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.

The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right-of-way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you

would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Thank you,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Alexis Metcalf <reply-to+45149969ec0b@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 2:22 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Alexis Metcalf just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Alexis

Last Name: Metcalf

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: As a resident of Tamarack and top local realtor, I wanted to share my thoughts of this plan. Running this path through Tamarack is going to hinder property values in the second highest property valued subdivision in the city limits. Running this path from the existing sidewalk on the north end of Laurel Creek East to then North up the

west side of 100e to 1100 N seems to be there better choice. Properties along 100e could use the walk ability to improve their property values and add to curb appeal. It was be wise for town and county to work together and go for the more direct, less expensive version along 100e. That becomes a win for cost and for adding value to these homes. Executing this path through Tamarack doesn't serve as much value to the residents as the town thinks, residents would be delighted to have access to it along 100E

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Tiffany Bozovich comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; [Matt Gavelek](#)
Subject: Comment Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 2:47:00 PM
Attachments:

Good Afternoon Ms. Bozovich,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require new permanent right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for new permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it impacts 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.

The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right-of-way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Thank you,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Tiffany Bozovich <reply-to+f78d6c4d1723@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 3:01 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Tiffany Bozovich just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Tiffany

Last Name: Bozovich

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: Please consider keeping the trail on 100east and not going through Tamarack subdivision. This trail would decrease home values in a neighborhood but it would increase those on 100east and provide a safe walkway along that road which does not exist currently.

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Katie Whalen comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; [Matt Gavelek](#)
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 4:35:00 PM
Attachments:

Good Afternoon Ms. Whalen,

Thank you for submitting your comment. Tree removal was included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the *Environmental Document* that is currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing.

The Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision was sent a Notice of Survey letter. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process and will be taken into consideration during the advancement and approval process. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Thank you,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
structurepoint.com [WEB](#)



From: Katie Whalen <reply-to+cfa8b4a28fa1@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 3:07 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Katie Whalen just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Katie

Last Name: Whalen

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: This project appears to be cutting down several existing trees in peoples yards along laurel creek drive in tamarack. This subdivision prides ourselves on having uniform crab-apple trees lining all of the streets. I want to make sure the project scope plans to replace any trees that are cut down. I know the town of Chesterton claims to be tree-friendly and that they are supposed to plant one every time they remove one, so I would think that would apply here. It would look really terrible to have a stretch of 5 houses with no trees...and making the owners pay for tree replacements doesn't seem fair because they didn't ask for this widening.

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Dave Turner comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; [Matt Gavelek](#)
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 4:37:00 PM
Attachments:

Good Afternoon Mr. Turner,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. This alternative would avoid impacts to properties along Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require new permanent right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton and result in trail users needing to cross CR 1100 N at CR 100 E. The current proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for new permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. Additionally, the preferred alternative minimizes impacts to residential properties throughout the project, as it impacts 4 residential parcels versus 9 if the trail utilized CR 100 E. This is a net benefit to the community as it reduces impacts and costs.

Tree removal was included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the *Environmental Document* that is currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as

described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM.

To date, coordination with the neighborhood has included distribution of a Notice of Survey. The Town has also talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years. Currently, preliminary plans and environmental documentation have been developed and we are providing an opportunity to comment. This included notifying the Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision, adjacent landowners, local stakeholders, and the public at large of the proposed project. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process and will be taken into consideration during the advancement and approval process.

The preferred alternative will result in impacts to the Tamarack Subdivision which need to be considered, including additional pedestrian traffic you mention. However, when compared to other alternatives the preferred alternative reduces impacts to adjacent properties by prioritizing use of existing Town owned right-of-way and provides additional benefits to the community, including enhanced access to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Finally, the proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N in the preferred alternative is desirable as it reduces the number of travel lanes and traffic movements pedestrians crossing the roadway must watch for when compared to the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Thank you,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Dave Turner <reply-to+e2cb7c1ff335@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 5:05 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Dave Turner just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Dave

Last Name: Turner

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: As this reads, it seems like a lot of work while avoiding the area where it is needed, which is the westside of 100 from 1100 to Laurel Creek. This is going to increase traffic in an established neighborhood that is not set up for it, was given no voice in the matter and will increase stress for the residents. Not to mention safety issue and decreased property values. Also, isn't it wrong to remove all of those beautiful trees? Isn't that some kind of environmental violation? More time needs to be spent and the neighborhood consulted prior to this paradigm shift in our home values.

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Deanne Manojlovic comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: "Deanne Manojlovic"
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: RE: Followup to WLT responses
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023 12:34:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Ms. Manojlovic,

Thank you for your comments. Your comments have been documented and will be taken into consideration.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
Best Employers in Ohio*

From: Deanne Manojlovic <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 12:57 AM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Followup to WLT responses

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Meghan,

Below please find our questions and comments with your responses in blue. We have added additional comments and questions in red and highlighted in yellow the questions that were not answered.

1. Why was this the only pathway considered? The more logical and straightforward pathway would be to continue the path from the already professionally installed corner of 1100 and 100 E to Railroad Road and 100 E. The electronic crosswalk is already there (and paid for) to be utilized, as are the ADA ramps and landscaping, and it would be the safest place to cross 1100.. Continuing down 100 makes the most sense. **If that path was actually investigated, please provide the dates of when this was done, who was contacted and participated in the discussion, what was discussed, and who decided that that pathway was not “feasible”.** No one would provide Deanne with that information when she asked. Numerous excuses have been thrown around as to why they want to infringe on the homeowners in Tamarack. **An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties (Which properties are you referring to? There are 6 residential properties along Laurel Creek and 6 + the corner house again on Catkin Circle that would be directly affected by the trail. On the other hand, there are 5 residential homes if the trail is put on 100) and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton (Why does this matter? Does the Town of Chesterton have difficulty working together with the county?). As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6 (This states the trail on 100 would “increase impacts to residential and commercial properties..” There are no commercial properties there; there are 5 houses, less than would be affected in Tamarack).** This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E (At 1100 and 5th St. trail users will cross the street to the north side of 1100/west side of 5th St. and then cross the street again to the east side of 5th St. Structure Point does not seem concerned about the traffic movements at that 4 way stop intersection. Did Structure Point actually investigate the proposed mid-block crossing or did you just look at drawings? Crossing mid-block on 1100 is very dangerous; vehicles going west crest over a hill close to the crossing as do vehicles going east. 1100 is a very busy road; it is much, much safer to cross at the traffic light with pedestrian signals). This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long (Is that accurate? 2 lanes of traffic is 23 feet while 3

lanes is over twice as much? Just verifying.) Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project (Not that it matters what they are in favor of, but we're sure they weren't in favor of the trail only if it went through Tamarack). This project would connect to the existing sidewalks and trails in the area. (We still disagree that crossing in the middle of a busy road is safer than crossing at a corner with a stop light and pedestrian signals.)

2. The Town of Chesterton is known as a tree AND bird town and yet they are choosing to unnecessarily cut down about 3/4 acre of trees, homes to countless wildlife, to divert this pathway so it will go through the center of our established neighborhood. We are devastated that the wildlife and their habitat that we see and hear on a DAILY basis are going to be impacted and destroyed-deer, fox, opossum, chipmunks, squirrels, groundhogs, raccoons, coyotes, and more, as well as untold birds including at least 5 species of woodpeckers (including the protected red headed woodpecker), owls, cranes, a variety of waterfowl, orioles, blue birds, cardinals and more. Tree removal and protected species impacts were included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal and protected species impacts can be found on pages 16-18 of the *Environmental Document* that is currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM. (Our comment pointed out that the Town of Chesterton claims to support and celebrate trees and birds while in practice they continue to disrupt and destroy them unnecessarily. Your answer basically says that the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management deemed it okay to destroy the trees and habitats so the Town of Chesterton and Structure Point find it acceptable to do as well).

3. Why does the Town of Chesterton feel entitled to infringe on the rights, safety and privacy of the residents in our established neighborhood in order to install a walking path THROUGH it, right up the middle of the subdivision entrance, disturbing the aesthetics and continuity of the neighborhood and going against the Homeowners Association covenants. The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. Under current conditions, there is nothing preventing the public at large from using said resources. The Homeowners Associations covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision and steps have been taken to provide a trail design which is aesthetically pleasing. (Pleasing to whom?

Structure Point who doesn't live here? It is NOT pleasing! And the town's desire to gut and intrude upon one of the most desired subdivisions in Chesterton is detrimental and appalling.)

- The eight-foot-wide trail will be concrete to match existing concrete drives, sidewalks, and curb ramps in the subdivision (This will be unsightly! We don't want or need more concrete in our neighborhood!)
- The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision (An 8 foot concrete trail up the entryway of our neighborhood and the removal of our matching trees does NOT match the feel and layout of our subdivision).
- The town is evaluating plantings to replace street trees which would be removed along Laurel Creek Drive.
- The town has used a boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (which extends from CR 1100 N into the Tamarack Subdivision Park).
 - The boardwalk is of a style which will eliminate the need for excavation in this area
 - The boardwalk has been laid out to minimize tree clearing ($\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre of trees is minimal to you? Not to us!), avoid clearing larger trees, and allows the town to retain as many trees as possible within the town own property. This is a benefit to all, including adjacent landowners.
 - The boardwalk will have a raised railing to keep people on the trail and prevent short cuts or sidepaths from being created.
- Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. However, this does not mean that these topics are not being discussed. The point of these conversations is to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the preliminary plans.

4. The intended path from 1100 to the Tamarack Park must be a raised platform as it is running through wetlands. The area is wet year round and serves as overflow for the existing creek. During peak water levels it even encroaches on current property lines. The homeowners whose properties are adjacent to that intended path should not have water diverted into their yards because of the installation of an unnecessary path. There will be no disruption of water as we are using a boardwalk that requires no excavation to place. The proposed boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the ground and is fully adjustable (up or down) to allow the uninterrupted passage of water. The trail crosses areas of wetlands which hold water well into the growing season based on field observations. Areas which currently flood or hold water will continue to do so post construction, there will be no change in the drainage of these areas as a result of the trail (We would hope not.)

5. Is the town prepared to care for and maintain that raised platform properly? Will the installation of that path disrupt the natural flow of groundwater and the underground water pathway that is currently there? The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response (That is the concern as the town does not seem to have enough personnel to handle the existing trails and parks) . If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the “Report a Concern” link on the Town of Chesterton Recreation website <https://www.chestertonin.org/174/Recreation>. The proposed trail construction is not to a depth which would affect the flow of groundwater. Please see info presented above. (We would hope not.)

6. We have NEVER seen an 8 foot walking path installed through an already established neighborhood, disrupting the aesthetics and continuity of those homes. Walking paths, especially 8 foot wide ones, are generally behind homes or part of a pre-planned community. Thank you for your comment. (This is unprecedented!)

7. We are concerned about the safety of crossing 1100 in the middle of the roadway. The plan to install a crosswalk in the middle of this insanely busy road seems careless and reckless when the crossing could be at an established, light controlled crosswalk and continue in a straight path to the next intersection at Railroad Road. See response to question #1 above. (See above as well. Not being a local company, perhaps Structure Point does not realize how busy 1100 is and how dangerous it will be. We find it hard to believe that anyone would advocate that crossing in the middle of a busy road with hills on both sides is safer than crossing at a stoplight with pedestrian signals!)

8. We are also extremely concerned that a walking path bringing strangers right past our backyards and homes jeopardizes the safety of us and our children, not to mention our homes. Directing strangers through the woods where they can discreetly peer into our backyards and homes and leading them to a secluded park is a dangerous, irrational choice. Then continuing the path in front of our private homes where again strangers have the opportunity to invade their privacy is a safety concern for our neighborhood. We have many young children who will be left vulnerable by this ill-proposed plan. Law enforcement is well aware of the activities that walking paths harbor and that are detrimental to the safety and security of neighborhoods, be it our children or our property and possessions. The residents of Tamarack did not buy their homes knowing the privacy, safety, and beauty of their homes would be jeopardized by inviting strangers to wander it. The safety and security is under the jurisdiction of the Police Department. (It will be difficult for the Police Department to secure the secluded park and extended stretch of woods.). The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website

<https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>. (The information on that site is all fluff and opinion pieces- if people thought their homes would sell for more, if they thought the path increased their value, etc. Over 80% of the realtors I spoke to said it will negatively impact our property values and ability to sell our homes.)

9. Current walking paths in Chesterton are riddled with trash that the town does not remove. The Town of Chesterton already has difficulty keeping up the sidewalks we already have. The town does not properly maintain the existing trails and yet wants to install an 8 foot atrocity through the yards of Tamarack homeowners. Will the town maintain those properly? What about the landscaping and trees that they plan to remove? Will the town be clearing the walking paths through the seasons including snow and ice? **We assume the Town of Chesterton is responsible for any accidents that occur on the walking path as opposed to the homeowner.** The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response (as previously stated, they are understaffed but thank you for passing the buck again). If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the “Report a Concern” link on the Town of Chesterton Recreation website <https://www.chestertonin.org/174/Recreation>.

10. According to FHWA-Indiana Environmental Document CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION / ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION:

a. The “opportunity for a public hearing is required” and yet we have requested and been denied that opportunity. The public involvement for this project included notifying the Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision, adjacent landowners, local stakeholders, and the public at large of the proposed project through publication of two Public Notices in the Northwest Indiana Times, the most widely distributed newspaper in the area. The opportunity to request a public hearing and submit comments is currently occurring and was extended to March 15th. Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. We have not indicated nor implied that a hearing or public information meeting cannot be held. (No, you did not say it CANNOT be held, but when you tell us we can request a public meeting and we do and then you tell us there is not one planned but we can call with questions, well, that is a denial. You did not offer to set one up for all of us who requested one; you offered to talk individually or answer emails.) We have indicated there are not currently any scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. Information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>.

b. “The shared-use path would then extend south along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road...” and “.... would increase impacts to residential and commercial properties and would extend beyond the limits of the Town of Chesterton and into an

unincorporated portion of Porter County.” This was mentioned at least a couple times but there are no commercial properties along the west side of 100 where the path would go so it makes us wonder why it was worded that way. Along the segment from 1100 to Railroad Road there are 5 houses that are unincorporated. The remaining land (and the majority of that segment) belongs to Tamarack Subdivision. As far as we know, no one has explored the opportunity for the town of Chesterton and Porter County to work together to install this walking trail down 100, the most reasonable, non-intrusive, environmentally friendly, common sense place to construct it. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 East Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request (So the town didn’t pursue the path down 100 because the county did not have money to contribute to it? Chesterton didn’t bother to look into the availability of easements because they didn’t want to pay for the sidewalks that they wanted to install? If the Town of Chesterton wants the path, they should pay for the path. Installing the path down 100 is the cheaper, more logical, more beneficial and safer route). Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners (Again please explain as that is inaccurate; more property owners will be infringed upon by the path gutting its way through Tamarack), the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

c. There is a pipeline that runs through the woods on the path from 1100 to the park. **How will that be handled?** Coordination with utility companies to identify potential conflicts and relocation of the appropriate facilities, if needed, has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. (Our question regarding Marathon Pipeline was ignored)

d. Based upon their expertise and experience, 80% of the real estate agents/brokers I spoke to believe that the installation of this trail THROUGH our neighborhood could negatively impact our property values. Why is the town infringing on the residents of our subdivision when other viable alternatives are available. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>. (Again, this site is useless. The references rely on opinions for their claims.)

We look forward to your reply.

Jovo and Deanne Manojlovic

Matt and Roxanne Enzer

Colin and Christa Ragland

From: [Iddings, Joshua](#)
To: [Deanne Manojlovic](#); [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: RE: WLT project
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 10:52:46 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Ms. Manojlovic,

Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. We have not indicated nor implied that a hearing or public information meeting cannot be held. We have indicated there are not currently any scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future.

Thank you,

JOSH IDDINGS
Environmental Project Manager

From: Deanne Manojlovic <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2023 2:06 AM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Re: WLT project

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Hello,

Your original notification states that "all interested persons may request a public hearing be held" but when I and others request ;a public hearing we are told that you are "not holding any public meetings." Please explain the meaning of this discrepancy and denial. Thank you.

Deanne Manojlovic

From: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 9:05 AM
To: Deanne Manojlovic <[REDACTED]>; Iddings, Joshua <Jiddings@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>;

Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>

Subject: RE: WLT project

Good Morning Ms. Manojlovic,

At this time, the project team is gathering information, comments, and concerns regarding the project but are not holding any public meetings. This does not preclude the Town from holding a public meeting or public hearing in the future. More information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>. All information gathered, comments received, and concerns regarding the project are being included as part of the project’s environmental documentation and being considered and responded to by the project team as they are being received.

The formal public hearing process for a federal highway funded project includes an opportunity for the public to verbally present comments for the project record. However, the project team does not present formal answers to comments submitted during the hearing or during the comment period. All comments received during the formal public hearing process are compiled and answers will be provided in writing after the approval of the project. A notice of the availability of responses to comments will be sent out only after the approval of the project. Therefore, if you have questions and concerns, we encourage you to reach out to the team or Town (copied on all replies) to discuss in a format more conducive to conversation.

Thank you,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



From: Deanne Manojlovic <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 2:09 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Re: WLT project

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Hello,

Yes, I do have many questions and concerns regarding the project but I do not want to discuss this in a one on one virtual meeting or phone call. I would like a public meeting to discuss the questions and concerns I and my neighborhood community have. Thank you.

Deanne Manojlovic

From: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 11:31 AM
To: Deanne Manojlovic <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Iddings, Joshua <jiddings@structurepoint.com>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>; Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>
Subject: RE: WLT project

Good Afternoon Ms. Manojlovic,

Are there any specific questions or concerns you have regarding the project that we could answer?

Project information and documentation can be found online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Thank you,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



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From: Deanne Manojlovic <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 11:45 AM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: WLT project

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Meghan Hinkle,

I request a public hearing on the Westchester-Liberty Trail project phase III.

Deanne Manojlovic

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Amy Morgan comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 1:30:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Morgan,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration.

Regarding notification of the public, the Town has talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years and have sent out Notice of Surveys to adjacent property owners that engineering work is ongoing. The public involvement for this project included notifying the Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision, adjacent landowners, local stakeholders, and the public at large of the proposed project through publication of two Public Notices in the Northwest Indiana Times, the most widely distributed newspaper in the area. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement, which is additional step taken by the Town to get the word out. If this is the first time you are hearing about the project, plans are not final and your feedback is a valuable part of the project. There is still time to review preliminary plans and environmental documentation and provide feedback. Comments are being accepted through March 1. Project information including the Categorical Exclusion environmental document and project plans are currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). Information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Temporary right of way would be required from one parcel to reconstruct their driveway but would revert back to the property owner post construction. An alternative utilizing CR 1050 was not considered because it would not connect to existing sidewalks or trails in the area.

Regarding students walking to school, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project. This project would connect to the existing sidewalks and trails in the area.

Regarding the playground equipment, not impacts will occur to the playground from this project.

Regarding tree impacts, and the boardwalk in the wooded area, tree removal and constructing the boardwalk was included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the *Environmental Document* that is currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM.

Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. Currently no public meetings are scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Amy Morgan <reply-to+d44fe9a5a838@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 10:38 AM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Amy Morgan just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Amy

Last Name: Morgan

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: Hello, we are very concerned about this project and the unexpected, inconsistent (very few were notified in our neighborhood), last minute and incomplete notification we have been given. This is an unfair short notice we as home owners are being given in Tamarack to respond. We need a hearing that is both plenty of time to prepare and get word out as well as given widespread notification to ALL who live here. This feels sneaky and as though the town is trying to get something through slyly when they have not been forthcoming. There remain many questions and with these details above, there remains the need for a highlighted map to be printed and given to those who are in our neighborhood. The clarification of purpose? For instance, the roads 1050 and 1100 have been in need of safe passage for students to get to school and if 1100 will not have a full sidewalk, kids will stay on 1100 even more now instead of heading into a wooded path, through a neighborhood that goes south, when they need to go north on Calumet. This seems like another short sighted, segmented design like the disjointed sidewalks all over Chesterton. Visitors are not going to want to go through a neighborhood - I will not want my children walking to school, even HS through the woods alone. Not to mention how this will scar Tamarack, add unknown visitors and traffic to the playground which we allow our young children to play at - (is there talk of how this will look for our playground and path there?) For cost purposes, since we were told that Chesterton won't pay for a sidewalk on 1100 or 1050 because it is a Country road...Then simply for cost purposes, how is the uprooting of trees and sidewalk in Tamarack and the building of a boardwalk through the woods in comparison to a straight sidewalk on 1100?? People coming from Coffee Creek, are they supposed to go west through Tamarack and then what? Go to 5th street to get to DT for diner or the Farmers market or USPS? Why in the world would we not add a sidewalk for THIS foot traffic hazard? People will continue to walk on 1100 between 5th and Calumet and along 100/ Calumet. There will

be continued and even greater concern for that danger as you just increased the traffic that would not want to waste time and energy to go through a neighborhood - esp if you are on a bike or walking. *** This hearing we need must be AFTER Spring Break as you know we want to be here for it and to be fair and forthcoming we all need more time to prepare and make the hearing in person. Thank you.

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To edit your email settings, go to your Inbox on desktop.

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023 1:56:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Morgan,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200
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structurepoint.com WEB



From: Amy Morgan <reply-to+273768c9ff5d@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 4:10 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Amy Morgan just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Amy

Last Name: Morgan

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: Hello again, I wonder if this three phase Trail plan actually has the potential to be executed separately? [Construction](#) for all 3 segments of this project is anticipated to begin in spring 2024.

The Public is asking for the reasons we are not facing the continual need for 1100 to connect along North CR 100 East to the intersection of Rail Road- As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

there will continue to be pedestrian traffic along CR100 that is dangerous and cutting through Laurel Creek does not serve the neighboring community – The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments together and connect to the existing sidewalk segments in the area. Westchester Liberty Trail 1 terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E. The existing sidewalk terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then the sidewalk continues north from the intersection along CR 100 E. Westchester Liberty Trail 2 terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. This project fills that need by providing a connection to CR 100 E along CR 1100 N. This is a benefit to the community and all trail users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack

Park.

Once this trail is constructed to connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E which turns into Calumet Ave.

who has asked the opinion of those who are over on Rail Orad and Kelle Dive what they think? Do they care to be connected to Tamarack or do they walk in Tamarack to avoid the busy and unsafe roads of Cr 100 and 1100? Yes, opportunities for the public at large have been offered and the community outside the Tamarack Subdivision has overwhelmingly supported the project. The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment. The Town has also talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years. Notices to adjacent property owners were sent out on February 15th and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement and Chesterton has posted info on their facebook page, which are additional steps taken by the Town to get the word out. The Town Council has also hosted concerned residents at Town Council Meeting listening to concerns and attended HOA meeting to gather information specifically from the Tamarack Subdivision Residents.

Furthermore, the recognition of the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission of this trail as a “High Priority” is largely attributed to the significance to provide connectivity to existing and planned trail connections in the community at large. This trail connection is an important step in filling the literal gap in connectivity for pedestrians wishing to travel in Chesterton.

Many folks may be divided on this Trail project and the support and frustation is unhelpful when the communication is unclear; when all three phases are lumped together and the shade is cast upon Tamarack, we lose sight of a long term benefit to sidewalks and bie paths. I do not know of any opposition to the 1100 Sidewalk. The purpose of the project is to connect Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1 to Phase 2 and fill the literal gap in connectivity. The project is discussed as three segments in the Categorical Exclusion document only to organize and ease the communication. To be clear, this project will be constructed all at once.

All of Chesterton needs to get from the East Side of Calument and 49 to the Schools, which will soon have more traffic with the addition onto WIS of 7&8th grade... so why would we not direct the plans to the ultimate good which is to have connected sidewalks through all of Chesterton, including CR 1050 where many High schoolers walk home from since it is shorter that was, and students of all schools run along? CR 1050 N is outside the project area for this project. The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1, Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2, and the existing sidewalk which terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E.

Once this trail is constructed to connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave and Downtown Chesterton from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E which turns into Calumet Ave.

Once this trail is constructed to connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St. From this intersection, there are existing trails and pedestrian facilities, including cross walks, that lead to the High School, Chesterton Middle School, Bailey Elementary School, and Chesterton Intermediate School. Furthermore from this same intersection the public can use existing pedestrian facilities to access various parks and the local Boys and Girls Club.

Is it not a wasted opportunity to face this need now for a sidewalk along Cr100, and a waste of time and money on the ripping up of trees and perfectly good sidewalks in Tamarack on Laurel Creek? Thank you for your comment.

Our HOA has been charged to maintain these trees and sidewalk areas that we love, yet we are now told that was not ours to protect? And then they will pave over this all with 8 feet of sidewalk? It is almost always the case that homeowners and adjacent property owners are charged with mowing and maintaining public right of way in front of their homes. This is not unique to Tamarack Subdivision and is often due to covenants and restrictions included in the agreement between the Town and Subdivision. If there are specific concerns about the maintenance of the right of way, Town representatives are copied on this response.

To be clear, the proposed installation of an 8-ft wide concrete trail along Laurel Creek Drive will not wipe out everything. There will remain a 4-6-ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing curb line and front edge of the trail. Additionally, the trail is being widened towards the curb to minimize impacts to homeowners. Additionally, although not currently shown on the preliminary plans, the Town is

investigating landscaping along Laurel Creek Drive to replace lost street trees.

The Homeowners Associations covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property.

There is already 8 feet total of cement sidewalks on both sides of the road. There is currently a 4 foot wide sidewalk on the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and a 4 foot wide sidewalk on the south side of Laurel Creek Drive. The existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive is not wide enough to accommodate different types of pedestrians (bikes, strollers, runners, and walkers) without users stepping off the sidewalk to pass each other or using the adjacent lawn to walk/ride when passing. The existing sidewalk is also not compliant with American with Disability Act requirements. The preferred alternative would construct an 8-foot wide path which is designed to accommodate all types of pedestrians and will meet ADA standards. This is a benefit to all users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack Park.

There is no need to provide a bikepath width of cement to deem this a worthy trail system. As a biker and trail user, I do not want to go along homes where dogs can come right up to me... Town of Chesterton code specifically requires dogs be leashed, and prohibits their running at large (Chapter 4 of the Chesterton Town Code 4-1 and 4-2). Regardless of your location, you should not be subject to harassment by dogs in Town right of way. Please contact your local official regarding any specific dog concerns as there are existing Town Codes to handle these situations.

this path will also increase traffic on a sidewalk where our children plan and hangout, often unaware of traffic already. The proposed project will not change the ability of Tamarack Subdivision residents to use the public right of way. They will still be able to hang out on the trail but should be aware of their surrounding regardless of the location or situation. The proposed improvements include specific improvements to reduce risks for pedestrians using the trail. This includes providing American with Disability Act compliant facilities and marked cross walks with advance warning signs and high visibility paint.

The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

Also, a main reason the homeowners are upset is that the trail through Tamarack was originally rumored to be a mere trail cutting through to the high school and vaguely directed ehind the park, not clearly mentioned that it would cut right THROUGH the park, behind homes

and then using Laurel Creek to check a box of saying they have connected the WLT. The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.

If this trail goes through phase three, the town loses a huge opportunity they will have to face eventually, which is to make the sidewalk along CR100 for the growing occupants on 49 East. The sidewalks in Chesterton need to be maintained, with a master plan that is cohesive, not segmenting them further. Thank you for your comment. The Town is copied on this comment and response and The Town of Chesterton has a Comprehensive Plan (2010) which includes trail planning.

and then having a huge removal of already established trees - I thought that Chesterton is a member of Tree Town USA, so why would they even consider doing that? Please see response above regarding tree impacts.

The list of pros vs Cons has been presented and collected by your organization, however, why are you not providing a public notice of the need for the better solution to come together? Please see responses above regarding the planning of the trail, alternatives considered for the project, and notifications that have been completed to date.

A trail For the Town should be done For the Town, by those who live here. No one expects to have a trail run through their front yard in a development where building the home included paying for a sidewalk and maintaining that area and trees - of course the owners of homes along a county road matter as well, however that is a consideration all homeowners take when choosing to live along a busy, public County Road as opposed to a quiet neighborhood with a sidewalk to maintain and enjoy. Lastly, it is upsetting to read the snarky comments by anyone, however we need to remember that the lack of upfront communication is where the defensive and aggressive tones are coming from. A trail through the woods is FAR different from a Trail through your front yard and disrupted driveway!!! Now that this has begun to stir up so many upset people, I hope Strucutrepoint will be professional and show a clear leadership here to unite a town instead of literally ripping it up and leaving it worse than it was before. Thank you for your comment.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

[Respond Now](#)

Robert Kania comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: "Robert Kania"
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O'Dell](#); "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: RE: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 3:28:00 PM
Attachments:

Mr. Kania,

Thank you for confirming your address.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



Best Places to Work in Indiana
Best Employers in Ohio

From: Robert Kania <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 2:56 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Re: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

I can confirm that is our address, but I never received anything from Structure Point or the Town regarding the plans since maybe 2020? The last we knew it was one of 3 proposals and from what everyone has told us, this was the path chosen.

Rob

On Tue, Mar 7, 2023 at 1:47 PM Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Mr. Kania,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration.

Our records indicate a Notice of Survey and a Legal Notice of Planned Improvement was sent to Robert and Melissa Kania at [REDACTED] which was based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. Could you confirm that is your address?

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 OFFICE

317.716.8446 CELL

structurepoint.com WEB



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
Best Employers in Ohio*

From: Robert Kania <reply-to+ecf446b9cf2b@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 12:29 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Robert Kania just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Robert

Last Name: Kania

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I am totally outraged by all of this. I have never received a letter regarding any of these plans and my house is one of the ones to be most affected. We only knew about it, when they were marking lines in my yard and after two days, we finally got a worker to tell us what was going on. People in the neighborhood mentioned getting things in the mail, but we never did. The Town has talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years and have sent out Notice of Surveys to adjacent property owners that engineering work is ongoing.

Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>

This project is absolutely absurd. I want to address several of these issues.

1. I do not understand the need for this project at all. I have heard from other people that you received funding and need to spend the money. I run every day through the roads of Chesterton and see all the potholes, flooded streets and segmented sidewalks that need repair, maybe this money could be used more for these things instead. I do not understand the need to create a trail from 1100, in the middle of 1100 mind you, crossing one of the most dangerous streets we have without a stop sign or stop light, to create a path to Coffee Creek. Yes, it might be a way to get Tamarack people to the high school, but I would not want my kids crossing 1100 without any stop sign or stoplight to help. Repairs to the existing streets and sidewalks are not included in this project. The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments (Westchester Liberty Trail 1 and Westchester Liberty Trail 2) together, and to existing sidewalk segments in the area. The proposed mid-block crossing minimizes

the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.

2. If you are already planning on putting in a full sidewalk all the way down 1100 to the corner by Teachers Credit Union, then you should just build a sidewalk from there down to Rail Road to connect the two. You have a stoplight there already with a crosswalk and signal buttons. We have needed a safe sidewalk there for years for Tamarack residents to get to the Round the Clock and other places. With your plan, we have to walk all the way through the park, cross 1100, again with no stop sign or stoplight and walk all the way back to the TCU corner, it makes no sense whatsoever. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.

3. The plans you have cut around the back of my property and they cut immediately around my property to start the trail of terror through Tamarack. You are going to take one of the best neighborhoods in Chesterton and gut it for an 8 ft. "trail" through peoples front yards. I have run the Duneland Trail and notice it goes behind subdivisions, not through them. If I wanted a trail in my neighborhood I would have stayed in Villages of Sand Creek. One of the reasons we left was we didn't like people walking through our yard at all times with their sidewalk system. We chose Tamarack for the beauty and charm of the quiet neighborhood. Now you want to allow anyone and everyone to wander through using this trail just to cut through to Coffee Creek. The trail alignment through the park and along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners. You are making people cut down their trees, as a result of this project no landowners within Tamarack Subdivision will be required to cut down trees on their private property. These trees are within the Town right-of-way. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. remove sprinkler systems, move electrical boxes and other things just to have people go through their yard. No permanent right of way will be acquired within the Tamarack Subdivision and all work will occur within existing town owned right of way in the subdivision. Please let us know where

sprinkler line exists within town owned right of way for your property. Coordination for all impacts to utilities impacted by the project has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. I know those things are owned by the Town easements, but they were already there when we moved in during 2010. I can't help that they were already there, but you want to remove trees to replace them with concrete, not a beautiful addition. People in Tamarack take pride in their homes and their yards. We work really hard to make sure it is as nice as possible. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. You tore up all our yards with Fiber Optic Cable last summer that nobody wanted. Now I have 3 ugly green boxes in my yard thanks to that. A few summers ago you tore up my yard to do water line repairs across Laurel Creek. Who knows what else you will do to continue to tear apart one of Chesterton's nicest subdivisions. The simple answer is don't. Go around it, it is the easiest path and will have the least effect on houses. The previous fiber optic cable and water line projects are not related to this project.

4. People say that property values will not decrease as a result, but I know this is not the case. These house are over half a million dollars and rising. Do you think we want anyone and everyone filing through? Who is going to patrol this "trail?" Who will monitor who is on it, back in the woods where anything can happen? Who is going to make sure that people don't do damage to the properties you are out to hurt? The answer is nobody. No one will monitor these trails. No one will keep them up. Nobody will care once this money is spent. Build the trail and connect and be done with it. I know this for a a fact, on phase II nobody monitors the overgrowth of trees that covers half of the trail that leads to coffee creek, so I am sure it will continue with this phase as well. As upkeep goes away, so do our property values. I know for a fact, I would not buy the house I have now if it would have had a "trail" going right through the front yard. I can't believe this isn't a joke, making a trail going through people's front yards. Whoever chose this idea was insane. The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmlead@chestertonin.org or submit a "Report a Concern" at the following website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>. The safety and security is under the jurisdiction of the Police Department. If there is a specific issue you can submit a "Report a Concern" at the following website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

Regarding property values, the National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional

information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

5. Concrete trails. As a runner, I can tell you that concrete trails are absolutely terrible for knees and joints. No runner would ever use these trails. I run all over this city and never use the trails by the boys and girls club. They are awful on body joints. This means that the trail is for bicyclists I guess. If you have ever tried to bike in coffee creek you realize how useless of an endeavor this is, so again what is the purpose. I don't want people zipping past my house at all hours on their bikes. You don't monitor kids on bikes ever. I have been through downtown Chesterton with kids zipping in and out of traffic all the time.

Now you want them to zip all through our front yards on your "trails."
Dumb This trail is being designed to be consistent with the existing trails and sidewalks in the area. The eight-foot-wide trail will be concrete to match existing concrete drives, sidewalks, portions of the Westchester Liberty Trail, and curb ramps in the subdivision. This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic.

6. Public Nuisances. Looking up law statues I have found the Nuisance per se. These show that if a trail causes a public nuisance it can be blocked or redone. I know you don't think it will be a nuisance. I know certain people on our board or on the other side of the neighborhood won't either. But the truth is, this doesn't affect them. This affects the houses you are about to tear through and the people that will be bothering them from this point on. I know for a fact that we have had to call the police a few times for people walking through the neighborhood or things going on at the park. You are just encouraging more of these things to happen. [Is there a specific law or statute you are referring to? If so, could you please send that to me?](#)

In conclusion, this trail is an outrage to the Tamarack Community. We received no letter, no mention or anything. From what I have heard, we are so far into the process there is nothing we can do. That is a travesty and makes me want to contact my lawyer immediately. [That is not true. The plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details. Your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration.](#)

We received no information, most of the stuff I have mentioned is things I heard from other people who were either informed or think they were. So if some of things were false please clarify. [Notices were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included.](#)

Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>

Just know that you are violating my rights as a homeowner in the town. We chose Tamarack as a secluded neighborhood without the gates and security of Sand Creek. It is a wonderful neighborhood, but this is going to ruin the seclusion and peace that makes it so great. The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. The Homeowners Associations covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision.

Like I said I run through Chesterton every day, usually 10-11 miles a day. I have no problem running on the roads every day. If you feel a trail is a necessity then it should be through the path of least resistance. It should be from 1100 straight down to Rail Road. it should not tear up one of the best communities you have. I request a formal meeting where I will have no problem addressing these issues in person. Thank you. Robert Kania Thank you for your comment. Pending the results of this opportunity for comment and to request a formal hearing the project team, Town, and INDOT will discuss next steps. It is anticipated that further public involvement will be completed. If additional public meetings or a public hearing is held, notice of such meeting will be sent to all adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and published in the Northwest Indiana Times (as required) by the most recent INDOT guidance documentation and standards. Additionally, notices will be sent to all those who provided contact information during this comment period.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

[Respond Now](#)

If you think this submission is spam, [report it as spam](#).

Melissa Kania comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O"Dell](#); ["Matt Gavelek"](#)
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Friday, March 3, 2023 12:50:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Kania,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration.

Our records indicate a Notice of Survey and a Legal Notice of Planned Improvement was sent to Robert and Melissa Kania at [REDACTED] which was based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. Could you confirm that is your address?

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
Best Employers in Ohio*

From: Melissa Kania <reply-to+3aa1c862c858@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2023 5:23 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Hello,

I am following up to secure a Public Hearing in regards to the Westchester Liberty Trail (WLT) Project

This will need to be made after April 3rd of this year to ensure the entire community is available for proper communication on the proposal of this project.

Please contact me asap in regard to this request and the anticipated timeline our Tamarack Community can expect. Your

request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. Pending the results of this opportunity for comment and to request a formal hearing the project team, Town, and INDOT will discuss next steps. It is anticipated that further public involvement will be completed. If additional public meetings or a public hearing is held, notice of such meeting will be sent to all adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and published in the Northwest Indiana Times (as required) by the most recent INDOT guidance documentation and standards. Additionally, notices will be sent to all those who provided contact information during this comment period.

This email that was sent Feb. 21st 2022 of the proposed trail is the FIRST I am hearing of this and it is widely disputed on being placed in my yard and in our private community, Not to mention there are much more suitable options. Notices were sent out

on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. The Homeowners Association of Tamarack Subdivision and local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that time. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>

This trail DOES NOT meet the needs of this community and is heavily disputed.

Melissa Kania just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Melissa

Last Name: Kania

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: HOW IS THIS PROJECT MOVING TOWARDS CONSTRUCTION?!? NO PROPER NOTIFICATION HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO ME OR ANY MEMBER OF OUR HOUSEHOLD LOCATED AT [REDACTED] (35) IN TAMARACK SUBDIVISION UNTIL THE EMAIL FEB 21ST 2023 BY OUR SUBDIVISION PROPERTY MANAGER. NO OTHER CONTACT OR NOTIFICATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO US BY THE TOWN OF CHESTERTON. I WOULD LIKE THE COPIES OF THE PUBLIC NOTICES THAT HAVE BEEN SENT OUT ON BEHALF OF THIS TRAIL PROJECT EMAILED TO ME IMMEDIATELY. [See responses above.](#) [Attached is the Notice of Planned Improvement that was sent out.](#)

THIS CONSTRUCTION PLAN HAS THE TRAIL SLATED TO RUN COMPLETELY AROUND THE BACK, SIDE AND FULL FRONT YARD OF OUR HOME. [The trail alignment through the park and along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners.](#)

THEN THROUGH THE CENTER OF OUR LONG-ESTABLISHED BEAUTIFUL SUBDIVISION FLANKED WITH CRABAPPLE TREES. WHICH WILL BE DESOLATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS TRAIL. [These trees are the jurisdiction of the Town and within the Town right-of-way. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision.](#)

I HAVE BEEN A HOMEOWNER IN THIS TAMARACK SUBDIVISION SINCE 2010. THE SOLE PURPOSE THAT WE CHOSE THIS LOCATION WAS BASED ON ITS TRANQUILITY AND PRIVATE LOCATION. OUR PREVIOUS HOME WAS SITUATED ON A TRAIL THAT RAN BEHIND OUR HOME AT VILLAGES OF SAND CREEK AND IT WAS BUSY, LOUD, AND VERY DISRUPTIVE. BUILDING THIS TRAIL IN THE TAMARACK SUBDIVISION WILL BE NO LESS DISRUPTIVE AND NOT TO MENTION INTRUSIVE ON 3 SIDES OF OUR RESIDENCE. WE PAY HEAVY TAXES ON THIS HOME AND WE WOULD LIKE TO ENSURE WE MAINTAIN THE PRIVACY THAT WE REQUIRE FOR OUR FAMILY AND HOME. WE DISPUTE THE

CONSTRUCTION OF THIS TRAIL ON EVERY LEVEL. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

THE OMISSION OF NOTIFICATION ABOUT THE PLANS OF THIS TRAIL FROM ANYONE APPEARS DEVIOUS, INCONSIDERATE AND A DELIBERATE TACTIC TO IMPLEMENT AN 'UNWANTED' NEIGHBORHOOD TRAIL. THE ENGINEER AND THE SINGLE HOME OWNER ON THE HOA IN FAVOR OF THIS CONSTRUCTION APPEARS TO HAVE COLLABORATED AN INITIATIVE TO PUSH THIS THROUGH WITHOUT PROPER NOTIFICATION TO OUR TAMARACK COMMUNITY. [See response above about notifications.](#)

I AM ASKING FOR YOU YOUR ASSISTANCE TO EXTEND THE TIMELINE ON THE COMMUNITY COMMENTS SO THERE CAN BE PROPER COMMUNICATION FOR THIS PROJECT FULLY WITHIN THE AFFECTED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY. [The public comment period will stay open for an additional 2 weeks. All the materials on the website and the comment form will remain active.](#)

THE MAJORITY IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD DEEM THIS PROJECT A PUBLIC NUISANCE SITUATED IN THE CENTER OF A PRIVATE COMMUNITY. AND OPPOSE IT COMPLETELY.

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Jenna Siqueira comments

From: [Iddings, Joshua](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#); [REDACTED]; [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Mark O'Dell](#); [Matt Gavelek](#)
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 10:48:46 AM

Jenna,

Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and this will be taken into consideration.

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

From: Jenna Siqueira <reply-to+ba4eddf9db08@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Jenna Siqueira just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Jenna
Last Name: Siqueira
Address: [REDACTED]
Email 2: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: While I love the idea of a bike trail in town, I don't love that it's going through my neighborhood. I have 3 small children and will not feel comfortable letting them play outside if we have more foot traffic in and out of the neighborhood. There are lots of small kids in the neighbor and having this trail will put myself, and other parents, on edge. I would appreciate if this trail existed outside of Tamarack.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

John Sparks comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:03:00 AM
Attachments:

Mr. Sparks,

Thank you for your comment. We are sorry to hear you have changed your mind regarding the project. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: John Sparks <reply-to+546b02787b7d@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Friday, March 10, 2023 7:09 AM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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John Sparks just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: John

Last Name: Sparks

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I initially supported this project as a runner who runs on 1050 to go west. I guess I didn't realize that the plan included an 8 foot wide path through neighbors' yards. I should have read the plan more closely. I now understand the concerns people have with the potential for cyclists riding at a rapid rate on what was once a sidewalk where kids play, and the encroachment on my neighbors' property. The trail alignment along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing Town owned right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners. The trail will follow the existing sidewalk and be widened primarily towards the existing curb line to avoid any impacts to the residential properties. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision.

I hope the town can use 1100 as an alternative since this is an established thoroughfare. This project is including a trail construction along CR 1100 N on the north side of the road from CR 50 E to the existing dead-end sidewalk just west of CR 100 E. If you are referring to a trail being constructed along CR 100 E, that alternative was evaluated and dismissed. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

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From: [Iddings, Joshua](#)
To: [REDACTED] [Hinkle, Meghan](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Matt Gavelek](#); [Mark O'Dell](#)
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 10:46:47 AM

Good morning,

Thank you for your comment.

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

From: John Sparks <reply-to+7a7f8701dd63@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 11:32 AM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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John Sparks just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: John

Last Name: Sparks

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: As a runner and cyclist who lives in Tamarack, I believe this will be a nice addition for our town. It will be much safer for the high school cross country teams than running on 1050 as well. I often run in Valpo because of their more interconnected neighborhoods.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

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Brent Martinson comments

From: [Iddings, Joshua](#)
To: [Marketing](#); [Hinkle, Meghan](#); [REDACTED]; [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Mark O'Dell](#); [Matt Gavelek](#)
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 10:50:07 AM

Brent,

Thank you for your comment and glad to hear about the potential for use by the school.

JOSH IDDINGS

Environmental Project Manager

From: Brent Martinson <reply-to+11334a9b1784@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 2:06 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Brent Martinson just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Brent

Last Name: Martinson

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I am the Principal of Chesterton High School and we are very excited about this project! From a running perspective, this is huge for boys' and girls' programs so we can access the wonderful coffee creek trails safely without running on public roads. This gives us so many more options for our student athletes to train. In addition, this is important for the safety of our student athletes. Instead of running on roads around town or west of Chesterton, this gives our student athletes direct access to numerous miles of trails without having to run on roadways. It is a game changer for training. Sincerely, Brent Martinson - Principal

Timothy Whalen comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 1:30:00 PM
Attachments:

Mr. Whalen,

Thank you for your comment. All requests for a hearing have been received, documented, and will be taken into consideration. Currently no public meetings are scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and this will be taken into consideration.

In regards to project information, the Categorical Exclusion environmental document and project plans are currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The full project limits and the project alternatives considered are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion environmental document.

In regards to the trees being removed, the Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
structurepoint.com [WEB](#)



From: Timothy Whalen <reply-to+532944b4d2ae@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 25, 2023 3:26 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Timothy Whalen just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Timothy

Last Name: Whalen

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: For reference, I am currently serving as the President of the Tamarack Subdivision Board of Directors. We have received multiple inquiries regarding the WLT project (DES. No. 1902832), and on behalf of our residents we would like to request that a public hearing be held in response to the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement. This will permit our residents to learn more about the project and provide an additional forum for review of the project documents. While our residents are most interested in Segment 3, hearing about the full project limits and the potential alternatives studied will be beneficial. A near-universal concern raised by our residents is how the tree impacts along Segment 3 will be mitigated by the project. We understand there is a commitment in the CE Document, however it does not explain how the trees will be replaced. Our subdivision has established parkway trees, and strongly desires to maintain the existing aesthetics both for the individual homeowners and the community at large by having the trees either left in place or replaced in kind at or about the same locations as the existing. For reference, our neighborhood covenants require a minimum of two (2) parkway trees per homestead. Thank you.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

[Respond Now](#)

Barry Siqueira comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O'Dell](#); ["Matt Gavelek"](#)
Subject: FW: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 2:11:00 PM
Attachments:

Mr. Siqueira,

Thank you for submitting your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments and concerns will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 OFFICE

317.716.8446 CELL

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From: Barry Siqueira <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 2, 2023 1:24 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Iddings, Joshua <jlddings@structurepoint.com>; Lorig, Greg <glorig@structurepoint.com>; Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>; Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>; Wolverton, Eric <ewolverton@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Re: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Meghan - appreciate the response. After having more time to think about it I really just have 3 main concerns:
- Is there anyway to keep or replant the crab apple trees on the north side of the road so the neighborhood doesn't lose too much of its original look? I understand this is under review and would appreciate a communication when a decision is made. [The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. The HOA president and property owners will be notified of the landscaping decision once it is finalized.](#)

- Will the outdated swingset in the park just north of Laurel creek be replaced? No work on the playground equipment will occur as a part of this project. [Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at \[tmclead@chestertonin.org\]\(mailto:tmclead@chestertonin.org\)](#) is copied on this email and you can address any questions you have about the equipment to him. The Town has noted that updates to the park equipment will be included in the Town's list with the Park Board's upcoming bond cycle as park funding is available. The cycle starts in 2025 and lasts for 5 years. Keep in mind the replacement or upgrade of park equipment is not part of the current undertaking.

-Will any markings be added to the road where the path crosses Catkin Circle to improve safety? Thinking crosswalk lines so car traffic stops short of where people could be walking. [All curb ramps will be replaced with American with Disability Act \(ADA\) compliant curb ramps, and pavement crosswalk markings will be added across Catkin Circle.](#)

On Tue, Feb 28, 2023 at 1:49 PM Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Mr. Siqueira,

Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans, and this will be taken into consideration. In regards to the trees being removed, the Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents.

Regarding property values, the National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 OFFICE

317.716.8446 CELL

structurepoint.com WEB



From: Barry Siqueira <reply-to+efa623589763@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Saturday, February 25, 2023 7:03 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Barry Siqueira just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Barry

Last Name: Siqueira

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: As a resident of Tammarack I do not understand why the trail has to come through the neighborhood when it could easily continue down E 1100 N to N 100 E. This will bring unnecessary foot traffic into Tammarack and likely lower property values. Also losing the crab apple trees that line Laurel Creek will destroy the aesthetic of the street. Going through county property outside of the neighborhood would be best for all involved.

Michelle Smith comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023 1:56:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Smith,

Yes, all comments received are being reviewed and responded to individually and accordingly. Responses are similar because the questions being asked are common frequent questions that include the same project details for responses. All comments received are also being compiled together with all responses to be considered for the project. The project team, including the Town of Chesterton, has been copied on all comments and responses being sent out.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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*Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: COLIN SMITH <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 9:12 AM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Re: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Good Morning,

Every member of my family wrote their own personal email to you. I am curious if they were read? We all got the same exact "form" email in return.

Thank you,

Michelle Smith

On 03/15/2023 7:56 AM Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Ms. Smith,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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317.716.8446 CELL

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*Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Michelle Smith <reply-to+41734179a7f0@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 11:15 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Michelle Smith just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Michelle

Last Name: Smith

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I grew up in Chesterton. My parents still live at that home on [REDACTED]. Sadly, this was part of the first phase of the Westchester Trail. I remember what a huge mess it was and how upset my parents were. I remember the homeless man who lived on the trail having to be moved. I remember my sister being "flashed" by a man in a trench coat. I remember the used condom wrappers laying near their yard and I remember the used syringes on the side of the trail. My husband's best friend was in charge of the clean up each day on the trail. The stories that he tells are horrible. He would be happy to share those with you. I have lived through what the first phase of this trail did. I have seen it first hand. If there are specific safety and security concerns of the neighborhood, sidewalks/trails, or roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>. The Town is responsible for maintaining the trails through the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

I currently live on [REDACTED]. Ironically, we moved her from our home near my parents house. We specifically moved here because it was in town, but there was minimal thru traffic and we felt it was a safe area for our children to grow up. We all watch out for each other in Tamarack. I wish every child could grow up in a neighborhood like ours. Your proposed plans, however, will change this. It will increase the traffic, decrease the safety, and take away the security that we have here. I have seen first hand what will happen. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

The worst problem is that it solves nothing. It doesn't allow any children

to safely get down 100. A crosswalk will do nothing - there are still no sidewalks that will connect to Calumet Avenue. Once this trail is constructed to connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E which turns into Calumet Ave.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

The crosswalk added at the mid-block crossing across CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and high visibility pavement markings along with flashing beacons at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadways. The crosswalk added at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road will include high visibility pavement markings. Pedestrians will yield to oncoming traffic at both crosswalk locations. The proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing.

This is a street used by many high schoolers to get to school. SR 100 is a speedway and unless you plan on having someone patrol 24/7, a child will get hurt. There is a real problem, but this is not a viable solution. If there are specific safety and speeding concerns on the roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website
<https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

Give people a safe way to get down 100, give kids a safe way to get to the high school. Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. Once this trail is constructed to connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive,

trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St.

A "Trail" through an existing neighborhood will only create problems. I could maybe understand if this solved the problem, but it doesn't. The money that you are proposing to spend on this could be used in so many ways that are better. Please solve the travel problem a different way. Ruining a neighborhood, and that's what this trail will do, serves no good purpose. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

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<https://www.structurepoint.com/>

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O"Dell](#); "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: FW: Westchester Trail
Date: Thursday, March 2, 2023 3:11:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Smith,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



-----Original Message-----

From: Michelle Smith <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 12:46 AM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Westchester Trail

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

I am writing to express my concern over the proposed Westchester Trail extension. The plan does not meet the needs of the town residents. We need a sidewalk that runs N/S on CR 100 to connect to the existing sidewalk, in addition to sidewalks that go down 1050 to allow students to reach the

highschool.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection. This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads.

Putting a trail through an existing subdivision as well as crosswalks on 100 is a dangerous proposition. The area for the crosswalk would still remain dangerous. High school students drive down this road very often. They drive down CR 1050 very often. Why not make a safer connection and a place for students to connect safely to their schools? Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

This is not a viable solution to a tea problem

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 3:25:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Smith,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Michelle Smith <reply-to+93b4d1262a9a@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 26, 2023 9:16 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Michelle Smith just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Michelle

Last Name: Smith

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: We definitely need a trail, but this is not the way to do this. We have asked the police department multiple times to watch Laurel Creek Drive as people "fly" down the road. We have a tree in our front yard that was hit by a teen cutting through to the high school. The "crosswalk" that you are proposing will be extremely dangerous - CR100 is a speedway as well. This is such a dangerous road - we try and cross on bikes, and I have my children get off and walk their bikes. No one stops for anyone.

The proposed mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users.

I live on South LCD, so this trail wouldn't affect me directly. The problem of how to get to the highschool would still exist.

This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads. Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection.

The problem of getting down 100 would still exist.

The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments together and connect to the existing sidewalk segments in the area. Westchester Liberty Trail 1 terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E. The existing sidewalk terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then the sidewalk continues north from the intersection along CR 100 E. Westchester Liberty Trail 2 terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. This project fills that need by providing a

connection to CR 100 E along CR 1100 N.

This is not a solution to the problems that our town faces. Get with the county and find a good solution. One where children riding their bikes to the high school don't get run off the road into a ditch (yes, this has happened to my family several times.) Give us sidewalks down 100 and to the high school that are a much better solution.

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

This is not a solution to Chesterton's trail issues.

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Jeff Hamstra comments

From: [Mark O'Dell](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#)
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#)
Subject: FW: Westchester-Liberty Trail
Date: Monday, February 27, 2023 10:06:40 AM

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This is the response I got from the Chesterton HS AD Jeff Hamstra about the trail.

Respectfully,
Mark D. O'Dell, PE | Town Engineer
modell@chestertonin.org | Chestertonin.org

From: Hamstra, Jeff <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, February 26, 2023 4:57 PM
To: Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org>
Cc: Berry, Tommy <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Westchester-Liberty Trail

Thanks, Mark. It would be a game changer for us. If you need anything else, please don't hesitate to ask.

We really appreciate you and your efforts on getting this in!

Jeff

On Sun, Feb 26, 2023 at 7:28 AM Mark O'Dell <modell@chestertonin.org> wrote:

Mr. Berry and Mr. Hamstra,

Thanks for submitting a comment, hopefully we can get this trail completed soon!

Thanks

Mark

Respectfully,
Mark D. O'Dell, PE | Town Engineer
modell@chestertonin.org | Chestertonin.org

Theresa Carroll comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O"Dell](#); ["Matt Gavelek"](#)
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Friday, March 3, 2023 12:50:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Carroll,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
Best Employers in Ohio*

From: Theresa Carroll <reply-to+578333de3feb@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2023 2:06 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Theresa Carroll just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Carroll

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I have three main concerns about this proposed project.

1. What plans are in place to maintain the safety and security of the neighborhood with this trail in place? Right now the children who reside in Tamarack are able to ride bikes and walk along sidewalks to each others homes without much issue and I would like things to stay that way. [The safety and security falls under the jurisdiction of the Police Department.](#) Specifically, what plans are there for lighting along the trail? I am uncomfortable with the trail being left dark. This is also a concern if high school student were to ride home from sports practices in the Fall/Winter when it is dark around 4-5pm. I'd like to request that there is adequate lighting along the trail. [Currently, additional lighting is not planned along the trail, but this comment will be taken into consideration by the design team.](#)

Additionally, is there a plan for increased Chesterton police presence in Tamarack or near the trail to ensure that the trail does not become a gathering place for people to engage in unsafe behavior or a quick getaway from Tamarack after engaging in questionable behavior. [Please see response above.](#)

2. How does this trail affect the Tamarack playground? It is important to me to have a playground at that park, for my own young children and the other young children in the neighborhood. Additionally, that playground is in desperate need of an update. I doubt that the playground meets contemporary safety standards. With the construction of the trail and more Chesterton residents being able to visit the Tamarack Park/Playground, could we prioritize a renovation of the Tamarack playground for the safety and enjoyment of children in Tamarack and Chesterton? [No impacts will occur to the playground or the equipment present due to this project. Updates to the park equipment will be included in the Town's list with the Park Board's upcoming bond cycle as park funding is available. The cycle starts in 2025 and lasts for 5 years.](#)

3. Please re-plant the crabapple trees that will need to be removed to construct the path. It is important to me to have the consistency of

crabapple trees lining the streets of Tamarack. Additionally, would the town consider planting additionally landscaping to provide privacy to those neighbors whose homes will be directly in front of the path? The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. However, this does not mean that these topics are not being discussed. Thank you for your comment and it will be taken into consideration by the design team

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Maureen Hurst comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O"Dell](#); ["Matt Gavelek"](#)
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 2, 2023 3:11:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Hurst,

Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and this will be taken into consideration.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Maureen Hurst <reply-to+7e5a56ff5e2b@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2023 6:16 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Maureen Hurst just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Maureen

Last Name: Hurst

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I do not support the trail going through the Tamarack subdivision.

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Linda Schwab comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:04:00 AM

Ms. Schwab,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

From: Linda Schwab <reply-to+8ca67ce71d9c@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2023 6:31 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Linda Schwab just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Linda

Last Name: Schwab

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I am not opposed to the Trail in theory, but I am opposed to the path and implementation of the Trail. I am opposed to the path the proposed Trail would take through the Tamarack Neighborhood and Park. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

The proposed path for the trail is inconsistent with rest of the Trail that

currently winds through the Town of Chesterton, in that the other segments of the Trail do NOT go through the heart of neighborhood subdivisions and do not cut across the paths of residential driveways and the front sides of homes in subdivisions. The only places where current segments of the Trail cross residential driveways and frontages is where those drives are adjacent to major arterial corridors. Thank you for your comment. This project is only evaluating the proposed project alignment and impacts of the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III portion of the trail. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

Furthermore, by cutting through the heart of the Tamarack neighborhood, this Trail would cause a visually unpleasant and unbalanced aesthetic and destroy the homogenous look that Tamarack has built and maintained over the past 20 years. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.

The design and covenants of the Tamarack neighborhood have been meticulously adhered to, and this pathway would make it impossible for those standards to be maintained. The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision. The Homeowners Associations covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property.

The proposed path of the Trail before and after entering the Tamarack Park and Neighborhood creates additional hazards and dangers for the users of the path. It would require users to cross CR1100N from the South side to the North side at the intersection of CR 50 E/5th Street. The intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St is a 4-way stop sign-controlled intersection. There is already a north south pedestrian crossing on the west side of the intersection with pedestrian crosswalk signage and striping. This trail connection will add a pedestrian crossing from the northwest corner of the intersection to the northeast corner of the intersection with crosswalk striping and signage.

From there, the users would travel along the North side of CR1100N for

approximately 1/3-mile where they would then need to cross CR1100 N again to access the trail on the South side of CR1100N where it enters a Town-owned easement and then into the wooded park area of the Tamarack Neighborhood. This mid-road crossing is extremely dangerous for users, as CR1100N is a heavily-traveled main corridor leading from SR 49 to the Chesterton High School, and serving many other residential and business areas along the way. A high volume of traffic, both local and from out of town, travel this stretch of CR1100N.

Adding this mid-block crossing is a benefit to trail users to safely cross CR 1100 N and access the Tamarack Park between the long stretch from CR 50 E to CR 100 E. Without adding this mid-block crossing trail users would only have the pedestrian crossings at CR 50 E and CR 100 E to cross to the south side of CR 1100 N and then share the roadway with motorists. Adding this mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when crossing CR 1100 N. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.

Furthermore, the access point of the trail crossing comes at a location that is at the base of a hill/depression on CR1100N, creating a hazard for drivers traveling westbound to slow down and stop for crossings. The vehicle stopping sight distance at the mid-block crossing location on CR 1100 N was evaluated per INDOT requirements. Adequate stopping sight distance is present at this location, and this crossing will not create a hazard to motorists.

Users trying to access the proposed trail path from Railroad will also find themselves in a tricky situation, needing to cross CR100E at an awkward place with heavy traffic. This crossing location was evaluated per INDOT requirements. Adequate stopping sight distance is present at this location, and this crossing will not create a hazard to motorists.

I'd like to offer an alternative proposed path: extend the trail along the North side of CR1100N all the way from 5th Street to the intersection with CR100E/Calumet Avenue, where there is a well-regulated traffic light and an existing 8-foot sidewalk. At this point, the Trail could proceed South across CR1100N and along the West side of CR100E (there is even a broad unused area adjacent to the Tamarack Neighborhood which could be utilized for part of it) to the south side of Railroad where a more natural and safer crossing of CR100E could be made to meet up with the existing trail along Railroad. Safer, for sure. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

And this gives the Town of Chesterton an added benefit and opportunity: at the intersection of CR1100N and CR100e/Calumet Avenue, users of the Trail could choose to turn north along Calumet Avenue and head into the South Calumet Business District and into the Downtown Chesterton area. The residences and neighborhoods along CR100E would be easily connected to Downtown as well as to CHS. This project would fill the missing connection between Westchester Liberty Trail 1 (terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E), the existing sidewalk (terminates approximately 250 feet west of the CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection), and Westchester Liberty Trail 2 (terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road). Therefore, this trail would provide a connection to CR 100 E/Calumet Avenue that is currently missing.

To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.

Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. To connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection.

A final note I'd like to make is this: I served on the Tamarack HOA Board of Directors approximately 14 years ago. At that time, the playground equipment in Tamarack Park needed repairs for safety. We approached the Town and the Park Department, but were DENIED because the Town said that they did not own the Park, but that the HOA owned it and it was our problem and responsibility. [The Town is aware that the playground equipment is in need of an update and has been copied on this email.](#) Updates to the park equipment will be included in the Town's list with the Park Board's upcoming bond cycle as park funding is available. The cycle starts in 2025 and lasts for 5 years.

We fixed the equipment and have maintained that park area, including mowing the grass, for at least the past 14 years and I believe longer. So to have the Town suddenly claim/acknowledge ownership of Tamarack Park is jarring. The Town has taken NO responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the Park for over 14 years, and now we are to believe that they will maintain it and the trail they propose to build there is insulting and unrealistic. [The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton.](#) If there are specific maintenance concerns and or questions regarding the trail and park they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

I worked as a Planner for the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (now CMAP) and as an environmental consultant. This Trail proposal lacks foresight and knowledge of the uses of the surrounding areas; it can be better and it should be better. [The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network.](#) Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.

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Theresa Buehler comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Mark O'Dell](#); [Matt Gavelek](#)
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 3:32:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Buehler,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Theresa Buehler <reply-to+34cb9b16fafb@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 9, 2023 12:59 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Theresa Buehler just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Buehler

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I would like to know if the boardwalk is going to have a rail along both sides. Yes there will be cable style railings along the boardwalk through the wooded area. The trail crossing across Pope O'Conner Ditch and an unnamed tributary along CR 1100 N will have a double-faced guardrail on one side (adjacent to the roadway) and a wooden rail fence on the other side.

I would also like to know why if this is a state project why it matters that a part of it would be in the unincorporated county. This is not a state project. It is a locally sponsored project of the Town of Chesterton which is receiving federal funding for the project. As federal oversight, the state (INDOT) is only reviewing project documentation to ensure compliance with the federal NEPA process and regulations.

I still feel it better serves our community to add additional sidewalk/multiuser trail I stead of tearing up existing sidewalks just to make them wider. We actually have eight feet of sidewalk we just have a street that runs between the 2 4' sections. Bicyclist's currently use out street to ride and I don't see them using the trail with the boardwalk for their rides. Walkers use the sidewalks. Thank you for your comment.

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To edit your email settings, go to your Inbox on desktop.

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Buehler

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I am having trouble understanding where the trail is going through the park once it is no longer board walk. Attached is a plan sheet showing the trail alignment through the park. The boardwalk will only be used through the park and wetland area to avoid wetland impacts. Could you clarify this question?

Are you going to remove the large trees along the the ravine and also the trees at the entrance to our park. As currently laid out, we are avoiding large trees where possible. A small street tree will be impacted by the entrance. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing and avoid clearing large trees. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees.

Also on the drawing it says sidewalk closed next to the sewage station. Is that permanent? No. This sidewalk is marked as "sidewalk closed" only during construction while the trail is being constructed. This "sidewalk closed" is indicated on the maintenance of traffic project plan sheets. Once construction is completed the sidewalk will reopen for pedestrians.

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Buehler

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: This is regarding the ability to walk only one half mile to the businesses of South Calumet Business district. My daughter visited from out of town and had a breakfast at Round the Clock with her husband's family She would have walked to the restaurant but didn't feel comfortable sharing the road with all the cars. She lives in a community share they can walk to all their needs and she stated that it doesn't make sense that we don't have a sidewalk on 100 east. Easy access to town and safer access to railroad rd to walk the trails at coffee creek center. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

There are currently sidewalk/trails along CR 100 E/South Calumet that extend north from the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This project will fill the missing sidewalk/trail connection gap from Westchester Liberty Trail 1 (terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E), the existing sidewalk (terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E), and Westchester Liberty Trail 2 (terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road). To get to CR 100 E and Round the Clock on Calumet, trail users coming from Laurel Creek Drive would need to head north through Tamarack Park to CR 1100 N and then head east on the trail on the north side of CR 1100 N to CR 100 E. Then the user can head north and access all amenities on CR 100 E. To get to Coffee Creek, trail users would need to head east along Laurel Creek Drive and follow the trail south along CR 100 E before crossing Rail Road and jumping on existing Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2 which leads to Coffee Creek Center.

Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on the destination in Chesterton trail users are after, and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. The preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, Chesterton High School, and the Middle School. The CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Buehler

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: Hi, I would like to voice my concern about what I saw in an aerial picture that is in your information binder. I noticed that it does not show the luxury Apartment complex Eagle Creek. As a resident of Tamerack who does try to walk along 100 east to access the business district of south Calumet, I have noticed a considerable increase in traffic due to these apartments. They can't make an easy left turn from Indiana 49 so they turn right into 1100 make a left onto 100east then a left onto Railroad rd to get to their homes. It has increased the number of cars on this small segment of road. I would like you to reconsider not having the multi use trail on this increasingly busy segment of road. [Please see response above about a trail segment along CR 100 E.](#) Are the Eagle creek apartments a part of your traffic study? [No traffic study was completed for this project.](#) The coffee creek townhouses are continuing to add to traffic also as well as other new homes being built. They don't use 100 East's as much to go North because they have easy access to northbound 49. At the 1100 and 100 east light the pedestrian cross button is not affected by the left turns since they turn left at the light. There is a button to push for the crosswalk to allow Pedro cross safety. Thank you Theresa Buehler [The mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection](#)

of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long.

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Buehler

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I just drove through Valparaiso, a neighboring community to Chesterton. As I drive I noticed that all of the wide multi use trails were along the busy streets and they connected neighborhoods instead of cutting through the residential neighborhood. This project is only evaluating the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III alignment and impacts. If the proposed trail were along 100 east between CR 1100 and Railroad Rd it would accomplish the goal of connecting neighborhoods. Please see response above about this trail alignment. The need for this project is to connect the existing Westchester Liberty Trail segments together and connect to the existing sidewalk segments in the area. Westchester Liberty Trail 1 terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E. The existing sidewalk terminates approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. Westchester Liberty Trail 2 terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road. This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads.

Additionally I am having a difficult time understanding where the trail will run near the playground equipment. Is it between the playground and the ditch? Are the trees growing there part of the 2 acres of trees being removed? The trail runs west of the playground equipment and east of the ravine. Tree A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing and avoid clearing large trees. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees.

Thank you Theresa

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Buehler

Address 2:

Email 2 [REDACTED]
Phone [REDACTED]

Message: I would like to advise that a better route to get into the town from Laurel Creek drive and 100 east is to go directly north on 100 east rather than a third of a mile west then north then a third of a mile back east to access the businesses of South Calumet. It is quite a distance out of our way to go to the businesses that we want to visit. This includes people who come from south and east of our neighborhood such as coffee creek and the Eagles crossing apartments. We do have residents of our neighborhood who walk to the European market and the extra distance is a little bit of a bother when carrying market purchases. Thank you Theresa Buehler [Please see response above about this trail alignment.](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa
Last Name: Buehler
Address [REDACTED]
Email 2 [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I was looking at the route through the Tamerack park and it wasn't clear to me where the trail will go. [Attached is a plan sheet showing the trail alignment through the park.](#)

Is it going to impact our playground equipment? [No impacts will occur to the playground equipment present due to this project.](#)

Are you going to have to remove the bushes that are growing along the tree line? [Yes tree and brush removal will occur as part of this project. The portion of the trail through the grassed area of the park will result in removal of some of the brush currently along the gravel path but this project will not result in removal of the entire tree/brush line.](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa
Last Name: Buehler
Address [REDACTED]
Email 2 [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I would like to understand your rationale that crossing county road 1100 mid block is safer than using the pedestrian crossing with a walk button at the 100 east intersection. It seems to me that crossing mid block on a street that is a main thoroughfare of the town is not the best option for pedestrians and people on bicycles. Also the students going to the boys and girls club and the high school have to cross to the north side of the busy street only to cross back over the busy street to get to their destination. [Please see the response above about the location of this mid block crossing.](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Theresa

Last Name: Buehler

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I am a resident of the Tamerack neighborhood. I am not against a multiuser trail. I do not feel it serves the best interest of our community to tear out existing sidewalks when we really need a sidewalk along 100 east so that people can walk to the businesses on south Calumet and for the more adventurous to even walk to the post office and businesses on Broadway. [Please see response above about this trail alignment.](#)

I also believe that taking out our trees and expanding the side walk is going to significantly change the look of our neighborhood. I would like to request the rendering of our street that structure point should have available to us. [The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. Attached is a project plan sheet showing trail rendering along Laurel Creek Drive.](#)

[Tree removal was included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal can be found on pages 16-18 of the *Environmental Document*](#)

that is currently posted online at
<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>.

Thank you, Theresa Buehler

John Komenas comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 2:55:00 PM
Attachments:

Good Afternoon Mr. Komenas,

Thank you for your comment.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
Best Employers in Ohio*

From: John Komenas <reply-to+b3ff4020577a@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 2:22 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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John Komenas just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: John

Last Name: Komenas

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I love the idea and the ability to connect the community to more parks and greens spaces. This will also allow greater walkability for citizens of the community, but also students at the local schools. The path would also make it safer for the community as 1100 is currently a dangerous street to walk with a large amount of traffic, no shoulder, and small hills.

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Lawrence Kirchner comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 3:18:00 PM
Attachments:

Good Afternoon,

Thank you for your comment and glad to hear you are looking forward to utilizing this trail regularly.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Lawrence Kirchner <reply-to+f83a80e34790@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 3:13 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Lawrence Kirchner just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Lawrence

Last Name: Kirchner

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I am writing in support of the proposed Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III extension connecting the Tamarack subdivision to the larger Porter County bike trail network. I have lived in Tamarack for more than 25 years and raised our children here. Tamarack is "land-locked" between three separate, high traffic roadways with no provision for cyclists or pedestrians. For this very reason, our children rarely left the subdivision to meet with friends or to attend nearby activities. The proposed bike trail will provide Tamarack children with safe routes to Chesterton High School, Dogwood Park, Coffee Creek, and other destinations. I have read some opponents are concerned about the impact to their property values. I believe these concerns are unfounded. The website of the National Association of Realtors states: Property values are of utmost importance to homeowners, and living near a park, trail, or greenway may be certainly something to take into consideration. The good news is that recent studies have confirmed living near trails and greenways will likely raise your property value an average of 3-5% and sometimes even as high as 15%. There is also not correlation that trails increase crime in their surrounding areas. Another concern is impact to the wooded area, already owned by the town of Chesterton. The draft Categorical Exclusion document shows a typical 8'-0" hard surface path and a 750' boardwalk through areas of drainage or environmental concern. This treatment is similar to what we treasure in facilities like Dune State Park and Coffee Creek. Plus, it is a more subdued cross-section than the Prairie Duneland Trail. Regarding traffic, I doubt there will be many users outside of nearby Chesterton and Tamarack residents. An 8'-0" wide boardwalk is not the kind of path that will attract long-distance users. The primary use of this path will likely be origin/destination trips by Tamarack residents and their guests. I look forward to seeing this improvement constructed and to using it regularly.

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Catherine Sparks comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 7:07:00 AM
Attachments:

Good Morning Ms. Sparks,

Thank you for your comment and glad you are looking forward to using it.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Catherine Sparks <reply-to+2aa38efaf77e@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 4:08 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Catherine Sparks just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Catherine

Last Name: Sparks

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I would love to be able to run and bike more easily from my house. Sounds great!!

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Lisa Filipek comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O"Dell](#); ["Matt Gavelek"](#)
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Friday, March 10, 2023 8:24:00 AM
Attachments:

Ms. Filipek,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Lisa Filipek <reply-to+ac9be1a169de@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 6:27 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Lisa Filipek just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Lisa

Last Name: Filipek

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: It would make more sense to acquire the land from 5 homes on 100 E to extend the side walk down 100E. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

This would allow easier access to a larger population and provide safe passage across 1100N via the already established crosswalk button at the intersection of 100 and 1100. Also, this would be less dangerous for pedestrians than crossing 5 intersections as the plan suggests. As you point out the preferred alternative does require cross walks to be installed or improved at multiple points along the trail. Three of these crosswalks are proposed to be within the Tamarack Subdivision (One at each of the two crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive; one at Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E). By taking the trail down CR 1100 N to CR 100 E you could eliminate both of the crossings of Catkins Circle, which does reduce the number of crossings. However, you would add a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E and remove the proposed mid-block crossing between 5th and CR 100 E. The current mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR

100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long. Catkins Circle is a low volume, local road, with posted speed limit of 20 mph and there are currently pedestrian crossings at both of these intersections which serve the Tamarack Subdivision as well as the public in general wishing to walk to the Tamarack Subdivision Park, a Town of Chesterton public facility. The preferred alternative will result in improved access to Tamarack Subdivision Park and improve the crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive to be American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant. The enhanced connectivity to the public park and ADA improvements are a net benefit to the community.

The removal of 2.5 acres of trees in a swampy area is also ridiculous. Not only is it neglectful to our environment, but it may lead to drainage issues and loss of habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including the protected red headed woodpecker. This is not true. A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees, predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N, will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing, avoid clearing large trees, and minimize wetland impacts. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain canopy cover as large trees are preserved. Further, the proposed boardwalk is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and forest. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs. In fact, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees and wetlands on this project.

Tree removal and protected species impacts were included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal and protected species impacts can be found on pages 16-18 of the *Environmental Document* that is currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as

described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM.

As far as safety, a path on 1100N and 100 E is more easy to patrol than a park path that is not easily accessible by car. As far as maintenance goes, Tamarack owns half of the land on 100E and it will be maintained by the landscape company and the other half, 5 houses, would be in grassy, non-landscaped areas of the easement for those 5 houses. The path in the park would need to be maintained by someone-don't know who. If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood and/or trails it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

The original park land was supposed to be donated and the trail was supposed to go to the park. The extension through an established neighborhood was no part of the original plan. Thank you for your comment. We are not aware of this. Do you have original documentation of the plan, you can submit to me?

Again, I want to stress how absolutely unsafe it is to cross 1000N. In the middle of the street at the base of the hill. Someone will be severely hurt or killed doing this because people speed through that area. The 100 E. Route is safer and will accomplish the same goal of connecting the trails while not disrupting an established neighborhood, providing easier accessibility for more people, providing a higher degree of safety because of easier access to patrol, and not disrupting the natural flora and fauna of the area. Thank you for your comment. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

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Shawn Fitzpatrick comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:04:00 AM
Attachments:

Mx. Fitzpatrick,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Shawn Fitzpatrick <reply-to+40ddcecad036@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 4, 2023 8:52 AM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Shawn Fitzpatrick just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Shawn

Last Name: Fitzpatrick

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: -

Message: To start, segment 1 along the north side of E 1100 N is not in question and is a logical path to connect the existing paths. However, segments 2 & 3 seem to be an unnecessary detour through a neighborhood and wooded area. If the point of the new path is to connect the paths at Rail Rd and along E 1100 N, then the logical route would be along the east side of N 100 E. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

No other portions of the existing paths cut through an established neighborhood and primarily parallel public roads. This project is only evaluating the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III project alignment and impacts. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

Before building an 8-foot wide path through an existing neighborhood, I would defer to those residents needs (especially when that proposed path is not the most logical or even safest for the intended users of the trail). Thank you for your comment. Thank you for the opportunity to

comment and please take this into consideration when making your final decision.

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Tom Fieffer comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O"Dell](#); ["Matt Gavelek"](#)
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 7:23:00 AM
Attachments:

Good Morning Mr. Fieffer,

Thank you for your comment.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Tom Fieffer <reply-to+4f98d0412963@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 4, 2023 6:01 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Tom Fieffer just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Tom

Last Name: Fieffer

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I think the trail is a wonderful idea. Many places are trying to make their towns more walkable. As Chesterton looks at a parking issue. More trails would encourage walking to downtown.

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Colin Smith comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Mark O"Dell](#); ["Matt Gavelek"](#)
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 1:45:00 PM
Attachments:

Mr. Smith,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Colin Smith <reply-to+3664599b5e3d@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 4, 2023 10:02 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Message Details:

First Name: Colin

Last Name: Smith

Address 2: [REDACTED]

Email 2 [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: My name is Colin Smith, but I go by "Cole." I am [REDACTED] and have grown up on Laurel Creek Drive. It is the best place ever to live. We are a family that supports each other. We know everyone and I have always felt safe here. We know if there are strangers. One mom noticed an unusual car in our neighborhood when I was 10. It turned out that I am asking you to please not build this trail. My grandparents have the bike path near their house. I have seen what that is like. Garbage, used syringes, condom wrappers. I do not want that for the children growing up in Tamarack. That isn't fair. Please take a step back and ask yourself. Would you want the place where your children are growing up to all of a sudden have increased traffic.

Message Details:

First Name: Colin

Last Name: Smith

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2 [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I am sorry, my computer glitched and this is the rest of my comment: When I was 10, there was a strange car. One of the mom's watched a drug deal take place. She called the police, and a gentleman was arrested that was selling to minors. Please don't take this away from us. Ask yourself if you would want your children to all of a sudden not feel safe, to have increased traffic, and strangers running around your house. Taking a quiet neighborhood and running a "trail" through it is not a viable answer to this problem. Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

We still won't be able to get to Calumet Avenue. This project would fill the missing connection between Westchester Liberty Trail 1 (terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E), the existing sidewalk (terminates approximately 250 feet west of the CR 1100 N and CR 100 E intersection), and Westchester Liberty Trail 2 (terminates at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road). Therefore, this trail would provide a connection to CR 100 E/Calumet Avenue. To connect to CR 100 E from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N.

This doesn't allow us to safely walk or ride bikes to the high school. Westchester Liberty Trail 1, which terminates at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, connects to sidewalks surrounding Chesterton High School located approximately 0.25 miles west. This project would fill

the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads. To connect to Chesterton High School from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel through Tamarack Park and the woods to CR 1100 N, and then travel west along CR 1100 N past the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E/5th St. Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project and excited for the trail connection.

It really doesn't solve anything. In fact, it creates more issue. Why can't we solve the issue properly instead of putting a bandaid on a problem that needs surgery. Please stop and find a better solution to the problem that exists. Making my home unsafe with increased traffic is not the answer. Thank you, Cole Smith [Thank you for your comment.](#)

BobbiLynn Caparella comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:03:00 AM
Attachments:

Ms. Caparella,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



From: BobbiLynn Caparella <reply-to+0567a0be954c@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 9:20 AM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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BobbiLynn Caparella just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: BobbiLynn

Last Name: Caparella

Address

Email 2

Phone

Message: I oppose the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III through the Tamarack neighborhood! This quiet neighborhood holds a community feel where neighbors know neighbors. The residents are familiar with each other, even if they don't know them personally. Building a public through-way for pedestrians, skateboarders and bicyclists, et al, is not in line with the lifestyle in which homeowners invested. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Creating a boardwalk that passes directly in someone's front yard does not evoke a feeling of security and safety that Tamarack residents have come to know. There is no need to disrupt the everyday lifestyles of families and friends by opening up the neighborhood to random trail visitors. [The boardwalk portion of the trail will be constructed through the wetland portion of Tamarack Park and not through residential front yards along Laurel Creek Drive. The trail alignment through the park and along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners and reducing impacts to residential properties.](#)

[The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.](#)

What's more, people that want to avoid crossing 1100 on the trail will have parking in Tamarack as an option. This quiet neighborhood is then vulnerable to people parking on the street to enter the trail at the unnamed tributary and park near Pope O'Conner Ditch, or near 100 N on Lauren Creek. [Through coordination with the Town, there are no current parking issues along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision for people accessing the Tamarack Park. There are no future parking issues anticipated along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision as a result of this project.](#)

I fully oppose connecting the Phase III to the Phase II trail section via the Tamarack neighborhood. As one who enjoys the trails, it is

uncomfortable to ride or walk through established neighborhoods with families and young children. I would much rather enjoy trails that avoid those routes. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Continuing the path on 1100 to 100 N, where there is a very wide shoulder is much less disruptive to the community of Tamarack. It is a **safe option for people!** [An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered.](#) However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

[The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.](#)

The neighborhood will lose its sense of security and community with strangers tramping through on unnecessary broad sidewalks. I can only imagine the debris that will be left behind, however accidentally. (Kids lose things. People drop wrappers and cans and trash. Things fall out of pockets and bags and carryalls. It is a reality that cannot be overlooked). Who will be responsible for maintaining this waste? **The homeowners themselves?** If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood or trail it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>. The Town will be responsible for maintaining the trail. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

Further, this opens the option for trail users to ride their bikes, skateboards and the like on the street because it is an open invitation once exiting the O'Connor Ditch tributary. [This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic. Therefore, this project will provide trail uses, bikes, skateboards, etc. a separated alternative than using the roadway.](#)

I do not oppose connecting the trails! I only strongly oppose using

Tamarack neighborhood as a conduit for connecting the trails.
Connecting through Tamarack would be an unfortunate and unwelcome project. Please reconsider!!! [Thank you for your comment.](#)

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Glenn Peterson comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:03:00 AM
Attachments:

Mr. Peterson,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Glenn Peterson <reply-to+d4d6935eb845@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 10:30 AM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Glenn Peterson just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Glenn

Last Name: Peterson

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: -

Message: Elimination of the mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N would be beneficial to all parties in the corridor. Adding the mid-block crossing is a benefit to trail users to safely cross CR 1100 N and access the Tamarack Park between the long stretch from CR 50 E to CR 100 E. Without adding this mid-block crossing trail users would only have the pedestrian crossings at CR 50 E and CR 100 E to cross to the south side of CR 1100 N and then share the roadway with motorists. The mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid-block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long.

Since the route is a primary access route to the Schools in the area, there are backups in this area and high peak volumes during the school year. The peak volumes would also likely coincide with the heaviest usage of the trail. Thank you for your comment. Pedestrians will yield to traffic at this crosswalk location. Therefore, no impacts to current traffic patterns are anticipated.

If feasible, the route that is included in the Town's 2010 Comprehensive Plan (page I-12) is an option to eliminate the mid-block crossing. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest

impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

If the route is to remain in place, enhanced pedestrian crossing elements should be added to the project. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.

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Tom Shumate comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:04:00 AM
Attachments:

Mr. Shumate,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200
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structurepoint.com WEB



From: Tom Shumate <reply-to+e21435f03722@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 5:15 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Tom Shumate just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Tom

Last Name: Shumate

Address:

Email 2:

Phone: -

Message: I was quite disappointed and shocked to read that the planned pathway is proposed to go across 1100 and into the forest. I thought that it was going up to Calumet/100 E and go south until the entrance of Tamarack. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

My concerns are first for the safety of anyone crossing the road at that location since it's a busy road. I can definitely foresee accidents happening. Why not go down to the intersection at 1100 and 100 where there are already lights in place and a crosswalk? The mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR

1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long.

Secondly the amount of trees and vegetation that will need to be cleared is unnecessary when you can just put a normal sidewalk right along 100. Why do we need to clear out a forest for an eight foot pathway? I know either way you go people will be upset. A total of 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted, but only a total of 0.71 acre of trees, predominantly on the north side of CR 1100 N, will be cleared as a result of the project. Terrestrial habitat includes many things including grass, bushes, trees, etc. Most of the terrestrial habitat impacts for this project will be grass and shrub type bushes.

The trail through the wooded area between CR 1100 N and Tamarack Park was laid out with assistance from the Town and US Army Corps of Engineers (who regulates work in wetlands) to minimize tree clearing, avoid clearing large trees, and minimize wetland impacts. Post construction, the trail will wind through this forested corridor which will retain a canopy cover as large trees are preserved.

The proposed boardwalk through the wetland portion of the wooded area is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and forest. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to trees and wetlands on this project through the wooded area. The project coordinated and evaluated all impacts and obtained the necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management, which included tree clearing.

I think the route to the intersection is the better of the two because it makes the most sense. If it doesn't then explain why. Please see responses above.

I hope you'll consider my comments and any others you may receive and change course. Although nowadays it seems like people's concerns aren't very important. Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Tom Shumate

Charlotte Morgan comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 3:32:00 PM

Ms. Morgan,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

From: Charlotte Morgan <reply-to+ffbf2fb210b6@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 6:20 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Charlotte Morgan just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Charlotte

Last Name: Morgan

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: I would like to comment that this trail is not a good idea and the reasons given are not what makes sense for us kids. We enjoy our neighborhood and being able to play safely with the neighbors that we know. We are a close neighborhood and I will not be allowed or feel safe playing at the playground if there is another access point that we can't see. Also the trail from our [Tamarack] playground will not be safe

since it is secluded and our family will not use it to get to school even though my brothers and I all go to the schools here. Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

Biking on a boardwalk gets slippery and the path will not be lit up and will be too hidden to travel on our own to school. Lighting is not currently included in the project scope, and may be considered to be added in the future. The boardwalk section will be constructed out of pressure treated lumber and will drain much better than an at grade trail. It will be elevated, and water will drain between the boards. If the trail were constructed at grade, it would be subjected to significantly increased ponding during and after rain events.

Who will keep the area clean? How will you not destroy our playground that has swings that you need to stand behind when pushing someone? The Town will be responsible for maintaining the trails and park. If there are specific maintenance concerns or questions they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

The crossing in the middle of the road is too dangerous for biking to the bike path and school so we would still have to ride the bus or have my mom come get me. Adding this mid-block crossing is a benefit to trail users to safely cross CR 1100 N and access the Tamarack Park between the long stretch from CR 50 E to CR 100 E. Without adding this mid-block crossing trail users would only have the pedestrian crossings at CR 50 E and CR 100 E to cross to the south side of CR 1100 N and then share the roadway with motorists. Adding this mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when crossing CR 1100 N. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.

And we like to bike and walk to Chesterton but would continue to go [on CR 100 N] towards town and this plan does not help anyone who needs that. I was born and grew up in Coffee Creek and we always wanted to bike and walk to downtown Chesterton. This plan [ignores this need]. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on the destination in Chesterton trail users are after, and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. The preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, Chesterton High School, and the Middle School. The CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).

To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.

Also, who will take care of the park and the parking when people come to play at the playground? The bike path has trash along it and so does Rail Road and the other one [Kelle Rd] and they are overgrown and you can't ride your bike without getting hit by the overgrown stuff or going over broken glass. Through coordination with the Town, there are no current parking issues along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision for people accessing the Tamarack Park. There are no future parking issues anticipated along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision as a result of this project. See response above about maintenance of the trails and park.

I am upset that the town is not considering the children who live here in Tamarack and what we think. We love our beautiful neighborhood and bike, scooter, rollerblade and walk freely around and are not happy we

are losing more grass and trees and getting more cement ... [Thank you for your comment.](#)

why can't we leave Laurel Creek alone and spend that money on more sidewalks and trees in Chesterton. [This project is adding more sidewalks in the Town of Chesterton. Please see additional response above regarding tree impacts.](#)

How much are you spending to rip up Laurel Creek and make an 8 foot wide path? The estimated cost for this project is \$1,942,000 which includes preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction. Federal and local funding will be used for this project. Additional information about the project costs are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on pages 10 and 23. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

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Madison Smith comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: Trail
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 9:14:00 AM
Attachments:

Ms. Smith,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)

317.716.8446 [CELL](#)

[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: COLIN SMITH <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 9:03 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Trail

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Dear Ms. Hinkle,

My name is Madison Smith. My friends call me Madi and I just turned [REDACTED]. My address is [REDACTED]. I am sure that you recognize the name of the street that I live on.

I am writing to ask you to please reconsider your plans for the Westchester Trail. My family moved to Tamarack when I was 18 months old. I don't remember every living anywhere else. This is my home. My backyard has a view of the park. Everyone at the park can see my house and can see the pool where my friends and I spend our whole summer. It's been okay though, because only our neighborhood uses the park. Even when some baseball teams use it for practice, it's okay, because we know who those people are. If you put a trail through there, I am very scared that I am no longer going to be able to play with my friends and feel safe. We can't put up fences, so we won't have any privacy. I don't think that this is right. I don't understand what the problem is that this is going to solve. I think it creates more safety issues. Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

My neighbors and I try to ride to Coffee Creek sometimes. I had to quit doing it though, because I almost got hit by a car - for real. There is no good way to get to that sidewalk on 100. I guess that I don't understand how a crosswalk is going to stop this. If there are specific safety and security concerns of the neighborhood, sidewalks/trails, or roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through

Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.

There is no sidewalk for us to ride on to get to the sidewalk on RailRoad. Based on your proposal, this is going to be even worse. It isn't safe. This project will add a trail along Laurel Creek Drive, south along CR 100 E, and a crosswalk will be added across CR 100 E to connect to the sidewalks and trails along Rail Road. The crossing will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk.

I am really sad that I am not going to be able to roam around my neighborhood and that strangers are going to be riding through. There is no way that my mom is going to let me be outside at night playing the tag games that we play here at night. We are like a big family in Tamarack. Why are you trying to change that? If you have children, would you want this for them? To not feel safe? [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Please don't do this!

Madison Smith

Jodi Thielemann comments

From: [JODI THIELEMANN](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Re: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 6:25:39 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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The answer to my first question was not sufficient. My question has to do with the fact that other than through our neighborhood, the path is just a sidewalk. To get to the trail or to get off of the trail, mere feet from our neighborhood are just sidewalks. So why does it need to be wider and more accessible just in our neighborhood?

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 13, 2023, at 2:32 PM, Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Ms. Thielemann,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)



317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



From: Jodi Thielemann <reply-to+3e619fb6f1e4@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Friday, March 10, 2023 3:19 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Jodi Thielemann just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Jodi
Last Name: Thielemann
Address: [REDACTED]
Email 2: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: We oppose a trail being built through our subdivision. The “trail” is only a sidewalk through many parts and we already have a sidewalk! [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Why do we need an 8 foot wide trail when a sidewalk is sufficient for other parts? [The existing sidewalk along the north shoulder of Laurel Creek Drive is 4-feet in width. This is not wide enough to accommodate different types of pedestrians \(bikes, strollers, runners, and walkers\) without users stepping off the sidewalk to pass each other or using the adjacent lawn to walk/ride when passing. The existing sidewalk is also not compliant with American with Disability Act requirements. The preferred alternative would construct an 8-foot wide path which is designed to accommodate all types of pedestrians and will meet ADA standards. This is a benefit to all users and increases accessibility to community green spaces including Tamarack Park.](#)

The trail’s supposed purpose is to prevent human vehicle conflict, but

how much conflict has there been? The project area has pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. This results in potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles between existing corridors of the Westchester Liberty Trail (Phase 1 and Phase 2). This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic. Therefore, this project will provide trail uses, bikes, skateboards, etc. a separated alternative than using the roadway, which reduces potential for conflict.

What about the conflict that will occur when all the young children who are learning to ride bikes and scooters in our neighborhood are now exposed to cyclists who notoriously only lookout for themselves and don't follow the laws of the road. If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood or roadways it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

The people of our subdivision have worked hard to make this both a beautiful and safe community and this trail threatens both the beauty of our streets and safety of our families. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.

The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

it is obvious that the people who live here do not want this, what is not obvious is who does? Who does this benefit? This project would fill the missing connection of the existing trails and sidewalks in the area for residents, neighborhoods, and students to access trails safely without utilizing public roads affecting traffic. Therefore, this project will provide trail uses, bikes, skateboards, etc. a separated alternative than using the roadway.

It is highly unusual for a trail to be placed in the front yards of homes through the middle of an established neighborhood. This will be an eyesore and a problem for this community. Thank you for your comment.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

UJ Puranik comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 8:56:00 AM
Attachments:

Mx. Puranik,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

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[structurepoint.com](#) WEB



Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: UJ Puranik <reply-to+b6b78d320322@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 6:10 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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UJ Puranik just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: UJ

Last Name: Puranik

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: This project may decrease the property value, place children at risk, spoil the beautifully tree line street. [The National Association of Realtors](#) has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features, information on effects to property values, and information on studies which have shown trails do not increase crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

Additionally, the trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.

The trail traffic will also interfere with a quite, kid and elderly friendly neighborhood we so dearly enjoy. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

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Laura O'Dell comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Lorig, Greg](#); [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 8:10:00 AM
Attachments:

Ms. O'Dell,

Thank you for your comment. We are glad you look forward to this trail being built and using it in the future.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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317.716.8446 CELL

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*Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Laura O'Dell <reply-to+43f26710f042@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 10:32 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Laura O'Dell just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III

Message Details:

First Name: Laura

Last Name: O'Dell

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I remember visiting Minneapolis, Minnesota when my kids were young, and I was so impressed by all the trails that were available to the residents there. The large quantities of trails throughout created a sense of community and promoted healthy activity for families young and old. Chesterton could be a community that could benefit from a trail system throughout the town. To have the connection to our beautiful state park and national park, as well as the wonderful European market that our town has to offer would be a benefit to our town and neighborhood. I feel that the Tamarack trail is a proactive start to this goal. Wandering through the beautiful wooded area behind this neighborhood would be a touch of Coffee Creek and State Park trails at our immediate access. How many times have we seen the Chesterton High School cross country and track teams running on 1050 to get through this neighborhood? How many have worried for those kids as they put themselves in danger considering 1050 is prime access to CHS. This road is heavily travelled by teen drivers possibly on their cell phones, let alone adult drivers with similar bad habits. From my own personal experience, my children would take that same road to get over to 5th street in the summers so that they could ride their bikes to the Chesterton Park Program offered at the park on 5th and Morgan. Thankfully, they were never injured while riding their bikes. Unfortunately, my youngest did get into an accident on this very road as a teen driver plowed into the back of his Honda Fit and totaled the vehicle. He and his classmate were both shaken, not injured physically, but that does not mean they were not injured mentally. This trail would provide a safe route for all kids which I would think would be in everyone's best interest. My family enjoys walking through our neighborhood, but we are often walking in the road because the narrow sidewalks do not promote the ability to converse while on our walk. It would be nice to have a wider sidewalk throughout our neighborhood so that families can enjoy exercising together. The residents remonstrating against the plan of the trail located behind their property is understandable, but during the summer when trees are in full bloom, I am curious how much someone on the trail would be able to see. I noticed in the newspaper that the residents on the corner lot were complaining about how the trail is on three sides of their property. I am not sure how it is on three sides, two perhaps, but also, they fail to say that their back yard is fenced in due to their inground pool on their property. I am not sure how much of their privacy is compromised with

the trail. In addition, the residents are tagging the trees that will be cut down. One is already dead, so the town would be doing that homeowner a favor, as it has been left standing, dead, for over a year, which is an eye sore. It is my understanding that Chesterton is part of Tree City USA. From what I know, when trees are removed, they are replaced. I also find it confusing to see signs in neighbors' yards who were in favor of a connection to the town via sidewalk. The residents don't know all that has gone into this trail or the reasons for the location, but I am certain that if they were able to use land that belonged to them they would choose that over purchasing unowned land at a much greater expense. Speaking of eyesores, a trail through Tamarack connecting to Dogwood park would give kids a safe way to get to the parks so that they can enjoy soccer, volleyball, and badminton in a park setting instead of their front yards. I am in favor of the proposed trail through Tamarack subdivision. This will be a great benefit to the community and will connect multiple schools and parks to our subdivision. The Town of Chesterton was a wonderful community to raise my family in and I am proud to call this area in Northwest Indiana home for the past 30 years. Growth and change are important, and I feel that this is a step in the right direction.

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Colin Smith comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Mark O'Dell"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 8:56:00 AM
Attachments:

Mr. Smith,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



*Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Colin Smith <reply-to+4eb6100cd7b1@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 11:20 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Colin Smith just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Colin

Last Name: Smith

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: My wife and I moved to Tamarack to get away from the issues that happen near the first part of the trail. My supervisor and best friend, Jeff Eckert, used to clean up on the existing trail. What a mess. There were people that tried to live on the trail, homelessness, drugs, sex. Would you want that in your front or back yard? The Town is responsible for maintaining the trails through the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

We should have been informed of this as my backyard can be seen from this proposed trail. No one even told us. We had to find out from neighbors. That is negligence on your part.

Notices to adjacent property owners were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. We have verified that Notice of Surveys and Notices for the Opportunity for Hearings have been sent to Colin and Michelle Smith Or Current Resident at [REDACTED] Chesterton, IN 46304. Can you confirm your address is complete and accurate? Mailings come in pre addressed envelopes with American Structurepoint printed return address. Please look for these envelopes in the future as you will continue to get notices mailed to your address. Local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement and Chesterton has posted info on there facebook page, which are additional steps taken by the Town to get the word out. If this is the first time you are hearing about the project, plans are not final and your feedback is a valuable part of the project. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>

The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years

ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.

Building a trail through our neighborhood is negligence as well- not to mention it doesn't help the sidewalk problem that everyone has. Kids are going to get hurt. Accidents are going to happen on 100. A cross walk isn't going to stop cars from speeding past. The crosswalk added at the mid-block crossing across CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and high visibility pavement markings along with flashing beacons at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadways. The crosswalk added at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road will include high visibility pavement markings. Pedestrians will yield to oncoming traffic at both crosswalk locations. The proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-lft of pavement vs. 23-lft at the mid block crossing.

If there are specific safety and speeding concerns on the roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

Please reconsider this project. It isn't a good solution and the residents of Tamarack don't deserve to have the town of Chesterton ruin their homes. Those that are proposing this should have the trail through their yards if they want it. We do not. Please find a better solution,. Thank you for your comment.

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Angeline Swiech comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: RE: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 3:10:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Swiech,

Thank you for your comment. I have ensured you are added to our email and mailing lists for the project to receive all additional legal notices being sent out for the project. Mailings come in a pre-addressed envelope with American Structurepoint printed in the return address. Please look out for these envelopes. Additionally, project information will be updated and posted on the project website at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt> as available. All legal notices will also be posted in the Northwest Indiana Times twice, 15 days prior and 7 days prior to any meeting held for the project.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



From: Angeline Swiech <reply-to+5f8eaa399d9c@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 2:56 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Angeline Swiech just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Angeline

Last Name: Swiech

Address

Email

Phone

Message: I would to attend a next meeting,or recieve information
regarding the proposed Trail. Thank you

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Scarlet Spain comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023 12:34:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Ms. Spain,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317.547.5580 OFFICE

317.716.8446 CELL

[structurepoint.com](#) WEB



From: Scarlet Spain <reply-to+bdb9706053c3@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 10:09 AM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Scarlet Spain just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Scarlet

Last Name: Spain

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: Hi there, An important update was brought up regarding drainage easements and the intended pathway. Can you please show according to official records where these easements lie? There is a utility and drainage easement on the property behind the sidewalk in front of your house. This utility and drainage easement is located entirely within private property of the residential properties along Laurel Creek Drive. All trail construction along Laurel Creek Drive will stay within the Town owned right-of-way and not impact private property, or this utility and drainage easement. This drainage easement can be found on the Secondary Plat for Tamarack Phase 3 or the personal deed to your property.

If there are any private water lines for your property within Town owned right-of-way, please let us know where they exist.

Also, we have been obligated to maintain certain aspects of our homes including trees, etc. This trail will knock out established trees and pieces of property as homeowners that we have been required to maintain. The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way, and the trail has been laid out to stay entirely within this right-of-way to minimize impacts to adjacent property owners. All tree clearing along Laurel Creek Dive will occur within existing Town owned right-of-way. The covenants held by the Homeowners Association do not apply to Town right-of-way or property. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.

I do not plan on living in my home "forever" and out of curiosity asked others if they would buy a home with a trail across from it. The answer from everyone I asked was "absolutely not". The town needs to find a better path for this that does not go through home owners' established spaces.... Thank you for your comment. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

Tim Buehler comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023 12:34:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Mr. Buehler,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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317.716.8446 CELL

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Best Places to Work in Indiana
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From: Tim Buehler <reply-to+f04f6e04b1d1@crm.wix.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 2:33 PM

To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>

Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Tim Buehler just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Tim

Last Name: Buehler

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: There needs to be traffic studies done on alternate routes.
Thank you for your comment. Traffic studies were not completed or required for this project.

It is likely that sidewalk utilization placed on N100E will benefit the entire community - Tamerack, Eagle Crossing, Downtown Chesterton, etc. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

Under either the preferred or CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternatives, the trail will enhance access to pedestrian facilities and the community at large, including

those residents in Tamarack Park. The distance traveled will change depending on the destination in Chesterton trail users are after, and it certainly may be shorter under certain circumstances for either alternative. The preferred alternative provides a shorter route to facilities like Bailey Elementary School, Chesterton Park, Chesterton High School, and the Middle School. The CR 1100 N to CR 100 E alternative would provide shorter distances for things along Calumet Road (CR 100 E).

To connect to CR 100 E/Calumet Ave from Laurel Creek Drive, trail users would travel north through Tamarack Park and the wooded area to CR 1100 N, and then travel east along CR 1100 N to the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and then travel north along CR 100 E/Calumet Ave to Downtown Chesterton.

We know that the study has not been done but it needs to be completed before decisions are made. Thank you for your comment.

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Jose and Olga Solis comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023 12:33:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Mr. Solis,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

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Indianapolis, IN 46240

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317.716.8446 CELL

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From: Jose/Olga Solis <reply-to+b664252b9a38@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 2:45 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Jose/Olga Solis just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Jose/Olga

Last Name: Solis

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: We do not want a trail in our subdivision. Tearing up sidewalks and trees is unacceptable just for a trail. Thank you for your comment. The existing sidewalks within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision. The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision. The Town is currently investigating the potential to relocate or replant trees which would be affected along Laurel Creek Drive as a result of the project to minimize impacts to residents. Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping.

Also, it would be a safety issue of bikers and walkers crossing onto 100E. As it is, vehicles drive pretty fast on 100E. Then we the residents come in and out quite frequently from Tamarack. I think this trail will increase the possibility of accidents. I've seen many near misses already. The crosswalk added at the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road will include high visibility pavement markings to notify motorists of the trail crossing. Pedestrians will yield to oncoming traffic at the crosswalk location.

If there are specific safety and speeding concerns on the roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

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Ed Virgil comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023 12:34:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Mr. Virgil,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

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Indianapolis, IN 46240
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From: Ed Virgil <reply-to+c31153d5aba2@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 3:10 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Ed Virgil just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Ed

Last Name: Virgil

Address: [REDACTED]

Email 2: [REDACTED]

Phone: -

Message: The Virgil's – [REDACTED], Chesterton I am a resident of Tamarack and I am opposed to segment 2 & 3 of the Westchester-Liberty Trail going through the Tamarack subdivision outlined in the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project plan. There are many issues with this proposal and I, like many of the residents in Tamarack, have many concerns. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

Safety point #1: a path crossing CR1100 in the middle of this stretch of road is an enormous safety hazard. I live on the North side of Tamarack and can see and hear traffic flow on CR1100. I can assure you, there are many, many people who speed excessively down this stretch of road. Allowing children to cross in the middle of a busy street with cars traveling way too fast is recipe for a fatality. This may be the single most ill thought out component of this segment. Why would anyone think crossing the middle of the road is a safe idea when there already exists pathways leading to the crosswalk at the intersection of CR1100 & CR100 with dedicated traffic and pedestrian lights. It' not if there will be an accident, it's when. [Thank you for your comment.](#) If there are specific safety and speeding concerns on the roadway it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

Safety point #2. Increased traffic bicycling or running on a sidewalk through a residential neighborhood heightens the threat of crashing into a car. Sidewalks make bicyclists invisible to motorists who don't expect to see them at driveways and crosswalks. This is certainly true when you have a path going down a residential sidewalk running through a neighborhood vs implementing a dedicated lane in the street or simply building the path around the subdivision. It's perplexing how proponents for this project can think this is an option at all, not to mention a good one. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

There are no other trails, here in Chesterton, or elsewhere, where the trail runs through the middle of a sub-division. In every other community the bike paths are near or around a neighborhood - not through it. [Thank](#)

you for your comment. This project is only evaluating the proposed project alignment and impacts of the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III portion of the trail.

While typically, bike and jogging paths do not negatively impact home values, they also never run directly through a neighborhood. In this instance, This will likely have an adverse effect on home values with how it is currently being planned. Particularly for those most directly impacted on Laurel Creek. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features, information on effects to property values, and information on studies which have shown trails do not increase crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

Again, there's a good reason paths are normally engineered to go around, and complement a neighborhood, but not through it. This clearly is being forced on the people who call this subdivision home because of the unwillingness of the people directly involved in the planning not wanting to take the time and allocate the necessary resources to build this correctly down unincorporated CR100. The need for the Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment.

As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route,

but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

The solution is easy, build the path. Just install the first segment of the plan. There is absolutely no reason this cannot be done. Segment two and three is completely unnecessary and irrational considering there is a safer and more logical way to build the path along CR1100 and CR100. Ed [Thank you for your comment.](#)

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Jen Soffin comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023 1:56:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Soffin,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

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From: Jen Soffin <reply-to+b3206aee1ef1@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 4:14 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Jen Soffin just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Jen

Last Name: Soffin

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: First let me say, I LOVE trails. I am all for constructing trails to connect and allow safe passage for residents. I am very opposed to the proposed route through Tamarack. [Thank you for your comment.](#)

AmericanTrails.org has a guideline of staying 100ft from adjacent landowners. [Thank you for this information.](#)

Why not consider continuing the partial 1100 link to connect directly to 100? It's a more direct route, better lighted and more traveled. There is also a sidewalk on 100 that comes from the north that stops on the north side of 1100/100 intersection. There is also much more greenspace along 1100 as the homes are set further back from the roadway. The proposed idea to start the 1100 portion on the north side, only to cut back across a very busy, highly traveled road to cut through an established neighborhood doesn't seem ideal. [As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at \[www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt\]\(http://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt\) and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall \(Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304\) and the Westchester Public Library \(200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304\).](#)

An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing location across CR 100 E to Rail Road will be at the same location in both the preferred alternative alignment or the CR 100 E alignment.

The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

In closing, is there another case in which your company has implemented a public trail in an established, small neighborhood 30 feet from residents front doors and if so, how did that fare? This project is only evaluating the proposed project alignment and impacts of the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III portion of the trail. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6. This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

While trails are a wonderful way to connect people, places and nature, I do believe there's a more sensible route available. Eliminate Tamarack and continue the 1100 trail direct to 100, then on to Rail Road. Thank you for your comment.

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Jonathan Morgan comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023 1:56:00 PM
Attachments:

Mr. Morgan,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

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Indianapolis, IN 46240
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From: Jonathan Morgan <reply-to+bea5ceccac5d@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 4:15 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Jonathan Morgan just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Jonathan

Last Name: Morgan

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: Hello, I am writing as a [REDACTED] in Tamarack who enjoys playing at our playground but I am nervous about using our swings. How will we swing if the person on the trail is right there? How will moms push their kids while the trail is right there? [The proposed trail alignment next to the playground equipment will be far enough away for the playground equipment to be used. No impacts will occur to the existing playground equipment as a result of this project.](#)

[Why would it not go around the park instead of through it? An alternative to go around the wooded area and Tamarack Park utilizing CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton. As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area.](#)

[We play tag here a lot and when we go to the park at our friends near Porter Cove, the people on the bike path have fences and we dont have to worry about how fast bikers go there because it is separate from the neighborhood. This is too close to feel safe. As currently proposed, the trail is just inside the brush line along the east edge of the park, in a part of the park not currently used for recreation. By installing the trail in this location there is no loss of recreation space and its location on the far eastern side of the park provides park patrons the option to use portions of the park far away from the trail to avoid the situations you are describing.](#)

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Karen Cobbs comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023 1:56:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Cobbs,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle

Senior Environmental Specialist

9025 N River Road, Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46240

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From: Karen Cobbs <reply-to+ae959bbde423@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 4:46 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Karen Cobbs just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Karen

Last Name: Cobbs

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: We are a private subdivision. A walking trail should go around us, not through us. We all have worked hard to afford houses in Tamarack. To be in this quiet, safe community is expensive. We chose this subdivision for these reasons. We all deserve privacy and the people walking in our neighborhood to be residents of the actual subdivision. It should not be a "pass through" for any random person who wants to walk the trail. The people living in front of the trail should not have to see lots of random walkers and bikers out their front window or incur potential noise at any time of the day or night. I am not against a trail around the subdivision, but to funnel random people through our personal subdivision that we pay so much money to live in is wrong. I understand it saves the county and state money, but it is not the correct thing to do. I can't imagine you or the people working on this project would want this to happen to your subdivision. If we wanted a catch all of random people at any hour of the day, we would have lived in an apartment complex. Thank you for your time and consideration. [Thank you for your comment.](#) Laurel Creek Drive and the Tamarack Subdivision Park are town owned and maintained properties/roads that are open to the public at large currently for use. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>.

If there are specific safety and security issues of the neighborhood or trail it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

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Jenny Orsburn comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023 1:56:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Orsburn,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist

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From: Jenny Orsburn <reply-to+f8ac16a49199@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 5:11 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Jenny Orsburn just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Jenny

Last Name: Orsburn

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: I support this project and the route, connecting to Rail Road will also help connect walkers, runners and bike riders to Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve. This trail type is also consistent with the rest of town trails, however I hope extra effort is given by the town to communicate to the residents of Tamarack to not park on the shared portions of the trail or block the trail with vehicles or yard waste (leaves and brush), Through coordination with the Town, there are no current parking issues along any portion of the existing trails. There are no future parking issues anticipated along as a result of this project.

The Town is copied on this response, and the maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" website <https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report>.

I also encourage that construction has minimal impact to the wetlands, and waterways UNT, Pope O Conner ditch. A wetland delineation for this project has been completed identifying and mapping resources like streams, ponds, and wetlands. A site visit in 2021 also included the US Army Corps of Engineers walking the project area. Along CR 1100 N two pipe extensions would be installed on the existing culverts to facilitate the trail crossings at Pope O'Connor Ditch and an unnamed tributary. To minimize impacts to environmental resources along this stretch of trail, the trail will be shifted south towards CR 1100 N and gabion baskets will be used to create a retaining wall to minimize impacts further.

The proposed boardwalk through the wooded area and Tamarack Park is of a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands and the forest. A new stream crossing will be installed over an unnamed tributary to Pope O'Connor Ditch in the portion of Tamarack Park towards Laurel Creek Drive. It will be an 8-ft wide by 5-ft tall reinforced box culvert.

Aneeqa Virgil comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023 1:56:00 PM
Attachments:

Ms. Virgil,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



From: Aneeqa Virgil <reply-to+433fb7eb06d5@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 6:39 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

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Aneeqa Virgil just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Aneeqa

Last Name: Virgil

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: Segment 2 and Segment 3 are not viable options for the reasons below: 1. It would be a safer alternative to have the trail cross at an intersection of 1100. With the traffic on 1100 (for example, during high school events), it could be considered a danger to cross where currently proposed. The safety of the users of the trail should be a high priority. The crosswalk added at the mid-block crossing across CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and high visibility pavement markings along with flashing beacons at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadways. The proposed mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E at the intersection before crossing. In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing. 2. The trail would be within 50 ft of a number of private residences in Tamarack. It is my understanding that there are guidelines for public trails to be at least 100 ft from private residences. The trail would be a nuisance for the residence of Tamarack. The guidance you are referring has been provided by another resident and is discussing considerations that were taken when designing trails for state parks. Trails in urban areas must be integrated into the community and this includes the possibility that trails will be run through residential neighborhoods. 3. Notification was not given to residences that would be directly impacted by the trail. Not only residences on Laurel Creek, but the entire subdivision would be impacted negatively by the trail. Notices to adjacent property owners were sent out on February 15th and we have verified that all adjacent property owners to the trail alignment were included. Mailing lists are compiled based on the best available contact information for adjacent residents based on the Assessor Office's records which are publicly available online. Local stakeholders (appointed and elected officials) were also provided notices at that. Additionally, two public notices were ran in the Northwest Indiana Times, the first

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nd

on the 15th and second on the 22nd. The Homeowners Association has also been sent the Legal Notice of Planned Improvement and Chesterton has posted info on their facebook page, which are additional steps taken by the Town to get the word out. If this is the first time you are hearing about the project, plans are not final and your feedback is a valuable part of the project. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>

4. The proposal does not make sense to divide through an existing subdivision. There are viable that would not disrupt our subdivision and accomplish the same goal of connect to railroad. Thank you for your comment.

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

[Respond Now](#)

If you think this submission is spam, [report it as spam](#).

To edit your email settings, go to your Inbox on desktop.

Barb Rabesa comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 8:56:00 AM
Attachments:

Good Morning,

Thank you for your comment. I have added you to our email and mailing lists for the project to receive all additional legal notices being sent out for the project. Mailings come in a pre-addressed envelope with American Structurepoint printed in the return address. Please look out for these envelopes. Additionally, project information will be updated and posted on the project website at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt> as available. All legal notices will also be posted in the Northwest Indiana Times twice, 15 days prior and 7 days prior to any meeting held for the project.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
structurepoint.com WEB



From: Barb Rabesa <reply-to+d377bda3091a@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 8:07 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Barb Rabesa just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Barb

Last Name: Rabesa

Address:

Email 2:

Phone:

Message: Please include us in your communications, as we are new residents and we would like to be notified of progress on this matter. We have grandchildren on Laurel Creek Avenue and will welcome a safer pathway to connect us all, to be able to walk/bike between homes and schools and parks will be great. Hoping all issues will be resolved quickly. Thank you

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

[Respond Now](#)

If you think this submission is spam, [report it as spam](#).

To edit your email settings, go to your Inbox on desktop.

Jared O'Dell comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 8:54:00 AM
Attachments:

Good Morning,

Thank you for your comment. We are glad you are looking forward to this trail being construct.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 [OFFICE](#)
317.716.8446 [CELL](#)
[structurepoint.com](#) [WEB](#)



From: Jared O'Dell <reply-to+0a4fd5499da0@crm.wix.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 10:13 PM
To: Marketing <marketing@structurepoint.com>; Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Jared O'Dell just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: Jared

Last Name: O'Dell

Address:

Email 2:

Phone: -

Message: I love the idea of the trail, growing up in Tamarack it was always dangerous to ride my bike to the highschool on 1050. This trail will connect it to the schools and the town and create a safe path for bikers and pedestrians

Reply to this email directly or via your site's Inbox: Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

[Respond Now](#)

If you think this submission is spam, [report it as spam](#).

To edit your email settings, go to your Inbox on desktop.

Dakota Sechrest comments

From: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Iddings, Joshua](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Wolverton, Eric](#); "Mark O'Dell"; "Matt Gavelek"
Subject: FW: Walking path
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023 12:34:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Ms. Sechrest,

Thank you for your comment. The project is not finalized, and your comments are an important part of the project development process. The design team and Town are currently reviewing and discussing the preliminary plans and your comments will be taken into consideration.

Your specific questions and comments have responses provided below in blue. Please let us know if you would like to have a virtual meeting with the design team or phone call to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hinkle
Senior Environmental Specialist
9025 N River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.716.8446 CELL
[structurepoint.com](#) WEB



From: Dakota Sechrest <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 3:50 PM
To: Hinkle, Meghan <mhinkle@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Walking path

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Hello my name is Dakota Sechrest I own the property at [REDACTED] IN 46304. I was

informed that a bike trail walking path will be constructed between my home and my neighbors home. The trail in this location has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property. A boardwalk will also be constructed in this location with cable style railings to maintain trail users on the boardwalk from navigating onto private land or into wetlands.

This is very concerning to me. I have 3 small children that frequently play in my driveway, and I don't want strangers being 20ft off my property hindering my family's privacy. Also the disruption it would cause with my dogs constantly seeing strangers near the property and the disruption for the deer and wildlife that frequent the wooded area around the property. Thank you for your comment.

The proposed location for crossing is not a great location there is a hill on either side and it is a great safety issue for anyone who would cross there. Is this referencing the proposed mid-block pedestrian crossing across CR 1100 N? If so, this mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E. This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block). In fact, a crossing of CR 1100 N at CR 100 E would result in pedestrians needing to cross 48-ft of pavement vs. 23-ft at the mid block crossing. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The vehicle stopping sight distance at the mid-block crossing location on CR 1100 N was evaluated per INDOT requirements. Adequate stopping sight distance is present at this location, and this crossing will not create a hazard to motorists.

These are the concerns I have with this project thank you.

RE: Tamarack Trail
Chesterton, IN 46304

March 9, 2022

James and
Gayle Vogan
comments

American Structurepoint
9025 River Rd. Suite 200
Indianapolis, In 46240

Attention: Megan Winkle

Dear Ms. Winkle:

This letter is in reference to
the proposed bike trail through
Tamarack Subdivision.

We purchased our lot at
[REDACTED], Chesterton
in 1997. We completed our home
in 1999 and moved in. We
looked for building lots for over
5 yrs., searching for a quiet
neighborhood, with nice lots,
curbs, sidewalks and trees.
We were happy when we found
Tamarack, which met all our
criteria.

This trail was never in any
plans we saw when we purchas-
ed & built our home, 26 yrs. ago.
This bike trail will disrupt "our"
quiet neighborhood, unfairly im-
pacting the Tamarack residents
when there are other options

for this trail.

The proposed trail with an entrance off 1100 North is unsafe. It is at the bottom of a dip in the road where cyclists would be crossing from the north side of 1100 N. A better route would be down 1100 N. to the stoplight at 100 East, down 100 East to Railroad

Also, Chesterton is a designated TREE CITY USA for the last 12+ years. But many trees, upwards of 50 will be lost to this trail.

There is also the safety feature of strangers riding through "our" neighborhood park, and through the front yards of our homes!

I strongly urge American Structurepoint to use an alternate route for this bike path!

Thank you in advance for your attention to this very important, neighborhood-changing proposal!

Sincerely,
Gayle A. Vogan
GAYLE S. VOGAN
James C. Vogan
JAMES C. VOGAN

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

DES. NO. 1902832

The Town of Chesterton will host a public hearing on April 19, 2023 at 6pm CST at the Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue, Chesterton, IN 46304. Enter Chesterton Middle School by the Auditorium Entrance (door #2), and the public hearing will be held in the Auditorium. The purpose of the public hearing is to offer all interested persons an opportunity to comment on current preliminary design plans for the Westchester-Liberty Trail (WLT) Phase 3 project (Des. No. 1902832) in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The purpose of the project is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between WLT 1 and WLT 2, and the sidewalks located along County Road (CR) 1100 North and North CR 100 East.

As proposed, the project would connect WLT 1 and WLT 2, and consists of the construction of 0.99-mile long, 8-foot wide, shared-use paths over three connected segments. The first segment (Segment 1) begins at the intersection of CR 1100 North and CR 50 East and extends approximately 0.45 mile east along the north side of CR 1100 North before ending where an existing sidewalk begins. This segment includes modification to two existing roadway stream crossings. The second segment (Segment 2) exists between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive, beginning 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and CR 100 East and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment through a wooded area before connecting to Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision Park. This segment would include construction of an 8-foot wide boardwalk through portions of the forested area and includes a new stream crossing. The third segment (Segment 3) begins where Segment 2 ends, along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and extends east 0.20 mile to the intersection of CR 100 East and Laurel Creek Drive. The existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive will be removed and replaced with the shared-use path. Segment 3 then extends south approximately 0.05 mile along the west side of CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road where it will end. ADA-compliant curb ramps and crosswalks will be constructed as needed.

The proposed construction of this project will require 1.60 acres of new permanent right-of-way, and the reacquisition of 0.86 acre of right-of-way. No relocations are anticipated. The cost associated with this project is approximately \$1,942,000.

The maintenance of traffic (MOT) plan will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. There will also be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area. Access to all properties will be maintained throughout construction. School corporations and emergency services will be notified of closures prior to construction. Construction is anticipated to occur in Spring 2024.

Federal and local funds are proposed to be used for construction of this project. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and INDOT have agreed this project falls within the guidelines of a Categorical Exclusion (CE) Level 3 environmental document. Preliminary design plans along with the CE document and other project documents are available for review at the following locations:

1. In-Person at:
Chesterton Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
Westchester Public Library, 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. Website:
<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>

Project information, including the hearing presentation, will be available on-line via the American Structurepoint, Inc. website (<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>). Public statements for the records

will be taken as part of the public hearing procedure. All verbal statements recorded during the public hearing and all written comments submitted prior to, during, and for a period of two (2) weeks following the hearing date, will be evaluated, considered, and addressed in subsequent environmental documentation. Written comments may be submitted prior to the public hearing and within the comment period to: Meghan Hinkle, at American Structurepoint, Inc., 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240. E-mail: mhinkle@structurepoint.com. **The Town of Chesterton respectfully request comments be submitted by May 5, 2023.**

With advance notice, Town of Chesterton will provide accommodations for persons with disabilities with regards to participation and access to project information as part of the hearings process, including arranging auxiliary aids, interpretation services for the hearing impaired, services for the sight impaired, and other services as needed. In addition, Town of Chesterton will provide accommodations for persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requiring auxiliary aids, including language interpretation services and document conversion. Should accommodation be required please contact Meghan Hinkle, American Structurepoint, Inc., 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46240. E-mail: mhinkle@structurepoint.com.

This notice is published in compliance with: 1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1)) stating, "Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a 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 and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate."; and 3) The *INDOT Project Development Public Involvement Procedures* approved by the Federal Highway Administration on July 7, 2021.

*** Proof of Publication ***

State of Indiana)
) ss.
Porter County)

Personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county and state, the undersigned Nicole Muscari who, being duly sworn, says that She/he is Legal Clerk of the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper of general circulation printed and published in the English language in the City of Valparaiso in state and county afore-said, and that the printed matter attached hereto is a true copy, which was duly published in said paper for 2 time(s), the date(s) of publication being as follows:
April 5, 2023 April 12, 2023

AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT INC. /Legals
Sarah Johnson - AP Specialist
9025 RIVER ROAD, SUITE 200
INDIANAPOLIS IN 46240

ORDER NUMBER 114297

The undersigned further states that the Northwest Indiana Times newspaper maintains an Internet website, which is located at www.nwi.com website and that a copy of the above referenced printed matter was posted on such website on the date(s) of publication set forth above.

Nicole Muscari, Legal Clerk
By: Cristina Palma

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12 day of April, 2023

Amanda Koepf
Notary Public



My commission expires:
Section: Legals
Category: 199 Legal - Porter County

PUBLISHED ON: 04/05/2023, 04/12/2023

TOTAL AD COST: 157.28
FILED ON: 4/12/2023

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LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING DES. NO. 1902832

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46304

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Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304

2. Online at the American Structure-
point, Inc. Website:
[https://www.structurepointpublic.co
m/wll](https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wll)

Project information, including the
hearing presentation, will be availa-
ble on-line via the American
Structurepoint, Inc. website [https://
www.structurepointpublic.com/wll](https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wll).
Public statements for the records
will be taken as part of the public
hearing procedure. All verbal state-
ments recorded during the public
hearing and all written comments
submitted prior to, during, and for a
period of two (2) weeks following
the hearing date, will be evaluated,
considered, and addressed in sub-
sequent environmental documenta-
tion. Written comments may be
submitted prior to the public hearing
and within the comment period to:
Meghan Hinkle, at American Struc-
turepoint, Inc., 9025 River Road,
Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana
46240. E-mail: [mhinkle@structure-
point.com](mailto:mhinkle@structurepoint.com). The Town of Chesterton
respectfully request comments be
submitted by
May 5, 2023.

With advance notice, Town of
Chesterton will provide accommo-
dations for persons with disabilities
with regards to participation and
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including arranging auxiliary aids,
interpretation services for the hear-
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needed. In addition, Town of
Chesterton will provide accommo-
dations for persons of Limited
English Proficiency (LEP) requiring
auxiliary aids, including language
interpretation services and docu-
ment conversion. Should accommo-
dation be required please contact
Meghan Hinkle, American Structur-
epoint, Inc., 9025 River Road, Suite
200, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46240.
E-mail: [mhinkle@structure-
point.com](mailto:mhinkle@structurepoint.com).

This notice is published in compli-
ance with: 1) Code of Federal
Regulations, Title 23, Section 771
(CFR 771.111(h)(1)) stating, "Each
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access to all interested parties and
revise the process, as appropriate.";
and 3) The INDOT Project
Development Public Involvement
Procedures approved by the Feder-
al Highway Administration on July
7, 2021.

4/5. 4/12 - 114297 HSPAXLP

Public Hearing Mailing List

Name	Attention	Agency/Company	Address 1	Address 2	City	State	Zip	Delivery Method
Ty Warner	Executive Director	Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission	6100 Southport Road		Portage	Indiana	46268	Mail
		Porter County Highway Engineering	1955 South State Road 2		Valparaiso	Indiana	46385	Mail
Board Members		Porter County Drainage Board	Development and Storm Water	155 Indiana Ave Suite 311	Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Council President		Chesterton Town Council	Town Hall	726 Broadway	Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Sheriff Jeffrey Balon		Porter County Sheriff	Porter County Sheriff's Office	2755 State Road 49	Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Mr. Kevin Breitzke	County Surveyor	Porter County Surveyor	Surveyor's Office	155 Indiana Avenue, Suite 303	Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Mr. Chip Pettit	Superintendent	Duneland School Corporation	Administration Center	601 West Morgan Ave	Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Mark O'Dell	MS4 Superintendent		1490 Broadway, Suite 3		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Lance Bella	Director	Porter County EMA	1995 South State Road 2		Valparaiso	Indiana	46385	Mail
Mr. Tyler McLead	Superintendent	Town of Chesterton Parks and Recreation Department	1490 Broadway, Suite 6		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Tim Richardson	Police Chief	Chesterton Police Department	790 Broadway		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Mr. Eric Camel	Fire Chief	Chesterton Fire Department	702 Broadway		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Renee Jeffries and Robin Russell	Property Managers	1st America Property Management Company, Inc.	3408 Enterprise Avenue		Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Porter County Commissioners			155 Indiana Ave		Valparaiso	Indiana	46383	Mail
Aspen Pines Apartments			500 W 1100 North		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Northwest Indiana Inc			521 W 1100 North		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Sandra K Gersna	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Helen M Misner-Sadler	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Northern Indiana Public Service Co			52 E 1100 North		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Thomas Darrell Jr Shumate	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Richard P Demkovich	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Scott B Sjaenheim	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
SBC Properties LLC			PO Box 2365		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Crossroads District of the Wesleyan Church Inc			75 E 1100 N		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Nancy Ann and Beth Ann Hageman	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail

Dorothy, Nancy Ann, and Beth Ann Hageman	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
John A Sr and Karen Andershock	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
David and Marsha Ellis	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Dakota Austin and Shaina Sechrest	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
DeLeon C Victoria Living Trust and Ms. Candice Saunders	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Dan R and Kimberly M Miller	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Charles E and Audrey M Jakerst	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Michael G and Victoria Hickle	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Gary and Wanda Sims	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Martin and Lydia Sandoval	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Town of Chesterton			1490 Broadway		Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Sylvia E Soto	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Colin and Michelle Smith	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Timothy and Katie Whalen	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Barry and Jenna Siqueira	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Michael and LouAnne Rone	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Timothy W and Theresa Buehler	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Ryan and Scarlet Spain	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Jeffery D and Michelle Gilbertsen	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Daniel K and Hayley C Wadowski	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Clarence Walsh	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Bobbi-Lynn Caparella	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Frank and Kimberly Goldak	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
David R and Terrim Nicholson	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Pernard D Michaels	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Gilbert and Ruth Bos	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Shivu and Ujwala Puranik	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
David N and Christina N Turner	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Anthony M and Amanda M McCrovitz	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Jeffrey M and Erika K Van Wagner	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Swati Agarwal	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Robert A and Melissa Kania	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail

Vincent and Magnolia Kisala	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Janel R Borsos	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
James W and Renea Martin	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Enzer Matthew I Trust	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Jovo I and Deanner Manojlovic	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Colin J Ragland and Christa D Hoffman	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Angeline Swiech	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Barb Rabesa	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
James and Gayle Vogan	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Matt and Roxanne Enzer	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail
Colin and Christa Ragland	Or Current Resident				Chesterton	Indiana	46304	Mail

Public Hearing Email Mailing List

Name	Email	Phone	Address 1	City	State	Zip
Amanda McCrovitz				Chesterton	IN	46304
Michelle Gilbertsen				Chesterton	IN	46304
Christina Turner				Chesterton	IN	46304
James Martin				Chesterton	IN	46304
Alexis Metcalf				Chesterton	IN	46304
Tiffany Bozovich				Chesterton	IN	46304
Katie Whalen				Chesterton	IN	46304
Dave Turner				Chesterton	IN	46304
Deanne Manojlovic				Chesterton	IN	46304
Amy Morgan				Chesterton	IN	46304
Robert Kania				Chesterton	IN	46304
Melissa Kania				Chesterton	IN	46304
Jenna Siqueira				Chesterton	IN	46304
John Sparks				Chesterton	IN	46304
Brent Martinson				Chesterton	IN	46304
Timothy Whalen				Chesterton	IN	46304
Barry Siqueira				Chesterton	IN	46304
Michelle Smith				Chesterton	IN	46304
Jeff Hamstra						
Theresa Carroll				Chesterton	IN	46304
Maureen Hurst				Chesterton	IN	46304
Linda Schwab				Chesterton	IN	46304
Theresa Buchler				Chesterton	IN	46304
John Komenas				Chesterton	IN	46304
Lawrence Kirchner				Chesterton	IN	46304
Catherine Sparks				Chesterton	IN	46304
Lisa Filipek				Chesterton	IN	46304
Shawn Fitzpatrick				Chesterton	IN	46304
Tom Fieffer				Chesterton	IN	46304
Colin Smith				Chesterton	IN	46304
BobbiLynn Caparella				Chesterton	IN	46304
Glenn Peterson				Chesterton	IN	46304

Tom Shumate		Chesterton	IN	46304
Charlotte Morgan		Chesterton	IN	46304
Madison Smith		Chesterton	IN	46304
Jodi Thielemann		Chesterton	IN	46304
UJ Puranik		Chesterton	IN	46304
Laura O'Dell		Chesterton	IN	46304
Scarlet Spain		Chesterton	IN	46304
Tim Buehler		Chesterton	IN	46304
Jose and Olga Solis		Chesterton	IN	46304
Angeline Swiech		Chesterton	IN	46304
Ed Virgil		Chesterton	IN	46304
Jen Soffin		Chesterton	IN	46304
Jonathan Morgan		Chesterton	IN	46304
Karen Cobbs		Chesterton	IN	46304
Jenny Orsburn		Chesterton	IN	46304
Aneeqa Virgil		Chesterton	IN	46304
Barb Rabesa		Chesterton	IN	46304
Jared O'Dell		Chesterton	IN	46304
Dakota Sechrest		Chesterton	IN	46304

WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL PHASE 3

Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana

Des. No. 1902832

PROJECT INFORMATION PACKET



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

April 5, 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. 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. **Hearing** will be April 19, 2023 at 6pm CST at the Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue Chesterton, IN 46304. Enter Chesterton Middle School by the Auditorium Entrance (door #2), and the public hearing will be held in the Auditorium.
4. **Submit** comments (or have comments postmarked by) **May 5, 2023**. Comments will be reviewed and considered as part of the decision making process.
5. **Questions?** Contact Meghan Hinkle of American Structurepoint, Inc. at (317) 547-5580 or mhinkle@structurepoint.com.

Comments will not be responded to individually during the comment period. All comments received will be evaluated and responded to in writing as part of the final environmental document. The availability of a response to comments will be published upon approval of the final environmental document.

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

1. In-Person at:
Chesterton Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
Westchester Public Library, 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. Website:
<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>

The Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project Team thanks you for your participation in this project.

Project Description

The Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832) is in Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. The total length of the project is 0.99 mile. Specifically, the project consists of three connected segments. The first segment (Segment 1) begins at the intersection of CR 1100 North and CR 50 East and extends approximately 0.45 mile east along the north side of CR 1100 North before ending where an existing sidewalk begins. The second segment (Segment 2) exists between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive, beginning 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and CR 100 East and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment through a wooded area before connecting to Laurel Creek Drive within the Tamarack Subdivision Park. The third segment (Segment 3) begins where Segment 2 ends, along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and extends east 0.20 mile to the intersection of CR 100 East and Laurel Creek Drive. Segment 3 then extends south approximately 0.05 mile along the west side of CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road where it will end.

The need for Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 project is evidenced by the current lack of connectivity between the two existing Westchester-Liberty Trail corridor sections and existing sidewalks located in the northeast quadrant of the project area, along CR 1100 North and CR 100 East. The existing project area is reliant on pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. This results in potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles between existing corridors of the Westchester-Liberty Trail. The first existing corridor section of the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1 begins at the intersection of the Prairie Duneland Trail and 23rd Street and extends south for approximately 1.0 mile before extending east along CR 1100 North for approximately 1.0 mile and terminating at the intersection with CR 50 North (also locally known as 5th Street). The second existing corridor section of the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 begins at the intersection of CR 100 East and Rail Road and extends east for approximately 0.30 mile before extending south along Keller Drive for approximately 0.30 mile and connecting to the Coffee Creek Preserve.

Generally, the project proposes to construct an 8-foot-wide shared-use path, connecting Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1 to Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2, and existing sidewalks.

Segment 1

The new paved shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of CR 1100 North, from the intersection of CR 50 East to the existing eight-foot-wide concrete sidewalk which begins approximately 250 feet west of CR 100 East. There will be crosswalks added at the intersection of CR 1100 North and CR 50 East to connect the new shared-use path to Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1. Two culvert pipe extensions (STR 101 and STR 102) will be necessary and consist of adding new pipes of the same size to the outlet of each structure. STR 101 would be extended five feet north and STR 102 would be extended three feet north, carrying streams Pope O'Connor Ditch and unnamed tributary (UNT) to Pope O'Connor Ditch, respectively. In the area of STR 101 and 102, the new shared-use path would be bordered by a guardrail to the south and a pedestrian handrail to the north. Additionally, inlets, storm sewers, and driveway culverts will be installed as necessary to facilitate drainage along CR 1100 North.

Segment 2

This segment would include construction of an 8-foot wide boardwalk through portions of the forested area and includes a new stream crossing. A small culvert (STR 106) would be constructed where the new shared-use path crosses over UNT to Pope O'Connor Ditch in the wooded area between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive. The new shared-use path would then enter the Tamarack Subdivision Park and be constructed adjacent to the existing four-foot-wide gravel sidewalk.

A new mid-block pedestrian crossing will be constructed across CR 1100 N approximately 0.21 mile east of CR 50 E to connect Segment 1 to Segment 2 of the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3. The mid-block crosswalk will include advanced warning signs, high visibility pavement markings, and a pedestrian push button at the crosswalk to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadways.

Segment 3

The new paved shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive and continue south along the west side of CR 100 East to the intersection of Rail Road, where it would connect with Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2. The existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive would be removed and replaced with an eight-foot-wide shared-use path. Widening for the shared-use path will occur towards the existing roadway curb line, within the existing town owned right-of-way. A five to seven foot wide grass buffer strip would remain between the front edge of the trail and the existing roadway curb line.

ADA-compliant curb ramps would be constructed at all intersections as needed. High visibility crosswalk striping, and advanced warning signs would be added across Catkin Circle (two crossings), and Laurel Creek Drive at the entrance to the Tamarack Subdivision at CR 100 East. Additionally, there would be high visibility crosswalk striping and advanced warning signs added at the intersection of CR 100 East and Rail Road to connect the new shared-use path to Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2.

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 1.600 acres of permanent right-of-way from residential, commercial, forested, wetland, and institutional properties. Additionally, the project will reacquire apparent right-of-way from residential, commercial, and institutional properties. Typical existing right-of-way in Segment 1 is edge of pavement along CR 1100 North. Segment 2 exists within a 60-ft wide corridor and land associated with the Tamarack Subdivision Park which are both owned by the Town of Chesterton. Typical existing right-of-way in Segment 3 is 30 feet wide along Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 East.

Des. No. 1902832		
Amount (acres)		
Land Use Impacts	Permanent	Reacquisition
Residential	0.430	0.320
Commercial	0.420	0.360
Agricultural	0	0
Forest	0.130	0
Wetlands	0.200	0
Other: Institutional	0.420	0.180
TOTAL	1.60	0.860

Maintenance of Traffic

The maintenance of traffic for the project will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. Flagging will be utilized to provide roadway access for large construction vehicles. There will also be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area. Signage and temporary curb ramps will be utilized for all pedestrian facility closures.

The sidewalk located along CR 1100 North will remain open while the new shared-use path is constructed and connected to it. The end of Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2, which dead ends at Rail Road, will be closed for approximately five days for the construction of an ADA-compliant curb ramp at the intersection of Rail Road and CR 100 East. The sidewalk located along the north side of Laurel Drive will be closed for approximately 1 to 3 months for the removal and replacement of the sidewalk with the new shared-use path. An additional route will not be provided for pedestrians at this location as the sidewalk located to the south of Laurel Creek Drive will remain open and will provide access to all the facilities within the area. Additionally, crosswalk pavement markings for a pedestrian detour along Laurel Creek Drive will be utilized. Lastly, a portion of the gravel path located within the Tamarack Subdivision Park, will be closed temporarily for approximately 2 to 4 weeks for the construction of the new shared-use path. Access throughout the park will be maintained as the majority of the gravel path will be unaffected. Signage will be placed at all closures.

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, emergency services, and pedestrians) 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 CE Level 3 Document prepared by American Structurepoint, Inc. for this project and released the document for public involvement on January 26, 2023. The CE evaluates the impact of the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 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.” Two streams and six wetlands were identified within the project area as potentially regulated resources. It is anticipated that the preferred alternative will impact approximately 152.25 linear feet of streams and 0.20 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 streams and wetlands. Mitigation will likely be needed and will be determined during permitting.

In addition, formal application for a Construction in a Floodway Permit from the IDNR will be required due to the proposed work within the 100-year floodway of Pope O’Connor Ditch. The proposed project will also require formal approval from the Porter County Drainage Board due to the project crossing Pope O’Conner Ditch, which is a regulated drain.

Terrestrial Habitat

The proposed project area was examined for the presence of terrestrial habitat resources. It is anticipated that the preferred alternative will impact approximately 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat due to the construction of the new shared-use path. It is anticipated that the clearing of approximately 0.71 acre of trees will be required for the development of the shared-use path throughout the wooded area between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive. Of the 2.52 acre of terrestrial habitat impact, 1.60 acres is maintained right-of-way, 0.03 acre is emergent wetland, 0.17 acre is forested wetland, and 0.71 acre is trees. Tree removal will occur during bat inactive season (between October 1st and March 31st).

Coordination occurred with US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and a “May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect” determination was received for tree clearing impacts. This project will require mitigation due to the tree clearing impacts.

4(f) Resources

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the use of certain public and historic lands for federally funded transportation facilities unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. The law applies to significant publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges, and National Register for Historical Places (NRHP) eligible or listed historic properties regardless of ownership. Lands subject to this law are considered Section 4(f) resources. There are four Section 4(f) resources located within or adjacent to the project area.

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1 is an existing trail corridor section that serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. This section ends along the south side of CR 1100 North, at the intersection of CR 1100 North and CR 50 East. In order to provide connectivity between Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1 and the new shared-use path, crosswalks will be added at the intersection. Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1 will not be closed for any time during the construction and no permanent right-of-way will be purchased adjacent to or within Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1. Therefore, no use is expected.

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 is an existing trail corridor section that serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. This section ends along the south side of Rail Road, at the intersection of Rail Road and CR 100 East. In order to provide connectivity between Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 and the new shared-use path, a new ADA-compliant curb ramp will be installed at the intersection of CR 100 East and Rail Road. For this reason, Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 will be temporarily impacted and closed for approximately 5 days during construction. During the remainder of construction, Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 will be unaffected by the installation of the new shared-use path. No permanent right-of-way will be purchased adjacent to or within Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2. The installation of the ADA-compliant curb ramp at Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 is considered a transportation enhancement activity and constitutes a no use under Section 4(f). The official with jurisdiction (OWJ), Town of Chesterton, concurred with the transportation enhancement.

Tamarack Subdivision Park

Tamarack Subdivision Park is an existing publicly-owned park and serves as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. The Tamarack Subdivision Park is located north of Laurel Creek Drive. There is a four-foot-wide gravel path along the eastern edge of the park that will be temporarily impacted for the construction of the new shared-use path and will be closed for approximately 2 to 4 weeks during construction. All access to the park will be maintained and open to the public during this time. No permanent right-of-way will be purchased adjacent to or within the park. The installation of the new shared-use path will result in connectivity between Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1 and Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 to the Tamarack Subdivision Park. Therefore, the project is considered a transportation enhancement activity and constitutes a no use under Section 4(f). The official with jurisdiction (OWJ), Town of Chesterton, concurred with the transportation enhancement.

Dunes-Kankakee Trail

The Dunes-Kankakee Trail is a future planned trail that will serve as a general resource to the public and is thus a Section 4(f) resource. The Dunes-Kankakee Trail will be located to the east of the project area, and would connect to Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2 near the intersection Rail Road and SR 49. As the planned trail is located outside of the construction limits, it is not anticipated to be impacted by this project; therefore, no use expected.

Community Impacts

The proposed project will construct an 8-foot-wide shared-use path, connecting Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 1 to Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 2, and to existing sidewalks. This project would result in an increase in recreational facilities in the area and is therefore a net benefit for the community. The proposed project will positively impact community cohesion by increasing the availability of shared recreational facilities and connecting existing trails in the surrounding area. The proposed project would also add ADA-compliant facilities throughout the project area, which increases non-motorized accessibility. Traffic will be maintained along the existing roadway during construction. The only potential impacts to motor traffic would be temporary lane closures or restrictions for road markings at trail crossings. The Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 project meets the town's current Comprehensive Plan, meets the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) *2050 Plan*, and is identified as a High Priority Corridor in the NIRPC's *Greenways and Blueways 2020 Regional Plan, Priority Trail Corridors Map*.

Public Facilities and Services

There is one religious facility, The River Church, adjacent to the project area. Two pipeline segments, associated with Northern Indiana Public Service Co. and Marathon Pipe Line Co., are located within the project area. There will be no impacts to the pipeline segments. Right-of-way will be acquired from the River Church, as noted in the right-of-way table above.

The maintenance of traffic for the project will include temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways. Flagging will be utilized to provide roadway access for large construction vehicles. There will also be temporary sidewalk and trail closures throughout the project area. Signage and temporary curb ramps will be utilized for all pedestrian facility closures. Access to all properties will be maintained throughout construction. The lane restrictions and detours will pose a temporary inconvenience to traveling motorists within the overall project; however, no significant delays are anticipated, and all inconveniences will cease upon project completion.

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 \$1,942,000 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	Summer 2023
Anticipated Begin of Construction Date	Spring 2024



WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC HEARING


Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3
Des. No. 1902832
Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana
April 19, 2023




1



Project Team







MATT **ERIC** **GREG** **MEGHAN** **JOSH**

Town of Chesterton
Matt Gavelek, Assistant Town Engineer

American Structurepoint, Inc.
Eric Wolverton, Project Development Director
Greg Lorig, Engineering Project Manager
Meghan Hinkle, Environmental Specialist
Josh Iddings, Environmental Project Manager




2

Submit Public Comments

In-Person Public Hearing:

- Verbal comment session after presentation using microphone
- Public Comment form available in information packet

Via website, mail, or email:

- Project Website: www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt
- Mail: Meghan Hinkle, American Structurepoint, Inc.
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
- Email: mhinkle@structurepoint.com
- Phone: 317.547.5580

The Town of Chesterton respectfully requests comments be submitted by Wednesday May 5, 2023



3

Presentation Agenda



- Public Hearing Intent
- Project Location
- Purpose & Need Overview
- Proposed Project Improvements
- Alternatives Considered
- Maintenance of Traffic
- Right-of-Way Requirements
- Land Acquisition Process
- Environmental Process
- Anticipated Project Schedule/Costs
- Comment Opportunities



4

Public Hearing Intent

- Requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Continuation of the opportunity to engage the public in the decision-making process
- Solicit comments on the environmental document & preliminary design plans
- All comments submitted will become part of the public record, and they will be entered into a transcript, reviewed, evaluated, and given full consideration during the decision-making process



5

Project Location



Chesterton, Porter County, IN

6

Purpose and Need

Need of Project

- Connectivity between the two existing Westchester Liberty Trail sections.
- Connectivity to the existing sidewalk at intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E.
- Conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles sharing the roadway.



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Project Area



8

Purpose and Need

Need of Project

- Connectivity between the two existing Westchester Liberty Trail sections.
- Connectivity to the existing sidewalk at intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E.
- Conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles sharing the roadway.

Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between Westchester Liberty Trail 1 and Westchester Liberty Trail 2, and the sidewalks located along CR 1100 North and CR 100 East.



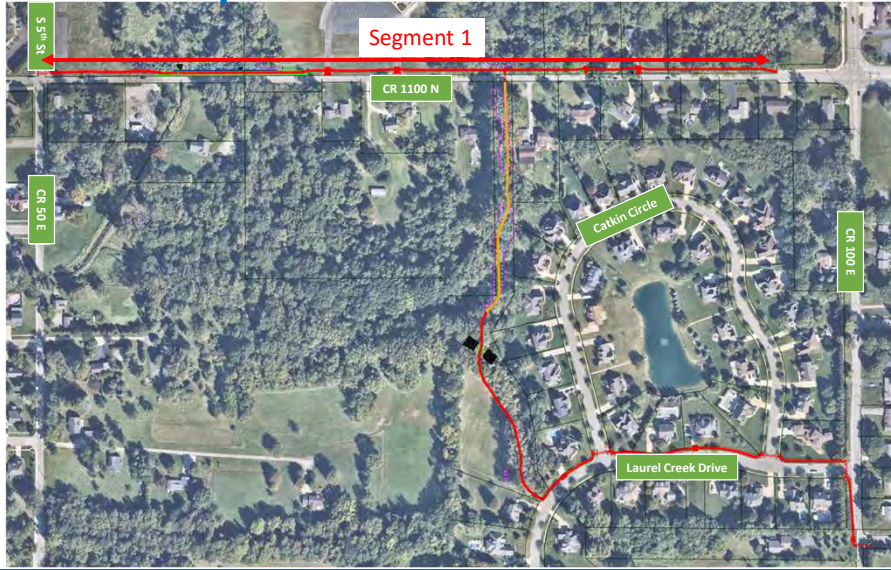
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Project Description – Preferred Alternative



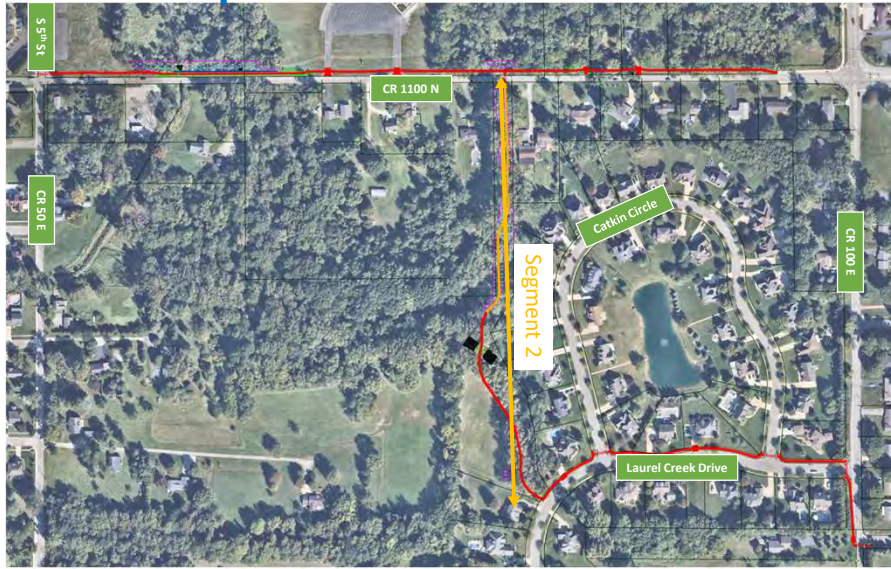
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Project Description – Preferred Alternative

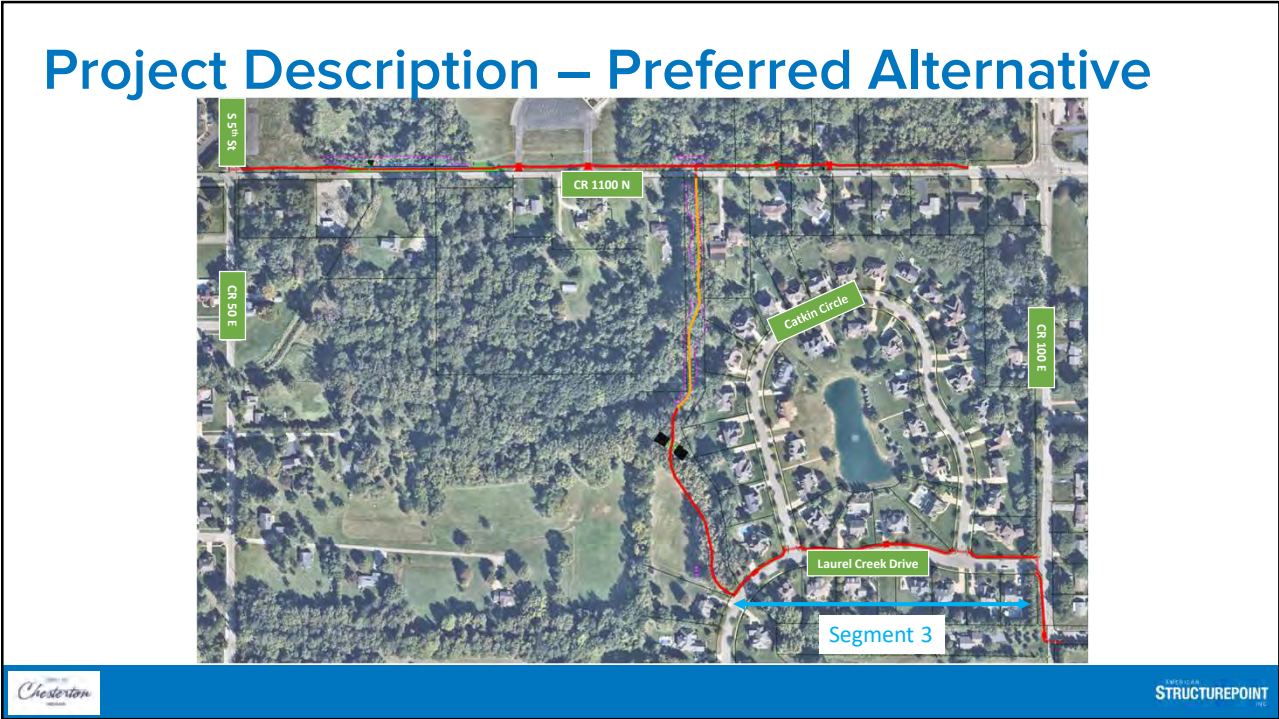


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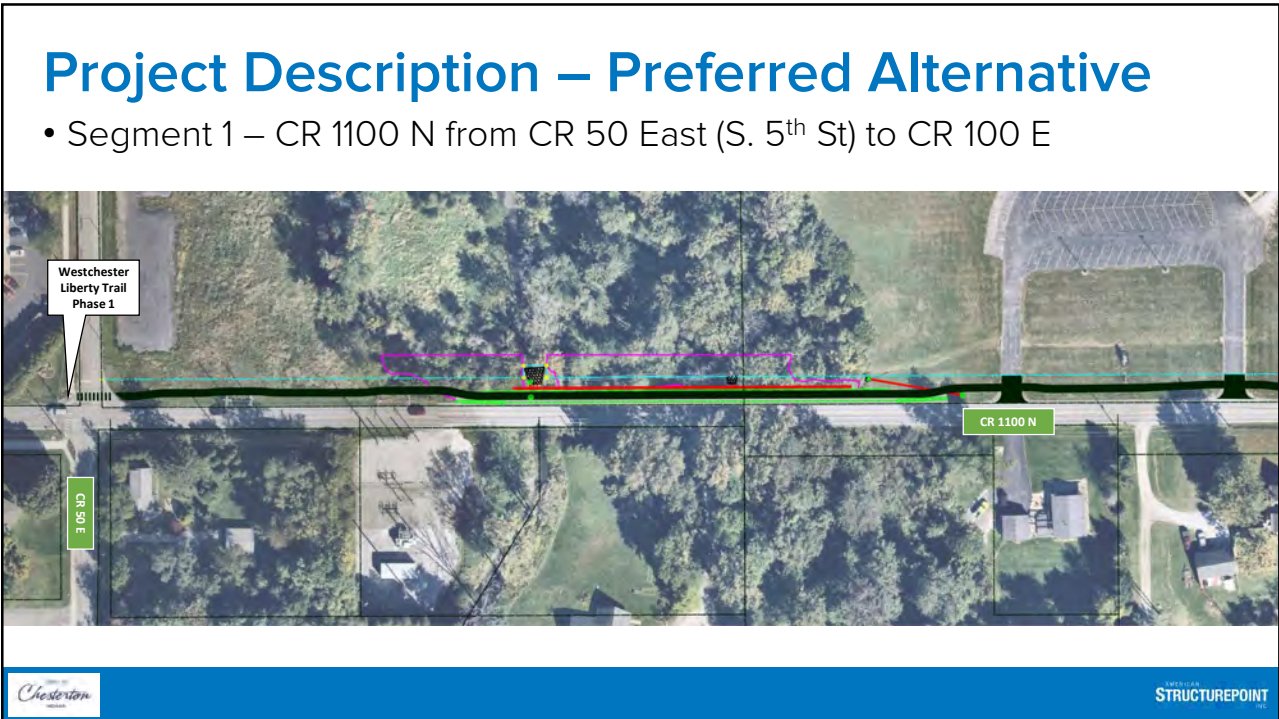
Project Description – Preferred Alternative



12



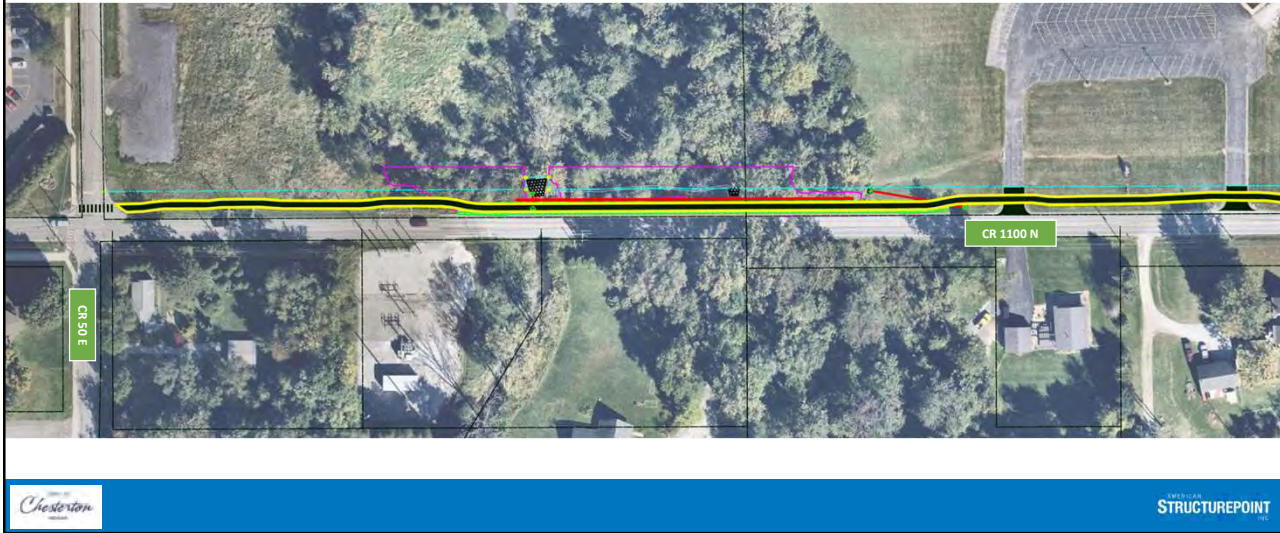
13



14

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 1 – CR 1100 N from CR 50 East (S. 5th St) to CR 100 E



15

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

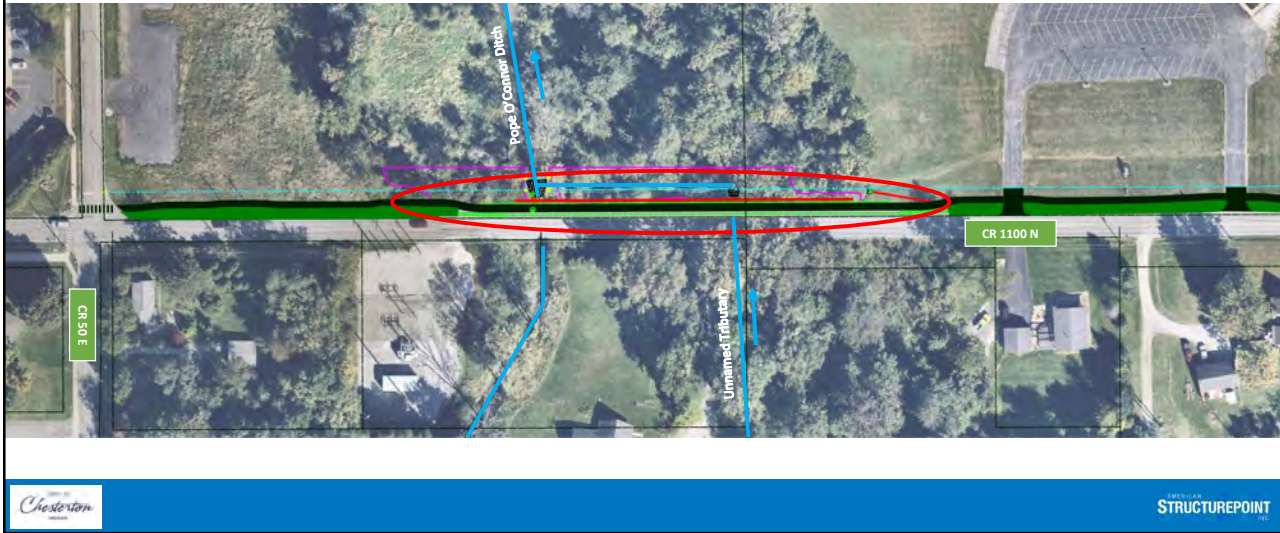
- Segment 1 – CR 1100 N from 5th Street (CR 50 East) to CR 100 E



16

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

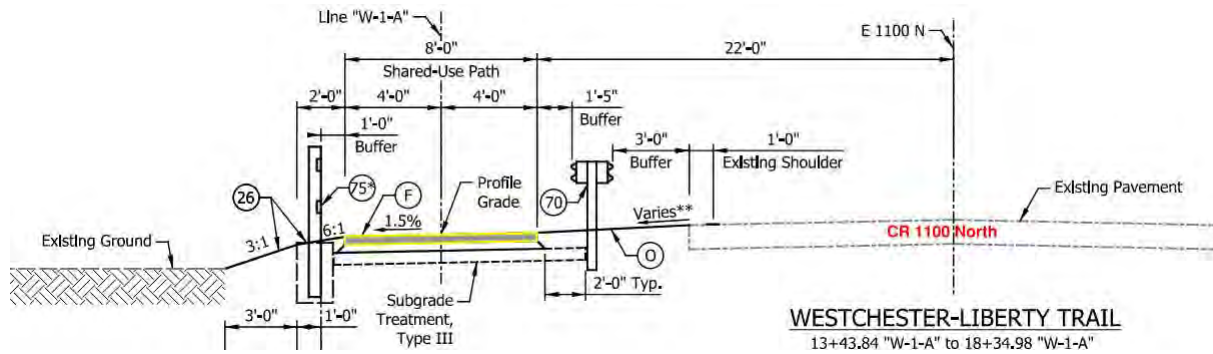
- Segment 1 – CR 1100 N from CR 50 East (S. 5th St) to CR 100 E



17

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

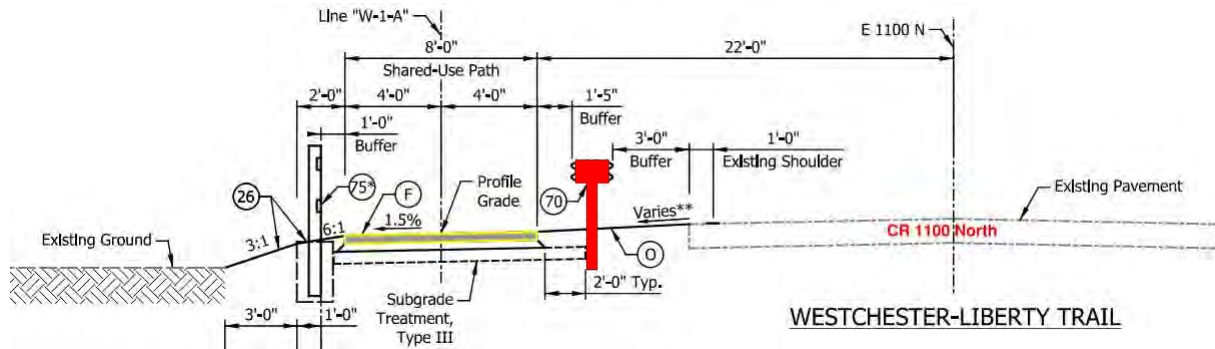
- Segment 1 – Pope O'Connor Ditch and Unnamed Tributary Details



18

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

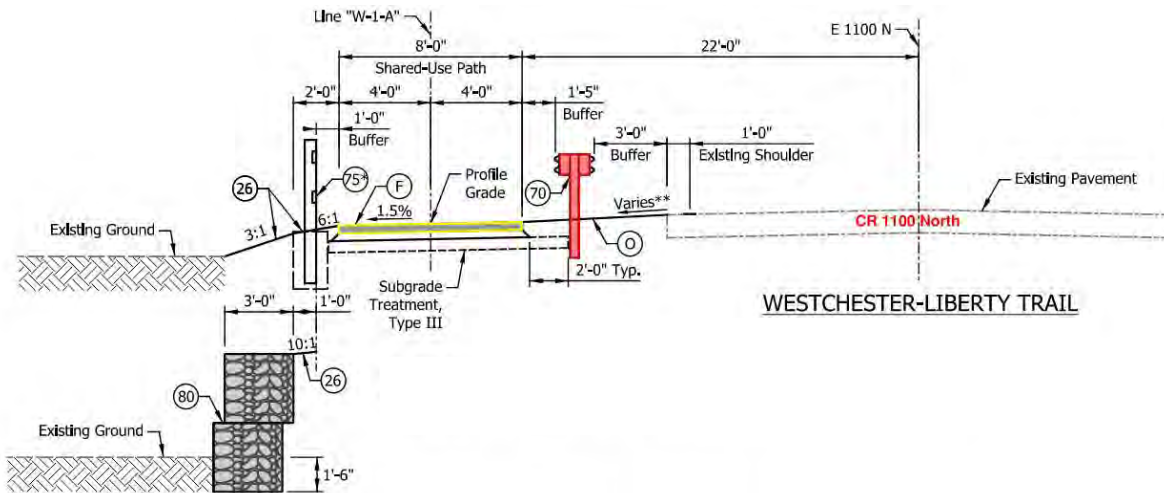
- Segment 1 – Pope O'Connor Ditch and Unnamed Tributary Details



19

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

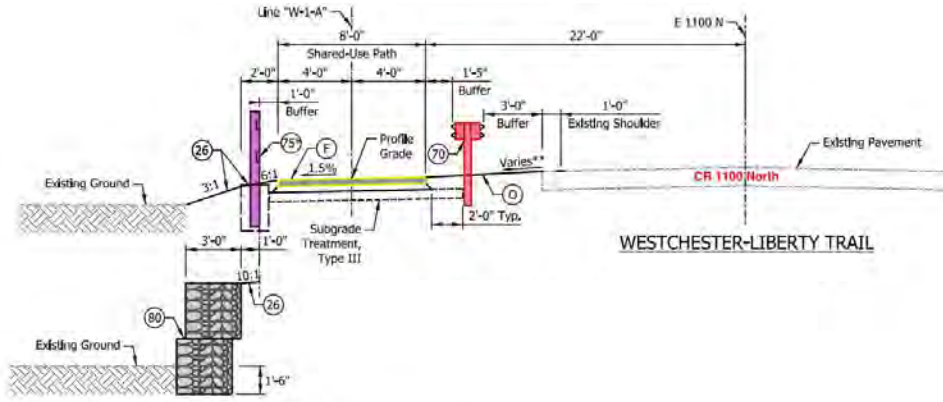
- Segment 1 – Pope O'Connor Ditch and Unnamed Tributary Details



20

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 1 – Pope O'Connor Ditch and Unnamed Tributary Details



21

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 1 – CR 1100 N from 5th Street (CR 50 East) to CR 100 E



22

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 1 – CR 1100 N from 5th Street (CR 50 East) to CR 100 E



23

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 1 – CR 1100 N from 5th Street (CR 50 East) to CR 100 E



24

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 1 – CR 1100 N from 5th Street (CR 50 East) to CR 100 E



25

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 2 – CR 1100 N south to Laurel Creek Drive



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Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 2 – CR 1100 N south to Laurel Creek Drive



Photo source: Briana Hope, American Structurepoint, Inc.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION:

Why is a mid-block crossing proposed?



27

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

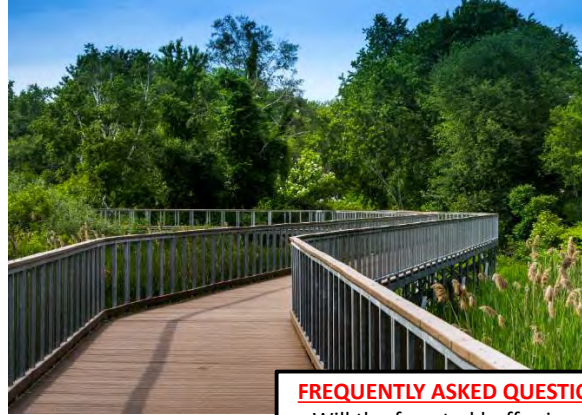
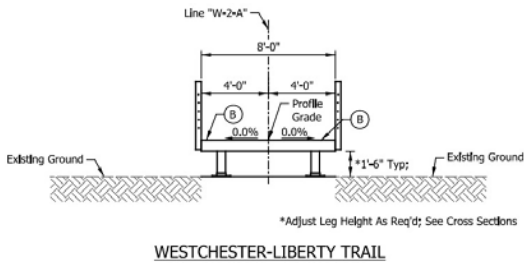
- Segment 2 – CR 1100 N south to Laurel Creek Drive



28

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 2 – CR 1100 N south to Laurel Creek Drive



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION:
Will the forested buffer in my backyard remain post construction?



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Project Description – Preferred Alternative

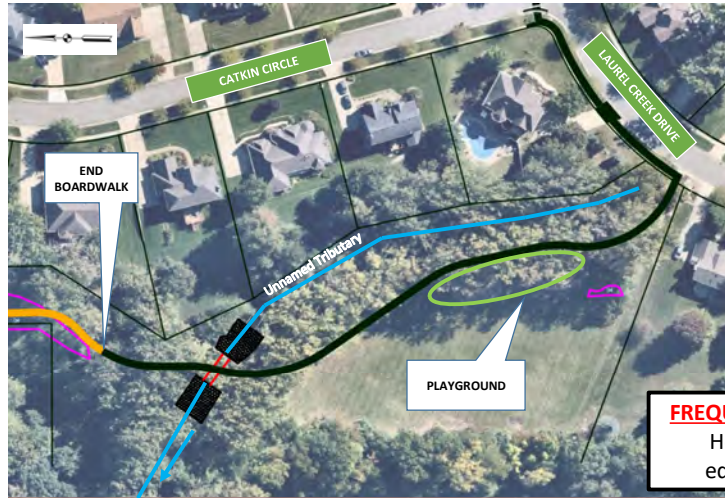
- Segment 2 – CR 1100 N south to Laurel Creek Drive



STRUCTUREPOINT

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 2 – CR 1100 N south to Laurel Creek Drive



31

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 3 – Laurel Creek Drive from Tamarack Subdivision Park to CR 100 E and CR 100 E south to Rail Road (Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2)



32

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 3 – Laurel Creek Drive from Tamarack Subdivision Park to CR 100 E and CR 100 E south to Rail Road (Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2)



33

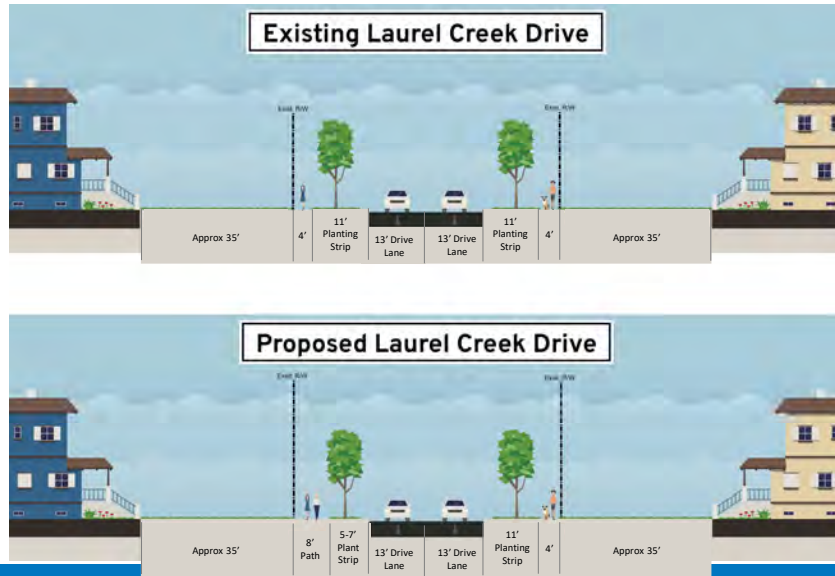
Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 3 – Laurel Creek Drive from Tamarack Subdivision Park to CR 100 E and CR 100 E south to Rail Road (Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2)



34

Project Description – Preferred Alternative



35

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 3 – Laurel Creek Drive from Tamarack Subdivision Park to CR 100 E and CR 100 E south to Rail Road (Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2)



36

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Segment 3 – Laurel Creek Drive from Tamarack Subdivision Park to CR 100 E and CR 100 E south to Rail Road (Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2)



Chesteron

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37

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Drainage



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION:
How will drainage be maintained?

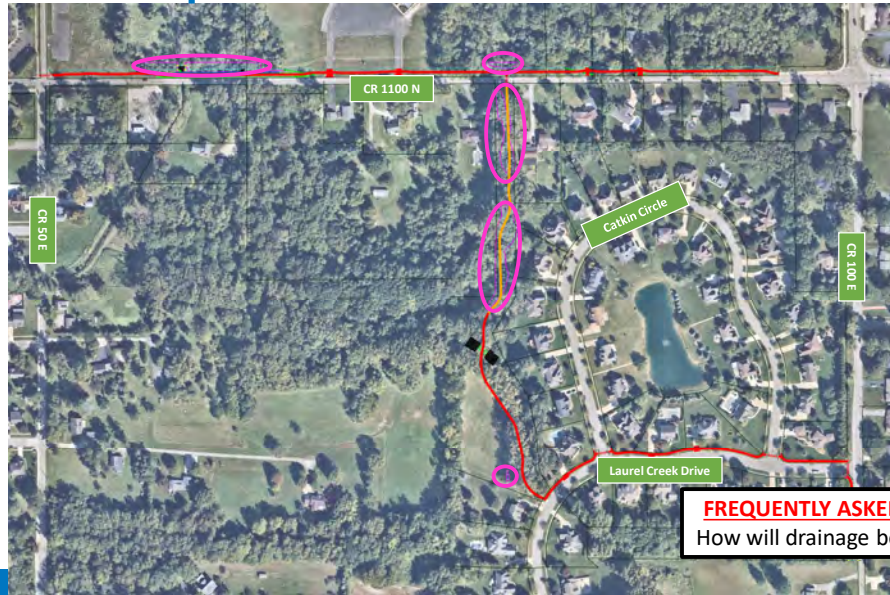
Chesteron

STRUCTUREPOINT

38

Project Description – Preferred Alternative

- Drainage



39

Alternatives Considered

Do Nothing Alternative:

- No improvements would be made
- Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1 and Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2 would remain unconnected
- Purpose and need of project would not be met

40

Alternatives Considered

Do Nothing Alternative:

- No improvements would be made
- Purpose and need of project would not be met

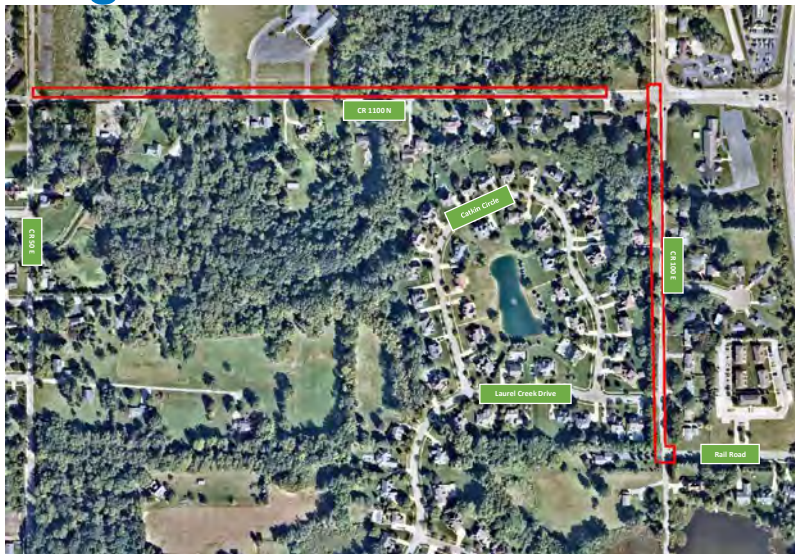
South along CR 100 E Alternative:

- Construct Westchester Liberty Trail along the north side of CR 1100 N from the existing end of Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1 at 5th Street (CR 50 East) to CR 100 E, then along the west side of CR 100 E to Rail Road and connect to Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2
- Lets take a look at the proposed impacts under this alternative



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South along CR 100 E Alternative



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Alternatives Considered – South along CR 100 E

- Total distance of construction
 - This is less than the preferred alternative
- Right-of-way Impacts
 - This would impact 5 additional residential parcels when compared to preferred alternative
 - This would require acquisition on right-of-way on 5 parcels within unincorporated Porter County
 - This would increase permanent right-of-way required for the project by approximately 50%
- CR 1100 N Pedestrian Crossing
 - Crosswalk at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E is twice as long as the mid-block crossing
 - Pedestrians need to watch for traffic on CR 1100 N and turning traffic from both roads
- Trail crosses into un-incorporated Porter County



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Maintenance of Traffic

- Temporary lane closures for construction of American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant curb ramps.
- Temporary sidewalk and trail closures.
- Signage and temporary curb ramps will be utilized for all closures.
- Access to all adjacent properties and Tamarack Subdivision Park will be maintained during construction.



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Right-of-Way Requirements

Land Use Impacts	Permanent (acres)
Residential	0.43
Commercial	0.42
Forest	0.13
Wetlands	0.20
Institutional (Church)	0.42
TOTAL	1.60

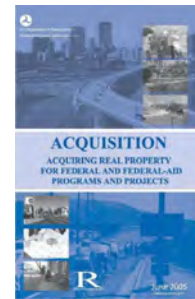
- Additionally, 0.86 acre of reacquired right-of-way along CR 1100 N will be needed.



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Land Acquisition Process

- New permanent and temporary right-of-way acquisition anticipated
- No relocations
- Land acquisition process must follow the Uniform Act of 1970
- The brochure that explains process can be found at <https://www.in.gov/indot/files/FHWA%20Acquisition%20Brochure%20-%20BLUE.pdf>.



Hard copies of these brochures are also available.



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Environmental Process

Requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Requires evaluation of environmental impacts of the project on the natural and social environment
 - Waterways, wetlands, endangered species, etc.
 - Historic Resources
 - Social and economic factors



Environmental Process

- Categorical Exclusion (CE)
 - Prepared in accordance with state and federal guidelines
 - Evaluates impacts of proposed project
- Evaluates a number of possible alternatives including a “Do Nothing” alternative as a baseline for comparison

The goal is to avoid, minimize, and then mitigate impacts



Environmental Status

NEPA Status

- Coordinated with local, state, and federal agencies
- Evaluated impacts
- Preliminary Engineering completed
- Categorical Exclusion released for public involvement on January 26, 2023

STATE AGENCIES
EMERGENCY SERVICES *IDEM* *INDOT*
LOCAL AGENCIES **ELECTED OFFICIALS**
SCHOOL DISTRICTS *NPS* *USACE* *HUD*
USFWS **FEDERAL AGENCIES** *IGS*
FHWA *DNR* *NRCS*



49

Environmental Status

- Historic Properties
 - Archaeological reconnaissance conducted
 - No archaeological sites within project area currently listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)
 - INDOT Cultural Resources staff has determined the proposed project falls under Category B, Type 6 of the Minor Projects Programmatic Agreement.
 - No impacts to historic properties are anticipated.



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Environmental Status

- Environmental Justice (EJ)
 - Population of EJ concern identified due to percent low income & percent minority when compared to two Census Tracts.
- No disproportionately high and adverse impacts are anticipated.
 - Will not disrupt community cohesion or create a physical barrier.
 - Add additional pedestrian facilities increasing pedestrian access.



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Environmental Status

- Section 4(f) Analysis
 - 4(f) resources include publicly owned public parks, recreation areas, wildlife or waterfowl refuges, and publicly or privately owned historic sites listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
 - Four 4(f) resources within the project area
 - Westchester Liberty Trail 1
 - Westchester Liberty Trail 2
 - Tamarack Subdivision Park
 - Planned Dunes-Kankakee Trail



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Environmental Status

- Wetland Delineation completed
 - Six wetlands and two streams identified
- Site visit with the US Army Corps of Engineers in 2021
- Wetlands and streams will likely be impacted
 - Section 401/404 Regional General Permit required
 - Indiana DNR Construction in a Floodway permit required
 - Wetland and stream mitigation anticipated



Terrestrial Habitat Impacts

- 2.52 acres of terrestrial habitat.
- 0.71 acre of tree clearing.
- 0.10 acre of tree clearing requires mitigation.
- Tree clearing was minimized using boardwalk through Tamarack Subdivision Park.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION:

How much tree clearing will occur?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION:

Will the trees be replaced?



Threatened and Endangered Species

- No state listed species
- Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat
- Monarch butterfly
- Coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Service
 - May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect determination received
 - Tree mitigation required



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION:
 Won't the trail through the wooded area impact protected species?



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Community Involvement

- Notice of Survey
- Opportunity for Requesting a Hearing
- Public Hearing

Project Website
www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt



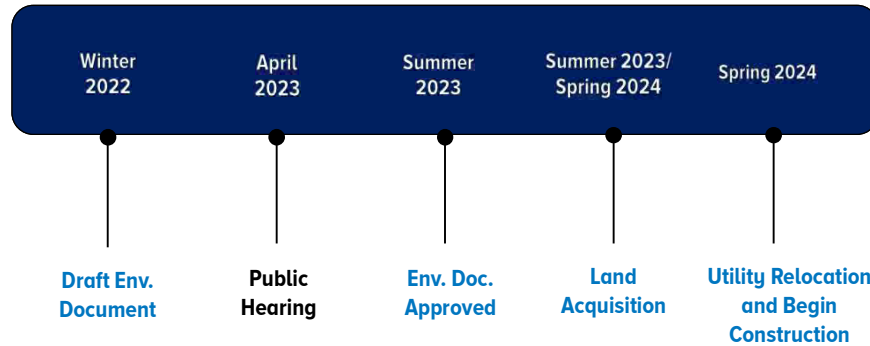
YOU
 QUESTIONS **MEETING**
INVOLVEMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION **FEEDBACK**
 CONCERNS **COMMUNITY**
COMMENTS *DISCUSSION*



56

Anticipated Project Schedule & Cost

ESTIMATED TIMELINE



- The estimated cost is \$1,942,000 which includes preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction.
- The project includes both local and federal funding.



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Project Resource Locations

- Environmental document available online at:
 - Project website: www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt
- Physical copy of the environmental document (with plans):
 - Chesterton Municipal Complex
 - 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
 - Westchester Public Library
 - 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304
 - Can be mailed upon request



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Submitting A Comment

COMMENT FORM

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Type your message here: _____

Submit

The team is interested in hearing your feedback on the project

- Comment forms are available to be completed.
- Project info and comment form will also be posted at: www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt
- Verbal comments accepted after this presentation or by fax or e-mail to Meghan Hinkle
 - Fax: 317.543.0270
 - Email: mhinkle@structurepoint.com
- Please submit comments by **May 5, 2023**



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THANK YOU!

Please be sure to view the visuals and project layout posted on the project website

www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt

For questions, please contact Meghan Hinkle at:

mhinkle@structurepoint.com

317.547.5580



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SIGN-IN / MAILING LIST

PUBLIC HEARING

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832)
Wednesday, April 19, 2023/6:00 p.m. CST
Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue, Chesterton, IN 46304

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information on the meeting Sign-In Sheet or on your comment submittal, be advised that your comment - including your personal identifying information - may be publicly available at any time. While you can ask us to withhold personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Name	Mailing Address	Email
Jennifer Fisher		
Greg Jabcock		
Tiffany Borovich		
Victoria & Neke Konopacki		
Amanda McGrofitz		
Rob Kann		
MARTI MANCUSO		



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Name	Mailing Address	Email
Jeff Van Wegner	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Shannon Walsh		
Dale Banhart		
Chris Turner		
BRITTHIELEMAN		
Ed Vigil		
Melissa Kana		



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Name	Mailing Address	Email
Theresa Buehler		
Sim Martin		
Rene Martin		
BARBARA BLACK		
JOHN BLACK		
Bob Filippek		
LISA Filippek		



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Name	Mailing Address	Email
Sylvia Soto		
Buck Kithredge		
Kim PARKS		
Michelle Gilbertsen		
Barb Rabson		
CLIP MORGAN		
D. Sugony Hill		



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Name	Mailing Address	Email
Roy NORELL		
Amber Thomas		
Janet Borsos		
Conrad H. Nolan		
Dakota Sechrist		
Lori Demeneay		
Jeff Gilbertson		



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Name	Mailing Address	Email
Chun Wang		
Nick Cables		
D. Wojewick		
	Address: City: State: Zip:	
	Address: City: State: Zip:	
	Address: City: State: Zip:	
	Address: City: State: Zip:	



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Name	Mailing Address	Email
John & Noelle Hilgeman	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	
	Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	
	Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	
	Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	
	Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	
	Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	



SPEAKER SIGN-IN SHEET

PUBLIC HEARING

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832)

Wednesday, April 19, 2023/6:00 p.m. CST

Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue, Chesterton, IN 46304

NAME

ADDRESS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
✓ June Borsos	
✓ Jenny Orsburn	
✓ Jim Martin	
✓ Bob Filippek	
✓ BRITTHELEMAN	
✓ Deanne Manojlovic	
Michelle Smith	
Theresa Buehler	
Tiffany Bozovich	
GEORGE MRAK	
Jessica Manojlovic	
LISA FILIPEK	
TOM SHUMATE	



SPEAKER SIGN-IN SHEET

PUBLIC HEARING

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Wednesday, April 19, 2023/6:00 p.m. CST

Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue, Chesterton, IN 46304

NAME

ADDRESS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
Dominick Wojcik	
Roy Wozniak	
JOHN HILGENA	



SPEAKER SIGN-IN SHEET

PUBLIC HEARING

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832)

Wednesday, April 19, 2023/6:00 p.m. CST

Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue, Chesterton, IN 46304

NAME

ADDRESS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
✓ D. GREGORY (GREG) HILL	
✓ Cliff MORGAN	
✓ Amanda McCroftz	
✓ Rene Martin	
✓ Roz ^{Kania} Kania	

Public Hearing Comments and Responses

Public Hearing Comments April 5, 2023 to May 5, 2023

	Name	Comment	Response
1	<p>Janel Borsos</p> <p>Received by email on 4/6/2023</p>	<p>I am writing to express my profound dissatisfaction with the proposed route of the Westchester-Liberty Trail through the Tamarack subdivision. It seems counterintuitive, doesn't it, to run a nature trail through an urban subdivision?</p> <p>The town of Chesterton has been called the "City of Trees," and yet the proposed trail will remove numerous trees from the park perimeter (which borders on my back yard) -- and even worse, from the front of homes on Laurel Creek Drive.</p> <p>I should mention that those ornamental flowering trees throughout our neighborhood are the signature of Tamarack, and their aesthetic beauty is a great source of pride for all our residents.</p> <p>Even those Tamarack residents whose property is not immediately adjacent to the proposed trail have expressed their certainty that their property values will be adversely affected by a shared-use trail and the outside traffic that will certainly result.</p> <p>We question what purpose could possibly be served if our neighborhood is bisected? Certainly this proposed trail must have been conceived long before Tamarack existed. Otherwise, a simple drive-through would prove to you that this serves our community badly.</p> <p>I ask for your consideration in this matter and urge you to consider alternate routes.</p>	<p>Trees: 0.71 acre of tree clearing will occur as part of this project. Most of the tree clearing for the project will occur along the north side of CR 1100 N. 0.10 acre of the tree clearing will require mitigation as determined through coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Service. The trail throughout the park has been laid out to minimize tree clearing and impacts to the forested wetlands. The boardwalk through Tamarack Subdivision Park will include cable style railings and pan style footers that do not require excavation to install. By using a pan style foot this system ensures that no root damage occurs and preserves trees. After construction, the trail will wind through the wooded area retaining canopy cover due to large trees and the existing tree line between the wooded area and property owners being preserved. The relocation or replacement of existing street trees (including ornamental flowering trees along Laurel Creek Drive) removed along Laurel Creek Drive is currently being considered but is dependent on utility locations and a for consideration commitment has been added to the project. Additionally, the Tamarack Subdivision HOA president and property owners immediately adjacent to the trail along Laurel Creek Drive will be notified of a landscaping decision once the landscaping plan is finalized and a firm commitment has been added to the project.</p> <p>Property Values: The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways. Additionally, American Structurepoint, Inc. coordinated with right-of-way (ROW) specialists and a third-party ROW appraiser for additional information regarding public comments received. Based on coordination with the ROW specialists and appraiser, property values are determined by market data, and in the past, it has not been concluded that trails adjacent to residential properties decrease property values. Currently the trend of having trail accessibility along with accessibility to other outdoor recreational features has been an increased selling point in recently constructed or newer neighborhoods. Refer to the <i>Public Controversy on Environmental Grounds</i> section and email coordination included in Appendix I of the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Purpose and Need: The need for the project is due to the lack of connectivity between the two existing Westchester Liberty Trail sections, the existing sidewalk at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E, and the conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists sharing the roadway with motorists. The purpose of the project is to reduce conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists sharing the roadway and connect the two Westchester Liberty Trail sections and connect to the existing sidewalk. Refer to the <i>Purpose and Need</i> section of the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Previous Planning: The Westchester Liberty Trail connection was identified many years ago, and the vision was to pass through the neighborhood to connect the Tamarack Subdivision to Chesterton and the existing trail network. Various news articles between 2016 to 2021 discussed the trail passing through the Tamarack Subdivision, and it has been presented at several Town Council meetings for public input and comment. The Town has also talked to residents who have contacted them regarding the project over the last two years. Furthermore, the recognition of the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission of this trail as a "High Priority" is largely attributed to the</p>

Public Hearing Comments April 5, 2023 to May 5, 2023

			<p>significance to provide connectivity to existing and planned trail connections in the community at large. Refer to the <i>Regional, Community, & Neighborhood Factors</i> section and multiple documents included in Appendix I of the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Alternatives: Whenever a project like this one has federal funding, it has to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires that we evaluate how the proposed project could impact the surrounding environment, evaluating both the natural environment, like waterways, wetlands, and endangered species and the social environment, like historic resources and social and economic factors. As part of the design development process, alternatives were considered, and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion. Refer to the <i>Other Alternatives</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p>
2	<p>Gregory Hill</p> <p>Received as written comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>From the minutes from I believe the April 10th Town Council Meeting, I have several comments that support many other Tamarack Subdivision people. I believe that the direction Structurepoint has received is from the Town of Chesterton. Is this correct?</p> <p>The concern should not be lowest cost but rather value and quality of life for those affected by this extension.</p> <p>With an 8 foot wide trail along Laurel Creek Drive how will you handle the outstandingly beautiful flowering rows on both sides of the drive in spring and the shade during the balance of the year.</p> <p>Although it has been stated trails raise the property values, this will not be the case for the Tamarack Subdivision. In addition, a reduction in assessed valuation will lead to lower tax revenues for Porter County and the towns portion.</p> <p>Conceiving "least environmental impact," two issues are: The boardwalk through a wetland west of Tamarack should be "negatively" impacting environmental.</p> <p>What is the cost of this boardwalk (material, labor, engineering) per 10 foot and for the cost for the normal 8 foot path per 10 foot?</p> <p>The "green" areas between the trail evergreens on the east side of Tamarack, west of 100 East is ideal as is.</p> <p>What is the cost to convert this to town property? Eminent domain? Provide whatever communication has occurred with Porter County.</p> <p>Items 2 and 3 just state a preference. Some county presidents express their desire to remain unincorporated. In my opinion you need to look at all involved, 30+ in Tamarack. I believe Tamarack would have no issues on that green area. What is the issue with Porter County?</p> <p>Per item 5, because Tamarack has higher valuation there would be a lowering especially homes along the path. Would Sand Creek, Coffee Creek subdivision want a path thru their developments?</p>	<p>Meeting Minutes: This comment refers to conversations had with the Town during a Town Council Meeting on April 10th. A response from the Chesterton Office of the Town Manager was sent to the Tamarack Homeowners Association based on the comments/questions presented at the meeting. Refer to the response from the Chesterton Office of the Town Manager included in Appendix I of the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information. All Town Council Meetings are open to the public to attend. These meetings are not part of the federal undertaking and American Structurepoint representatives did not attend Town Council meetings. As such, remarks made during the Town Council Meetings are not official comments.</p> <p>Project Sponsor and Funding Requirements: Yes, the Town of Chesterton is the sponsor of the project and American Structurepoint, Inc. is the lead engineer for the project.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Boardwalk: The boardwalk will be made out of pressure treated lumber and will include cable style railings to maintain trail users, including bikes, on the boardwalk and restrict trail users from navigating onto private land or into wetlands. The proposed boardwalk through the wetland portion of the wooded area was selected because it is a type which does not require excavation to place. The boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the existing ground surface and is fully adjustable in height (up or down) to ensure it minimizes impacts long term to the wetlands. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management have been very supportive of the efforts taken to avoid impacts to the wetlands on this project. The project coordinated and evaluated all impacts and obtained the necessary authorizations from the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management. Refer to the <i>Wetlands</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Boardwalk Cost: The construction of the boardwalk was not selected based on the cost compared to constructing a paved trail. The boardwalk was selected to reduce impacts to the wetlands, reduce impacts to the surrounding trees, and maintain existing drainage in this portion of the trail. The overall cost of the project is approximately \$1.9 million dollars which is approximately \$3,640 per 10 foot of trail.</p>

Public Hearing Comments April 5, 2023 to May 5, 2023

			<p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Right-of-way engineering has been completed as part of the Town’s evaluation process and the CR 100 E alternative has been evaluated. It was determined to construct the trail on the CR 100 E alignment, it would require the reacquisition of all land to the center line of CR 100 E. This would increase the right-of-way costs and impacts to property owners significantly for the project. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County. The preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays withing existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way in this area. Refer to the <i>Other Alternatives Considered</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p>
3	<p>Linda Schwab Received by email on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>My name is Linda Schwab and I am a homeowner and resident of the Tamarack subdivision in Chesterton, IN and have owned my home since 2004. My address is [REDACTED]. I would like to enter my public comments into the Public Records regarding the Westchester Liberty Trail in Chesterton, IN, in response to the Public Hearing on the subject on April 19, 2023: I am OPPOSED to the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 path and plan as it is currently being presented (April 19, 2023). I would like both the Town of Chesterton and their trail consultants, American Structurepoint, to re-evaluate the trail concerns presented, re-evaluate the logic of the plans presented, and pursue other options before continuing with this plan. My reasons are as follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Running this trail through the Tamarack subdivision (the middle of it! Right in front of people’s front yards!) is not consistent with the way in which any other trail in the Town of Chesterton, or Porter is laid out. There is NO OTHER PLACE where a public trail cuts through the heart of a subdivision and certainly not through the front yards and driveways of a subdivision. Current Trails in your system run along the backsides of subdivisions and alongside major arterial traffic roadways. The trails CONNECT subdivisions and other residential areas, not cut through them. Homeowners in Tamarack chose to live in a subdivision for quiet, some relative privacy, and less traffic. Many homeowners in Tamarack purchased their homes prior to this Trail ever being planned (including myself, homeowner since 2004). So by adding this trail you are changing the LANDSCAPE that current homeowners chose to live in and purchased. In fact, even by cutting down trees in the “park” area you will be changing the landscape. We DO have concerns that the trail will de-value the homes in this neighborhood. It certainly can have an impact on the homes where you plan to rip up the current sidewalk, pass the trail over their driveways, and uproot the trees; that, in turn, will de-value all of our homes. You state, in Item 5 of your “Office of the Town Manager Westchester Liberty Trail Questions and Concerns” to which I will refer as TOWN Q&A, that “recent studies have confirmed living near trails and greenways will likely raise your property value and average of 3-5% and sometimes even as high as 15%”. I would like to point out the word “near”, versus the reality of this situation the word being “ON, with the path through your front yard”. There IS a difference, and it is significant. Yes, people may like to be NEAR a trail but I would love to see this study/studies’ questions and wonder how NEAR was presented to the study group. NEAR may conjure up “close to, accessible” but not necessarily “in my front yard”. 	<p>Alignment in Neighborhood: Trail, multi-use path, and shared-use path alignments vary greatly and depend on many things including funding conditions, design conditions, environmental impacts, and the existing landscape to name a few. One example of a trail through a neighborhood is The Iron Horse Heritage trail that runs through Portage, Indiana. It enters the “Four Seasons On the Lake” subdivision and runs down Lakeshore Drive.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p> <p>Office of the Town Manager Response (Town Q&A): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the meeting these topics were discussed and context for comment received.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: The mid-block crossing of CR 1100 N was chosen because it minimizes the distance pedestrians have to travel to get across the roadway. Compared to the existing crossing at CR 1100 N at CR 100 E which would require pedestrians to cross 48-feet in pavement width, the proposed mid-block crossing only requires pedestrians to cross 23-feet in pavement width, which is less than half the distance. Additionally, pedestrians do not have to watch for turning vehicles at mid-block crossings like they do at intersections. The vehicle stopping sight distance at the mid-block crossing location on CR 1100 N was evaluated per INDOT requirements. The posted speed limit along CR 1100 S is 30 mph. Per the Indiana Design Manual, a 200 foot stopping sight distance is required for a 30 mph design speed. The hill to the west of the proposed mid-block crossing location is the closest and is approximately 300 feet away from proposed mid-block crossing location. Adequate stopping sight distance is present at this location, and this crossing will not create a hazard to motorists. The midblock crossing will include high visibility pavement markings, advanced warning signs, and a push button activated flashing beacon to notify motorists of trail users crossing the roadway. Refer to the <i>Public Controversy on Environmental Grounds</i> section of the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: If there are specific speeding, safety, and/or security concerns of the neighborhood, sidewalks/trails, or roadways it would fall under the</p>

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	<p>Also, please provide a citation for these studies, as none have been cited in your presentations.</p> <p>2) Safety.</p> <p>It's pretty hard to believe that this plan offers the best safety to ANYONE. Certainly not the users of the trail. Certainly not to the drivers on the roads by this trail, or drivers of the homes with driveways through which the trail crosses. I posed this question earlier to American Structurepoint, specifically regarding the safety of crossing midpoint on CR 1100 N. I was given a canned response, which was repeated in their video presentation with a graphic NOT representative of this particular crossing, stating "studies" (once again, no specific citation) have shown midpoint crossing is safer for pedestrians and drivers, and that the midpoint crossing here would be half as wide as if the trail crossed CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100E. Have these designers DRIVEN down CR 1100 N? There is a dip right before that crossing location whether you are traveling West or East. If drivers are traveling West during sunset hours, they will never see pedestrians crossing midpoint, and would never expect it, having just come off a stop light situation, regardless of whether you place signs and lines. We ALL know how people really drive on that road. Fast, hurried. Trying to get to CHS or the other schools on Fifth Street. Trying to get onto SR 49, trying to beat the inevitable traffic stop light. Out-of-town folks driving to CHS for an event (CHS has something going on nearly every month of the year). My kids are grown, but if I were a parent with younger children trying to cross that road walking our bikes or stroller I'd be scared to death. I might be foolish enough to try it once, but not again. I would much rather cross at an intersection with a 4-way traffic light that could be controlled for safe crossing and the ability to see the traffic and the traffic to see me. And for larger groups, adequate space for a waiting area to safely cross.</p> <p>I was also told by American Structurepoint that an adequate traffic study had been done. I question WHEN that study was done (what year, what time of year). Some of the plan drawings presented earlier by American Structurepoint were dated 2018. Did these studies occur at typically busy times of day or time of the year? Many new subdivisions have been added to the Town of Chesterton since 2018, to the West of CR 100E. Was the added traffic volume to and from those subdivisions (trips) accounted for in the traffic study and/or planning and assessment of this path? Has the poor quality of CR 1050 N been considered, so as the surmise that more traffic coming off the CR 1050 subdivisions might route to CR 1100 N west of 5th Street to avoid the traffic and crumbling road? Is that traffic study still relevant in the 2023 Chesterton landscape? And how many times do you expect trail users to crisscross 1100 N? Or the rest of the roads for that matter? As planned, it's a LOT, and not very safe, efficient, or appealing to the user. Again, if I were with younger kids, I would give up.</p> <p>As a homeowner in this subdivision, we are accustomed to look carefully for bikes and pedestrians on our sidewalks and on our streets when entering and egressing our driveways; likewise, as pedestrians and bicyclists in our own neighborhood, we are accustomed to look out for cars in driveways – we know, and often pause to let the car pass through their drive. Will trail users be that alert and courteous, or will they have the "THIS IS THE TRAIL AND I HAVE ALL ROW" mindset seen so often on urban trails? In our neighborhood, no one minds if little kids learn to ride their bikes on our neighborhood sidewalks – it's what we do! It's our Community, and we cheer on the neighbor kids as they learn this rite of passage. We wave at our elderly neighbors as they safely walk the sidewalks for their stroll. We stop and talk to each other when</p>	<p>jurisdiction of the Police Department and can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>Traffic Studies: Traffic data is shown on the project plan sheets as N/A or Not Applicable because this project is for a new multi-use trail. If traffic data is provided on the cover sheet of project plan sheets it is typically for road rehabilitation or road reconstruction projects. No traffic studies were completed for this project due to it being a trail construction project. This does not preclude project designers from considering appropriate design parameters (such as line of sight discussed above) in the trail design.</p> <p>Surrounding Roadways: If there are specific roadway and/or traffic concerns regarding traffic patterns/volumes in the area and the condition of existing roadways they can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>Trail Maintenance: The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the responsibility of the Town of Chesterton. If there are specific maintenance concerns and/or questions regarding the trail and park they can be submitted under the "Report a Concern" website https://www.chestertonin.org/303/Report.</p> <p>Existing Trails and Signage: Signage will be included in the proposed project to direct trail users. Refer to the project plan sheets in Appendix B of the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information. For surrounding trails and alignments refer to information provided on the following website https://chestertonin.org/156/Trails</p> <p>Playground Equipment Updates: Updates to the park equipment will be considered in the Town's list with the Park Board's upcoming 2025 bond cycle as park funding is available.</p> <p>Trail vs Sidewalk: The existing sidewalk along the north shoulder of Laurel Creek Drive is only 4-feet in width. This is not wide enough to accommodate a shared-use path with different types of pedestrians (bikes, strollers, runners, and walkers) without users stepping off the sidewalk to pass each other or using the adjacent lawn to walk/ride when passing. The existing sidewalk is also not compliant with American with Disability Act requirements. The minimum paved width for a shared-use path is 8 feet per the Indiana Design Manual – Chapter 51, Section 7 and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities. The Indiana Design Manual requirements must be followed due to federal construction funds. Portions of the trail to the east along Rail Road were constructed with other funding types and are not required to adhere to the design standards listed above.</p> <p>Shared Roadway/Bike Lane: Constructing a separated bike lane along Laurel Creek Drive was considered. Per recommendations from Federal Highway Administration, the minimum width of a separated bike lane against a curb and gutter section of roadway should be at least 4-feet-wide. Laurel Creek Drive is 30-feet-wide from back of curb to back of curb. The Town does not want to remove on-street parking on this road; therefore, a separated bike lane cannot be constructed on this road to still maintain two travel lanes (one in each direction) and an on-street parking lane without being</p>
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	<p>walking the dogs or just walking for exercise. But putting a public multi-use trail in the same path as our neighborhood sidewalk is different – its not safe! It’s a scary situation. And it detracts from our quality of life and sense of physical safety and community. Let our neighborhood sidewalks remain as our neighborhood sidewalks.</p> <p>3) Trail Maintenance In your Town Q&A, Items 9 and 17, you state any and all maintenance of any portion of the trail would be the responsibility of the Town. Does this mean that you will promptly remove snow so that children walking to and from the Bus Stops will have safe access?, (which is what the current homeowners do for the sidewalks in front of their homes). Will you be sure that the Town snow plows do not pile snow up at sidewalk /trail street corner crossings like they usually do each year? What is the Town plan to handle snow? The Park in Tamarack is owned by the Town, yet the Tamarack HOA has paid private landscapers for the past 20 years to maintain the grounds to some degree (mowing grass so that it is usable). The Town has never in 20 years done any maintenance or improvements on the playground equipment, gravel trail, pea gravel surface around the equipment, or shrub management along the gravel trail. How can we believe you will maintain the WL Trail that runs through the park with any care? What funds and plan do you have in place for that? I have walked and rode my bike (in years past and as recently as last week) a portion of the WL Trail along Rail Road, east of CR 100E, to reach Coffee Creek. It is NOT 8 feet wide throughout. It has vegetation overgrowth (trees, shrubs, grasses) making it difficult to pass in some places and definitely not 8 feet wide in many places. Maintenance has NOT been done along this portion of the trail for some time, if ever. There are NO trail markers or signs for WL Trail, that I have found, anywhere in Chesterton. I cannot even find where WL Trail is supposed to be west of the old Steele Family Health off of Rail Road/Kelle Drive. Does it head South along Kelle Drive, or continue East along Rail Road to Dickinson Road and then head South to Coffee Creek? Either way, the WL Trail is not marked and the sidewalks are not 8 feet wide nor contiguous the whole way, and is therefore still incomplete. And then there is the question, and confusion, of “what is a sidewalk (with technically bikes not allowed as in “Downtown” Chesterton) versus what is a Trail (allowing for bikes, etc)? Are you going to have one standard for part of Chesterton and a different standard for other parts?</p> <p>4) Alternative Options In the Town Q&A Item 11, regarding a “shared roadway”, you state the design team is considering it. I would be OK with this – it would make much more sense if you do, indeed, go forward with going through Tamarack. Reduced speed limits and even speed bumps would aid in the safety for the trail users. It would be much more aesthetically pleasing than digging up our sidewalks and trees and running a giant trail through our yards. Item 14 addresses running the Trail along the South side of Laurel Creek and a dismissive answer that it would be an unsafe crossing ---- excuse me? Crossing in a 20 mph residential zone is much better than crossing in a 30 mph zone where drivers rarely drive under 35 mph (CR 1100N). Why the safety double standard? In any case – the question was probably really asking why you don’t just run the trail on the street in a shared roadway concept – north side or south side of Laurel Creek. It still really makes no sense why the Trail is not just run along the west side of CR 100E from the intersection at 1100 N. The reality is, just as many private properties would be impacted and the convenience to trail users would be greater and more</p>	<p>widened. Refer to the <i>Other Alternatives Considered</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Dunes-Kankakee Trail: This trail is a future planned trail with no specific route or secured funding yet. Additional information regarding the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission Greenways can be found on the following website https://nirpc.org/greenways-blueways-map/</p> <p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>Connection: By constructing this project it will connect to the existing sidewalk on CR 1100 N (that travels north along CR 100 E into downtown Chesterton), connect to the existing Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 1 (that travels to Chesterton High School), and connect to the existing Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 2 terminus (that travels along Rail Road to Coffee Creek Preserve).</p> <p>Previous Comment: Please see previous response sent from American Structurepoint, Inc. in the opportunity for public comment or request a public hearing section of (Appendix G, G-70 to G-72 and G-201 to G-205) attached to the Categorical Exclusion document.</p>
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	<p>direct using this path. I would like to know how long ago, if ever, the question of annexation was posed to these homeowners and how likely it would be today for them to agree to yielding the ROW at least? This would in fact open the ACCESSIBILITY of the WL Trail to many more homes along CR 100E, as well as subdivisions and apartments branching off from there. Has the step even been taken to find out recently? Ut should be.</p> <p>A NIRPC Trails map indicates the “planned” Dunes-Kankakee Trail to branch off of 1100 N and run alongside SR 49 to the south. Why not take the step to easily make the WL Trail PART OF that and run the trail alongside SR 49 rather than through Tamarack? It could easily run south from CR 1100 N to Rail Road, and connect the WL Trail at Rail Road.</p> <p>5) Overall Critique</p> <p>As a former urban planner, I find this piece-meal approach to trail planning in the Duneland area frustrating and short-sighted. If you want to link communities, get the communities on board and set up the design and way to achieve it all the way through. Build the trails into the overall Planning concepts, make room for them, and anticipate urban growth and its locations. Make it easy for the trail users. Talk to your Porter County and Township partners and other municipal partners. Work together and make a great plan, not some cobbled-together trail system that technically “meets the needs” but causes more confusion and frustration in the end product. You can do better. The designers can do better. And you should do better.</p> <p>Yes, it would and will be wonderful to connect the downtown and the subdivisions and residential areas in Chesterton to the parks and the schools. I’ve lived here since 2004 with little kids, and had hoped something would be created. It would have been a godsend to let them ride their bikes to practices and schools and especially CHS during summer school. But that did not happen in 19 years, and by the time you begin building this last phase, my last kid will literally be graduating. Of course CHS is all for the trail – everyone is “for the trail” in concept, but not this ridiculous and awkward design. DO BETTER.</p> <p>6) Conclusion with original letter written to American Structurepoint</p> <p>The following is my original letter written to American Structurepoint when this Trail was announced, so that it may be included in the formal Public Record:</p> <p>I am not opposed to the Trail in theory, but I am opposed to the path and implementation of the Trail. I am opposed to the path the proposed Trail would take through the Tamarack Neighborhood and Park. The proposed path for the trail is inconsistent with rest of the Trail that currently winds through the Town of Chesterton, in that the other segments of the Trail do NOT go through the heart of neighborhood subdivisions and do not cut across the paths of residential driveways and the front sides of homes in subdivisions. The only places where current segments of the Trail cross residential driveways and frontages is where those drives are adjacent to major arterial corridors.</p> <p>Furthermore, by cutting through the heart of the Tamarack neighborhood, this Trail would cause a visually unpleasant and unbalanced aesthetic and destroy the homogenous look that Tamarack has built and maintained over the past 20 years. The design and covenants of the Tamarack neighborhood have been meticulously adhered to, and this pathway would make it impossible for those standards to be maintained. The proposed path of the Trail before and after entering the Tamarack Park and Neighborhood creates additional hazards and dangers for the users of the path. It would require users to cross CR1100N from the South side to the North side at the intersection of CR 50 E/5th Street. From there, the users would travel along the North</p>	
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4	<p>Michelle Gilbertsen</p> <p>Received by email on 4/20/2023</p>	<p>My name is Michelle Gilbertsen and I live at [REDACTED]. I am writing to voice my concern, not on the construction of the trail, but on the construction of the trail specifically through Tamarack.</p> <p>To begin, I want to first address Structurepoint using the National Association of Realtors website as reference to property values increasing if a trail is "near" a walking/bike trail. One, it makes no mention of the adverse effects of a trail directly behind, wrapped around, or right in front of a homeowner's home and yard. And two, it makes no mention of a trail being constructed straight through the middle of a subdivision years after that subdivision became established. The stated results of "living near a trail" do not apply here.</p> <p>I happen to be a paying member of the National Association of Realtors and have been selling residential real estate in LaPorte, Lake, and Porter Counties for 20 years. I have</p>	<p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Alignment in Neighborhood: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding a trail through another neighborhood.</p> <p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p> <p>Alternatives: Please see response to comments 1 and 2 above regarding the other alternatives considered for the project (including the CR 100 E Dismissed Alternative).</p>

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been searching high and low for any evidence that something good – in a real estate capacity - might come from the construction of this trail through Tamarack. And I cannot find any location anywhere, in all of Northwest Indiana, where a major walking/bike trail was constructed through a subdivision AFTER the subdivision has grown the way ours has. Which brings us to the defense, I’ve heard, that this trail was evidently platted along with the subdivision back in 1995.

But it was not constructed with the subdivision. To me, that would have been the absolute perfect time to create the trail. But instead, here we are almost THIRTY YEARS LATER – no trail – and we have a subdivision that has grown into one of the best in our town. All the parkway trees are of course, now mature, and beautifully flower every Spring season. We have wonderful support from our homeowners’ association and management company providing and enforcing our covenants and restrictions that, through the years, hundreds of homeowners have abided by. We have all taken great pride in our homeownership, and have always nicely maintained and updated our houses and yards. From the beginning, and up till 2015, the average price of Tamarack grew to \$343,00. And as we sit currently, today, the homes in Tamarack are easily worth between \$500-\$800K. The trajectory has always trended upwards. And that all happened WITHOUT a TRAIL.

Again, as a Realtor, I can tell you from my years of experience, that a vast majority of Homebuyers want to fully embrace their right to “quiet enjoyment.” They want their investment to equate to feeling safe, feeling secure, having a sense of privacy, they do not want an excessive amount of traffic, and they do not want tarnished curb appeal. To date, Tamarack has delivered on all these attributes; homes here have always been in in high demand with Buyers, and the trajectory of those values are proof of that.

Moving forward - - - there is no way that a trail behind the six homes on Catkin is going to bring more value to them, than what their homes are valued at today. There is no way that a trail in full view of the five homes on the south side of Laurel Creek Drive, will bring more value to them, than what their homes are worth today. More substantially, there is no way that a trail *wrapped around* the Kania’s home will bring more value to them, than what their home is worth today; and there is no way that a trail ripping through the front yards of the Agarwal’s, the VanWagner’s, the McCorvitz’s, the Turner’s, and the Puranik’s homes, will bring more value to them, than what their homes are worth today.

Basic supply-&-demand tells us that when the demand for a property decreases, the price decreases. So, when the prices of our affected homes all eventually decrease, the entire subdivision will then follow suit due to comparative market value. This will surely affect everyone in the subdivision. Everything will go backwards.

To conclude, make no mistake, I personally love and frequently use all our Duneland Community trails for biking, jogging, and walking. But to put one straight through the middle of our subdivision - right past someone’s loved home for three decades - I feel, is just wrong. There are many homeowners who feel the same - we reject this idea and have done so quite openly and emotionally, because ... quite simply, we cannot see what good will come from it. Damage will certainly be done, in a number of literal ways, and we will all lose what Tamarack has evolved into.

On the other end, respectfully, for those in favor of this proposed trail, I ask, what do you lose, if it is not built through Tamarack? And how does that compare to what we homeowners will lose if it is??

We ask that you please reroute and strongly consider a safer, and far more practical and sensible option. Chesterton is better than this. Keep Tamarack the way it has always been - these are *our homes*.

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<p>5</p>	<p>Barb and Steve Rabesa</p> <p>Received by email on 4/20/2023</p>	<p>We are new residents on Jefferson Ave in Downtown Chesterton, having moved from NH to be near family. Our daughter, son-in-law and 3 grandchildren live just 1 mile away on Laurel Creek Drive.</p> <p>We chose our location in Downtown Chesterton for its proximity to them and to the downtown area as well as IN Dunes State and National Parks. We believed the Trail System and sidewalks throughout the town would facilitate safely walking and cycling about town.</p> <p>However, the treacherous stretch of CR 100 and CR1100, and between intersection CR 100/CR 1100 and Rail Road is discouraging. Whether walking, bicycling or driving to avoid pedestrians/cyclists, we see this as the most pressing safety issue in need of correction.</p> <p>We are excited for this trail continuation project but disagree with its planned route. It is our opinion as downtown residents, the planned extension Segment 1 of the existing trail system should continue along CR 1100 to CR 100 and the traffic lights should be upgraded to accommodate the Trail system at that intersection.</p> <p>It is our opinion the trail should connect CR 100 to Rail Road, thus completing the only plausible pedestrian/cycling route across 49 to the east side of town.</p> <p>The benefits of this straight forward approach to connect Coffee Creek Preserve access to downtown would be immediate.</p> <p>We hope future efforts and public funds will facilitate the Trail Systems better connecting north of town to the Dunes State and National Park trails.</p> <p>On a side note, it would be great to improve the broken downtown sidewalks which are vital to safe foot traffic before devoting valuable resources to creating an intrusive park-like trail through the forested wetlands behind and through Tamarack Subdivision, and wasting money dissecting a well established neighborhood with a large and unnecessary public trail.</p> <p>We appreciate the effort and expense devoted to this project and have faith in the town decisionmakers to redirect and proceed with this project for the benefit of all who call this area home.</p>	<p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Connection: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the trail connection.</p> <p>Trail and Sidewalk Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance which includes reporting the broken portions of sidewalks.</p> <p>Future Trail Planning: Additional information regarding the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission Greenways can be found on the following website https://nirpc.org/greenways-blueways-map/</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Nancy Jacobson</p> <p>Received by email on 4/21/2023</p>	<p>I'm against the current plan. You have heard many reasons, so I'll limit my comments to the below:</p> <p>The current plan, having the bike path going through Tamarack and Laurel Canyon is dangerous. Many bicycle riders ride very quickly, can be over 30 miles per hour. Having bikers ride through a quiet residential neighborhood, in front of homes and driveways is dangerous, waiting for a car backing out and possibly hitting a biker riding quickly down the street. The bike trail shouldn't share the sidewalk where people walk slowly. It would also be a hazard, for instance, people walking with little children slowly and fast bicycle riders. The trail should not go in the middle of Tamarack.</p> <p>Wherever this bike trail ends up, there should be fencing installed as part of the plan. In other words, people's property should not be open to the trail, but separated by a wood fence for safety and privacy. Many people will use the trail, including people with nefarious intentions. Without a fence, properties would be open to potential crimes. This fence should be paid for and maintained by the funding for this project now and ongoing, not affected residents.</p>	<p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Fencing: Constructing fencing along the entire trail is not being considered at this time.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Kelly Campbell</p> <p>Received by email on 4/26/2023</p>	<p>I am writing to request the Chesterton Town Council reconsider the proposed Phase III of the Westchester Liberty Trail. The current proposal is not only detrimental to the aesthetic of Tamarack subdivision but also dangerous and completely inconvenient to the residents of this</p>	<p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p>

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		<p>town. Under the current plan, pedestrians will have to cross in the middle of 1100N, a notoriously unsafe road where a child has already been struck by a vehicle. This is clearly a very dangerous proposal and as a parent, I would not allow my children to cross this road without supervision. I am sure that when, not if, someone is seriously injured crossing that busy road the town will most certainly be held accountable especially considering all statements on public record warning of the risks of this crossing. Additionally, it makes no sense to build a very long, roundabout path through Tamarack destroying countless trees and several properties when town residents will only continue to risk walking along 100E as it is the most convenient and direct path to downtown. 100E is currently a very unsafe road for pedestrians to walk on but given the alternative of walking nearly a half of a mile out of the way, I strongly believe that many people will continue to use this hazardous route. I also wonder if the town has considered how difficult it will be to build a 8ft paved path through land that is constantly flooded. But even if the path through the wetlands is possible, why tear out the existing sidewalks and crabapple trees within the Tamarack subdivision? Other areas of the bike trail will connect to established sidewalks, why not within Tamarack? This seems like a waste of time, money and resources. Tamarack neighborhood has little enough traffic that people could easily walk the current residential sidewalks or bike on Laurel Creek road. A simple painted bike lane on the road would be far less expensive and intrusive than demolishing several yards and many of the neighborhood's trees. In addition, this destruction would undoubtedly effect the property values in this neighborhood. It seems clear to anyone who truly considers the proposed Westchester Liberty Trail Phase III's problems, dangers and price tag that there are clearly better alternatives. The most obvious route would run along 1100N and 100E with safe crossing at the intersection and light. This alternative path will safely and conveniently connect our community and greatly benefit the town of Chesterton.</p>	<p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Path through Wetlands: Segment 2 of the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 (south of CR 1100 N) will include the construction of a boardwalk on a portion of the alignment through the wetlands present in the wooded area. Please see response to comment 2 above regarding how the boardwalk will be constructed, how impacts have been reduced to these wetlands, and the coordination that has occurred with resource agencies.</p> <p>Trail vs Sidewalk: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the trail width.</p> <p>Bike Lane: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the bike lane.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p>
8	John Hilgeman Received by website comment on 5/2/2023	<p>We urge you to reevaluate your decision on what you call a "safe" crossing. Sure, there are many mid-street crossings throughout the US and all are unique in their own way. However, the mid-street crossing proposed by structurepoint is irresponsible. The town of Chesterton planned for and installed a crosswalk at the corner of 100 East and 1100 North a few years ago that meets the ADA requirements. This corner, as you should know, is controlled by a traffic light, and installing a pedestrian walk signal would be an easy task. The irresponsible aspect of the mid-street crossing on busy 1100 is going to be the cause of a child suffering serious injury. I was told at the public hearing that your group did "traffic studies" and your traffic engineer stated the traffic study was not done where the proposed crossing will potentially be installed and was not even conducted in Chesterton. A proper traffic study is only accurate if it is conducted in the proposed construction area. Vehicle speeds at the proposed crossing are on average well above the posted speed limit. I brought this up to your engineer and he said "that's an enforcement issue" and I agree with him. But if there is a known speeding problem in an area why install a crossing for children there? The Chesterton police department is not staffed to catch every dangerous driver on the towns streets, so to say they need to "enforce it" was a partial admission to a known problem. Second, the boardwalk along 1100 and the proposed cutting through the woods. The boardwalk will be expensive to maintain, the life span on decking materials range from 5 to 10 years. The replacement cost will not be covered by a grant and will be funded by town taxes. (And) this is not an expense that the citizens should have to be responsible for. Please listen to the comment entries and reconsider the proposed design.</p>	<p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Traffic Studies: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding traffic studies.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk.</p>

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<p>9</p>	<p>John and Barbara Black</p> <p>Received by email on 5/3/2023</p>	<p>Barbara and I enjoyed the opportunity to speak with you after the April 19, 2023 Public Hearing held at the Westchester Middle School. Although the proposed Westchester – Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project will not directly encroach on our property, [REDACTED] we are strongly opposed to the Project design as outlined in Des. NO. 1902832. While familiar with American Structurepoint’s excellent engineering reputation and having known several of its staff through our mutual Purdue University connections, Segments 2 and 3 are ill-advised. They do not “. . . improve quality of life for people and communities alike, bring innovation and vision to the build environment . . .” (Reference American Structurepoint mission statement.) Tamarack property owners have already voiced numerous concerns about the proposed plans. We won’t rehash all of them but we will offer our specific thoughts re Segments 2 and 3. Very simply Segment 2, as proposed, is unacceptable. CR 1100N is heavily traveled as an east-west “corridor” between SR 49, Chesterton High School, churches, various rapidly growing Westchester Township and Liberty Township residential areas, Dogwood Park etc. First Responders (including Town and County police and Chesterton fire department) also utilize CR1100 for quick access. Elevation changes, excessive speed, late afternoon and midmorning sun glare are additional factors contributing to the dangers in attempting to cross into or return from the proposed wooded trail. Segment 3, as proposed, would represent a terrible intrusion into Tamarack’s residential community. Tamarack is a mature, fully developed “village” consisting of 82 (non-cookie cutter) homes. The “epicenter” of the trail would pass directly by at least six homes’ front yards. According to the Porter County Assessors web-site, the 2022 assessed total value of these six properties is \$3.894M. Additionally, there are seven properties on Catkin Circle and Laurel Creek directly across from the six; their total assessed value is \$3.640M. In other words, the trail would extend through the middle of the beautifully maintained Tamarack “residential community”. The trail would literally be on a widened concrete sidewalk only a few feet from property owners’ front doors. We are not opposed to well-designed urban and rural trails. We have used the Prairie Duneland Trail, sections of the Monon Trail, and others throughout the US, for running, biking, and hiking. But we have never run, biked, or hiked a concrete trail that went through the middle of a subdivision, nor would we feel comfortable doing so! We are opposed to Segments 2 and 3 of the Westchester-Liberty Phase 3 as currently designed!</p>	<p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Private Property Impact: The trail alignment along Laurel Creek Drive stays within existing Town owned right-of-way to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way from property owners. The trail will follow the existing sidewalk and be widened towards the existing roadway curb line and avoid any impacts to the residential properties. No changes will occur to residential property boundary lines or the distance from the trail to property owners’ front doors/houses.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Maureen and Christopher Hurst</p> <p>Received by email on 5/5/2023</p>	<p>We believe it is not safe to have the trail go over people’s driveways in a neighborhood especially with new, young inexperienced drivers. We, also, have several toddlers in our neighborhood which is concerning with potential bikers riding fast through a neighborhood.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Theresa Buehler</p> <p>Received by email on 5/5/2023</p>	<p>Greetings, I have some responses to the email the Tamarack homeowners association received in response to our comments. Answer 5 says that our property values would not be affected. I have a friend who asked me about if there were any homes for sale in Tamarack. I advised her if the trail plan and she was able to go to the public hearing. After watching the presentation she advised me that she really wouldn’t want to live in a neighborhood with the trail running through it. She felt along the perimeter is good but to change the character and the beauty that she feels is given by the street trees and</p>	<p>Reference to Answers 5, 7, 9, 17, 11, and 15: Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the meeting these topics were discussed and context for comment received.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees. A four to six foot wide grass buffer strip would remain between the front edge of the trail and the existing curb line to provide the possibility for replanting of street trees if there are not utility relocation conflicts.</p>

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	<p>symmetry would make her not consider Tamarack as the quiet private neighborhood that it is currently.</p> <p>Answer 7 about the trees. I don't believe that you would be able to relocate or even replant with the small space that is left after the widening of the concrete.</p> <p>Answer 8. Utilities. I wonder about the small space left for utilities and how if in the future different or more utilities need to be added or changed what happens.</p> <p>Answer 9,17 Maintenance of trail. I see how the existing trail is "maintained" so I question if the town is up to maintaining more trail. Also currently when there is snow the snow plows pile snow over the crossings that are ramped for the handicapped. The trail on Rail road has evergreen trees growing over 2/3s of the paved path. There is broken glass and graffiti under highway 49.</p> <p>Answer 11. I like the idea of the share roadway. Residents of Tamarack use the street to walk run and bike already.</p> <p>Answer 15. The mid block crossing just west of 11th street. My friend and I like to bike but when we try to cross at the crossing cars don't stop for us. We find that it is much easier to cross at the stop sign and proceed north on 11th street. We never reported issues we just found the easier way.</p> <p>I would also like to know if you considered the Dunes Kankakee trail that is supposed to go down South Calumet/200 east to railroad. You could combine the two trails for that short segment. We really do need sidewalks along that section of the road for pedestrians to walk to town. I truly believe that people who walk from Coffee Creek and Eagles Crossing Apartments will not want to walk over 20 minutes out of their way to get to town. They will still walk the distance on 100 east where there isn't a safe place to walk.</p> <p>I do not believe that the mid block crossing on 1100 is a safe plan for the kids to go to school. You should make the cars stop for the pedestrians if you continue on this plan. Not flashing lights but a stop light if someone wants to cross they push the button to stop traffic.</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>Utilities: Coordination with utility companies to identify potential conflicts and relocation of the appropriate facilities, if needed, has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. Future expansion of utilities or installation of new utilities would be completed independent of this project. There are not currently plans to install or expand utilities as part of this undertaking and relocation of existing utilities in conflict with the preferred alternative is the only coordination being completed. For this undertaking, it is the Town of Chesterton's preference to relocate utilities within the grass buffer for the preferred alternative if required over impacting residential yards. This is why a decision on replanting street trees has not been made as additional information from the utilities is needed before making that decision. Refer to the <i>Public Facilities and Services</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk.</p> <p>Shared Roadway/Bike Lane: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the bike lane.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Dunes-Kankakee Trail: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the Dunes-Kankakee Trail.</p> <p>Connection: Please see response to comment 5 above regarding connection of the trail.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p>
<p>12 James Driscoll</p> <p>Received by email on 5/5/2023</p>	<p>It is my understanding that today is the last day for public comment on the proposed Westchester-Liberty Trail. I am not sure that sending this email to you is the appropriate method of delivering comment so I ask that you please forward to the appropriate party, if necessary.</p> <p>My family and I live in Tamarack at [REDACTED] and we mostly support the much needed extension. However, while my home is not directly affected, we do not support the short section that will run adjacent to the 4-5 homes through the center of the subdivision. Constructing an eight-foot wide sidewalk in front of people's homes is a nuisance and I believe would have a negative impact on their property values.</p> <p>I recognize that many are calling for the path to be moved to run along N 100 E but I do not call for that modification. Frankly, I find that proposal self-serving as it is essentially saying "put it in front of someone else's house, not mine." My hope is that the town will consider modifying the plans by removing the path that runs through yards and having a shared roadway from the exit of Tamarack's park to the intersection of Laurel Creek and N</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Shared Roadway/Bike Lane: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the bike lane.</p> <p>Existing Sidewalks: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding using the existing sidewalk and requirement for a shared-use path width.</p>

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	<p>100 E. The reality is that people using the path could simply use the current sidewalks and be just as safe. Thank you for your time and the Board’s consideration.</p>
<p>13 Deanne Manojlovic Received by email on 5/5/2023</p> <p>I want everything on the record; it should all be transparent and accurate for everyone. I hope that everything is being shared with all the entities involved in this project, not just the town and Structure Point. Many of us have asked a lot of questions and many of the answers received have been vague or twisted versions of the truth. I think everyone deserves to be informed.</p> <p>Below is a compilation of topics I’ve orated or sent in to Structure Point or the Chesterton Town Council. I want to make sure they have all been placed on the record.</p> <p>1.THIS WAS SENT TO MEGHAN AT STRUCTURE POINT: She added her replies in blue. We then replied back to her with additional comments and questions in red. We received a statement that she had received the follow up email, but she did not provide any answers to those questions.</p> <p>Below please find our questions and comments with your responses in blue. We have added additional comments and questions in red and highlighted in yellow the questions that were not answered.</p> <p>Why was this the only pathway considered? The more logical and straightforward pathway would be to continue the path from the already professionally installed corner of 1100 and 100 E to Railroad Road and 100 E. The electronic crosswalk is already there (and paid for) to be utilized, as are the ADA ramps and landscaping, and it would be the safest place to cross 1100.. Continuing down 100 makes the most sense. If that path was actually investigated, please provide the dates of when this was done, who was contacted and participated in the discussion, what was discussed, and who decided that that pathway was not “feasible”. No one would provide Deanne with that information when she asked. Numerous excuses have been thrown around as to why they want to infringe on the homeowners in Tamarack. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties (Which properties are you referring to? There are 6 residential properties along Laurel Creek and 6 + the corner house again on Catkin Circle that would be directly affected by the trail. On the other hand, there are 5 residential homes if the trail is put on 100) and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton (Why does this matter? Does the Town of Chesterton have difficulty working together with the county?). As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6 (This states the trail on 100 would “increase impacts to residential and commercial properties..” There are no commercial properties there; there are 5 houses, less than would be affected in Tamarack). This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).</p> <p>The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E (At 1100 and 5th St. trail users will cross the street to the north side of 1100/west side of 5th St. and then cross the street again to the east side of 5th St. Structure Point does not seem concerned about the</p>	<p>Previous Comments: Please see previous responses sent from American Structurepoint, Inc. in the opportunity for public comment or request a public hearing section of (Appendix G, G-46 to G-53 and G-142 to G-152) attached to the Categorical Exclusion document.</p> <p>Alternatives: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the other alternatives considered for the project. No commercial properties will be impacted or require any right-of-way for any alternative chosen.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative). The CR 100 E alternative was initially investigated during the preliminary design phase of the project in 2019 and further investigated based on public comments and concerns in 2023.</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing. The roadway/crossing pavement widths have been confirmed by the project design team. The 3 lanes at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 100 E are wider due to intersection approach lane width requirements and turn lane width requirements creating a wider roadway pavement section.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p> <p>Protected Species: The Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act requires any project that has federal funding to evaluate impacts on protected species and impacts to their habitat. Coordination occurred with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and it was determined no state threatened, endangered, or rare species have been reported in the project area. Additionally, coordination occurred with US Fish and Wildlife Service and two federally listed species, and their habitat may be present in this project area, the endangered Indiana bat, and the threatened northern long-eared bat. The monarch butterfly, a candidate species, and its habitat may also be present within this project area. At this time candidate species do not require additional coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Service. Impacts to the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and the bats habitat were coordinated with US Fish and Wildlife Service. This project received a may affect, likely to adversely affect determination for impacts to the Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat. Mitigation for a portion of the tree clearing is required for this project. US Fish and Wildlife concurred with this determination and mitigation and no further coordination is required at this time. Refer to the <i>Protected Species</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Boardwalk: Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the boardwalk.</p> <p>Drainage: The proposed project will not install new drainage to eliminate existing areas of flow, ponding, and low lying areas. All areas will still collect water as they currently do post construction. No change in the current existing low lying areas will occur.</p>

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	<p>traffic movements at that 4 way stop intersection. Did Structure Point actually investigate the proposed mid-block crossing or did you just look at drawings? Crossing mid-block on 1100 is very dangerous; vehicles going west crest over a hill close to the crossing as do vehicles going east. 1100 is a very busy road; it is much, much safer to cross at the traffic light with pedestrian signals). This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long (Is that accurate? 2 lanes of traffic is 23 feet while 3 lanes is over twice as much? Just verifying.) Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project (Not that it matters what they are in favor of, but we're sure they weren't in favor of the trail only if it went through Tamarack). This project would connect to the existing sidewalks and trails in the area. (We still disagree that crossing in the middle of a busy road is safer than crossing at a corner with a stop light and pedestrian signals.)</p> <p>The Town of Chesterton is known as a tree AND bird town and yet they are choosing to unnecessarily cut down about 3/4 acre of trees, homes to countless wildlife, to divert this pathway so it will go through the center of our established neighborhood. We are devastated that the wildlife and their habitat that we see and hear on a DAILY basis are going to be impacted and destroyed-deer, fox, opossum, chipmunks, squirrels, groundhogs, raccoons, coyotes, and more, as well as untold birds including at least 5 species of woodpeckers (including the protected red headed woodpecker), owls, cranes, a variety of waterfowl, orioles, blue birds, cardinals and more. Tree removal and protected species impacts were included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal and protected species impacts can be found on pages 16-18 of the Environmental Document that is currently posted online at https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM. (Our comment pointed out that the Town of Chesterton claims to support and celebrate trees and birds while in practice they continue to disrupt and destroy them unnecessarily. Your answer basically says that the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management deemed it okay to destroy the trees and habitats so the Town of Chesterton and Structure Point find it acceptable to do as well).</p> <p>Why does the Town of Chesterton feel entitled to infringe on the rights, safety and privacy of the residents in our established neighborhood in order to install a walking path THROUGH it, right up the middle of the subdivision entrance, disturbing the aesthetics and continuity of the neighborhood and going against the Homeowners Association covenants. The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. Under current conditions, there is nothing preventing the public at large from using said resources. The Homeowners Associations</p>	<p>Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Trail vs Sidewalk: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the trail width.</p> <p>Utilities: Please see response to comment 11 above regarding utility impacts.</p> <p>Dunes-Kankakee Trail: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the Dunes-Kankakee Trail.</p> <p>Public and Town Council Meetings: Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the Town Council meeting and meeting minutes where comments were discussed. Town Council public meetings occurred on April 10th and April 24th. The public meeting referenced on April 19th was the Public Hearing held as part of the part of the federal undertaking for this project.</p>
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covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision and steps have been taken to provide a trail design which is aesthetically pleasing. (Pleasing to whom? Structure Point who doesn't live here? It is NOT pleasing! And the town's desire to gut and intrude upon one of the most desired subdivisions in Chesterton is detrimental and appalling.)

The eight-foot-wide trail will be concrete to match existing concrete drives, sidewalks, and curb ramps in the subdivision (This will be unsightly! We don't want or need more concrete in our neighborhood!)

The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision (An 8 foot concrete trail up the entryway of our neighborhood and the removal of our matching trees does NOT match the feel and layout of our subdivision).

The town is evaluating plantings to replace street trees which would be removed along Laurel Creek Drive.

The town has used a boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (which extends from CR 1100 N into the Tamarack Subdivision Park).

The boardwalk is of a style which will eliminate the need for excavation in this area. The boardwalk has been laid out to minimize tree clearing (¾ of an acre of trees is minimal to you? Not to us!), avoid clearing larger trees, and allows the town to retain as many trees as possible within the town own property. This is a benefit to all, including adjacent landowners.

The boardwalk will have a raised railing to keep people on the trail and prevent short cuts or sidepaths from being created.

Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. However, this does not mean that these topics are not being discussed. The point of these conversations is to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the preliminary plans.

The intended path from 1100 to the Tamarack Park must be a raised platform as it is running through wetlands. The area is wet year round and serves as overflow for the existing creek. During peak water levels it even encroaches on current property lines. The homeowners whose properties are adjacent to that intended path should not have water diverted into their yards because of the installation of an unnecessary path. There will be no disruption of water as we are using a boardwalk that requires no excavation to place. The proposed boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the ground and is fully adjustable (up or down) to allow the uninterrupted passage of water. The trail crosses areas of wetlands which hold water well into the growing season based on field observations. Areas which currently flood or hold water will continue to do so post construction, there will be no change in the drainage of these areas as a result of the trail (We would hope not.)

Is the town prepared to care for and maintain that raised platform properly? Will the installation of that path disrupt the natural flow of groundwater and the underground water pathway that is currently there? The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response (That is the concern as the town does not seem to have enough personnel to handle the existing trails and parks) . If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" link on the Town of Chesterton Recreation website <https://www.chestertonin.org/174/Recreation>. The proposed trail construction is not to a

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depth which would affect the flow of groundwater. Please see info presented above. (We would hope not.)

We have NEVER seen an 8 foot walking path installed through an already established neighborhood, disrupting the aesthetics and continuity of those homes. Walking paths, especially 8 foot wide ones, are generally behind homes or part of a pre-planned community. Thank you for your comment. (This is unprecedented!)

We are concerned about the safety of crossing 1100 in the middle of the roadway. The plan to install a crosswalk in the middle of this insanely busy road seems careless and reckless when the crossing could be at an established, light controlled crosswalk and continue in a straight path to the next intersection at Railroad Road. See response to question #1 above. (See above as well. Not being a local company, perhaps Structure Point does not realize how busy 1100 is and how dangerous it will be. We find it hard to believe that anyone would advocate that crossing in the middle of a busy road with hills on both sides is safer than crossing at a stoplight with pedestrian signals!)

We are also extremely concerned that a walking path bringing strangers right past our backyards and homes jeopardizes the safety of us and our children, not to mention our homes. Directing strangers through the woods where they can discreetly peer into our backyards and homes and leading them to a secluded park is a dangerous, irrational choice. Then continuing the path in front of our private homes where again strangers have the opportunity to invade their privacy is a safety concern for our neighborhood. We have many young children who will be left vulnerable by this ill-proposed plan. Law enforcement is well aware of the activities that walking paths harbor and that are detrimental to the safety and security of neighborhoods, be it our children or our property and possessions. The residents of Tamarack did not buy their homes knowing the privacy, safety, and beauty of their homes would be jeopardized by inviting strangers to wander it. The safety and security is under the jurisdiction of the Police Department. (It will be difficult for the Police Department to secure the secluded park and extended stretch of woods.) The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>. (The information on that site is all fluff and opinion pieces- if people thought their homes would sell for more, if they thought the path increased their value, etc. Over 80% of the realtors I spoke to said it will negatively impact our property values and ability to sell our homes.)

Current walking paths in Chesterton are riddled with trash that the town does not remove. The Town of Chesterton already has difficulty keeping up the sidewalks we already have. The town does not properly maintain the existing trails and yet wants to install an 8 foot atrocity through the yards of Tamarack homeowners. Will the town maintain those properly? What about the landscaping and trees that they plan to remove? Will the town be clearing the walking paths through the seasons including snow and ice? We assume the Town of Chesterton is responsible for any accidents that occur on the walking path as opposed to the homeowner. The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response (as previously stated, they are understaffed but thank you for passing the buck again). If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" link on the Town of Chesterton Recreation website <https://www.chestertonin.org/174/Recreation>.

According to FHWA-Indiana Environmental Document CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION / ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION:

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- a. The “opportunity for a public hearing is required” and yet we have requested and been denied that opportunity. The public involvement for this project included notifying the Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision, adjacent landowners, local stakeholders, and the public at large of the proposed project through publication of two Public Notices in the Northwest Indiana Times, the most widely distributed newspaper in the area. The opportunity to request a public hearing and submit comments is currently occurring and was extended to March 15th. Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. We have not indicated nor implied that a hearing or public information meeting cannot be held. (No, you did not say it CANNOT be held, but when you tell us we can request a public meeting and we do and then you tell us there is not one planned but we can call with questions, well, that is a denial. You did not offer to set one up for all of us who requested one; you offered to talk individually or answer emails.) We have indicated there are not currently any scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. Information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>.
- b. “The shared-use path would then extend south along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road...” and “... would increase impacts to residential and commercial properties and would extend beyond the limits of the Town of Chesterton and into an unincorporated portion of Porter County.” This was mentioned at least a couple times but there are no commercial properties along the west side of 100 where the path would go so it makes us wonder why it was worded that way. Along the segment from 1100 to Railroad Road there are 5 houses that are unincorporated. The remaining land (and the majority of that segment) belongs to Tamarack Subdivision. As far as we know, no one has explored the opportunity for the town of Chesterton and Porter County to work together to install this walking trail down 100, the most reasonable, non-intrusive, environmentally friendly, common sense place to construct it. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 East Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request (So the town didn’t pursue the path down 100 because the county did not have money to contribute to it? Chesterton didn’t bother to look into the availability of easements because they didn’t want to pay for the sidewalks that they wanted to install? If the Town of Chesterton wants the path, they should pay for the path. Installing the path down 100 is the cheaper, more logical, more beneficial and safer route). Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners (Again please explain as that is inaccurate; more property owners will be infringed upon by the path gutting its way through Tamarack), the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.
- c. There is a pipeline that runs through the woods on the path from 1100 to the park. How will that be handled? Coordination with utility companies to identify potential conflicts and relocation of the appropriate facilities, if needed, has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. (Our question regarding Marathon Pipeline was ignored)
- d. Based upon their expertise and experience, 80% of the real estate agents/brokers I spoke to believe that the installation of this trail THROUGH our neighborhood could negatively impact our property values. Why is the town infringing on the residents of our subdivision when other viable alternatives are available. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website

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<https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>. (Again, this site is useless. The references rely on opinions for their claims.)

2. I BELIEVE I SPOKE THIS AT THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING APRIL 10:
Today I would like to urge you to consider 2 things about the westchester path.
#1 is safety. We've all been taught to cross at a corner and if that corner has a light, that's even better. Contrary to that though, structure point, and in essence the town, are saying that to cross at the traffic light with electric pedestrian crossing signals is unsafe somehow-at traffic lights where vehicles are stopped and where the pedestrians wait for the electric signals to notify them to safely walk across. We're told it's because the street is wider. It doesn't matter how far it is or how long it takes to cross as the pedestrian signal is programmed for enough time to do so. Look at larger cities where it's common for pedestrians to cross 5, 6, 8 lanes of traffic, not 3. But somehow we are being told that that would be unsafe. Instead, they tell us that children crossing in the middle of a very busy road at the valley of two hills IS safe. That is dangerous and illogical! 1100 is only going to become more busy when CMS is closed and more vehicles transport children and product down 1100 to 5th st.
I'd also like to point out that while we've been told by structure point that it is unsafe to cross at a light with pedestrian crossing signals,
it IS safe to cross over 4 lanes of traffic at a 4 way stop sign which is what they will do to get from the south side of 1100 to north side and then again from the west side of 5th to the east side to continue down the path. None of that makes sense.
#2 is logistics. You claim to want to connect the 2 trails. The most logical, direct, and feasible route is down 100. People traveling down rail road from sand creek, coffee creek, the apartments etc to get to town are more likely to go down 100 to the light rather than about a mile out of their way traveling through tamarack, the woods, and then backtracking up 1100 to get to the same point.
I saw a plan for the dunes Kankakee trail to 100 and 1100. Trails from that point extended west along 1100 and south down 100 to rail rd. Structure point said the town asked the county to contribute financially to the path and the county said they had no money. That is not a reason for the town of Chesterton to choose an unsafe path and an unprecedented route through an established neighborhood. I think the town should be doing all they can to work with the county to put this path where it can be utilized in the safest way, the most logical way and the most useful way-down 100. Gutting an established neighborhood and crossing an extremely busy road are NOT the right way.

3. I SPOKE AT THE PUBLIC MEETING ON APRIL 19 AND AGAIN AT THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING APRIL 24 TO ENSURE THAT WHAT I SAID WENT ON THE RECORD AND WAS HEARD AND RECORDED BY MORE PEOPLE. THIS IS A COMBINATION OF BOTH ORATIONS:
To this council and the Town of Chesterton: Please do not choose to intentionally and maliciously gut our beautiful established subdivision, arguably one of the most desired in Chesterton for its beauty, close proximity to town and privacy. Please do not cut down more of our trees, concrete our greenspace, and completely alter and negatively transform the nature of our subdivision. Please do not choose to have children cross at a dangerous crosswalk when they could safely cross at a corner, at a light with pedestrian signals. Please do not disrupt and destroy the habitats and pathways of numerous wildlife including the redheaded woodpecker, bats, deer, cranes, etc. If you so desire this trail, please work together with the county to install it down 100, the safest, most logical, economical, and fiscally and environmentally responsible location.
What I said at the public meeting bears repeating: the path on 100 was not given full consideration. We were told that the county was asked to contribute financially but they didn't have any money; That's not a reason to exclude 100.

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Why didn't you ask the county if you could use the easement? Or collaborate with them in another way? Our Porter County Commissioner Jim Biggs has said if there is easement available, the town CAN use it. Please do the right thing.

It's ludicrous but Structure Point claims crossing in the middle of busy 1100 is safer because "The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for". It's not considered unsafe in large cities to cross up to 8 lanes of traffic at a light. With a crossing at 100 the traffic signals can stop all traffic and the existing pedestrian signals can be programmed to allow enough time for pedestrians to cross. Structure Point claims it's safe for pedestrians to cross over 1100 and again 5th St at a 4 way stop sign-that has the same number of traffic movements as 1100 and 100 which they say is not safe.

Structure Point has erroneously stated that there's a larger "environmental impact" going down 100. Someone please explain: to get to Rail Road you can start at the current ADA compliant ramp and make a fairly clear path past 5 houses and open land OR you can have pedestrians cross an extremely busy road, remove about ¼ acre of trees, install a boardwalk over wetlands, concrete your way through park greenspace, install an 8 foot wide concrete trail in front of homes, remove more mature trees and cross 3 roads, all while directly impacting 14 homeowners and indirectly 70 more. Tell me again which one impacts the environment more?

A path down 100 would help connect neighborhoods east of 100 to downtown, neighborhoods such as Sand Creek, Coffee Creek and the apartments. Many use 100 already even though there is no safe path. They would love a path on 100 but aren't likely to use a trail that's two thirds longer to reach the same point.

Concerns of decreasing property values and home salability have been dismissed by Structure Point, referencing a realtor site with irrelevant articles based on people's perceptions, not factual studies. Realtors can attest to the difficulty of selling homes that have walking paths running through or by their property. Not everyone wants to live by a path that intrudes upon their privacy, safety and peaceful enjoyment of their land. While I haven't spoken with all 82 tamarack homeowners, over ¾ of them are opposed to the proposed trail through our subdivision and only 2 are for it. How many of those promoting this trail actually live on such a trail and how many would live on this proposed trail? Dare I say none?!

Please do the right thing and find an alternative to Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the trail. (As one councilman has claimed that the board thinks most of the homeowners in Tamarack want the trail through the neighborhood, I clarified that while I have not spoken with EVERY homeowner, I have a list of over two thirds of the homeowners in Tamarack who are OPPOSED to the trail and only 2 who are for it (and one of them works for the town)).

I must also point out that when I commented to Structure Point that we did not receive a reply to the last questions we had sent in, Josh Iddings rudely replied that they did; they said thank you for your comments. That is not a reply to questions!

I also asked a number of Structure Point employees if they are doubling down on their claim that it is safer to cross in the middle of busy 1100 than it is to cross at the light with pedestrian signals and most of them said that it is safer in the middle of the road! I still find that ludicrous! Not one person I've talked to who is not associated with Structure Point or the town thinks that crossing 1100 in the middle is safer than at the light. It is truly reckless for the trail to cross 1100 in the middle when it could easily and safely cross at the light at 100.

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14	Jane Collins Received by email on 5/9/2023	<p>I live in the westchester south subdivision off of 5th street. The Pope O'Connor ditch runs at the back of our property. I was reading on your website about the new trail proposed and have some questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -will this construction add more water to the ditch flow? -will my property be considered in a flood zone and this increase the need for flood insurance? <p>My questions come from the following: segment 1</p> <p>The new eight-foot wide, paved, shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of CR 1100 North, from the intersection of North CR 50 East and tie into the existing eight-foot-wide concrete sidewalk which begins approximately 250 feet west of North CR 100 East. There will be crosswalks added at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East to connect the new shared-use path to Westchester-Liberty Trail I. Two culvert pipe extensions (STR 101 and STR 102) will be necessary and consist of adding new pipes of the same size to the outlet of each structure. STR 101 would be extended five feet north and STR 102 would be extended three feet north, carrying streams Pope O'Connor Ditch and unnamed tributary (UNT) to Pope O'Connor Ditch, respectively. In the area of STR 101 and 102, the new shared-use path would be bordered by a guardrail to the south and a pedestrian handrail to the north. Additionally, inlets, storm sewers, and driveway culverts will be installed as necessary to facilitate drainage along CR 1100 North. Thank you in advance for your answers to my questions.</p>	<p>Drainage: Please see response to comment 13 above regarding drainage. Refer to the <i>Floodplains</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information.. The modifications to drainage structures included in this project will likely result in an insubstantial change in the structures capacity to carry flood water.</p> <p>Structures on CR 1100 N: Two pipe extensions will be installed on CR 1100 N to perpetuate existing drainage from the roadway and the existing structures of Pope O'Connor Ditch and an unnamed tributary. No change will occur to the existing flow of Pope O'Conner Ditch or the unnamed tributary and existing drainage will be maintained.</p>
15	Lawrence Kirchner Received by email on 5/9/2023	<p>Please consider the following comment</p> <p>My wife and I purchased our homesite within the Tamarack subdivision in 1995. One of they key draws was the connectivity to downtown Chesterton, and Lake Michigan beyond, due to the subdivision's proximity. Marketing materials from the developer promised a future bike trail connection.</p> <p>28 years later, the Town is finally considering construction of that connection. It is needed now, more than ever. Tamarack is an island surrounded by two-lane roads with no designated bicycle or pedestrian facilities. CR 1050 and CR 1100 are both extremely busy with a preponderance of vehicles driven by teenagers heading to/from the high school, work vehicles, and generally distracted drivers. How do I know this? I am a frequent user of these routes for running and cycling.</p> <p>More importantly, these roads are frequently used by high school athletic teams as part of their regular training regimen.</p> <p>Many of us who live in Tamarack bemoan the fact that our children can not safely leave the subdivision to visit friends or get to school because of the lack of a means for safely navigating down CR 1050 or CR 1100.</p> <p>This trail extension, will provide the safe connectivity for the families of Tamarack, and the entire Chesterton community.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
16	Gregory Hill Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	<p>My name is Gregory Hill. I'm a member of Tamarack on White Willow Lane, so I'm not intimately affected by it, but I do have a bunch of comments that I had submitted. You indicated in the presentation there are nine homes being affected, okay, I believe for Tamarack. There's over 30 homes involved and it will affect the whole Tamarack subdivision.</p> <p>You should be looking at the value and quality of life in the Tamarack. Okay And I understand you've got a lot of environmental work, but the stated plan that you're looking at currently does not increase any value within Tamarack. Okay. In my judgment, it reduces the value.</p>	<p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Boardwalk Cost: Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the boardwalk and costs.</p>

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		<p>Even though some records indicate that trails increase the value of property along the trail, I don't believe that will be the case with Tamarack.</p> <p>Okay. I don't think you would propose a trail through Coffee Creek or Sand Creek and you're going straight through a fully-developed Tamarack subdivision. Yes, you own that right-of-way and I have been -- hopefully, none of us have been educated on your right-of-way and what you can and cannot do. Okay. But you've got to look at the quality of life and what exists.</p> <p>With respect to the boardwalk specifically, I would like to note what is the total cost of the boardwalk; materials, labor, engineering -- okay --per ten feet or per foot relative to the cost of a normal eight-foot path.</p> <p>Okay. Third, I see that you are extending the trail on 1100 all the way to 100 East and it dead ends there. That means the lineal footage from segment two to 100 East is duplicated both along 1100 and -- okay -- and Laurel Creek. You're spending twice the additional distance. Why?</p> <p>Also, you're indicating you're having to mitigate going south on section two. Okay. If you get rid of section two and you come down, which you have already said was not reasonable, because of nine houses along 1100 -- or along 100 East, okay, it doesn't make sense.</p> <p>You're going through a natural habitat. You have to mitigate it. You're probably satisfied by the environmental rules, but it doesn't make sense especially when you're taking the path along 1100, okay, all the way to 100 East. Why are you doubling the length of the path?</p> <p>You talked a lot about environmental. Yes, we have a lot of requirements, federal and state. Okay. But if you eliminate section two, I got to believe you would be eliminating tree removal, mitigation, things of that nature. They all cost money.</p> <p>And from what I -- I talked earlier today to one of your representatives. We're looking at \$1.942 million. That's our money. That's the residents that paid that; federal, state, county.</p> <p>And I don't think this is a judicious use of our moneys when there is a more cost effective, less disruptive to the community. And Tamarack is part of the community.</p> <p>Okay. That's about it. And I'll listen to quite a few others and I appreciate the opportunity.</p>	<p>Alternatives: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the other alternatives considered for the project.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p>
17	Cliff Morgan Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	<p>My name is Cliff Morgan. Thanks for hearing my comments.</p> <p>I'm a soccer coach here in Chesterton. I get to go over to Duneland quite regularly. And so I would like to, first of all, let you know that I am for the trail. I think that it's a great idea to put the trail together. I think that there is a safer way and that's what I would like to discuss for a second.</p> <p>One of the kids that I take to soccer once a week is on 1100. And the place where you're going to put a safer crosswalk there, I know that at least one child has been hit crossing in that area on a bike and why kids are walking there.</p> <p>My son is an avid runner here in the Chesterton system and they won't run down 1100 the way that you guys are looking to do this. I think that it's safer to go all the way up 100 and connect directly there.</p> <p>I wouldn't let my kids cross where you guys are suggesting that they would cross because I think that I would be putting my kids in danger. And I think that by putting the crosswalk where you're recommending is going to put other kids in the community at danger as well. So I like the idea of the trail. I understand that there's complications with right-of-ways and other concerns, but I think that our kids' safety is more important than your current recommendation. Thank you.</p>	<p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p>

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<p>18</p>	<p>Amanda McCrovitz</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Good evening. I think several of the things that I want to talk about have been addressed. However, I just want to point out that my property is on Laurel Creek Drive and so this proposed shared-use trail will be going through my front yard.</p> <p>And I know that there's been some talk about green spaces and that improves property value. However, I would like to know, and I still can't find it and I am just curious, do you know anywhere where the shared-use trails go through peoples' front of their homes? I just don't see any value in that when there's an existing sidewalk.</p> <p>I have a lot of different things I could talk about, but one of the things I'm sitting here thinking about, and forgive me if this is a little tiny bit selfish, but I noticed that for one to three months that this area runs in front of my home is going to be under construction. I have a son who will be graduating high school in 2024. We usually do our kids' open houses at our home. Like that's going to be terrific.</p> <p>I just -- what about -- we've done a lot of research about the environmental impacts and the species and I don't want to discredit that because I do believe that's important. However, what about my quiet enjoyment and use of my home?</p> <p>I noticed tonight on one of the boards out here it says that the trail is going to be 35 feet from the front of my home. And, currently, when I measured from the very front of my home to the front edge of the walk, it's 36.8 feet.</p> <p>So I'm losing almost over a foot and a half of my property, according to what is out there. I realize it's probably not a formal plan, but I do want to bring that to light because that's -- something is not accurate here and I am not okay with this.</p> <p>I mean, we're standing probably maybe even further apart than the edge of this trail is going to be going. I'm curious about has there been a proposed use study done? I can argue both ways with that. Okay. Maybe there won't be a lot of traffic on it. Okay. Great. That would be lovely. However, then why are we doing this? It is a lot of money when I do believe there exists that other alternative route. Has there been a cost comparison done to make that connection from 1100 down 100 East to Railroad? It's a straight shot. It doesn't disrupt our existing neighborhood.</p> <p>I do realize there are five homes on 100 East that are County and that's a whole 'nother ball of wax to negotiate their property as well, but I would like to see a cost-benefit analysis.</p> <p>I will also think -- when I was noticing the aerial views of this, all of the construction that has been done on the east side of 100 East, the Coffee Creek development and the Enclave Apartments, none of those were there in those aerial views. That's a whole section of people in our community that we're not necessarily giving a better connection or a safer route to get downtown.</p> <p>Just curious what would be, someone who lives in those apartments, their incentive to not just take that dangerous little jaunt down 100 to get to the other side of Calumet and go straight into town versus all the way through our neighborhood, through the park, to 5th Street to come back this way to the European Market to the downtown area.</p> <p>It doesn't -- I just -- I understand the need.</p> <p>I just think -- I mean, we have a great goal to connect everybody, but I just think we need to look at more appropriate means of doing it than going through the Tamarack subdivision. It just -- it doesn't really make sense to me. There is an existing sidewalk there that people can use. I realize it's not ADA compliant and I'm not aware exactly all the details for that, but I just think that there are better things that could be done.</p> <p>And then I had a question on -- I think it's page 6 in this project information packet. With the Dunes Kankakee Trail, I was just curious. It talks about that it is going to connect up near the intersection of Railroad and SR-49.</p>	<p>Alignment in Neighborhood: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding a trail through another neighborhood.</p> <p>Private Property Impact: Please see response to comment 9 above regarding changes in property lines.</p> <p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>Alternatives: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the other alternatives considered for the project.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative). Because it was determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners and right-of-way, no additional comparisons were completed between this alternative and the preferred alternative.</p> <p>Connection: Please see response to comment 5 above regarding connection of the trail.</p> <p>Existing Sidewalk: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the trail width.</p> <p>Dunes-Kankakee Trail: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the Dunes-Kankakee Trail.</p>
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		<p>And I was just curious, does that mean that eventually that connection from 100 East is going to be connected somehow to the Westchester Trail, because that's kind of what this is -- the phase two, near the intersection of Railroad and SR-49.</p> <p>So how is that going to be connected? Has that been seen because if that's something that's already in the works, is there a need for segment two and three? And could we utilize our federal dollars, our tax dollars, however all this comes together, to make that work? Those are some of the questions that I still have.</p> <p>All right. No problem. Thank you.</p>	
19	<p>Renee Martin</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Hello. I'm actually reading this on behalf of an avid cyclist and the cyclist's perspective. As an avid cyclist for decades, I cannot ever recall a trail system that has a trail running throughout front yards within a residential neighborhood. Most all-activities-used trails limit the number of times a trail must cross any type of street or driveway to limit the potential of a collision.</p> <p>The current trail system I ride several times a week is designed to travel around neighborhoods, not through them and at cross streets have pedestrian lights to stop vehicular cross traffic. They are safe, fun to travel, and a boom to property values.</p> <p>Having a trail run through the neighborhood passing driveways is a recipe for disasters. Cyclists can easily travel 10 to 12 miles per hour and the families backing out of driveways, having to look both ways for cars in the road and cyclists on the path will result in collisions on the trail. Also, we have several children in the neighborhood that ride their tricycles, their moms are walking strollers, bikes going past at fast speeds is a recipe for disaster. I have not experienced communities that have committed to building safe, usable trail systems designing the trails to cross in a residential driveway on a separate path within a neighborhood. The risks are too great.</p> <p>Also, as I mentioned previously, the 1100 crossing, the actual place they're putting -- this was my observation -- the actual place they're putting the crosswalk -- if you look going east, there's a hill. If you look going west, there's a hill. And until you get up upon it, you're not going to see that person in all of the crosswalk warning.</p> <p>Also, let me add that with the growth of electric scooters, electric fat-tire scooters, electric bicycles, the risks increase significantly as they travel much faster and are typically driven by children and teens without helmets that are on their phones and not paying attention. The existing trail design makes no sense and will result in collisions and injuries.</p>	<p>Alignment in Neighborhood: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding a trail through another neighborhood.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Electric Vehicles: The Town does not have anything in the town code that addresses the use of e-vehicles on trails or elsewhere. Currently there are no documented incidents on other surrounding trails. If this becomes an issue in the future the Town of Chesterton will discuss this further.</p>
20	<p>Robert Kania</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Okay. So my wife and I live at [REDACTED] Ours is going to be affected more than anybody else. We are the one that comes behind, comes to the side, and then comes to the front of our house. We live on the corner lot.</p> <p>I would just like to say, personally, how stupid this is going to look in my property after this is done. I'm going to have an eight-foot sidewalk on one-half of my property with no trees and a four-foot sidewalk on the other half of my property on a corner lot.</p> <p>I cannot fathom any of you or any of you wanting that in your front yard. It doesn't make - it makes zero sense whatsoever.</p> <p>On another note, I am a runner. I run through Chesterton constantly. I will never run on 1100 ever. You want them to cross the street? You are giving us gobbledygook numbers as far as it being 48 feet across on this way and only 23 feet this way because you cross 23 feet this way at a deadly intersection and then you have to cross Catkin to get across that road. You have to cross Catkin to get across the other side of the road. And then you have to cross Laurel Creek to get across this side of the road.</p> <p>So all of your numbers are forgetting the other roads you have to cross in your amendment to this change in the actual crossing.</p> <p>I also want to deem from a protection standpoint. Okay. No offense. We bought houses in Tamarack because we wanted to live in Tamarack. People who want to live in Tamarack</p>	<p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Roadway Crossings: The preferred alternative does require crosswalks to be installed or improved at 6 points along the trail. One at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E, one mid-block crossing across CR 1100 N, three crosswalks within the Tamarack Subdivision (one at each of the two crossings of Catkins Circle and Laurel Creek Drive; one at Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E), and one across CR 100 E at Rail Road. The crosswalk at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E is a 4-way stop sign-controlled intersection and the proposed project will add a pedestrian crossing from the northwest corner to the northeast corner of the intersection with crosswalk striping and signage. See response above about the mid-block crossing on CR 1100 N. The two existing crossings at both crossings of Catkin Circle and Laurel Creek Drive will be improved to include new American with Disability Act compliant curb ramps and crosswalk striping with signage. The crosswalk at Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E will include crosswalk striping and signage. The crosswalk added at the intersection of CR</p>

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	<p>need to buy houses in Tamarack. People just riding through, we don't know who they are. We can't trust them. We can't trust the town to take care of this. Who knows what is going to go on in the back of those woods? Who knows. And I don't want to be the one to have to call the cops all the time because there's stuff coming up behind us.</p> <p>All right. Who is going to take care of the trail? Nobody takes care of the trail on Railroad. Nobody. The sections are overgrown with evergreen trees. The concrete is already breaking and splitting. Things are overgrown all the time. I run past this area all the time. All right. I see how little this is taken care of. And now I want this in my front yard? Not even close. Not even close to what this is going to be.</p> <p>I love the idea that we are only going to impact five houses in Laurel Creek, but you are bringing an entire slew of people, bicyclists, walkers, whatever into a neighborhood, one of your best neighborhoods.</p> <p>And I just do not understand -- I still -- nowhere has anybody answered in any of these -- you showed us a 24-minute video. And in nowhere did you describe the need for what this was. If you're not worried about traffic, like what was said earlier, then why are we doing this? If you're not worried about the number of people that come through this, then what's the point?</p> <p>If you really want to connect to the high school, I get it, but you're also connecting to the wrong side of the high school. You're connecting to the north side of the high school and the entrance to the high school is closer to the south.</p> <p>So, again, no one has described the need for this trail except to connect two different roads that already do this over an existing massively busy road, like they said, that no one will ever stop for. You're worried about crossing at a crosswalk with a stoplight for traffic and a crosswalk signal and -- but you're not worried about the other people coming across on a flashing yellow.</p> <p>Well, we have a flashing yellow where Railroad comes in and there are accidents almost every day on that road with people peering out because no one cuts down the evergreens on Railroad.</p> <p>And so all of this ties into all -- again, if I felt the need for this, because I run so much, I would dart out of my house and take off on this thing like anybody else. I don't get it. I run through every town, every street imaginable in Chesterton. I'm a marathon runner. That's what I do. All right. And I do not understand the point of adding miles and miles of concrete, which runners would never run on anyway, to satisfy this so-called need.</p>
<p>21 Janel Borsos</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>I am Janel Borsos and I live on Catkin Circle. I'm speaking tonight in opposition to the trail and I would like to read the letter that I wrote to Ms. Hinkle.</p> <p>I am writing to express my profound dissatisfaction with the proposed route of the Westchester-Liberty Trail through the Tamarack subdivision. It seems counterintuitive, doesn't it, to run a nature trail through an urban subdivision?</p> <p>The Town of Chesterton has been called the city of trees and, yet, the proposed trail will remove numerous trees from the park perimeter, which borders on my backyard and, even worse, from the front of homes on Laurel Creek Drive.</p> <p>I should mention that those ornamental flowering trees throughout our neighborhood are the signature of Tamarack and their anesthetic beauty is a great source of pride for all our residents.</p> <p>Even those Tamarack residences whose property is not immediately adjacent to the proposed trail have expressed their certainty that their property values will be adversely affected by a shared-use trail and the outside traffic that will certainly result.</p> <p>We question what purpose could possibly be served if our neighborhood is bisected. Certainly, the proposed trail must have been conceived long before Tamarack existed. Otherwise, a simple drive through would prove to you that this serves our community</p>

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		<p>badly. I ask for your consideration in this matter and urge you to consider alternative routes. Thank you.</p>	
<p>22</p>	<p>Jenny Orsburn</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>I will put this down. Jenny Orsburn. I am a resident of Chesterton. I actually purchased my home because it was close to the trails and I like to say I live in the best neighborhood in Chesterton. I am here today because I'm in support of this project. I am in support of the design of it. I understand the amount of work and I appreciate the amount of work that goes into putting together a project like this and I appreciate my town leadership for putting this together and thinking outside of the box and not making it a standard get-somewhere-as-fast-as-possible type of trail. I myself run five to six days a week on every road on every trail in this town and I do hope that others in this community do get out and experience them because you will see we do have a wide variety of options where trails do run in front of peoples' driveways and they do connect Dogwood Park to subdivisions. We are a connecting community. We are a community of about 14,000 people. My kids go to school with your kids. We all see each other in the grocery store. I think we like each other. I think we can enjoy having a trail that connects us as well within our community. We're also a community that's divided by a highway. I'm a board member of the Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy. I'm very excited about the fact that we are building a trail that will connect our town that's divided by the highway over to Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy, but we're making a lot of improvements as well to our park plan. Again, I am here in support of this. I think you guys have done a really great design. It's low environmental impact. There's always -- it's easy to say there's concerns about tree removal. This is very minimal. This will be a really wonderful experience for families if you do actually go out on the trails in this town in the region, in the county. Every town around us is scrambling for this money to build trails. You will see it's a friendly environment. People aren't getting mowed over. Nobody is out there fighting. There's no crime. I think our police department can attest to that. But it's a quality of life issue. That is something that we should be proud of, so I commend the design team and I commend the town for putting this trail program together.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>23</p>	<p>Jim Martin</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Good evening. I'm Jim Martin. I live at [REDACTED] I appreciate you guys giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns. Let me say that I am in favor of a trail in connectivity. I run and I bike. What I am not in favor of is the path, phase two specifically, phase 3 specifically. And a lot of reasons were given both in your video presentation, in the town's responses to some of our questions that we asked when we met with them, and in email responses from your organization. So I'm aware of all of them and, you know, your concerns. But I have a few categories that I want to present that are counters to the theories that you're using to support the current path of the trail. So I have this category called common sense travel. There's plenty of bikers in here. People have mentioned biking. I bike. One thing when you're out on a bike trail, you really don't want a lot of turns. You're out there usually for exercise. These bike trails, especially as you head west, they're straight. Okay. They do cross some roads, but they're straight. You're out there to get some speed, get some exercise. People aren't sightseeing for the most part. Some are, but most aren't. Most are out there for exercise. The more turns, the worse the experience is. I just want to say common sense dictates running down 1100 North to 100 East and going south on 100 East because that's less turns than when you cut through at that midpoint and you've got a few turns and squiggles and make a turn through Tamarack and all that.</p>	<p>Signage and Roadway Crossings: Please see response to comments 3 and 20 above regarding the trail signage and roadway crossings for the proposed project.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p>

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The only point is that -- there are people that may have touched on this, but if you're in Coffee Creek and you want to head to downtown Chesterton, you pop out on Railroad, are you going to go through Tamarack all the way back around a quarter mile or so and come back to Calumet, 100 East, or are you just going to head north on 100 East? That's common sense. Common sense says the shortest distance between two points is go straight, right.

I have this category I call safety. I know all of the issues you presented about 23 feet versus 48 feet, watching for turns, and all of that. I want to bring up a few points. And some of these have been covered, but I am going to mention them anyway because I wrote them down.

Okay. In this case, safety isn't necessarily dictated by travel distance. That mid-block cross on 1100 North, people have brought this up, it's between two hills. The speed limit on 1100 North is 30 miles per hour. It's routine for people to do at least 40 and the high school kids probably pushing 50.

So imagine yourself crossing at this mid-block where there's cars coming both east and west and you're going to go to the crossing, but they're coming over hills. The crossing is in the gully between the two hills, and especially when you're coming from the west going east. It's a shorter distance from the crest of the hill to where that trail is going to start -- or where that crossing is going to be. So if someone gasses it up from that stop sign at 5th and is heading west, then they're going to be cresting that hill. And all of a sudden they're going to see bikers and walkers. That's dangerous.

And the same thing coming the other direction. It's a higher hill. There's a little more distance of view, but my point is you're going at speed and you're encountering pedestrians and bikers. I think that's very dangerous rather than crossing over at 100 East where you'll be crossing with the light, for one thing. The east/west travel will be stopped because you're going to wait for the light to cross. You're not going to cross in through traffic.

And as far as watching out for turning vehicles, I'm waiting at the light to turn -- to go across to 11- -- you know, down 100 East. And if I am on the corner, people that are coming down Calumet, which is 100 East, are going to see me from a great distance away. They're going to see me. Also, if I'm looking there, I can see them. If the light was red, heading north and south, and then it turns green, those cars that are there, they can see you and you can see them. I don't think that's as big a safety issue as crossing at midpoint and possibly get picked off by a speeder.

I am really concerned about the dangers. And all these people that talk about running, I don't run down 110. That's dangerous. I realize there will be a sidewalk there in the future. That makes it safer to do. I would be willing to try that.

Sorry. Okay.

The other thing is this thing crosses in my backyard. You're talking about the trail trying to preserve as many trees as possible, right? What do you think is going to be happening back there at night on weekends when it's warm? Kids are going to be partying back there and causing problems. And who is going to monitor that? Are we going to call the cops every time, you know, someone is doing something they shouldn't be doing out there?

As far as impact -- well, I'm not going to talk about the numbers of impacts. This is something that probably other people don't know and this is important.

A lot of this has to do with requiring right-of-ways right down 100 East. I will tell you that we had a meeting with Jim Biggs, the Board of County Commissioners for this area; Red Stone, the Porter County Council for this area; and a few of us from Tamarack. And what came out of that meeting is one thing, that a town council person has approached Jim Biggs about a memorandum of understanding, which would be something like the county

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	<p>would permit the town to put a sidewalk on my rights it has along 100 East as long as the town maintained the sidewalk and the county wouldn't have responsibility for this. Jim Biggs stated at that meeting that he was in favor of that and that he would -- he would push it through the commissioners and Red Stone through the council, whatever was necessary. In other words, the county is on board with the town. This isn't an adversarial situation. This isn't the town and the county battling each other.</p> <p>This is a movement towards cooperation. The town has approached the county and the county has said, yes, we will agree to that. I just wanted to make sure you guys know that because whatever it takes to make this thing safe and not impact a completed residential area would be the best. It would be safer. It is cooperative between the town and the county and it will have less impact to the Tamarack neighborhood. Thank you very much.</p>	
24	<p>Bob Filipek</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p> <p>Hi. My name is Bob Filipek. Sorry about that. I am going to get this going. All right. First of all, can I get a show of hands of all the residents that are going to be affected by this, so people understand that. All of the people that are here, show of hands. Okay. And how many are for it? We have one, Jenny, and all the rest are opposed. Thank you. I just wanted to make sure everyone saw it. A couple points I have here. Some of the people talked about it. I think most people are for the path that connects section one to section two at Railroad and the other one that you're talking about. Out of the three phases they talk about, no one is opposing to going on 1100 because it connects it and it connects from the 50 -- or 50 East all the way up to 100 and it connects those people to get into town as well, so it provides a safe path for them to get there. What they're opposed to is crossing 1110, like they've mentioned many times, in the middle of the road. When you're coming down there around five o'clock or whenever the sun is setting, you're going right into the sunset and you're blinded a lot of times on 1100 so you can't see what's coming there, whether you have a cross -- people crossing or whatever. That's another fact that is a problem there. If you cross at the section of 1100 and 100 East, it's a safer route. It's a shorter route, cheaper route, and it also benefits the community better. The reason, it's safer. You're crossing at a light that they talked about instead of crossing in the middle of a crosswalk. I wouldn't let your kids -- that's why we have them. When they cross schools, they don't cross at the middle of the street. They go to a corner and cross through a crossing guard. Okay. They don't just cross in the middle of the street. It doesn't make any sense. Second, from a cost perspective, if the proposed route that you said -- the second proposed route that you guys said was not viable is very viable. And the reason for it is it's shorter and it's straighter and it's going to be cheaper than doubling up the route like Mr. Hill talked about going on Laurel Creek and 1100. And you're duplicating the cost of the existing route that you guys proposed. By going with the other route on 100, it's shorter and straighter and cheaper. As far as the people that are going to be affected by it, if there's an easement, like we talked about like from a county easement on 100, you can use that easement just like you're using the town easement. It's the same easement that the county or the town owns. They are giving you access to use. So why are you going to go through and go through the other section when you have a better route that is better for you?</p>	<p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>Notification: Mailing lists are based on current Assessor Office records which are publicly available online. Notice of Survey letters were sent to all property owners and adjacent property owners to the project area in May 2020. A legal notice of planned improvement was published in the <i>Northwest Indiana Times</i> on February 15 and 22, 2023. The legal notice of planned improvement was also mailed to adjacent property owners, local stakeholders, and the Tamarack Subdivision Homeowners Association on February 10, 2023. The Town of Chesterton also posted the legal notice and project information on their Facebook page in multiple posts to ensure the public was being notified. A project website was created and included a project information packet, the draft Categorical Exclusion (CE) document, project plan sheets, the legal notice, and a comment form. Additionally, the CE was made available for public review at the following locations: Chesterton Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304 and Westchester Public Library, 200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304. The team has followed the guidelines for notices set by INDOT and included in the INDOT Public Involvement website https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/</p>

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		<p>And then you say the third part of it benefits the community. They talked about it a little bit, but the people in Tamarack are here opposed to it because of the path that you're projecting.</p> <p>But by going on 1100 to 100 and 100 to Railroad, you also benefit the residents of Sand Creek, Coffee Creek, and Eagle Crossing. There's three other subdivisions that are there. If they come down Railroad -- they come down to the Railroad and then they have to say, okay, I am going to either take this proposed route, go a half mile out of my way, go through Tamarack, cross 1100 not at a crossing that is safe and -- no one is going to use it. So if you're putting in a path to connect the two paths, no one is going to use that path to go there. If you went on 100 East, more people would use it.</p> <p>And we talked to people and we talked about this at the last -- at the town meeting there. If the people from Sand Creek have said, "Am I going use this path?" They're going to say, "No. I am not going to go through Tamarack. I am just going to go on 100 and hope I don't get hit."</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>And so the other thing that they had under here was the contact information that they sent. When they originally sent this out, there were a number of people in Tamarack that were not informed. They had the wrong contact and they gave us very little involvement with it as well as the county. So we felt that the county and these residents of Tamarack should be involved before the planning process, before you submitted this to the federal for funding on this. Thank you.</p>	
25	<p>Brit Thieleman</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Bob, you're a little too tall for me.</p> <p>My name is Brit Thieleman. I live at [REDACTED], so my yard is not affected by the trail.</p> <p>I could tell you that me and my family are for a trail, but not a trail through Tamarack. We're worried about things like home values; right?</p> <p>We're worried about our neighbors having people in their front yards. We're worried about things like liability. You know, if someone gets hurt on the trail in front of one of my neighbors' houses, are they liable? Can they be liable? Can they get sued? Who is going to pay their lawyer bills? Is the town going to do that? I don't think so, but I don't know.</p> <p>Safety, a lot of people talked about safety. I went out and saw the site myself. And I'm a papa. I've got a three-year-old grandson. I would not walk my grandson across that with the two hills they're talking about. I would love to see if the police have done any kind of speed vio- -- or speed verification to see if people -- how fast they're really going. Down that road, people tend to go pretty fast. I would not walk my three-year-old across that.</p> <p>No way.</p> <p>1100 is a disaster. You know, I hate the idea that Tamarack is isolated from the town with those sidewalks for our kids to get to town or get to the schools. Love the idea of going down 1100. That would be a nice connection for that, you know, to get into the town or go to schools. So, you know, a lot of concerns from, you know, our community and our neighborhood.</p> <p>And then lastly -- oh, two things. Parking. So if people are going to get on the trail in Tamarack, where are they going to park? Park along the road? If there's a group, would they gather and have 20, 25 cars parked along all in front of the houses? I think that's a problem.</p> <p>The idea of having people through the neighborhood that we don't know or don't need, I think also causes a problem for our community.</p> <p>And then, lastly, I see that, you know, the \$1.9 million, you know, how much of that is state? And is Chesterton paying any of that? Is the Town of Chesterton putting up some money for this? I would like to know those answers. Thank you.</p>	<p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Parking: Through coordination with the Town, there are no current parking issues along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision. There are no future parking issues anticipated along Laurel Creek Drive or in the Tamarack subdivision as a result of this project.</p> <p>Project Cost: Federal funds were awarded by Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) to the Town of Chesterton. The construction funding is 80% federal and 20% local funding. Local funds may exceed 20% if construction costs exceed the current allocated amount.</p>

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<p>26</p>	<p>Deanne Manojlovic</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Let me start by saying I'm opposed to this path in my neighborhood. As I said before, I want everything on the record. It should be transparent and accurate for everyone. I hope that everything is being shared with all the entities involved in this project, not just the town and Structurepoint.</p> <p>Many of us have asked a lot of questions and many of the answers received have been vague or twisted versions of the truth. I think everyone deserves to be informed of the conversations that we've had.</p> <p>The path will be on the north side of 1100 from 5th Street all the way to 100. That being said, the most logical, economical, safe, and fiscally and environmentally responsible path to Railroad is across 1100 from the north to the south at that light with pedestrian signals and then continue down 100.</p> <p>We've been given many difficult answers as to why that path wasn't pursued. One says the county was asked to contribute financially, but they didn't have any money. That is not a reason to exclude that pathway.</p> <p>I've asked numerous times for information on that meeting and, to date, no one has been able to tell me when it was, who was involved, what all was said when it was finally decided that it would not be pursued.</p> <p>The town should have asked the county if the easement could be used to create the trail. It appears to me that the town chose to discredit that option because they didn't want to be the only ones paying for a project that would benefit someone else, that being the county.</p> <p>I heard that the town contacted the county recently and I know that the county has said, "If there is an easement available there, the town can use it." I hope the town does the right thing and works together with the county to stay out of an established subdivision and create a path down 100, the safest, most economical, the most environmentally responsible route.</p> <p>Another reason they gave for not going down 100 is that it's less safe to cross at the light with pedestrian signals. It sounds ludicrous, but Structurepoint and, in essence, the town, says it's safer to cross in the middle of busy 1100, a road that is going to become even busier when they close CMS. It's at the valley of two hills. With only pedestrian walkway signals -- this was a quote. "The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movement trail users need to watch for when compared to the trail crossing at 1100 and 100," end of quote. They can't seriously believe that.</p> <p>They have no problem having pedestrians cross twice over 1100 and 5th Street at a four-way stop at the beginning of this path all while watching for the same number of traffic movement as they would have at 1100 and 100.</p> <p>In large cities, it's common to cross four, six, eight lanes of traffic at a light. Are you saying that that's not safe?</p> <p>Crossing at 1100 and 100 with a traffic signal where all traffic can be stopped while pedestrians are crossing as well as no turn on red being implemented, that's, obviously, the safest choice. The distance doesn't matter. Signals can be programmed to allow enough time for pedestrians to cross.</p> <p>Another reason Structurepoint gave for crossing 1100 midway and going through Tamarack subdivision is that it has the least environmental impact. I would like someone to please explain that to me because let me paint this picture.</p> <p>You start a path and an ADA compliant ramp that's already been installed on the southwest corner of 1100 and 100. And you make a fairly clear path down 100 past five homes and the rest of the open land owned by Tamarack to Railroad Road or you could have pedestrians cross 1100 unsafely at the valley of two hills, remove about three-</p>	<p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>Alternatives: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the other alternatives considered for the project. No commercial properties will be impacted or require any right-of-way for any alternative chosen.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p> <p>Connections: Please see response to comment 5 above regarding connection of the trail.</p> <p>Alignment in Neighborhood: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding a trail through another neighborhood.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p> <p>Existing Sidewalk: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the trail width.</p> <p>Protected Species: Please see response to comment 13 above regarding protected species and impacts.</p> <p>Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk.</p>
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	<p>quarter acres of trees, install a boardwalk over wetlands, concrete your way through the green space in a park, and gut an established neighborhood removing a sidewalk, installing an eight-foot wide concrete slab through the entryway of the neighborhood, removing mature trees paid for and maintained by that neighborhood. Which has the least environmental impact?</p> <p>We feel the path down 100 would help connect neighbors east of 100 to downtown. Residents of Sand Creek, Coffee Creek, and the apartments could travel the path on Railroad to 100 and go straight up 100 into town. They're not likely to go way out of their way through Tamarack, through the woods, unsafely cross again 1100, and then backtrack.</p> <p>Many of us have spoken to members of those areas too. They'll just take their chances on 100 and continue up that path.</p> <p>We are concerned with the property values decreasing in our beautiful neighborhood. The first thing you would see upon entering our subdivision would be lots of concrete and lack of symmetry.</p> <p>Installing an eight-foot-wide walking path in the front of homes in an established neighborhood is unprecedented and it is wrong. Over 80 percent of the realtors I spoke with said it's likely our property values will be negatively impacted. And it would certainly affect the salability of homes in a neighborhood that is arguably rated, by most realtors, as one of the most sought after in Chesterton. Not everyone wants to live by a path that intrudes upon their privacy.</p> <p>Realtors are tasked with the difficulty of selling homes that have walking paths running through or by their property.</p> <p>Structurepoint has tried to use articles written by the National Association of Realtors. The problem is those articles are all based on perception, not reality. Their site says that, quote, "Living near trails and greenways will likely raise your property values," end quote. And, again, quoting, "There is not a correlation that trails increase crime in surrounding areas," end quote.</p> <p>Well, first off, trails and greenways should not be lumped into the same category as there's a significant difference between those two.</p> <p>I know. I'm trying to, but I do feel it's important to get to say what I need to say.</p> <p>Second, I read through the articles and most of them were either irrelevant or used the perception of people as facts. They asked people, "Do you think your house would sell for more?" "Do you think your house" -- there was no actual study cited in those -- in those references that you guys gave.</p> <p>I do not want it going through our neighborhood. If I had known a trail was going to go through, I would not have built there. This was not disclosed when we bought our land. I am concerned with the safety of my family, my belongings, and my neighbor. We built in Tamarack because it's secluded from town, but still close. We have a tree line and there's lots of kids and we love the privacy.</p> <p>I'm also concerned about the destruction and disruption –</p> <p>I will try to wrap up, but I do feel it's important that I get to have my say.</p> <p>I will. I'm sure we'll have time for them.</p> <p>I'm concerned about the disruption and destruction of wildlife. We have natural deer pathways through those woods as well as a variety of other wildlife including the protected Red-Headed Woodpecker and owls and cranes.</p> <p>When concerns are brought up regarding safety, Structurepoint points to the Chesterton Police Department. The difficulty in policing the woods at a secluded park is quite evident. On 100, the trail should remain in full sight for easy policing.</p>	
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		<p>When concerns are raised over maintenance of the path, Structurepoint defers to the park department. Well, the park department is already unable to maintain the parks and trails we already have, whether it's lack of funding or lack of employees, I don't know.</p> <p>I do have a list of over two-thirds of the residents of Tamarack who are opposed to this path going through our neighborhood.</p> <p>And this is why I think it's important because some of the answers that you all gave to us weren't accurate and I don't think that that's fair in answering us or in the fact that other people aren't aware of what has been said.</p> <p>You mentioned the increased impact to residential or commercial property is going down 100, but there's no commercial properties on 100, so I am not quite sure why some of these things are said.</p> <p>You also mentioned that the high school is in favor of the proposed project, but the high school didn't know exactly what you were doing. They might agree with the fact that there is a path, but that doesn't say that they want you to gut through Tamarack.</p> <p>One other thing I want to say is that the Town of Chesterton is known, as somebody else mentioned, as a tree and bird town. Yet, we're going to unnecessarily cut down three-quarter acres of trees, home to countless wildlife to divert this pathway.</p> <p>And it's mentioned also that the eight-foot path would be -- of concrete would be aesthetically pleasing. That won't be pleasing. I'm not sure to who because I bet you all don't live on one.</p> <p>Okay. Good. Well, I mean after -- I can talk again? I will do that.</p>	
27	Michelle Smith Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	<p>Hi. My name is Michelle Smith. I live at [REDACTED] in Tamarack. I think I can give you a perspective that you have yet to get.</p> <p>I grew up on [REDACTED] which is phase one of the Westchester-Liberty Trail. I can remember being woken up at night by the construction, by the gangs that were gathered there. I could remember the homeless man, Mel, and his tent being taken down. I grew up on that trail. I know -- you can tell me there's no crime there. It may not be reported, but I saw it firsthand.</p> <p>Jeffery Eggert was my husband's best friend growing up and has given me permission to tell you what he saw. His very first job in high school was cleaning up the trail. The bags of used condom wrappers, the bags of used syringes, they exist. They were in my parents' driveway.</p> <p>It's not the safe issue that you're making it. It's not. I have seen it. I was woken up as a child with it. I moved from that neighborhood specifically so I would not have to be there.</p> <p>You mentioned that there are five – nine homes that are going to be in the path. I'm not one of those nine homes, but, yet, my property faces the park. The back of my land will be the park. It will be my yard that those people are in.</p> <p>I don't care if it makes sense, but this doesn't make sense. It's not safe. And, Jenny, I know that you want it and I understand why. And I know where you live and I know where the path is. This is nowhere near as close to your house as this path will be to mine.</p> <p>But I just want you to understand.</p> <p>The trail is needed. I understand that, but not where you're going to put it. It's not safe.</p> <p>In addition to what I stated with children growing up, my daughter has a scar permanent on her knee from trying to cross over 100 and being -- having a car wave her to go past as another car came over the hill.</p> <p>Do you know what it's like to see your child almost be killed? I was with her. I was on a bike. It was at the very intersection that you want to put a crosswalk. It's a crosswalk. Nobody is going to stop. We have a stoplight at an intersection.</p> <p>It's not -- we're not saying these things to be difficult as a neighborhood. We don't want our neighborhood destroyed. We don't want this, but it's so much more than that.</p>	<p>Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns.</p> <p>Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.</p>

Public Hearing Comments April 5, 2023 to May 5, 2023

		I ask you to please take into consideration the safety of everyone and what truly is going to happen on that trail, but, with the proposed route, cannot properly be policed.	
28	Theresa Buehler Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	I am Theresa Buehler. Theresa Buehler, [REDACTED] And I would like to make a comment on the crosswalk on 1100. The town emailed us answers to our questions and you said, the one just west of 11th Street, and that because no one complained, there's no problem. We have tried to cross there and have chosen to just cross at the stop sign because cars don't stop for you. I don't know if it's because they just stopped and they don't want to stop again, but it's much easier to cross at the stop sign so we choose not to take it. I wasn't aware that we should be complaining to the town that that crosswalk does not work. They don't respect blinking yellow lights. So if you wanted to cross there, maybe you need to have the police department educate our town drivers on respect for walkers and bikers.	Speeding, Safety, and Security: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding safety and security concerns. Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.
29	Tiffany Bozovich Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	Hi. I am Tiffany Bozovich. I live at [REDACTED]. I've lived in Chesterton my entire life. Living here, kids on bikes, we would always ride around town. Having the bike trail was amazing when that got put in because we could get to places we couldn't before. Kids are always going to take the shortest path, not necessarily the path that is there. So we are now giving our children permission because there's going to be a trail out of Tamarack to get to the schools to get to downtown. When we're not with these kids -- they're kids. They're going to take the shortest route. So they're going to come down 100 East. They are not going to go down 1100, cross, come through Tamarack. And I'm not just talking about our kids. I'm talking about the kids on the east side of 100 East because now these kids are going to be told there's now a path that you guys can take to get into town and you don't have to go down 100 East. These kids are not going take that path. They are going to go down 100 East and that is going to cause a huge problem because already people are walking or riding their bikes or running down that road. I almost hit a runner because I didn't even see him and I was going the speed limit. But it's sometimes hard to see. There's no sidewalk there. A sidewalk would benefit the entire town. And I understand that -- you know, we are all in favor of having a trail, but we want the safest trail by far. Not a trail that's going to cause all of these turns and kids are just going to go down 100 East and that's what I'm most scared of. I'm also scared of the crosswalk, but everyone said it. I don't think I need to repeat that part, but I wanted to bring attention to -- I think more people are going to be running or biking down 100 East and it's going to be kids. Thank you.	CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative). Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing.
30	George Mrak Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	My name is George Mrak. I live in Eagle Crossing apartment complex, so I'm tangentially affected by this plan. It's right off of Kelly Drive. One thing that I noticed is you're going to have a walking bridge, or whatever you call it, going through wetlands and having culverts for the tributary and Pope ditch. How much is it going to cost to maintain this bridge or this walkway? Obviously it's going to be more labor intensive than taking care of the sidewalk. And I just want to know if when you discarded the idea of going from 1100 North down 100 East, how much wetland was affected there? I know you're talking about a right-of-way and trees, but I think it would be much less intrusive to the environment if you just put a sidewalk along an existing road. Thank you.	Unnamed Tributary to Pope O'Conner Ditch: The added crossing of unnamed tributary to Pope O'Conner Ditch in Segment 2 of this project is not a bridge but a culvert with a paved trail over top of it. Refer to the project plan sheet on Appendix B, B-17 in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information. Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk. Boardwalk Cost: Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the boardwalk and costs. Environmental Impacts: There is no specific breakdown of the environmental impact comparison between the preferred alternative and the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).

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			Refer to the <i>Other Alternatives</i> discussion in the Categorical Exclusion document for additional information
31	Jessica Manojlovic Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	Hi. I'm Jessica Manojlovic. I live at [REDACTED] and a lot of you are coming from parents' perspective or more of the older generation perspective, but coming from a teenager and someone who has lived their entire life in Tamarack, I can tell you firsthand how much a crosswalk or a road on -- going from Railroad straight to downtown would be so much more beneficial. There's been multiple times where me and my friends have gone from my house through the town walking in that grass wooded section. Never would we ever go through a back area to take a giant U-turn to go to downtown. Plus, I also would personally feel unsafe and much less safe knowing how kids talk nowadays and all the gossip and stuff that you hear from other people. I know multiple people that have gotten pulled over from speeding on that road. That's a very common spot that police will look at because of how common people will speed down that road or 1050, which, in this case, isn't super important, but it's very, very important. I myself have almost gotten pulled over on that road. Not for speeding, but I had a taillight out and they were telling me about that. But that's just another instance how police are constantly catching people in that spot. They can sit at that Life Church. That's not necessarily going to stop kids from speeding, especially being right by a high school with a lot of inner-school traffic and people being late for school. It's just even more dangerous than being at a light telling you to go or stop and you can see. Also, walking up having a concrete place for kids to designedly walk to get to downtown is so much more safe than us to having us watch behind our backs to walk to town because of cars. I've always wanted a path down that road, but we've never had one and when they actually put the -- I think you said it was the second trail that was by the Around The Clock and all that area down there. We used that and we loved it because it was in a good area. No one is going to want to go back and get bitten by mosquitos just to go downtown. They're just going to want the straight shot. Thank you.	CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).
32	Lisa Filipek Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	I'm Lisa Filipek. I live in Tamarack. And according to your presentation, you've totally tabled and gotten rid of the route that everyone here is interested in. I think that given the number of people that see this as a valid route, along with the fact that county is on board and you may not have had that information originally, I think that it needs to be reopened and reconsidered as a viable option.	Alternatives: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the other alternatives considered for the project. CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).
33	Tom Shumate Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023	Hi. My name is Tom Shumate. I live at [REDACTED]. I'm not a part of Tamarack. I have just been listening. I wasn't really going to come here to talk. I just wanted to come here and observe it because it's near me. It's right across the street from where I live at. And just listening to everybody talk, I think it's pretty clear that the path is kind of a dumb idea. It seems like you guys are trying to connect two dots and you're just looking for any way to get to it instead of the easiest path. I like to bike. How many times do I go out on the road a year? Maybe once. Why? Because I live right on 1100 and I don't feel like going out onto the road right there. I've got seven kids. How many times do they go out on that road? Zero. Where do they ride their bikes? They ride in my driveway and that's the only place they're going to go. They're not going out on the road. I think there's a disconnect between you guys and the public because we live there. I live on the road. You could do all your studies and your observations you want, but you guys don't live in Tamarack. The path isn't going through your neighborhood. You're not living on 1100.	Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred. Project Sponsor and Funding Requirements: Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the process that must be followed as part of NEPA. Mid-block Crossing: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the mid-block crossing. Guardrail: The guardrail will be constructed for 400 feet on the north side of CR 1100 N, which is the opposite side of the road as this residential property. Access to all properties on CR 1100 N will be maintained and no impacts will occur to this residential property. The guardrail is required due to clearzone safety requirements that could not be met at the location where the trail is crossing over Pope O'Conner Ditch. The trail

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		<p>All you do is observe and report your facts and things, but we live it. We're there. And after listening to them, I think it's a pretty poor decision on your part to do this. The other thing I thought was interesting, which kind of sucks for me, but it looked like in your video it had a guardrail in front of my house. I thought I was going to be able to cross the road now and make it to the safe sidewalk, but now you guys put a guardrail up there. But then you think where else in the town do you have a guardrail that guards the sidewalk? Why would we have that? Oh, maybe because the road is dangerous. Maybe that's why. So you guys already know that. Anyway, I'm going to close with my opinion and your guys' plan is two thumbs down for the record. Thank you.</p>	<p>was required to be moved closer to the road edge to minimize impacts to the stream and wetland at this location.</p>
<p>34</p>	<p>Dominick Wojewnik Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Hello. I'm Dominick Wojewnik from [REDACTED]. I think everyone here -- well, with the exception of maybe one person, I hear -- thinks this is a poor idea. I could say for certainty that when I was looking -- I acquired the house about six years ago. And I could say for certainty that if I had seen the plan that you're talking about implemented, I might have had reservations about acquiring a house in that neighborhood. It's a nice area, people are kind and considerate. By the way, I have the loud boxer that runs around constantly and I'm so very sorry. The general thought though is that you have a general opinion here. You have people that want the trail, but the design is -- needs to be reconsidered. The one thing I did do is I did drive around and I noticed that 50 East has a sidewalk that goes all the way down. Why not continue that at the end point and just carry it down to 100 East? That's the alternative. It probably saves some money. You just have to do a little bit more development to that existing sidewalk, but that presents an alternative to the 100 East issue. That's it. Thanks.</p>	<p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p>
<p>35</p>	<p>Roy Norder Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>My name is Roy Norder. I live at [REDACTED]. I have been a resident of Tamarack for 22 years, so my property is not one that's directly affected by the trail. I would have to say my goal for many, many years has been to get a safe route to walk from our isolated neighborhood downtown. I have spoken to our representative on counsel, Jim Ton, about this many times. I feel like when I leave our subdivision and get on 100 East and walk, I certainly can walk in the grass if it's not the wintertime or if it's the wet season, but you have to. Most drivers are considerate, but not all. I certainly wouldn't want my grandchildren riding bikes or doing that. So I'm in favor of a trail, a safe trail to town, but it appears that there's a lot of inconsistencies with this trail and what we currently have as trails in connecting one part of town out to the Coffee Creek section. I mean, the current sidewalk on Railroad, as someone previously mentioned, is overgrown with trees and almost impassable in spots. And when you get out near Coffee Creek, it switches to narrow sidewalks again. The sidewalks in Tamarack, why can't they be utilized? Why do we have to have an eight-foot? If the trail does come in through the park, which has its own problems, but if the trail comes in through the park, why can't the existing sidewalks on both sides be used and potentially the street used as a bike lane? Many other cities put bike path paintings on the road. It's a lot cheaper than putting in an eight-foot sidewalk -- sidewalk just to make it consistent with a federal mandated-type trail type thing. It seems ridiculous for the amount of volume that it would get. There's other accesses to the trail in town and you can't access the Prairie Dune Trail without -- at the trailhead without traveling on city streets or narrow sidewalks. You have to go all the way to 23rd to get a wide sidewalk and even that's not 100 percent.</p>	<p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Connection: Please see response to comment 5 above regarding connection of the trail.</p> <p>Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk.</p> <p>Existing Sidewalks: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the trail width.</p> <p>Bike Lane: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding the bike lane.</p> <p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p> <p>Property Values: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding property values.</p> <p>School Busing: The Duneland School Corporation does not have any policy in place regarding students walking to school or if busing will be discontinued. The Town Manager noted that school bus service would continue throughout and after the project construction.</p>

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		<p>There's a section just south of Texas Street that's a narrow sidewalk also. Cyclists are going to use the road. Not the path. On Railroad, they don't use the path that's there. They use the roads. They use the roads. It makes more sense. And the cyclist, I thought who spoke earlier, was very -- was very succinct in his remonstrations.</p> <p>The trail proposed takes property that is city-owned, but it's been maintained and paid for in the trees and the mowing by the residents there. It's not in my front yard, but I certainly wouldn't want it in my front yard.</p> <p>You say access to a trail adds value. Yeah. If you can -- access to the trail means like if I can walk a block or a quarter mile on a sidewalk and get to a trail, not going through my front yard. So the impact on home values, I believe, is going to be there.</p> <p>Again, taking property that the city owns and has the right to take diverts it from those homeowners' use, basically their front yard that they use, and turns it into a use for someone else, who potentially is not paying city property taxes.</p> <p>And let's be honest. Our assessed valuation doesn't just go to the property line. Okay. We're not assessed for that piece of property between the sidewalk and the street, but we're assessed on the way our home looks. We're assessed on the salability and having an eight-foot path -- why an eight-foot path? Okay. At worst case, add a foot to it so you don't have to take the trees out or whatever. There's lots of alternatives. You've heard them here tonight.</p> <p>And I understand people on 100 East. They might not want to be affected either except -- look at it. They get a sidewalk. We have sidewalks. We just can't go anywhere on them out of our neighborhood.</p> <p>One other comment. I saw it stated somewhere that the school board was in favor of it and someone said, yeah, that just means they're okay with it. My question is, once a safe path from Tamarack provides access to the local schools, will the student from Tamarack continue to be bused? You know, now we're within a mile of schools. What's the busing policy for how close? Having served on an elementary school board in Illinois many, many years ago, that was one of the considerations for busing is how close do you live. Well, if I was on a school board, I would be in favor of it too if I was able to eliminate a bus. I don't know what the rules are here with regulations. Just a question that I have. Thank you very much.</p>	
36	<p>John Hilgeman</p> <p>Verbal comment at public hearing on 4/19/2023</p>	<p>Hi. My name is John Hilgeman. I live at [REDACTED]. My property is nowhere near the trail as far as seeing it. But coming into the neighborhood, I'm going to see it, right? We come off of 100. It's going to be ugly, for one.</p> <p>The second part that I don't know if anyone is even thinking about, the wooden pathway that you're going to put through the wooded area. So there's lots of trees back there. You're talking about keeping the mature trees, cutting down the small trees. Part of the year, the leaves fall off the trees, right? Who is going to maintain, for one, to clean that pathway? It's going to be slippery.</p> <p>And the question I have is what is the material going to be made out of for that boardwalk? Is it wood? Is it plastic? What is it going to be, so I would like to know that.</p> <p>And just the -- and you're saying it's going to be a cable, right? So it's going to be a horizontal cable. So if someone is walking with a stroller on there and a kid is getting kind of antsy inside the stroller or whatever is going on or if someone on a bicycle and they kind of come over too far, their tire is going to fall right off this path that you're putting in, this wooden path. So for those reasons alone, it's not safe just the way it is, even walking. So if you have leaves covered over this pathway and you slip off this thing, now you're going to -- in marsh, swamp, whatever the hell it is, sorry about the cuss, but how do you get out, right? How high off the ground is this going to be?</p>	<p>Trail Maintenance: Please see response to comment 3 above regarding trail maintenance including the boardwalk.</p> <p>Trees: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding trees.</p> <p>Boardwalk: Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the boardwalk.</p> <p>Alternatives: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the other alternatives considered for the project.</p> <p>CR 100 E (Dismissed Alternative): Please see response to comment 2 above regarding the CR 100 E (dismissed alternative).</p> <p>Guardrail: Please see response to comment 33 above regarding the guardrail construction.</p> <p>Purpose and Need and Previous Planning: Please see response to comment 1 above regarding the purpose and need of the project and previous planning that has occurred.</p>

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	<p>I think the most logical way, like everyone has pointed out, is come down 1100 where you want it. And I love what he said back there, as far as the guardrail. He can't even use it. It's in his front yard. He thought, oh, great, I can bring my kids to town crossing the street. Obviously, he can't. There's a guardrail, for the reasons he pointed out, because it's a fast travel lane.</p> <p>So if you're going to do it, come down 1100, like everyone has said. Come down 1100 and connect it to Railroad. That's the most logical point.</p> <p>It's the way you guys are doing it. And, you know, is it -- does it come to we've already made promises to concrete companies? Have you made promises to deck building companies? Made contacts with tree cutting companies? I mean, all this money you guys are wasting to put an unnecessary trail through woods, which -- I'm sure the two people on the other side of those woods that live in those two homes off of 1100, I'm sure they don't want a pathway coming between their houses.</p> <p>So I just -- I don't know what the deal is as far as how you guys came up with this idea being the best, but I can tell you right now it's not. So that's all I got.</p>	
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Janel Borsos comments

From: [Janel Borsos](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Westchester-Liberty Trail
Date: Thursday, April 6, 2023 5:50:11 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

To: Meghan Hinkle
From: Janel Borsos

I am writing to express my profound dissatisfaction with the proposed route of the Westchester-Liberty Trail through the Tamarack subdivision. It seems counterintuitive, doesn't it, to run a **nature trail** through an **urban** subdivision?

The town of Chesterton has been called the "City of Trees," and yet the proposed trail will remove numerous trees from the park perimeter (which borders on my back yard) -- and even worse, from the front of homes on Laurel Creek Drive.

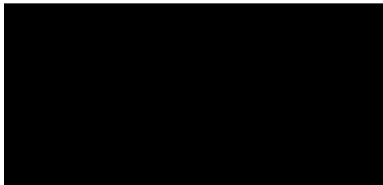
I should mention that those ornamental flowering trees throughout our neighborhood are the signature of Tamarack, and their aesthetic beauty is a great source of pride for all our residents.

Even those Tamarack residents whose property is not immediately adjacent to the proposed trail have expressed their certainty that their property values will be adversely affected by a shared-use trail and the outside traffic that will certainly result.

We question what purpose could possibly be served if our neighborhood is bisected? Certainly this proposed trail must have been conceived long before Tamarack existed. Otherwise, a simple drive-through would prove to you that this serves our community badly.

I ask for your consideration in this matter and urge you to consider alternate routes.

Janel Borsos



CONCERNS: D. GREGORY Hill 04/19/23

FROM THE MINUTES FROM, I BELIEVE, THE APRIL 10TH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING, I HAVE SEVERAL COMMENTS THAT SUPPORT MANY OTHER TAMARACK SUBDIVISION PEOPLE

I BELIEVE THAT THE DIRECTOR STATEMENT HAS RECEIVED IS FROM THE TOWN OF CHRISTENTON:

IS THIS CORRECT?

THE CONCERN SHOULD NOT BE LOWEST COST BUT RATHER VALUE AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY THIS EXTENSION.

WITH AN 8' WIDE TRAIL ALONG LAUREL CREEK DRIVE HOW WILL YOU HANDLE 1- THE OUTSTANDINGLY BEAUTIFUL FLOWERING ROWS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE DRIVE IN SPRING AND 2- THE SHADE DURING THE BALANCE OF THE YEAR.

ALTHOUGH IT HAS BEEN STATED TRAILS RAISE PROPERTY VALUES, THIS WILL NOT BE THE CASE FOR THE TAMARACK SUBDIVISIONS. IN ADDITION, A REDUCTION IN ASSESSED VALUATION WILL LEAD TO LOWER TAX REVENUES FOR PORTER COUNTY AND THE TOWN'S PORTION.

CONCERNING "LEAST ENVIRONMENT IMPACT", TWO ISSUES ARE:

THE BOARDWALK THROUGH A WETLAND WEST OF TAMARACK SHOULD BE "NEGATIVELY" IMPACTING ENVIRONMENT

- WHAT IS THE COST OF THIS BOARDWALK (MATERIAL, LABOR, ENGINEERING) PER 10' AND FOR THE COST FOR THE NORMAL 8' PATH PER 10'?
- THE "GREEN" AREAS BETWEEN THE TOWN BOUNDARIES ON THE EAST SIDE OF TAMARACK, WEST OF 100 EAST IS IDEAL AS IS. (*12)

~~✗~~ WHAT IS THE COST TO CONVERT THIS TO TOWN PROPERTY? EMINENT DOMAIN? PROVIDE WHATEVER COMMUNICATION HAS OCCURRED WITH PORTER COUNTY.

* ITEMS 2 & 3 JUST STATE A PREFERENCE: "SOME COUNTY RESIDENTS EXPRESS THEIR DESIRE TO REMAIN UNINCORPORATED." IN MY OPINION YOU NEED TO LOOK AT ALL INVOLVED. ^{SD+ IN} TAMARACK

* A. I BELIEVE TAMARACK WOULD HAVE NO ISSUE ON THAT "GREEN" AREA. WHAT IS THE ISSUE WITH PORTER COUNTY?

PER ITEM 5, BECAUSE TAMARACK HAS HIGH VALUATION THERE WOULD BE A DOWNING ESPECIALLY IF DMAS ALONG THE PATH. WOULD SAND CREEK, COFFEE CREEK SUBDIVISION WANT A PATH THRU THEIR DEVELOPMENTS?

Linda Schwab comments

My name is Linda Schwab and I am a homeowner and resident of the Tamarack subdivision in Chesterton, IN and have owned my home since 2004. My address is [REDACTED] Chesterton, IN 46304. I would like to enter my public comments into the Public Records regarding the Westchester Liberty Trail in Chesterton, IN, in response to the Public Hearing on the subject on April 19, 2023:

I am OPPOSED to the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 path and plan as it is currently being presented (April 19, 2023). I would like both the Town of Chesterton and their trail consultants, American Structurepoint, to re-evaluate the trail concerns presented, re-evaluate the logic of the plans presented, and pursue other options before continuing with this plan. My reasons are as follow:

- 1) Running this trail through the Tamarack subdivision (the middle of it! Right in front of people's front yards!) is not consistent with the way in which any other trail in the Town of Chesterton, or Porter is laid out. There is NO OTHER PLACE where a public trail cuts through the heart of a subdivision and certainly not through the front yards and driveways of a subdivision. Current Trails in your system run along the backsides of subdivisions and alongside major arterial traffic roadways. The trails CONNECT subdivisions and other residential areas, not cut through them.

Homeowners in Tamarack chose to live in a subdivision for quiet, some relative privacy, and less traffic. Many homeowners in Tamarack purchased their homes prior to this Trail ever being planned (including myself, homeowner since 2004). So by adding this trail you are changing the LANDSCAPE that current homeowners chose to live in and purchased. In fact, even by cutting down trees in the "park" area you will be changing the landscape.

We DO have concerns that the trail will de-value the homes in this neighborhood. It certainly can have an impact on the homes where you plan to rip up the current sidewalk, pass the trail over their driveways, and uproot the trees; that, in turn, will de-value all of our homes. You state, in Item 5 of your "Office of the Town Manager Westchester Liberty Trail Questions and Concerns" to which I will refer as TOWN Q&A, that "recent studies have confirmed living near trails and greenways will likely raise your property value and average of 3-5% and sometimes even as high as 15%". I would like to point out the word "near", versus the reality of this situation the word being "ON, with the path through your front yard". There IS a difference, and it is significant. Yes, people may like to be NEAR a trail but I would love to see this study/studies' questions and wonder how NEAR was presented to the study group. NEAR may conjure up "close to, accessible" but not necessarily "in my front yard". Also, please provide a citation for these studies, as none have been cited in your presentations.

- 2) Safety.

It's pretty hard to believe that this plan offers the best safety to ANYONE. Certainly not the users of the trail. Certainly not to the drivers on the roads by this trail, or drivers of the homes with driveways through which the trail crosses. I posed this question earlier to American Structurepoint, specifically regarding the safety of crossing midpoint on CR 1100 N. I was given a canned response, which was repeated in their video presentation with a graphic NOT representative of this particular crossing, stating "studies" (once again, no specific citation) have shown midpoint crossing is safer for pedestrians and drivers, and that the midpoint crossing here would be half as wide as if the trail crossed CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100E. Have these designers DRIVEN down CR 1100 N? There is a dip right before that crossing location whether

you are traveling West or East. If drivers are traveling West during sunset hours, they will never see pedestrians crossing midpoint, and would never expect it, having just come off a stop light situation, regardless of whether you place signs and lines. We ALL know how people really drive on that road. Fast, hurried. Trying to get to CHS or the other schools on Fifth Street. Trying to get onto SR 49, trying to beat the inevitable traffic stop light. Out-of-town folks driving to CHS for an event (CHS has something going on nearly every month of the year). My kids are grown, but if I were a parent with younger children trying to cross that road walking our bikes or stroller I'd be scared to death. I might be foolish enough to try it once, but not again. I would much rather cross at an intersection with a 4-way traffic light that could be controlled for safe crossing and the ability to see the traffic and the traffic to see me. And for larger groups, adequate space for a waiting area to safely cross.

I was also told by American Structurepoint that an adequate traffic study had been done. I question WHEN that study was done (what year, what time of year). Some of the plan drawings presented earlier by American Structurepoint were dated 2018. Did these studies occur at typically busy times of day or time of the year? Many new subdivisions have been added to the Town of Chesterton since 2018, to the West of CR 100E. Was the added traffic volume to and from those subdivisions (trips) accounted for in the traffic study and/or planning and assessment of this path? Has the poor quality of CR 1050 N been considered, so as the surmise that more traffic coming off the CR 1050 subdivisions might route to CR 1100 N west of 5th Street to avoid the traffic and crumbling road? Is that traffic study still relevant in the 2023 Chesterton landscape? And how many times do you expect trail users to criss cross 1100 N? Or the rest of the roads for that matter? As planned, it's a LOT, and not very safe, efficient, or appealing to the user. Again, if I were with younger kids, I would give up.

As a homeowner in this subdivision, we are accustomed to look carefully for bikes and pedestrians on our sidewalks and on our streets when entering and egressing our driveways; likewise, as pedestrians and bicyclists in our own neighborhood, we are accustomed to look out for cars in driveways – we know, and often pause to let the car pass through their drive. Will trail users be that alert and courteous, or will they have the “THIS IS THE TRAIL AND I HAVE ALL ROW” mindset seen so often on urban trails? In our neighborhood, no one minds if little kids learn to ride their bikes on our neighborhood sidewalks – it's what we do! It's our Community, and we cheer on the neighbor kids as they learn this rite of passage. We wave at our elderly neighbors as they safely walk the sidewalks for their stroll. We stop and talk to each other when walking the dogs or just walking for exercise. But putting a public multi-use trail in the same path as our neighborhood sidewalk is different – its not safe! It's a scary situation. And it detracts from our quality of life and sense of physical safety and community. Let our neighborhood sidewalks remain as our neighborhood sidewalks.

3) Trail Maintenance

In your Town Q&A, Items 9 and 17, you state any and all maintenance of any portion of the trail would be the responsibility of the Town.

Does this mean that you will promptly remove snow so that children walking to and from the Bus Stops will have safe access?, (which is what the current homeowners do for the sidewalks in front of their homes). Will you be sure that the Town snow plows do not pile snow up at sidewalk /trail street corner crossings like they usually do each year? What is the Town plan to handle snow?

The Park in Tamarack is owned by the Town, yet the Tamarack HOA has paid private landscapers for the past 20 years to maintain the grounds to some degree (mowing grass so that it is usable). The Town has never in 20 years done any maintenance or improvements on the playground equipment, gravel trail, pea gravel surface around the equipment, or shrub management along the gravel trail. How can we believe you will maintain the WL Trail that runs through the park with any care? What funds and plan do you have in place for that?

I have walked and rode my bike (in years past and as recently as last week) a portion of the WL Trail along Rail Road, east of CR 100E, to reach Coffee Creek. It is NOT 8 feet wide throughout. It has vegetation overgrowth (trees, shrubs, grasses) making it difficult to pass in some places and definitely not 8 feet wide in many places. Maintenance has NOT been done along this portion of the trail for some time, if ever. There are NO trail markers or signs for WL Trail, that I have found, anywhere in Chesterton. I cannot even find where WL Trail is supposed to be west of the old Steele Family Health off of Rail Road/Kelle Drive. Does it head South along Kelle Drive, or continue East along Rail Road to Dickinson Road and then head South to Coffee Creek? Either way, the WL Trail is not marked and the sidewalks are not 8 feet wide nor contiguous the whole way, and is therefore still incomplete. And then there is the question, and confusion, of “what is a sidewalk (with technically bikes not allowed as in “Downtown” Chesterton) versus what is a Trail (allowing for bikes, etc)? Are you going to have one standard for part of Chesterton and a different standard for other parts?

4) Alternative Options

In the Town Q&A Item 11, regarding a “shared roadway”, you state the design team is considering it. I would be OK with this – it would make much more sense if you do, indeed, go forward with going through Tamarack. Reduced speed limits and even speed bumps would aid in the safety for the trail users. It would be much more aesthetically pleasing than digging up our sidewalks and trees and running a giant trail through our yards. Item 14 addresses running the Trail along the South side of Laurel Creek and a dismissive answer that it would be an unsafe crossing ---- excuse me? Crossing in a 20 mph residential zone is much better than crossing in a 30 mph zone where drivers rarely drive under 35 mph (CR 1100N). Why the safety double standard? In any case – the question was probably really asking why you don’t just run the trail on the street in a shared roadway concept – north side or south side of Laurel Creek. It still really makes no sense why the Trail is not just run along the west side of CR 100E from the intersection at 1100 N. The reality is, just as many private properties would be impacted and the convenience to trail users would be greater and more direct using this path. I would like to know how long ago, if ever, the question of annexation was posed to these homeowners and how likely it would be today for them to agree to yielding the ROW at least? This would in fact open the ACCESSIBILITY of the WL Trail to many more homes along CR 100E, as well as subdivisions

and apartments branching off from there. Has the step even been taken to find out recently? It should be.

A NIRPC Trails map indicates the “planned” Dunes-Kankakee Trail to branch off of 1100 N and run alongside SR 49 to the south. Why not take the step to easily make the WL Trail PART OF that and run the trail alongside SR 49 rather than through Tamarack? It could easily run south from CR 1100 N to Rail Road, and connect the WL Trail at Rail Road.

5) Overall Critique

As a former urban planner, I find this piece-meal approach to trail planning in the Duneland area frustrating and short-sighted. If you want to link communities, get the communities on board and set the design and way to achieve it all the way through. Build the trails into the overall Planning concepts, make room for them, and anticipate urban growth and its locations. Make it easy for the trail users. Talk to your Porter County and Township partners and other municipal partners. Work together and make a great plan, not some cobbled-together trail system that technically “meets the needs” but causes more confusion and frustration in the end product. You can do better. The designers can do better. And you should do better.

Yes, it would and will be wonderful to connect the downtown and the subdivisions and residential areas in Chesterton to the parks and the schools. I’ve lived here since 2004 with little kids, and had hoped something would be created. It would have been a godsend to let them ride their bikes to practices and schools and especially CHS during summer school. But that did not happen in 19 years, and by the time you begin building this last phase, my last kid will literally be graduating. Of course CHS is all for the trail – everyone is “for the trail” in concept, but not this ridiculous and awkward design. DO BETTER.

6) Conclusion with original letter written to American Structurepoint

The following is my original letter written to American Structurepoint when this Trail was announced, so that it may be included in the formal Public Record:

I am not opposed to the Trail in theory, but I am opposed to the path and implementation of the Trail. I am opposed to the path the proposed Trail would take through the Tamarack Neighborhood and Park. The proposed path for the trail is inconsistent with rest of the Trail that currently winds through the Town of Chesterton, in that the other segments of the Trail do NOT go through the heart of neighborhood subdivisions and do not cut across the paths of residential driveways and the front sides of homes in subdivisions. The only places where current segments of the Trail cross residential driveways and frontages is where those drives are adjacent to major arterial corridors.

Furthermore, by cutting through the heart of the Tamarack neighborhood, this Trail would cause a visually unpleasant and unbalanced aesthetic and destroy the homogenous look that Tamarack has built and maintained over the past 20 years. The design and covenants of the Tamarack neighborhood have been meticulously adhered to, and this pathway would make it impossible for those standards to be maintained.

The proposed path of the Trail before and after entering the Tamarack Park and Neighborhood creates additional hazards and dangers for the users of the path. It would require users to cross

CR1100N from the South side to the North side at the intersection of CR 50 E/5th Street. From there, the users would travel along the North side of CR1100N for approximately 1/3-mile where they would then need to cross CR1100 N again to access the trail on the South side of CR1100N where it enters a Town-owned easement and then into the wooded park area of the Tamarack Neighborhood. This mid-road crossing is extremely dangerous for users, as CR1100N is a heavily-traveled main corridor leading from SR 49 to the Chesterton High School, and serving many other residential and business areas along the way. A high volume of traffic, both local and from out of town, travel this stretch of CR1100N. Furthermore, the access point of the trail crossing comes at a location that is at the base of a hill/depression on CR1100N, creating a hazard for drivers traveling westbound to slow down and stop for crossings. Users trying to access the proposed trail path from Railroad will also find themselves in a tricky situation, needing to cross CR100E at an awkward place with heavy traffic.

I'd like to offer an alternative proposed path: extend the trail along the North side of CR1100N all the way from 5th Street to the intersection with CR100E/Calumet Avenue, where there is a well-regulated traffic light and an existing 8-foot sidewalk. At this point, the Trail could proceed South across CR1100N and along the West side of CR100E (there is even a broad unused area adjacent to the Tamarack Neighborhood which could be utilized for part of it) to the south side of Railroad where a more natural and safer crossing of CR100E could be made to meet up with the existing trail along Railroad. Safer, for sure. And this gives the Town of Chesterton an added benefit and opportunity: at the intersection of CR1100N and CR100e/Calumet Avenue, users of the Trail could choose to turn north along Calumet Avenue and head into the South Calumet Business District and into the Downtown Chesterton area. The residences and neighborhoods along CR100E would be easily connected to Downtown as well as to CHS.

A final note I'd like to make is this: I served on the Tamarack HOA Board of Directors approximately 14 years ago. At that time, the playground equipment in Tamarack Park needed repairs for safety. We approached the Town and the Park Department, but were DENIED because the Town said that they did not own the Park, but that the HOA owned it and it was our problem and responsibility. We fixed the equipment and have maintained that park area, including mowing the grass, for at least the past 14 years and I believe longer. So to have the Town suddenly claim/acknowledge ownership of Tamarack Park is jarring. The Town has taken NO responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the Park for over 19 years, and now we are to believe that they will maintain it and the trail they propose to build there is insulting and unrealistic.

I worked as a Planner for the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (now CMAP) and as an environmental consultant. This Trail proposal lacks foresight and knowledge of the uses of the surrounding areas; it can be better and it should be better.

Michelle Gilbertsen comments

My name is Michelle Gilbertsen and I live at [REDACTED]

I am writing to voice my concern, not on the construction of the trail, but on the construction of the trail specifically through Tamarack.

To begin, I want to first address Structurepoint using the National Association of Realtors website as reference to property values increasing if a trail is “near” a walking/bike trail. One, it makes no mention of the adverse effects of a trail directly behind, wrapped around, or right in front of a homeowner’s home and yard. And two, it makes no mention of a trail being constructed straight through the middle of a subdivision years after that subdivision became established. The stated results of “living near a trail” do not apply here.

I happen to be a paying member of the National Association of Realtors and have been selling residential real estate in LaPorte, Lake, and Porter Counties for 20 years. I have been searching high and low for any evidence that something good – in a real estate capacity - might come from the construction of this trail through Tamarack. And I cannot find any location anywhere, in all of Northwest Indiana, where a major walking/bike trail was constructed through a subdivision AFTER the subdivision has grown the way ours has.

Which brings us to the defense, I’ve heard, that this trail was evidently platted along with the subdivision back in 1995.

But it was not constructed with the subdivision. To me, that would have been the absolute perfect time to create the trail. But instead, here we are almost THIRTY YEARS LATER – no trail – and we have a subdivision that has grown into one of the best in our town. All the parkway trees are of course, now mature, and beautifully flower every Spring season. We have wonderful support from our homeowners’ association and management company providing and enforcing our covenants and restrictions that, through the years, hundreds of homeowners have abided by. We have all taken great pride in our homeownership, and have always nicely maintained and updated our houses and yards. From the beginning, and up till 2015, the average price of Tamarack grew to \$343,00. And as we sit currently, today, the homes in Tamarack are easily worth between \$500-\$800K. The trajectory has always trended upwards. And that all happened WITHOUT a TRAIL.

Again, as a Realtor, I can tell you from my years of experience, that a vast majority of Homebuyers want to fully embrace their right to “quiet enjoyment.” They want their investment to equate to feeling safe, feeling secure, having a sense of privacy, they do not want an excessive amount of traffic, and they do not want tarnished curb appeal. To date, Tamarack has delivered on all these attributes; homes here have always been in in high demand with Buyers, and the trajectory of those values are proof of that.

Moving forward - - - there is no way that a trail behind the six homes on Catkin is going to bring more value to them, than what their homes are valued at today. There is no way that a trail in full view of the five homes on the south side of Laurel Creek Drive, will bring more value to them, than what their homes are worth today. More substantially, there is no way that a trail *wrapped around* the Kania’s home will bring more value to them, than what their home is worth today; and there is no way that a trail ripping through the front yards of the Agarwal’s, the VanWagner’s, the McCorvitz’s, the Turner’s, and the Puranik’s homes, will bring more value to them, than what their homes are worth today.

Basic supply-&-demand tells us that when the demand for a property decreases, the price decreases. So, when the prices of our affected homes all eventually decrease, the entire subdivision will then follow suit due to comparative market value. This will surely affect everyone in the subdivision. Everything will go backwards.

To conclude, make no mistake, I personally love and frequently use all our Duneland Community trails for biking, jogging, and walking. But to put one straight through the middle of our subdivision - right past someone's loved home for three decades - I feel, is just wrong. There are many homeowners who feel the same - we reject this idea and have done so quite openly and emotionally, because ... quite simply, we cannot see what good will come from it. Damage will certainly be done, in a number of literal ways, and we will all lose what Tamarack has evolved into.

On the other end, respectfully, for those in favor of this proposed trail, I ask, what do you lose, if it is not built through Tamarack? And how does that compare to what we homeowners will lose if it is??

We ask that you please reroute and strongly consider a safer, and far more practical and sensible option. Chesterton is better than this. Keep Tamarack the way it has always been - these are *our homes*.

Barb and Steve Rabesa comments

From: [Barb & Steve Rabesa](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Cc: modell@chestertonin.org; mgavelek@chestertonin.org
Subject: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 (Des. No. 1902832)
Date: Thursday, April 20, 2023 4:04:55 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Good Afternoon,

We are new residents on Jefferson Ave in Downtown Chesterton, having moved from NH to be near family. Our daughter, son-in-law and 3 grandchildren live just 1 mile away on Laurel Creek Drive.

We chose our location in Downtown Chesterton for its proximity to them and to the downtown area as well as IN Dunes State and National Parks. We believed the Trail System and sidewalks throughout the town would facilitate safely walking and cycling about town.

However, the treacherous stretch of CR 100 and CR1100, and between intersection CR 100/CR 1100 and Rail Road is discouraging. Whether walking, bicycling or driving to avoid pedestrians/cyclists, we see this as the most pressing safety issue in need of correction.

We are excited for this trail continuation project but disagree with its planned route.

It is our opinion as downtown residents, the planned extension Segment 1 of the existing trail system should continue along CR 1100 to CR 100 and the traffic lights should be upgraded to accommodate the Trail system at that intersection.

It is our opinion the trail should connect CR 100 to Rail Road, thus completing the only plausible pedestrian/cycling route across 49 to the east side of town.

The benefits of this straight forward approach to connect Coffee Creek Preserve access to downtown would be immediate.

We hope future efforts and public funds will facilitate the Trail Systems better connecting north of town to the Dunes State and National Park trails.

On a side note, it would be great to improve the broken downtown sidewalks which are vital to safe foot traffic before devoting valuable resources to creating an intrusive park-like trail through the forested wetlands behind and through Tamarack Subdivision, and wasting money dissecting a well established neighborhood with a large and unnecessary public trail.

We appreciate the effort and expense devoted to this project and have faith in the town decision-makers to redirect and proceed with this project for the benefit of all who call this area home.

Thank You,

Barb and Steve Rabesa

[REDACTED]

Nancy Jacobson comments

From: [Nancy Jacobson](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Comments on Westchester Liberty Trail from Nancy Jacobson [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, April 21, 2023 8:17:05 AM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Meghan Hinkle, at American
Structurepoint, Inc.,

9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

To Meghan Hinkle;

I'm against the current plan. You have heard many reasons, so I'll limit my comments to the below:

The current plan, having the bike path going through Tamarack and Laurel Canyon is dangerous. Many bicycle riders ride very quickly, can be over 30 miles per hour. Having bikers ride through a quiet residential neighborhood, in front of homes and driveways is dangerous, waiting for a car backing out and possibly hitting a biker riding quickly down the street. The bike trail shouldn't share the sidewalk where people walk slowly. It would also be a hazard, for instance, people walking with little children slowly and fast bicycle riders. The trail should not go in the middle of Tamarack.

Wherever this bike trail ends up, there should be fencing installed as part of the plan. In other words, people's property should not be open to the trail, but separated by a wood fence for safety and privacy. Many people will use the trail, including people with nefarious intentions. Without a fence, properties would be open to potential crimes. This fence should be paid for and maintained by the funding for this project now and ongoing, not affected residents.

Thank you,

Nancy Jacobson

Kelly Campbell comments

From: [Kelly Campbell](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: WLT Phase III
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 5:54:24 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to request the Chesterton Town Council reconsider the proposed Phase III of the Westchester Liberty Trail. The current proposal is not only detrimental to the aesthetic of Tamarack subdivision but also dangerous and completely inconvenient to the residents of this town.

Under the current plan, pedestrians will have to cross in the middle of 1100N, a notoriously unsafe road where a child has already been struck by a vehicle. This is clearly a very dangerous proposal and as a parent, I would not allow my children to cross this road without supervision. I am sure that when, not if, someone is seriously injured crossing that busy road the town will most certainly be held accountable especially considering all statements on public record warning of the risks of this crossing.

Additionally, it makes no sense to build a very long, roundabout path through Tamarack destroying countless trees and several properties when town residents will only continue to risk walking along 100E as it is the most convenient and direct path to downtown. 100E is currently a very unsafe road for pedestrians to walk on but given the alternative of walking nearly a half of a mile out of the way, I strongly believe that many people will continue to use this hazardous route.

I also wonder if the town has considered how difficult it will be to build a 8ft paved path through land that is constantly flooded. But even if the path through the wetlands is possible, why tear out the existing sidewalks and crabapple trees within the Tamarack subdivision? Other areas of the bike trail will connect to established sidewalks, why not within Tamarack? This seems like a waste of time, money and resources. Tamarack neighborhood has little enough traffic that people could easily walk the the current residential sidewalks or bike on Laurel Creek road. A simple painted bike lane on the road would be far less expensive and intrusive than demolishing several yards and many of the neighborhood's trees. In addition, this destruction would undoubtedly effect the property values in this neighborhood.

It seems clear to anyone who truly considers the proposed Westchester Liberty Trail Phase

Ill's problems, dangers and price tag that there are clearly better alternatives. The most obvious route would run along 1100N and 100E with safe crossing at the intersection and light. This alternative path will safely and conveniently connect our community and greatly benefit the town of Chesterton.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kelly Campbell

John Hilgeman comments

From: [John Hilgeman](#)
To: [Marketing](#); [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: [Environmental PI] Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III - new submission
Date: Tuesday, May 2, 2023 11:09:25 PM

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John Hilgeman just submitted your form: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III on [Environmental PI](#)

Message Details:

First Name: John

Last Name: Hilgeman

Address

Email 2

Phone: -

Message: We urge you to reevaluate your decision on what you call a "safe" crossing. Sure, there are many mid-street crossings throughout the US and all are unique in their own way. However, the mid-street crossing proposed by structurepoint is irresponsible. The town of Chesterton planned for and installed a crosswalk at the corner of 100 East and 1100 North a few years ago that meets the ADA requirements. This corner, as you should know, is controlled by a traffic light, and installing a pedestrian walk signal would be an easy task. The irresponsible aspect of the mid-street crossing on busy 1100 is going to be the cause of a child suffering serious injury. I was told at the public hearing that your group did "traffic studies" and your traffic engineer stated the traffic study was not done where the proposed crossing will potentially be installed and was not even conducted in Chesterton. A

proper traffic study is only accurate if it is conducted in the proposed construction area. Vehicle speeds at the proposed crossing are on average well above the posted speed limit. I brought this up to your engineer and he said "that's an enforcement issue" and I agree with him. But if there is a known speeding problem in an area why install a crossing for children there? The Chesterton police department is not staffed to catch every dangerous driver on the towns streets, so to say they need to "enforce it" was a partial admission to a known problem. Second, the boardwalk along 1100 and the proposed cutting through the woods. The boardwalk will be expensive to maintain, the life span on decking materials range from 5 to 10 years. The replacement cost will not be covered by a grant and will be funded by town taxes. (And) this in not an expense that the citizens should have to be responsible for. Please listen to the comment entries and reconsider the proposed design.

Reply directly or go to your site's Inbox:

[Respond Now](#)

If you think this submission is spam, [report it as spam](#).

To edit your email settings, go to your Inbox on desktop.

John and Barbara Black comments

From: [B Black](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Tamarack - Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3
Date: Wednesday, May 3, 2023 6:24:46 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Dear Megan Hinkle,

Barbara and I enjoyed the opportunity to speak with you after the April 19, 2023 Public Hearing held at the Westchester Middle School. Although the proposed Westchester – Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project will not directly encroach on our property, [REDACTED] we are strongly opposed to the Project design as outlined in Des. NO. 1902832.

While familiar with American Structurepoint’s excellent engineering reputation and having known several of its staff through our mutual Purdue University connections, Segments 2 and 3 are ill-advised. They do not “. . . improve quality of life for people and communities alike, bring innovation and vision to the build environment . . .” (Reference American Structurepoint mission statement.)

Tamarack property owners have already voiced numerous concerns about the proposed plans. We won’t rehash all of them but we will offer our specific thoughts re Segments 2 and 3. Very simply Segment 2, as proposed, is unacceptable. CR 1100N is heavily traveled as an east-west “corridor” between SR 49, Chesterton High School, churches, various rapidly growing Westchester Township and Liberty Township residential areas, Dogwood Park etc. First Responders (including Town and County police and Chesterton fire department) also utilize CR1100 for quick access. Elevation changes, excessive speed, late afternoon and mid-morning sun glare are additional factors contributing to the dangers in attempting to cross into or return from the proposed wooded trail.

Segment 3, as proposed, would represent a terrible intrusion into Tamarack’s residential community. Tamarack is a mature, fully developed “village” consisting of 82 (non-cookie cutter) homes. The “epicenter” of the trail would pass directly by at least six homes’ front yards. According to the Porter County Assessors web-site, the 2022 assessed total value of these six properties is \$3.894M. Additionally, there are seven properties on Catkin Circle and Laurel Creek directly across from the six; their total assessed value is \$3.640M. In other words, the trail would extend through the middle of the beautifully maintained Tamarack “residential community”. The trail would literally be on a widened concrete sidewalk only a few feet from property owners’ front doors.

We are not opposed to well-designed urban and rural trails. We have used the Prairie Duneland Trail, sections of the Monon Trail, and others throughout the US, for running, biking, and hiking. But we have never run, biked, or hiked a concrete trail that went through the middle of a subdivision, nor would we feel comfortable doing so!

We are opposed to Segments 2 and 3 of the Westchester-Liberty Phase 3 as currently designed!

Maureen and Christopher Hurst comments

From: [Mimi Hurst](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Re: Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project, Des. No. 1902832, Chesterton, IN
Date: Friday, May 5, 2023 5:49:07 PM

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Please correct our statement to say “inexperienced” drivers.

Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On May 5, 2023, at 4:14 PM, Mimi Hurst <[REDACTED]> wrote:

We believe it is not safe to have the trail go over people’s driveways in a neighborhood especially with new, young experienced drivers. We, also, have several toddlers in our neighborhood which is concerning with potential bikers riding fast through a neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Maureen & Christopher Hurst

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 5, 2023, at 8:20 AM, Hinkle, Meghan
<mhinkle@structurepoint.com> wrote:

Good Morning,

Thank you for submitting comments during the first round of public involvement for the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 project (Des. No. 1902832). The Town of Chesterton will host a public hearing for the Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 project (Des. No. 1902832), and you are being contacted with the additional project information. The public hearing will be held on April 19, 2023 at 6pm CST at the Chesterton Middle School, 651 W. Morgan Avenue, Chesterton, IN 46304. Enter Chesterton Middle School by the Auditorium Entrance (door #2), and the public hearing will be held in the Auditorium. Please see the attached legal notice with all the public hearing

Theresa Buehler comments

From: [Theresa Buehler](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#); [Matt Gavelek](#); modell@chestertonin.org; jton@chestertonin.org
Subject: Westchester Liberty Trail
Date: Friday, May 5, 2023 4:39:48 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Greetings,

I have some responses to the email the Tamarack homeowners association received in response to our comments. Answer 5 says that our property values would not be affected. I have a friend who asked me about if there were any homes for sale in Tamarack. I advised her if the trail plan and she was able to go to the public hearing. After watching the presentation she advised me that she really wouldn't want to live in a neighborhood with the trail running through it. She felt along the perimeter is good but to change the character and the beauty that she feels is given by the street trees and symmetry would make her not consider Tamarack as the quiet private neighborhood that it is currently.

Answer 7 about the trees. I don't believe that you would be able to relocate or even replant with the small space that is left after the widening of the concrete.

Answer 8. Utilities. I wonder about the small space left for utilities and how if in the future different or more utilities need to be added or changed what happens.

Answer 9,17 Maintenance of trail. I see how the existing trail is "maintained" so I question if the town is up to maintaining more trail. Also currently when there is snow the snow plows pile snow over the crossings that are ramped for the handicapped. The trail on Railroad road has evergreen trees growing over 2/3s of the paved path. There is broken glass and graffiti under highway 49.

Answer 11. I like the idea of the share roadway. Residents of Tamarack use the street to walk run and bike already.

Answer 15. The mid block crossing just west of 11th street. My friend and I like to bike but when we try to cross at the crossing cars don't stop for us. We find that it is much easier to cross at the stop sign and proceed north on 11th street. We never reported issues we just found the easier way.

I would also like to know if you considered the fire Dunes Kankakee trail that is supposed to go down South Calumet/200 east to railroad. You could combine the two trails for that short segment. We really do need sidewalks along that section of the road for pedestrians to walk to town. I truly believe that people who walk from Coffee Creek and Eagles Crossing Apartments will not want to walk over 20 minutes out of their way to get to town. They will still walk the distance on 100 east where there isn't a safe place to walk.

I do not believe that the mid block crossing on 1100 is a safe plan for the kids to go to school. You should make the cars stop for the pedestrians if you continue on this plan. Not flashing lights but a stop light if someone wants to cross they push the button to stop traffic.

Thank you,
Theresa Buehler

Sent from my iPhone

James Driscoll comments

From: [James Driscoll](#)
To: dlafata@chestertonin.org
Cc: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Westchester-Liberty Trail
Date: Friday, May 5, 2023 5:27:56 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Dear Mr. Lafata:

It is my understanding that today is the last day for public comment on the proposed Westchester-Liberty Trail. I am not sure that sending this email to you is the appropriate method of delivering comment so I ask that you please forward to the appropriate party, if necessary.

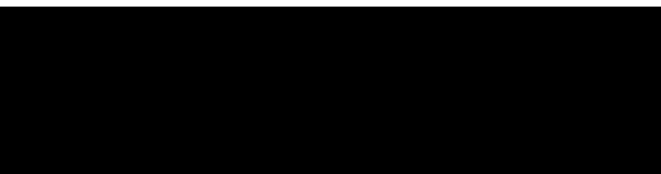
My family and I live in Tamarack at [REDACTED] and we mostly support the much needed extension. However, while my home is not directly affected, we do not support the short section that will run adjacent to the 4-5 homes through the center of the subdivision. Constructing an eight-foot wide sidewalk in front of people's homes is a nuisance and I believe would have a negative impact on their property values.

I recognize that many are calling for the path to be moved to run along N 100 E but I do not call for that modification. Frankly, I find that proposal self-serving as it is essentially saying "put it in front of someone else's house, not mine." My hope is that the town will consider modifying the plans by removing the path that runs through yards and having a shared roadway from the exit of Tamarack's park to the intersection of Laurel Creek and N 100 E. The reality is that people using the path could simply use the current sidewalks and be just as safe.

Thank you for your time and the Board's consideration.

Regards,

James P. Driscoll
Attorney at Law



Confidentiality Notice: This transmission is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to

Deanne Manojlovic comments

From: [Deanne Manojlovic](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: more WLT comments
Date: Saturday, May 6, 2023 1:00:43 AM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

I want everything on the record; it should all be transparent and accurate for everyone. I hope that everything is being shared with all the entities involved in this project, not just the town and Structure Point. Many of us have asked a lot of questions and many of the answers received have been vague or twisted versions of the truth. I think everyone deserves to be informed.

Below is a compilation of topics I've orated or sent in to Structure Point or the Chesterton Town Council. I want to make sure they have all been placed on the record.

1. THIS WAS SENT TO MEGHAN AT STRUCTURE POINT: She added her replies in blue. We then replied back to her with additional comments and questions in red. We received a statement that she had received the followup email, but she did not provide any answers to those questions.

Meghan,

Below please find our questions and comments with your responses in blue. We have added additional comments and questions in red and highlighted in yellow the questions that were not answered.

1. Why was this the only pathway considered? The more logical and straightforward pathway would be to continue the path from the already professionally installed corner of 1100 and 100 E to Railroad Road and 100 E. The electronic crosswalk is already there (and paid for) to be utilized, as are the ADA ramps and landscaping, and it would be the safest place to cross 1100.. Continuing down 100 makes the most sense. **If that path was actually investigated, please provide the dates of when this was done, who was contacted and participated in the discussion, what was discussed, and who decided that that pathway was not "feasible".** No one would provide Deanne with that information when she asked. Numerous excuses have been

thrown around as to why they want to infringe on the homeowners in Tamarack. An alternative which utilized CR 1100 N to CR 100 E and south to Rail Road was considered. However, this alternative would impact more residential properties (Which properties are you referring to? There are 6 residential properties along Laurel Creek and 6 + the corner house again on Catkin Circle that would be directly affected by the trail. On the other hand, there are 5 residential homes if the trail is put on 100) and require more right-of-way when compared to the preferred alternative. This alternative also would require the trail to cross into unincorporated areas of Porter County and outside of the Town of Chesterton (Why does this matter? Does the Town of Chesterton have difficulty working together with the county?). As currently proposed, the preferred alternative makes use of existing Town owned property to traverse from CR 1100 N to Laurel Creek Drive and then stays within existing right-of-way along Laurel Creek Drive to completely avoid the need for permanent right-of-way within this area. As part of the design development process alternatives were considered and these are discussed in the Categorical Exclusion on page 6 (This states the trail on 100 would "increase impacts to residential and commercial properties.." There are no commercial properties there; there are 5 houses, less than would be affected in Tamarack). This document is posted for viewing online at www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt and is available for in person viewing at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304).

The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for when compared to a trail crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E (At 1100 and 5th St. trail users will cross the street to the north side of 1100/west side of 5th St. and then cross the street again to the east side of 5th St. Structure Point does not seem concerned about the traffic movements at that 4 way stop intersection. Did Structure Point actually investigate the proposed mid-block crossing or did you just look at drawings? Crossing mid-block on 1100 is very dangerous; vehicles going west crest over a hill close to the crossing as do vehicles going east. 1100 is a very busy road; it is much, much safer to cross at the traffic light with pedestrian signals). This is due to the fact that CR 1100 N at the intersection of CR 100 E has three lanes (versus the two at mid block) and pedestrians must watch for turning vehicles not only on CR 1100 N but also from CR 100 E. The mid-block crossing at CR 1100 N will include advanced warning signs and pavement markings along with a flashing beacon at the crosswalk. The mid-block crossing length is 23-feet long whereas the crossing at CR 1100 N and CR 100 E would be 48-feet long (Is that accurate? 2 lanes of traffic is 23 feet while 3 lanes is over twice as much? Just verifying.) Additionally, the high school has submitted a comment for the project, and they are in favor of the proposed project (Not that it matters what they are in favor of, but we're sure they weren't in favor of the trail only if it went through Tamarack). This project would connect to the existing sidewalks and trails in the area. (We still disagree that crossing in the middle of a busy road is safer than crossing at a corner with a stop light and pedestrian signals.)

2. The Town of Chesterton is known as a tree AND bird town and yet they are choosing to unnecessarily cut down about 3/4 acre of trees, homes to countless wildlife, to divert this pathway so it will go through the center of our established neighborhood. We are devastated that the wildlife and their habitat that we see and hear on a DAILY basis are going to be impacted and destroyed-deer, fox, opossum, chipmunks, squirrels, groundhogs, raccoons, coyotes, and more, as well as untold birds including at least 5 species of woodpeckers (including the protected red headed woodpecker), owls, cranes, a variety of waterfowl, orioles, blue birds, cardinals and more. Tree removal and protected species impacts were included and evaluated in the project's Categorical Exclusion environmental document. Details of the coordination that occurred for the project in regards to tree removal and protected species impacts can be found on pages 16-18 of the *Environmental Document* that is currently posted online at <https://www.structurepointpublic.com/wlt>. The Environmental Document can also be found in person at the Chesterton Town Hall (Municipal Complex, 1490 Broadway Ave Chesterton, IN 46304) and the Westchester Public Library (200 W Indiana Ave Chesterton, IN 46304). The project is still evaluating the replacement of trees once construction has been completed. Coordination included obtaining necessary authorizations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management project impacts, including for tree clearing. Additionally, the use of a raised boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (as described in the Categorical Exclusion linked above) avoids impacts to forested wetlands which has been supported by both the USACE and IDEM. (Our comment pointed out that the Town of Chesterton claims to support and celebrate trees and birds while in practice they continue to disrupt and destroy them unnecessarily. Your answer basically says that the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana Department of Environmental Management deemed it okay to destroy the trees and habitats so the Town of Chesterton and Structure Point find it acceptable to do as well).
3. Why does the Town of Chesterton feel entitled to infringe on the rights, safety and privacy of the residents in our established neighborhood in order to install a walking path THROUGH it, right up the middle of the subdivision entrance, disturbing the aesthetics and continuity of the neighborhood and going against the Homeowners Association covenants. The existing sidewalks and park within the Tamarack Subdivision fall within Town owned property and right of way. Under current conditions, there is nothing preventing the public at large from using said resources. The Homeowners Associations covenants do not have any restrictions on the installation of trails nor does any covenants held by the Homeowners Association apply to Town right of way or property. The trail has been laid out to stay entirely within Town owned property within the subdivision and steps have been taken to provide a trail design which is aesthetically pleasing. (Pleasing to whom? Structure Point who doesn't live here? It is NOT pleasing! And the town's desire to gut and intrude upon one of the most desired subdivisions in Chesterton is detrimental and appalling.)
- The eight-foot-wide trail will be concrete to match existing concrete drives, sidewalks, and curb ramps in the subdivision (This will be unsightly! We don't want or need more concrete in our neighborhood!)

- The trail will retain a 4-6 ft wide grass buffer strip between the existing edge of curb along Laurel Creek Drive and the back of the trail to match existing feel and layout in the subdivision (An 8 foot concrete trail up the entryway of our neighborhood and the removal of our matching trees does NOT match the feel and layout of our subdivision).
- The town is evaluating plantings to replace street trees which would be removed along Laurel Creek Drive.
- The town has used a boardwalk through portions of Segment 2 (which extends from CR 1100 N into the Tamarack Subdivision Park).
 - The boardwalk is of a style which will eliminate the need for excavation in this area
 - The boardwalk has been laid out to minimize tree clearing (¾ of an acre of trees is minimal to you? Not to us!), avoid clearing larger trees, and allows the town to retain as many trees as possible within the town own property. This is a benefit to all, including adjacent landowners.
 - The boardwalk will have a raised railing to keep people on the trail and prevent short cuts or sidepaths from being created.
- Please note, that the plans currently presented are preliminary and do not contain all the final design details including landscaping. However, this does not mean that these topics are not being discussed. The point of these conversations is to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the preliminary plans.

4. The intended path from 1100 to the Tamarack Park must be a raised platform as it is running through wetlands. The area is wet year round and serves as overflow for the existing creek. During peak water levels it even encroaches on current property lines. The homeowners whose properties are adjacent to that intended path should not have water diverted into their yards because of the installation of an unnecessary path. There will be no disruption of water as we are using a boardwalk that requires no excavation to place. The proposed boardwalk uses pan style feet to sit on the ground and is fully adjustable (up or down) to allow the uninterrupted passage of water. The trail crosses areas of wetlands which hold water well into the growing season based on field observations. Areas which currently flood or hold water will continue to do so post construction, there will be no change in the drainage of these areas as a result of the trail (We would hope not.)

5. Is the town prepared to care for and maintain that raised platform properly? Will the installation of that path disrupt the natural flow of groundwater and the underground water pathway that is currently there? The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response (That is the concern as the town does not seem to have enough personnel to handle the existing trails and parks) . If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmclead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the "Report a Concern" link on the Town of Chesterton Recreation website <https://www.chestertonin.org/174/Recreation>. The proposed trail construction is not to a depth which would affect the flow of groundwater. Please see info presented above. (We

would hope not.)

6. We have NEVER seen an 8 foot walking path installed through an already established neighborhood, disrupting the aesthetics and continuity of those homes. Walking paths, especially 8 foot wide ones, are generally behind homes or part of a pre-planned community. Thank you for your comment. (This is unprecedented!)
7. We are concerned about the safety of crossing 1100 in the middle of the roadway. The plan to install a crosswalk in the middle of this insanely busy road seems careless and reckless when the crossing could be at an established, light controlled crosswalk and continue in a straight path to the next intersection at Railroad Road. See response to question #1 above. (See above as well. Not being a local company, perhaps Structure Point does not realize how busy 1100 is and how dangerous it will be. We find it hard to believe that anyone would advocate that crossing in the middle of a busy road with hills on both sides is safer than crossing at a stoplight with pedestrian signals!)
8. We are also extremely concerned that a walking path bringing strangers right past our backyards and homes jeopardizes the safety of us and our children, not to mention our homes. Directing strangers through the woods where they can discreetly peer into our backyards and homes and leading them to a secluded park is a dangerous, irrational choice. Then continuing the path in front of our private homes where again strangers have the opportunity to invade their privacy is a safety concern for our neighborhood. We have many young children who will be left vulnerable by this ill-proposed plan. Law enforcement is well aware of the activities that walking paths harbor and that are detrimental to the safety and security of neighborhoods, be it our children or our property and possessions. The residents of Tamarack did not buy their homes knowing the privacy, safety, and beauty of their homes would be jeopardized by inviting strangers to wander it. The safety and security is under the jurisdiction of the Police Department. (It will be difficult for the Police Department to secure the secluded park and extended stretch of woods.). The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and discussions on perceptions of increased foot traffic leading to increased crime. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>. (The information on that site is all fluff and opinion pieces- if people thought their homes would sell for more, if they thought the path increased their value, etc. Over 80% of the realtors I spoke to said it will negatively impact our property values and ability to sell our homes.)
9. Current walking paths in Chesterton are riddled with trash that the town does not remove. The Town of Chesterton already has difficulty keeping up the sidewalks we already have. The town does not properly maintain the existing trails and yet wants to install an 8 foot atrocity through the yards of Tamarack homeowners. Will the town maintain those properly? What about the landscaping and trees that they plan to remove? Will the town be clearing the walking paths through the seasons including

snow and ice? We assume the Town of Chesterton is responsible for any accidents that occur on the walking path as opposed to the homeowner. The maintenance and upkeep of the trail will be the Town of Chesterton, who are copied on this comment and response (as previously stated, they are understaffed but thank you for passing the buck again). If there are specific maintenance concerns they can be directed to Tyler McLead, CPRP, Parks Superintendent at tmlead@chestertonin.org or submitted under the “Report a Concern” link on the Town of Chesterton Recreation website <https://www.chestertonin.org/174/Recreation>.

10. According to FHWA-Indiana Environmental Document CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION / ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION:
 - a. The “opportunity for a public hearing is required” and yet we have requested and been denied that opportunity. The public involvement for this project included notifying the Homeowners Association of the Tamarack Subdivision, adjacent landowners, local stakeholders, and the public at large of the proposed project through publication of two Public Notices in the Northwest Indiana Times, the most widely distributed newspaper in the area. The opportunity to request a public hearing and submit comments is currently occurring and was extended to March 15th. Your request for a hearing has been received and will be taken into consideration. We have not indicated nor implied that a hearing or public information meeting cannot be held. (No, you did not say it CANNOT be held, but when you tell us we can request a public meeting and we do and then you tell us there is not one planned but we can call with questions, well, that is a denial. You did not offer to set one up for all of us who requested one; you offered to talk individually or answer emails.) We have indicated there are not currently any scheduled or planned but this does not preclude the design team from holding them in the future. Information on the public hearing process can be found on the INDOT Public Involvement website <https://www.in.gov/indot/public-involvement/public-involvement/the-public-involvement-process/>.
 - b. “The shared-use path would then extend south along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road...” and “.... would increase impacts to residential and commercial properties and would extend beyond the limits of the Town of Chesterton and into an unincorporated portion of Porter County.” This was mentioned at least a couple times but there are no commercial properties along the west side of 100 where the path would go so it makes us wonder why it was worded that way. Along the segment from 1100 to Railroad Road there are 5 houses that are unincorporated. The remaining land (and the majority of that segment) belongs to Tamarack Subdivision. As far as we know, no one has explored the opportunity for the town of Chesterton and Porter County to work together to install this walking trail down 100, the most

reasonable, non-intrusive, environmentally friendly, common sense place to construct it. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the CR 100 East Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request (So the town didn't pursue the path down 100 because the county did not have money to contribute to it? Chesterton didn't bother to look into the availability of easements because they didn't want to pay for the sidewalks that they wanted to install? If the Town of Chesterton wants the path, they should pay for the path. Installing the path down 100 is the cheaper, more logical, more beneficial and safer route). Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact to property owners (Again please explain as that is inaccurate; more property owners will be infringed upon by the path gutting its way through Tamarack), the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

c. There is a pipeline that runs through the woods on the path from 1100 to the park. **How will that be handled?** Coordination with utility companies to identify potential conflicts and relocation of the appropriate facilities, if needed, has been initiated. This coordination will continue through the duration of the engineering phase of the project. (Our question regarding Marathon Pipeline was ignored)

d. Based upon their expertise and experience, 80% of the real estate agents/brokers I spoke to believe that the installation of this trail THROUGH our neighborhood could negatively impact our property values. Why is the town infringing on the residents of our subdivision when other viable alternatives are available. The National Association of Realtors has information available on trails and greenways which may be of interest to you. This includes the pros/cons of such features and information on effects to property values. Additional information can be found at the following website <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>. (Again, this site is useless. The references rely on opinions for their claims.)

We look forward to your reply.

Jovo and Deanne Manojlovic

Matt and Roxanne Enzer

Colin and Christa Ragland

2. I BELIEVE I SPOKE THIS AT THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING APRIL 10:

Today I would like to urge you to consider 2 things about the westchester path.

#1 is safety. We've all been taught to cross at a corner and if that corner has a light, that's

even better. Contrary to that though, structure point, and in essence the town, are saying that to cross at the traffic light with electric pedestrian crossing signals is unsafe somehow at traffic lights where vehicles are stopped and where the pedestrians wait for the electric signals to notify them to safely walk across. We're told it's because the street is wider. It doesn't matter how far it is or how long it takes to cross as the pedestrian signal is programmed for enough time to do so. Look at larger cities where it's common for pedestrians to cross 5, 6, 8 lanes of traffic, not 3. But somehow we are being told that that would be unsafe. Instead, they tell us that children crossing in the middle of a very busy road at the valley of two hills IS safe. That is dangerous and illogical! 1100 is only going to become more busy when CMS is closed and more vehicles transport children and product down 1100 to 5th st.

I'd also like to point out that while we've been told by structure point that it is unsafe to cross at a light with pedestrian crossing signals, it IS safe to cross over 4 lanes of traffic at a 4 way stop sign which is what they will do to get from the south side of 1100 to north side and then again from the west side of 5th to the east side to continue down the path. None of that makes sense.

#2 is logistics. You claim to want to connect the 2 trails. The most logical, direct, and feasible route is down 100. People traveling down rail road from sand creek, coffee creek , the apartments etc to get to town are more likely to go down 100 to the light rather than about a mile out of their way traveling through tamarack, the woods, and then backtracking up 1100 to get to the same point.

I saw a plan for the dunes Kankakee trail to 100 and 1100. Trails from that point extended west along 1100 and south down 100 to rail rd. Structure point said the town asked the county to contribute financially to the path and the county said they had no money. That is not a reason for the town of Chesterton to choose an unsafe path and an unprecedented route through an established neighborhood. I think the town should be doing all they can to work with the county to put this path where it can be utilized in the safest way, the most logical way and the most useful way-down 100. Gutting an established neighborhood and crossing an extremely busy road are NOT the right way.

3. I SPOKE AT THE PUBLIC MEETING ON APRIL 19 AND AGAIN AT THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING APRIL 24 TO ENSURE THAT WHAT I SAID WENT ON THE RECORD AND WAS HEARD AND RECORDED BY MORE PEOPLE. THIS IS A COMBINATION OF BOTH ORATIONS:

To this council and the Town of Chesterton: Please do not choose to intentionally and maliciously gut our beautiful established subdivision, arguably one of the most desired in Chesterton for its beauty, close proximity to town and privacy. Please do not cut down more of our trees, concrete our greenspace, and completely alter and negatively transform the nature of our subdivision. Please do not choose to have

children cross at a dangerous crosswalk when they could safely cross at a corner, at a light with pedestrian signals. Please do not disrupt and destroy the habitats and pathways of numerous wildlife including the redheaded woodpecker, bats, deer, cranes, etc. If you so desire this trail, please work together with the county to install it down 100, the safest, most logical, economical, and fiscally and environmentally responsible location.

What I said at the public meeting bears repeating: the path on 100 was not given full consideration. We were told that the county was asked to contribute financially but they didn't have any money; That's not a reason to exclude 100.

Why didn't you ask the county if you could use the easement? Or collaborate with them in another way? Our Porter County Commissioner Jim Biggs has said if there is easement available, the town CAN use it. Please do the right thing.

It's ludicrous but Structure Point claims crossing in the middle of busy 1100 is safer because ["The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail users and also reduces the number of traffic movements trail users need to watch for"](#). It's not considered unsafe in large cities to cross up to 8 lanes of traffic at a light. With a crossing at 100 the traffic signals can stop all traffic and the existing pedestrian signals can be programmed to allow enough time for pedestrians to cross.

Structure Point claims it's safe for pedestrians to cross over 1100 and again 5th St at a 4 way stop sign-that has the same number of traffic movements as 1100 and 100 which they say is not safe.

Structure Point has erroneously stated that there's a larger "environmental impact" going down 100. Someone please explain: to get to Rail Road you can start at the current ADA compliant ramp and make a fairly clear path past 5 houses and open land OR you can have pedestrians cross an extremely busy road, remove about $\frac{3}{4}$ acre of trees, install a boardwalk over wetlands, concrete your way through park greenspace, install an 8 foot wide concrete trail in front of homes,

remove more mature trees and cross 3 roads, all while directly impacting 14 homeowners and indirectly 70 more. Tell me again which one impacts the environment more?

A path down 100 would help connect neighborhoods east of 100 to downtown, neighborhoods such as Sand Creek, Coffee Creek and the apartments. Many use 100 already even though there is no safe path. They would love a path on 100 but aren't likely to use a trail that's two thirds longer to reach the same point.

Concerns of decreasing property values and home sellability have been dismissed by Structure Point, referencing a realtor site with irrelevant articles based on people's perceptions, not factual studies. Realtors can attest to the difficulty of selling homes that have walking paths running through or by their property. Not everyone wants to live by a path that intrudes upon their privacy, safety and peaceful enjoyment of their land. While I haven't spoken with all 82 tamarack homeowners, over $\frac{2}{3}$ of them are opposed to the proposed trail through our subdivision and only 2 are for it. How many of those promoting this trail actually live on such a trail and how many would live on this proposed trail? Dare I say none?!

Please do the right thing and find an alternative to Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the trail.

(As one councilman has claimed that the board thinks most of the homeowners in Tamarack want the trail through the neighborhood, I clarified that while I have not spoken with EVERY homeowner, I have a list of over two thirds of the homeowners in Tamarack who are OPPOSED to the trail and only 2 who are for it (and one of them works for the town)).

I must also point out that when I commented to Structure Point that we did not receive a reply to the last questions we had sent in, Josh Iddings rudely replied that they did; they said thank you for your comments. That is not a reply to questions!

I also asked a number of Structure Point employees if they are doubling down on their claim that it is safer to cross in the middle of busy 1100 than it is to cross at the light with pedestrian signals and most of them said that it is safer in the middle of the road! I still find that ludicrous! Not one person I've talked to who is not associated with Structure Point or the town thinks that crossing 1100 in the middle is safer than at the light. It is truly reckless for the trail to cross 1100 in the middle when it could easily and safely cross at the light at 100.

Deanne Manojlovic

Jane Collins comments

From: [Jane Collins](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Question about Pope O'Connor Ditch
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 2:30:52 PM

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Hi,

I live in the westchester south subdivision off of 5th street. The Pope O'Connor ditch runs at the back of our property. I was reading on your website about the new trail proposed and have some questions:

- will this construction add more water to the ditch flow?
- will my property be considered in a flood zone and this increase the need for flood insurance?

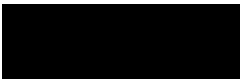
My questions come from the following:

segment 1

The new eight-foot wide, paved, shared-use path would be constructed along the north side of CR 1100 North, from the intersection of North CR 50 East and tie into the existing eight-foot-wide concrete sidewalk which begins approximately 250 feet west of North CR 100 East. There will be crosswalks added at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East to connect the new shared-use path to Westchester-Liberty Trail I. Two culvert pipe extensions (STR 101 and STR 102) will be necessary and consist of adding new pipes of the same size to the outlet of each structure. STR 101 would be extended five feet north and STR 102 would be extended three feet north, carrying streams Pope O'Connor Ditch and unnamed tributary (UNT) to Pope O'Connor Ditch, respectively. In the area of STR 101 and 102, the new shared-use path would be bordered by a guardrail to the south and a pedestrian handrail to the north. Additionally, inlets, storm sewers, and driveway culverts will be installed as necessary to facilitate drainage along CR 1100 North.

Thank you in advance for your answers to my questions.

Jane Collins



[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

Lawrence Kirchner comments

From: [Lawrence Kirchner](#)
To: [Hinkle, Meghan](#)
Subject: Westchester Liberty Trail
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 4:08:34 PM
Attachments: [image243119.png](#)
[image378149.png](#)
[image472932.png](#)
[image359093.png](#)
[image783292.png](#)

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Please consider the following comment

My wife and I purchased our homesite within the Tamarack subdivision in 1995. One of the key draws was the connectivity to downtown Chesterton, and Lake Michigan beyond, due to the subdivision's proximity. Marketing materials from the developer promised a future bike trail connection.

28 years later, the Town is finally considering construction of that connection. It is needed now, more than ever. Tamarack is an island surrounded by two-lane roads with no designated bicycle or pedestrian facilities. CR 1050 and CR 1100 are both extremely busy with a preponderance of vehicles driven by teenagers heading to/from the high school, work vehicles, and generally distracted drivers. How do I know this? I am a frequent user of these routes for running and cycling.

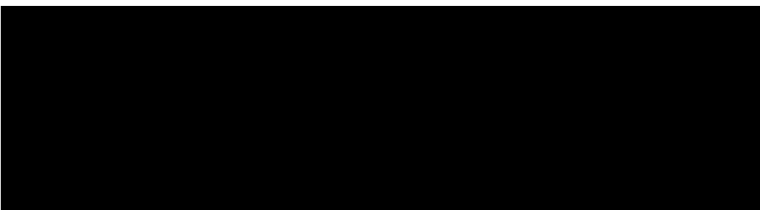
More importantly, these roads are frequently used by high school athletic teams as part of their regular training regimen.

Many of us who live in Tamarack bemoan the fact that our children can not safely leave the subdivision to visit friends or get to school because of the lack of a means for safely navigating down CR 1050 or CR 1100.

This trail extension, will provide the safe connectivity for the families of Tamarack, and the entire Chesterton community.

Lawrence L. Kirchner, PE, SE

[Principal, Senior Vice President](#)
[National Bridge Practice Leader](#)



In the Matter Of:
WESTCHESTER-LIBERTY TRAIL

Transcript of Proceedings

April 19, 2023

StewartRichardson
DEPOSITION SERVICES

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PUBLIC HEARING

RE: Westchester-Liberty Trail

Designation No. 1902832

HELD ON
April 19, 2023
6:07 p.m.

CHESTERTON MIDDLE SCHOOL
651 WEST MORGAN AVENUE
CHESTERTON, INDIANA 46304

TAKEN BY
AMY WEAVER, RPR
NOTARY PUBLIC

STEWART RICHARDSON & ASSOCIATES
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AGENDA

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1. Meeting Called to Order
By Matt Gavelek
2. Videotape Played
3. Public Statement Session
By Josh Iddings

1 MR. GAVELEK: Okay. Good evening. Thank you
2 all for attending. On behalf of the Chesterton
3 Town Council, I welcome you to the
4 Westchester-Liberty Trail, Phase 3, public hearing.

5 We're glad you chose to spend your Wednesday
6 evening to learn more about the project and to
7 share your thoughts.

8 Before we start, I wanted to mention that
9 bathrooms are located to the back to the left. And
10 in the case of an emergency, you'll go back to the
11 right out where you came in.

12 The Westchester-Liberty Trail was
13 conceptualized several decades ago. Its most
14 recent phase was completed in 2017. After multiple
15 grant submissions, the town successfully received
16 \$1.6 million in grant funding in 2019 through
17 NIRPC, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning
18 Commission.

19 Then the town retained American
20 Structurepoint, who is to my right and to my left,
21 to design this federal aid project and we have now
22 reached the stage of the process where input from
23 the community is vital.

24 We initially started with a comment period in
25 February at which time several residents requested

1 an extension of that comment period as well as a
2 convening of a formal public hearing, and the town
3 accommodated those requests, both of those
4 requests, which is why we're here tonight.

5 So tonight's public hearing follows the
6 federal state requirements for public involvement.

7 And we're going to start with a 24-minute
8 video explaining the project and frequently asked
9 questions. Then we're going to hold a public
10 comment session during which the community can
11 provide comments about the project.

12 After the comment session concludes, the
13 project team will move back into the foyer near the
14 foam board exhibits to talk one-on-one with those
15 who are interested.

16 The open house will be staffed by
17 Structurepoint staff as well as the town. And the
18 town staff will include the town manager, David
19 Cincoski; park superintendent, Tyler McLead; and
20 myself, the assistant town engineer.

21 So without further ado, let's start the video.

22 (Video is played at this time.)

23 MR. IDDINGS: Okay. That concludes the
24 description -- project description of the
25 presentation portion of this hearing.

1 We are now going to start the verbal comment
2 session. For those of you who are signed up to
3 speak tonight, when your name is called, we ask
4 that you come up to the microphone, introduce
5 yourself, and provide your comment.

6 Please use the microphone. We do have a court
7 reporter here tonight that will be recording all
8 comments given.

9 We ask that -- we already said that. Sorry.

10 Please limit your comments to approximately
11 three minutes to allow everybody an opportunity to
12 speak.

13 We also ask that the audience be courteous to
14 all speakers and not interrupt anyone during the
15 verbal comment session.

16 Once all of those who have signed up have
17 given their comment, we will open the floor up to
18 anybody else who would like to give a comment. We
19 ask that those people, when directed, come up to
20 the microphone, introduce themselves, give their
21 comment, and then immediately see Meghan or Maryssa
22 to sign into the public speaker sheet.

23 It's very important to get a concise list of
24 everybody who is giving verbal comments so that we
25 can have it for the record.

1 Project team will not be responding to any
2 comments received tonight. Formal comments will be
3 included in the final environmental document and
4 the availability of this document will be announced
5 and mailed to everybody who signed in and provided
6 us a mailing address or email tonight.

7 After those wishing to present a verbal
8 comment have finished, we will conclude the formal
9 portion of the hearing and dismiss to the back to
10 see the exhibits.

11 Once we break, the discussions will be
12 informal and not recorded. Please note that
13 official comments will still be accepted through
14 May 5th. You can submit comments on the website
15 via mail or email to Meghan Hinkle.

16 If there are any questions on how to submit
17 comments, please see a project team member after
18 the hearing.

19 All right. The first person we have signed in
20 is Greg Hill. If you could come to the front,
21 please.

22 MR. HILL: My name is Gregory Hill. I'm a
23 member of Tamarack on White Willow Lane, so I'm not
24 intimately affected by it, but I do have a bunch of
25 comments that I had submitted.

1 You indicated in the presentation there are
2 nine homes being affected, okay, I believe for
3 Tamarack. There's over 30 homes involved and it
4 will affect the whole Tamarack subdivision.

5 You should be looking at the value and quality
6 of life in the Tamarack. Okay. And I understand
7 you've got a lot of environmental work, but the
8 stated plan that you're looking at currently does
9 not increase any value within Tamarack. Okay. In
10 my judgment, it reduces the value.

11 Even though some records indicate that trails
12 increase the value of property along the trail, I
13 don't believe that will be the case with Tamarack.

14 Okay. I don't think you would propose a trail
15 through Coffee Creek or Sand Creek and you're going
16 straight through a fully-developed Tamarack
17 subdivision. Yes, you own that right-of-way and I
18 have been -- hopefully, none of us have been
19 educated on your right-of-way and what you can and
20 cannot do. Okay. But you've got to look at the
21 quality of life and what exists.

22 With respect to the boardwalk specifically, I
23 would like to note what is the total cost of the
24 boardwalk; materials, labor, engineering -- okay --
25 per ten feet or per foot relative to the cost of a

1 normal eight-foot path.

2 Okay. Third, I see that you are extending the
3 trail on 1100 all the way to 100 East and it dead
4 ends there. That means the lineal footage from
5 segment two to 100 East is duplicated both along
6 1100 and -- okay -- and Laurel Creek. You're
7 spending twice the additional distance. Why?

8 Also, you're indicating you're having to
9 mitigate going south on section two. Okay. If you
10 get rid of section two and you come down, which you
11 have already said was not reasonable, because of
12 nine houses along 1100 -- or along 100 East, okay,
13 it doesn't make sense.

14 You're going through a natural habitat. You
15 have to mitigate it. You're probably satisfied by
16 the environmental rules, but it doesn't make sense
17 especially when you're taking the path along 1100,
18 okay, all the way to 100 East. Why are you
19 doubling the length of the path?

20 You talked a lot about environmental. Yes, we
21 have a lot of requirements, federal and state.
22 Okay. But if you eliminate section two, I got to
23 believe you would be eliminating tree removal,
24 mitigation, things of that nature. They all cost
25 money.

1 And from what I -- I talked earlier today to
2 one of your representatives. We're looking at
3 \$1.942 million. That's our money. That's the
4 residents that paid that; federal, state, county.

5 And I don't think this is a judicious use of
6 our moneys when there is a more cost effective,
7 less disruptive to the community. And Tamarack is
8 part of the community.

9 MR. IDDINGS: Sir, you're approaching five
10 minutes. Please wrap it up.

11 MR. HILL: Okay. That's about it. And I'll
12 listen to quite a few others and I appreciate the
13 opportunity.

14 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much, Mr. Hill.

15 Next, can we have Cliff Morgan come up to the
16 front, please.

17 MR. MORGAN: My name is Cliff Morgan. Thanks
18 for hearing my comments.

19 I'm a soccer coach here in Chesterton. I get
20 to go over to Duneland quite regularly. And so I
21 would like to, first of all, let you know that I am
22 for the trail. I think that it's a great idea to
23 put the trail together. I think that there is a
24 safer way and that's what I would like to discuss
25 for a second.

1 One of the kids that I take to soccer once a
2 week is on 1100. And the place where you're going
3 to put a safer crosswalk there, I know that at
4 least one child has been hit crossing in that area
5 on a bike and why kids are walking there.

6 My son is an avid runner here in the
7 Chesterton system and they won't run down 1100 the
8 way that you guys are looking to do this. I think
9 that it's safer to go all the way up 100 and
10 connect directly there.

11 I wouldn't let my kids cross where you guys
12 are suggesting that they would cross because I
13 think that I would be putting my kids in danger.
14 And I think that by putting the crosswalk where
15 you're recommending is going to put other kids in
16 the community at danger as well.

17 So I like the idea of the trail. I understand
18 that there's complications with right-of-ways and
19 other concerns, but I think that our kids' safety
20 is more important than your current recommendation.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you, Mr. Morgan.

23 Amanda McCrovitz.

24 MS. McCROVITZ: Good evening. I think several
25 of the things that I want to talk about have been

1 addressed. However, I just want to point out that
2 my property is on Laurel Creek Drive and so this
3 proposed shared-use trail will be going through my
4 front yard.

5 And I know that there's been some talk about
6 green spaces and that improves property value.
7 However, I would like to know, and I still can't
8 find it and I am just curious, do you know anywhere
9 where the shared-use trails go through peoples'
10 front of their homes? I just don't see any value
11 in that when there's an existing sidewalk.

12 I have a lot of different things I could talk
13 about, but one of the things I'm sitting here
14 thinking about, and forgive me if this is a little
15 tiny bit selfish, but I noticed that for one to
16 three months that this area runs in front of my
17 home is going to be under construction. I have a
18 son who will be graduating high school in 2024. We
19 usually do our kids' open houses at our home. Like
20 that's going to be terrific.

21 I just -- what about -- we've done a lot of
22 research about the environmental impacts and the
23 species and I don't want to discredit that because
24 I do believe that's important. However, what about
25 my quiet enjoyment and use of my home?

1 I noticed tonight on one of the boards out
2 here it says that the trail is going to be 35 feet
3 from the front of my home. And, currently, when I
4 measured from the very front of my home to the
5 front edge of the walk, it's 36.8 feet.

6 So I'm losing almost over a foot and a half of
7 my property, according to what is out there. I
8 realize it's probably not a formal plan, but I do
9 want to bring that to light because that's --
10 something is not accurate here and I am not okay
11 with this.

12 I mean, we're standing probably maybe even
13 further apart than the edge of this trail is going
14 to be going. I'm curious about has there been a
15 proposed use study done? I can argue both ways
16 with that. Okay. Maybe there won't be a lot of
17 traffic on it. Okay. Great. That would be
18 lovely. However, then why are we doing this? It
19 is a lot of money when I do believe there exists
20 that other alternative route. Has there been a
21 cost comparison done to make that connection from
22 1100 down 100 East to Railroad? It's a straight
23 shot. It doesn't disrupt our existing
24 neighborhood.

25 I do realize there are five homes on 100 East

1 that are County and that's a whole 'nother ball of
2 wax to negotiate their property as well, but I
3 would like to see a cost-benefit analysis.

4 I will also think -- when I was noticing the
5 aerial views of this, all of the construction that
6 has been done on the east side of 100 East, the
7 Coffee Creek development and the Enclave
8 Apartments, none of those were there in those
9 aerial views. That's a whole section of people in
10 our community that we're not necessarily giving a
11 better connection or a safer route to get downtown.

12 Just curious what would be, someone who lives
13 in those apartments, their incentive to not just
14 take that dangerous little jaunt down 100 to get to
15 the other side of Calumet and go straight into town
16 versus all the way through our neighborhood,
17 through the park, to 5th Street to come back this
18 way to the European Market to the downtown area.

19 It doesn't -- I just -- I understand the need.
20 I just think -- I mean, we have a great goal to
21 connect everybody, but I just think we need to look
22 at more appropriate means of doing it than going
23 through the Tamarack subdivision. It just -- it
24 doesn't really make sense to me. There is an
25 existing sidewalk there that people can use. I

1 realize it's not ADA compliant and I'm not aware
2 exactly all the details for that, but I just think
3 that there are better things that could be done.

4 And then I had a question on -- I think it's
5 page 6 in this project information packet. With
6 the Dunes Kankakee Trail, I was just curious. It
7 talks about that it is going to connect up near the
8 intersection of Railroad and SR-49.

9 And I was just curious, does that mean that
10 eventually that connection from 100 East is going
11 to be connected somehow to the Westchester Trail,
12 because that's kind of what this is -- the phase
13 two, near the intersection of Railroad and SR-49.

14 So how is that going to be connected? Has
15 that been seen because if that's something that's
16 already in the works, is there a need for segment
17 two and three? And could we utilize our federal
18 dollars, our tax dollars, however all this comes
19 together, to make that work? Those are some of the
20 questions that I still have.

21 MR. IDDINGS: You've reached five minutes.
22 Please wrap it up.

23 MS. McCROVITZ: All right. No problem. Thank
24 you.

25 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much.

1 Renee Martin.

2 MS. MARTIN: Hello. I'm actually reading this
3 on behalf of an avid cyclist and the cyclist's
4 perspective.

5 As an avid cyclist for decades, I cannot ever
6 recall a trail system that has a trail running
7 throughout front yards within a residential
8 neighborhood. Most all-activities-used trails
9 limit the number of times a trail must cross any
10 type of street or driveway to limit the potential
11 of a collision.

12 The current trail system I ride several times
13 a week is designed to travel around neighborhoods,
14 not through them and at cross streets have
15 pedestrian lights to stop vehicular cross traffic.
16 They are safe, fun to travel, and a boom to
17 property values.

18 Having a trail run through the neighborhood
19 passing driveways is a recipe for disasters.
20 Cyclists can easily travel 10 to 12 miles per hour
21 and the families backing out of driveways, having
22 to look both ways for cars in the road and cyclists
23 on the path will result in collisions on the trail.

24 Also, we have several children in the
25 neighborhood that ride their tricycles, their moms

1 are walking strollers, bikes going past at fast
2 speeds is a recipe for disaster. I have not
3 experienced communities that have committed to
4 building safe, usable trail systems designing the
5 trails to cross in a residential driveway on a
6 separate path within a neighborhood. The risks are
7 too great.

8 Also, as I mentioned previously, the 1100
9 crossing, the actual place they're putting -- this
10 was my observation -- the actual place they're
11 putting the crosswalk -- if you look going east,
12 there's a hill. If you look going west, there's a
13 hill. And until you get up upon it, you're not
14 going to see that person in all of the crosswalk
15 warning.

16 Also, let me add that with the growth of
17 electric scooters, electric fat-tire scooters,
18 electric bicycles, the risks increase significantly
19 as they travel much faster and are typically driven
20 by children and teens without helmets that are on
21 their phones and not paying attention.

22 The existing trail design makes no sense and
23 will result in collisions and injuries.

24 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

25 Okay. Can Rob K. -- I don't -- can you

1 pronounce your last name when you come up here. I
2 can't -- is it Kravis?

3 MR. KANAI: No. It's Kanai.

4 MR. IDDINGS: I was way off. I apologize.

5 MR. KANAI: That's okay. I have sloppy
6 handwriting.

7 Okay. So my wife and I live at [REDACTED]
8 Creek. Ours is going to be affected more than
9 anybody else. We are the one that comes behind,
10 comes to the side, and then comes to the front of
11 our house. We live on the corner lot.

12 I would just like to say, personally, how
13 stupid this is going to look in my property after
14 this is done. I'm going to have an eight-foot
15 sidewalk on one-half of my property with no trees
16 and a four-foot sidewalk on the other half of my
17 property on a corner lot.

18 I cannot fathom any of you or any of you
19 wanting that in your front yard. It doesn't
20 make -- it makes zero sense whatsoever.

21 On another note, I am a runner. I run through
22 Chesterton constantly. I will never run on 1100
23 ever. You want them to cross the street? You are
24 giving us gobbledygook numbers as far as it being
25 48 feet across on this way and only 23 feet this

1 way because you cross 23 feet this way at a deadly
2 intersection and then you have to cross Catkin to
3 get across that road. You have to cross Catkin to
4 get across the other side of the road. And then
5 you have to cross Laurel Creek to get across this
6 side of the road.

7 So all of your numbers are forgetting the
8 other roads you have to cross in your amendment to
9 this change in the actual crossing.

10 I also want to deem from a protection
11 standpoint. Okay. No offense. We bought houses
12 in Tamarack because we wanted to live in Tamarack.
13 People who want to live in Tamarack need to buy
14 houses in Tamarack. People just riding through, we
15 don't know who they are. We can't trust them. We
16 can't trust the town to take care of this. Who
17 knows what is going to go on in the back of those
18 woods? Who knows. And I don't want to be the one
19 to have to call the cops all the time because
20 there's stuff coming up behind us.

21 All right. Who is going to take care of the
22 trail? Nobody takes care of the trail on Railroad.
23 Nobody. The sections are overgrown with evergreen
24 trees. The concrete is already breaking and
25 splitting. Things are overgrown all the time. I

1 run past this area all the time. All right. I see
2 how little this is taken care of. And now I want
3 this in my front yard? Not even close. Not even
4 close to what this is going to be.

5 I love the idea that we are only going to
6 impact five houses in Laurel Creek, but you are
7 bringing an entire slew of people, bicyclists,
8 walkers, whatever into a neighborhood, one of your
9 best neighborhoods.

10 And I just do not understand -- I still --
11 nowhere has anybody answered in any of these -- you
12 showed us a 24-minute video. And in nowhere did
13 you describe the need for what this was. If you're
14 not worried about traffic, like what was said
15 earlier, then why are we doing this? If you're not
16 worried about the number of people that come
17 through this, then what's the point?

18 If you really want to connect to the high
19 school, I get it, but you're also connecting to the
20 wrong side of the high school. You're connecting
21 to the north side of the high school and the
22 entrance to the high school is closer to the south.

23 So, again, no one has described the need for
24 this trail except to connect two different roads
25 that already do this over an existing massively

1 busy road, like they said, that no one will ever
2 stop for. You're worried about crossing at a
3 crosswalk with a stoplight for traffic and a
4 crosswalk signal and -- but you're not worried
5 about the other people coming across on a flashing
6 yellow.

7 Well, we have a flashing yellow where Railroad
8 comes in and there are accidents almost every day
9 on that road with people peering out because no one
10 cuts down the evergreens on Railroad.

11 And so all of this ties into all -- again, if
12 I felt the need for this, because I run so much, I
13 would dart out of my house and take off on this
14 thing like anybody else. I don't get it.

15 I run through every town, every street
16 imaginable in Chesterton. I'm a marathon runner.
17 That's what I do. All right. And I do not
18 understand the point of adding miles and miles of
19 concrete, which runners would never run on anyway,
20 to satisfy this so-called need.

21 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

22 All right. I believe it is Janel -- or Janet?

23 MS. BORSOS: I am Janel Borsos and I live on
24 Catkin Circle. I'm speaking tonight in opposition
25 to the trail and I would like to read the letter

1 that I wrote to Ms. Hinkle.

2 I am writing to express my profound
3 dissatisfaction with the proposed route of the
4 Westchester-Liberty Trail through the Tamarack
5 subdivision. It seems counterintuitive, doesn't
6 it, to run a nature trail through an urban
7 subdivision?

8 The Town of Chesterton has been called the
9 city of trees and, yet, the proposed trail will
10 remove numerous trees from the park perimeter,
11 which borders on my backyard and, even worse, from
12 the front of homes on Laurel Creek Drive.

13 I should mention that those ornamental
14 flowering trees throughout our neighborhood are the
15 signature of Tamarack and their anesthetic beauty
16 is a great source of pride for all our residents.

17 Even those Tamarack residences whose property
18 is not immediately adjacent to the proposed trail
19 have expressed their certainty that their property
20 values will be adversely affected by a shared-use
21 trail and the outside traffic that will certainly
22 result.

23 We question what purpose could possibly be
24 served if our neighborhood is bisected. Certainly,
25 the proposed trail must have been conceived long

1 before Tamarack existed. Otherwise, a simple drive
2 through would prove to you that this serves our
3 community badly.

4 I ask for your consideration in this matter
5 and urge you to consider alternative routes.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

8 Jenny Orsburn.

9 MS. ORSBURN: I will put this down.

10 Jenny Orsburn. I am a resident of Chesterton.
11 I actually purchased my home because it was close
12 to the trails and I like to say I live in the best
13 neighborhood in Chesterton.

14 I am here today because I'm in support of this
15 project. I am in support of the design of it.

16 I understand the amount of work and I
17 appreciate the amount of work that goes into
18 putting together a project like this and I
19 appreciate my town leadership for putting this
20 together and thinking outside of the box and not
21 making it a standard
22 get-somewhere-as-fast-as-possible type of trail.

23 I myself run five to six days a week on every
24 road on every trail in this town and I do hope that
25 others in this community do get out and experience

1 them because you will see we do have a wide variety
2 of options where trails do run in front of peoples'
3 driveways and they do connect Dogwood Park to
4 subdivisions.

5 We are a connecting community. We are a
6 community of about 14,000 people. My kids go to
7 school with your kids. We all see each other in
8 the grocery store. I think we like each other. I
9 think we can enjoy having a trail that connects us
10 as well within our community.

11 We're also a community that's divided by a
12 highway. I'm a board member of the Coffee Creek
13 Watershed Conservancy. I'm very excited about the
14 fact that we are building a trail that will connect
15 our town that's divided by the highway over to
16 Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy, but we're
17 making a lot of improvements as well to our park
18 plan.

19 Again, I am here in support of this. I think
20 you guys have done a really great design. It's low
21 environmental impact. There's always -- it's easy
22 to say there's concerns about tree removal. This
23 is very minimal. This will be a really wonderful
24 experience for families if you do actually go out
25 on the trails in this town in the region, in the

1 county. Every town around us is scrambling for
2 this money to build trails. You will see it's a
3 friendly environment. People aren't getting mowed
4 over. Nobody is out there fighting. There's no
5 crime. I think our police department can attest to
6 that.

7 But it's a quality of life issue. That is
8 something that we should be proud of, so I commend
9 the design team and I commend the town for putting
10 this trail program together.

11 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

12 Jim Martin.

13 MR. MARTIN: Good evening. I'm Jim Martin. I
14 live at [REDACTED]. I appreciate you guys
15 giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns.

16 Let me say that I am in favor of a trail in
17 connectivity. I run and I bike.

18 What I am not in favor of is the path, phase
19 two specifically, phase 3 specifically. And a lot
20 of reasons were given both in your video
21 presentation, in the town's responses to some of
22 our questions that we asked when we met with them,
23 and in email responses from your organization. So
24 I'm aware of all of them and, you know, your
25 concerns.

1 But I have a few categories that I want to
2 present that are counters to the theories that
3 you're using to support the current path of the
4 trail.

5 So I have this category called common sense
6 travel. There's plenty of bikers in here. People
7 have mentioned biking. I bike. One thing when
8 you're out on a bike trail, you really don't want a
9 lot of turns. You're out there usually for
10 exercise. These bike trails, especially as you
11 head west, they're straight. Okay. They do cross
12 some roads, but they're straight. You're out there
13 to get some speed, get some exercise. People
14 aren't sightseeing for the most part. Some are,
15 but most aren't. Most are out there for exercise.
16 The more turns, the worse the experience is.

17 I just want to say common sense dictates
18 running down 1100 North to 100 East and going south
19 on 100 East because that's less turns than when you
20 cut through at that midpoint and you've got a few
21 turns and squiggles and make a turn through
22 Tamarack and all that.

23 The only point is that -- there are people
24 that may have touched on this, but if you're in
25 Coffee Creek and you want to head to downtown

1 Chesterton, you pop out on Railroad, are you going
2 to go through Tamarack all the way back around a
3 quarter mile or so and come back to Calumet,
4 100 East, or are you just going to head north on
5 100 East? That's common sense. Common sense says
6 the shortest distance between two points is go
7 straight, right.

8 I have this category I call safety. I know
9 all of the issues you presented about 23 feet
10 versus 48 feet, watching for turns, and all of
11 that. I want to bring up a few points. And some
12 of these have been covered, but I am going to
13 mention them anyway because I wrote them down.

14 Okay. In this case, safety isn't necessarily
15 dictated by travel distance. That mid-block cross
16 on 1100 North, people have brought this up, it's
17 between two hills. The speed limit on 1100 North
18 is 30 miles per hour. It's routine for people to
19 do at least 40 and the high school kids probably
20 pushing 50.

21 So imagine yourself crossing at this mid-block
22 where there's cars coming both east and west and
23 you're going to go to the crossing, but they're
24 coming over hills. The crossing is in the gully
25 between the two hills, and especially when you're

1 coming from the west going east. It's a shorter
2 distance from the crest of the hill to where that
3 trail is going to start -- or where that crossing
4 is going to be. So if someone gasses it up from
5 that stop sign at 5th and is heading west, then
6 they're going to be cresting that hill. And all of
7 a sudden they're going to see bikers and walkers.
8 That's dangerous.

9 And the same thing coming the other direction.
10 It's a higher hill. There's a little more distance
11 of view, but my point is you're going at speed and
12 you're encountering pedestrians and bikers. I
13 think that's very dangerous rather than crossing
14 over at 100 East where you'll be crossing with the
15 light, for one thing. The east/west travel will be
16 stopped because you're going to wait for the light
17 to cross. You're not going to cross in through
18 traffic.

19 And as far as watching out for turning
20 vehicles, I'm waiting at the light to turn -- to go
21 across to 11- -- you know, down 100 East. And if I
22 am on the corner, people that are coming down
23 Calumet, which is 100 East, are going to see me
24 from a great distance away. They're going to see
25 me. Also, if I'm looking there, I can see them.

1 If the light was red, heading north and south, and
2 then it turns green, those cars that are there,
3 they can see you and you can see them. I don't
4 think that's as big a safety issue as crossing at
5 midpoint and possibly get picked off by a speeder.

6 I am really concerned about the dangers. And
7 all these people that talk about running, I don't
8 run down 110. That's dangerous. I realize there
9 will be a sidewalk there in the future. That makes
10 it safer to do. I would be willing to try that.

11 MR. IDDINGS: You're approaching five minutes.

12 MR. MARTIN: Sorry. Okay.

13 The other thing is this thing crosses in my
14 backyard. You're talking about the trail trying to
15 preserve as many trees as possible, right? What do
16 you think is going to be happening back there at
17 night on weekends when it's warm? Kids are going
18 to be partying back there and causing problems.
19 And who is going to monitor that? Are we going to
20 call the cops every time, you know, someone is
21 doing something they shouldn't be doing out there?

22 As far as impact -- well, I'm not going to
23 talk about the numbers of impacts. This is
24 something that probably other people don't know and
25 this is important.

1 A lot of this has to do with requiring
2 right-of-ways right down 100 East. I will tell you
3 that we had a meeting with Jim Biggs, the Board of
4 County Commissioners for this area; Red Stone, the
5 Porter County Council for this area; and a few of
6 us from Tamarack. And what came out of that
7 meeting is one thing, that a town council person
8 has approached Jim Biggs about a memorandum of
9 understanding, which would be something like the
10 county would permit the town to put a sidewalk on
11 any rights it has along 100 East as long as the
12 town maintained the sidewalk and the county
13 wouldn't have responsibility for this. Jim Biggs
14 stated at that meeting that he was in favor of that
15 and that he would -- he would push it through the
16 commissioners and Red Stone through the council,
17 whatever was necessary. In other words, the county
18 is on board with the town. This isn't an
19 adversarial situation. This isn't the town and the
20 county battling each other.

21 This is a movement towards cooperation. The
22 town has approached the county and the county has
23 said, yes, we will agree to that. I just wanted to
24 make sure you guys know that because whatever it
25 takes to make this thing safe and not impact a

1 completed residential area would be the best. It
2 would be safer. It is cooperative between the town
3 and the county and it will have less impact to the
4 Tamarack neighborhood.

5 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you, sir.

6 MR. MARTIN: Thank you very much.

7 MR. IDDINGS: Bob Filipek.

8 MR. FILIPEK: Hi. My name is Bob Filipek.
9 Sorry about that. I am going to get this going.

10 All right. First of all, can I get a show of
11 hands of all the residents that are going to be
12 affected by this, so people understand that.

13 All of the people that are here, show of
14 hands.

15 Okay. And how many are for it?

16 We have one, Jenny, and all the rest are
17 opposed.

18 Thank you. I just wanted to make sure
19 everyone saw it.

20 A couple points I have here. Some of the
21 people talked about it. I think most people are
22 for the path that connects section one to
23 section two at Railroad and the other one that
24 you're talking about. Out of the three phases they
25 talk about, no one is opposing to going on 1100

1 because it connects it and it connects from the
2 50 -- or 50 East all the way up to 100 and it
3 connects those people to get into town as well, so
4 it provides a safe path for them to get there.

5 What they're opposed to is crossing 1110, like
6 they've mentioned many times, in the middle of the
7 road. When you're coming down there around
8 five o'clock or whenever the sun is setting, you're
9 going right into the sunset and you're blinded a
10 lot of times on 1100 so you can't see what's coming
11 there, whether you have a cross- -- people crossing
12 or whatever. That's another fact that is a problem
13 there.

14 If you cross at the section of 1100 and
15 100 East, it's a safer route. It's a shorter
16 route, cheaper route, and it also benefits the
17 community better. The reason, it's safer. You're
18 crossing at a light that they talked about instead
19 of crossing in the middle of a crosswalk. I
20 wouldn't let your kids -- that's why we have them.
21 When they cross schools, they don't cross at the
22 middle of the street. They go to a corner and
23 cross through a crossing guard. Okay. They don't
24 just cross in the middle of the street. It doesn't
25 make any sense.

1 Second, from a cost perspective, if the
2 proposed route that you said -- the second proposed
3 route that you guys said was not viable is very
4 viable. And the reason for it is it's shorter and
5 it's straighter and it's going to be cheaper than
6 doubling up the route like Mr. Hill talked about
7 going on Laurel Creek and 1100. And you're
8 duplicating the cost of the existing route that you
9 guys proposed. By going with the other route on
10 100, it's shorter and straighter and cheaper.

11 As far as the people that are going to be
12 affected by it, if there's an easement, like we
13 talked about like from a county easement on 100,
14 you can use that easement just like you're using
15 the town easement. It's the same easement that the
16 county or the town owns. They are giving you
17 access to use. So why are you going to go through
18 and go through the other section when you have a
19 better route that is better for you?

20 And then you say the third part of it benefits
21 the community. They talked about it a little bit,
22 but the people in Tamarack are here opposed to it
23 because of the path that you're projecting.

24 But by going on 1100 to 100 and 100 to
25 Railroad, you also benefit the residents of

1 Sand Creek, Coffee Creek, and Eagle Crossing.
2 There's three other subdivisions that are there.
3 If they come down Railroad -- they come down to the
4 Railroad and then they have to say, okay, I am
5 going to either take this proposed route, go a half
6 mile out of my way, go through Tamarack, cross 1100
7 not at a crossing that is safe and -- no one is
8 going to use it.

9 So if you're putting in a path to connect the
10 two paths, no one is going to use that path to go
11 there. If you went on 100 East, more people would
12 use it.

13 And we talked to people and we talked about
14 this at the last -- at the town meeting there. If
15 the people from Sand Creek have said, "Am I going
16 use this path?" They're going to say, "No. I am
17 not going to go through Tamarack. I am just going
18 to go on 100 and hope I don't get hit."

19 MR. IDDINGS: Sir, you're approaching five
20 minutes.

21 MR. FILIPEK: Thank you.

22 And so the other thing that they had under
23 here was the contact information that they sent.
24 When they originally sent this out, there were a
25 number of people in Tamarack that were not

1 informed. They had the wrong contact and they gave
2 us very little involvement with it as well as the
3 county. So we felt that the county and these
4 residents of Tamarack should be involved before the
5 planning process, before you submitted this to the
6 federal for funding on this.

7 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you, sir.

8 MR. FILIPEK: Thank you.

9 MR. IDDINGS: Brit Thieleman.

10 MR. THIELEMAN: Bob, you're a little too tall
11 for me.

12 My name is Brit Thieleman. I live at
13 [REDACTED], so my yard is not affected by
14 the trail.

15 I could tell you that me and my family are for
16 a trail, but not a trail through Tamarack. We're
17 worried about things like home values; right?

18 We're worried about our neighbors having
19 people in their front yards. We're worried about
20 things like liability. You know, if someone gets
21 hurt on the trail in front of one of my neighbors'
22 houses, are they liable? Can they be liable? Can
23 they get sued? Who is going to pay their lawyer
24 bills? Is the town going to do that? I don't
25 think so, but I don't know.

1 Safety, a lot of people talked about safety.
2 I went out and saw the site myself. And I'm a
3 papa. I've got a three-year-old grandson. I would
4 not walk my grandson across that with the two hills
5 they're talking about. I would love to see if the
6 police have done any kind of speed vio- -- or speed
7 verification to see if people -- how fast they're
8 really going. Down that road, people tend to go
9 pretty fast. I would not walk my three-year-old
10 across that. No way.

11 1100 is a disaster. You know, I hate the idea
12 that Tamarack is isolated from the town with those
13 sidewalks for our kids to get to town or get to the
14 schools. Love the idea of going down 1100. That
15 would be a nice connection for that, you know, to
16 get into the town or go to schools. So, you know,
17 a lot of concerns from, you know, our community and
18 our neighborhood.

19 And then lastly -- oh, two things. Parking.
20 So if people are going to get on the trail in
21 Tamarack, where are they going to park? Park along
22 the road? If there's a group, would they gather
23 and have 20, 25 cars parked along all in front of
24 the houses? I think that's a problem.

25 The idea of having people through the

1 neighborhood that we don't know or don't need, I
2 think also causes a problem for our community.

3 And then, lastly, I see that, you know, the
4 \$1.9 million, you know, how much of that is state?
5 And is Chesterton paying any of that? Is the Town
6 of Chesterton putting up some money for this? I
7 would like to know those answers.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much.

10 Deanne.

11 MS. MANOJLOVIC: Let me start by saying I'm
12 opposed to this path in my neighborhood. As I said
13 before, I want everything on the record. It should
14 be transparent and accurate for everyone.

15 I hope that everything is being shared with
16 all the entities involved in this project, not just
17 the town and Structurepoint.

18 Many of us have asked a lot of questions and
19 many of the answers received have been vague or
20 twisted versions of the truth. I think everyone
21 deserves to be informed of the conversations that
22 we've had.

23 The path will be on the north side of 1100
24 from 5th Street all the way to 100. That being
25 said, the most logical, economical, safe, and

1 fiscally and environmentally responsible path to
2 Railroad is across 1100 from the north to the south
3 at that light with pedestrian signals and then
4 continue down 100.

5 We've been given many difficult answers as to
6 why that path wasn't pursued. One says the county
7 was asked to contribute financially, but they
8 didn't have any money. That is not a reason to
9 exclude that pathway.

10 I've asked numerous times for information on
11 that meeting and, to date, no one has been able to
12 tell me when it was, who was involved, what all was
13 said when it was finally decided that it would not
14 be pursued.

15 The town should have asked the county if the
16 easement could be used to create the trail. It
17 appears to me that the town chose to discredit that
18 option because they didn't want to be the only ones
19 paying for a project that would benefit someone
20 else, that being the county.

21 I heard that the town contacted the county
22 recently and I know that the county has said, "If
23 there is an easement available there, the town can
24 use it." I hope the town does the right thing and
25 works together with the county to stay out of an

1 established subdivision and create a path down 100,
2 the safest, most economical, the most
3 environmentally responsible route.

4 Another reason they gave for not going down
5 100 is that it's less safe to cross at the light
6 with pedestrian signals. It sounds ludicrous, but
7 Structurepoint and, in essence, the town, says it's
8 safer to cross in the middle of busy 1100, a road
9 that is going to become even busier when they close
10 CMS. It's at the valley of two hills. With only
11 pedestrian walkway signals -- this was a quote.

12 "The mid-block crossing minimizes the number of
13 travel lanes which need to be crossed by trail
14 users and also reduces the number of traffic
15 movement trail users need to watch for when
16 compared to the trail crossing at 1100 and 100,"
17 end of quote. They can't seriously believe that.

18 They have no problem having pedestrians cross
19 twice over 1100 and 5th Street at a four-way stop
20 at the beginning of this path all while watching
21 for the same number of traffic movement as they
22 would have at 1100 and 100.

23 In large cities, it's common to cross four,
24 six, eight lanes of traffic at a light. Are you
25 saying that that's not safe?

1 Crossing at 1100 and 100 with a traffic signal
2 where all traffic can be stopped while pedestrians
3 are crossing as well as no turn on red being
4 implemented, that's, obviously, the safest choice.
5 The distance doesn't matter. Signals can be
6 programmed to allow enough time for pedestrians to
7 cross.

8 Another reason Structurepoint gave for
9 crossing 1100 midway and going through Tamarack
10 subdivision is that it has the least environmental
11 impact. I would like someone to please explain
12 that to me because let me paint this picture.

13 You start a path and an ADA compliant ramp
14 that's already been installed on the southwest
15 corner of 1100 and 100. And you make a fairly
16 clear path down 100 past five homes and the rest of
17 the open land owned by Tamarack to Railroad Road or
18 you could have pedestrians cross 1100 unsafely at
19 the valley of two hills, remove about three-quarter
20 acres of trees, install a boardwalk over wetlands,
21 concrete your way through the green space in a
22 park, and gut an established neighborhood removing
23 a sidewalk, installing an eight-foot wide concrete
24 slab through the entryway of the neighborhood,
25 removing mature trees paid for and maintained by

1 that neighborhood. Which has the least
2 environmental impact?

3 We feel the path down 100 would help connect
4 neighbors east of 100 to downtown. Residents of
5 Sand Creek, Coffee Creek, and the apartments could
6 travel the path on Railroad to 100 and go straight
7 up 100 into town. They're not likely to go way out
8 of their way through Tamarack, through the woods,
9 unsafely cross again 1100, and then backtrack.

10 Many of us have spoken to members of those
11 areas too. They'll just take their chances on 100
12 and continue up that path.

13 MR. IDDINGS: You're approaching five minutes.

14 MS. MANOJLOVIC: We are concerned with the
15 property values decreasing in our beautiful
16 neighborhood. The first thing you would see upon
17 entering our subdivision would be lots of concrete
18 and lack of symmetry.

19 Installing an eight-foot-wide walking path in
20 the front of homes in an established neighborhood
21 is unprecedented and it is wrong. Over 80 percent
22 of the realtors I spoke with said it's likely our
23 property values will be negatively impacted. And
24 it would certainly affect the saleability of homes
25 in a neighborhood that is arguably rated, by most

1 realtors, as one of the most sought after in
2 Chesterton. Not everyone wants to live by a path
3 that intrudes upon their privacy.

4 Realtors are tasked with the difficulty of
5 selling homes that have walking paths running
6 through or by their property.

7 Structurepoint has tried to use articles
8 written by the National Association of Realtors.
9 The problem is those articles are all based on
10 perception, not reality. Their site says that,
11 quote, "Living near trails and greenways will
12 likely raise your property values," end quote.
13 And, again, quoting, "There is not a correlation
14 that trails increase crime in surrounding areas,"
15 end quote.

16 Well, first off, trails and greenways should
17 not be lumped into the same category as there's a
18 significant difference between those two.

19 MR. IDDINGS: Ma'am, you're at six minutes.
20 Please wrap up.

21 MS. MANOJLOVIC: I know. I'm trying to, but I
22 do feel it's important to get to say what I need to
23 say.

24 Second, I read through the articles and most
25 of them were either irrelevant or used the

1 perception of people as facts. They asked people,
2 "Do you think your house would sell for more?" "Do
3 you think your house" -- there was no actual study
4 cited in those -- in those references that you guys
5 gave.

6 I do not want it going through our
7 neighborhood. If I had known a trail was going to
8 go through, I would not have built there. This was
9 not disclosed when we bought our land. I am
10 concerned with the safety of my family, my
11 belongings, and my neighbor. We built in Tamarack
12 because it's secluded from town, but still close.
13 We have a tree line and there's lots of kids and we
14 love the privacy.

15 I'm also concerned about the destruction and
16 disruption --

17 MR. IDDINGS: Ma'am, you're at seven minutes.

18 MS. MANOJLOVIC: I will try to wrap up, but I
19 do feel it's important that I get to have my say.

20 MR. IDDINGS: Please respect the others that
21 have to give comments tonight.

22 MS. MANOJLOVIC: I will. I'm sure we'll have
23 time for them.

24 I'm concerned about the disruption and
25 destruction of wildlife. We have natural deer

1 pathways through those woods as well as a variety
2 of other wildlife including the protected
3 Red-Headed Woodpecker and owls and cranes.

4 When concerns are brought up regarding safety,
5 Structurepoint points to the Chesterton Police
6 Department. The difficulty in policing the woods
7 at a secluded park is quite evident. On 100, the
8 trail should remain in full sight for easy
9 policing.

10 When concerns are raised over maintenance of
11 the path, Structurepoint defers to the park
12 department. Well, the park department is already
13 unable to maintain the parks and trails we already
14 have, whether it's lack of funding or lack of
15 employees, I don't know.

16 I do have a list of over two-thirds of the
17 residents of Tamarack who are opposed to this path
18 going through our neighborhood.

19 And this is why I think it's important because
20 some of the answers that you all gave to us weren't
21 accurate and I don't think that that's fair in
22 answering us or in the fact that other people
23 aren't aware of what has been said.

24 You mentioned the increased impact to
25 residential or commercial property is going down

1 100, but there's no commercial properties on 100,
2 so I am not quite sure why some of these things are
3 said.

4 You also mentioned that the high school is in
5 favor of the proposed project, but the high school
6 didn't know exactly what you were doing. They
7 might agree with the fact that there is a path, but
8 that doesn't say that they want you to gut through
9 Tamarack.

10 MR. IDDINGS: Ma'am, you're at eight minutes.
11 I'm going to have to ask you to sit down, please.

12 MS. MANOJLOVIC: One other thing I want to say
13 is that the Town of Chesterton is known, as
14 somebody else mentioned, as a tree and bird town.
15 Yet, we're going to unnecessarily cut down
16 three-quarter acres of trees, home to countless
17 wildlife to divert this pathway.

18 And it's mentioned also that the eight-foot
19 path would be -- of concrete would be aesthetically
20 pleasing. That won't be pleasing. I'm not sure to
21 who because I bet you all don't live on one.

22 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you, ma'am.

23 MS. HOPE: If you have additional things you
24 would like to say after everybody else goes, you're
25 more than welcome to come back up.

1 MS. MANOJLOVIC: Okay. Good.

2 Well, I mean after -- I can talk again?

3 MS. HOPE: Yes. If there are other people,
4 you're more than welcome to come back up.

5 MS. MANOJLOVIC: I will do that.

6 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

7 Is there anybody else in the audience who
8 would like to give a verbal comment?

9 Please come to the front.

10 Please remember to state your name and
11 address.

12 Meghan, if you could have her sign in.

13 MS. SMITH: Hi. My name is Michelle Smith. I
14 live at [REDACTED] in Tamarack. I
15 think I can give you a perspective that you have
16 yet to get.

17 I grew up on [REDACTED], which is
18 phase one of the Westchester-Liberty Trail. I can
19 remember being woken up at night by the
20 construction, by the gangs that were gathered
21 there. I could remember the homeless man, Mel, and
22 his tent being taken down.

23 I grew up on that trail. I know -- you can
24 tell me there's no crime there. It may not be
25 reported, but I saw it firsthand.

1 Jeffery Eggert was my husband's best friend
2 growing up and has given me permission to tell you
3 what he saw. His very first job in high school was
4 cleaning up the trail. The bags of used condom
5 wrappers, the bags of used syringes, they exist.
6 They were in my parents' driveway.

7 It's not the safe issue that you're making it.
8 It's not. I have seen it. I was woken up as a
9 child with it. I moved from that neighborhood
10 specifically so I would not have to be there.

11 You mentioned that there are five -- nine
12 homes that are going to be in the path. I'm not
13 one of those nine homes, but, yet, my property
14 faces the park. The back of my land will be the
15 park. It will be my yard that those people are in.

16 I don't care if it makes sense, but this
17 doesn't make sense. It's not safe. And, Jenny, I
18 know that you want it and I understand why. And I
19 know where you live and I know where the path is.
20 This is nowhere near as close to your house as this
21 path will be to mine.

22 MR. IDDINGS: Ma'am, please respect the
23 speaker's turn.

24 MS. SMITH: But I just want you to understand.
25 The trail is needed. I understand that, but not

1 where you're going to put it. It's not safe.

2 In addition to what I stated with children
3 growing up, my daughter has a scar permanent on her
4 knee from trying to cross over 100 and being --
5 having a car wave her to go past as another car
6 came over the hill.

7 Do you know what it's like to see your child
8 almost be killed? I was with her. I was on a
9 bike. It was at the very intersection that you
10 want to put a crosswalk. It's a crosswalk. Nobody
11 is going to stop. We have a stoplight at an
12 intersection.

13 It's not -- we're not saying these things to
14 be difficult as a neighborhood. We don't want our
15 neighborhood destroyed. We don't want this, but
16 it's so much more than that.

17 I ask you to please take into consideration
18 the safety of everyone and what truly is going to
19 happen on that trail, but, with the proposed route,
20 cannot properly be policed.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much.

23 Ma'am, can you please see Meghan to sign in on
24 the speaker sheet. Thank you.

25 Is there anybody else who would like to give a

1 verbal comment please come to the front?

2 Again, please state your name for the record
3 and see Meghan afterwards to sign in the speaker
4 sheet.

5 MS. BUEHLER: I am Theresa Buehler.

6 MR. IDDINGS: Please move closer to the
7 microphone. Thank you.

8 MS. BUEHLER: Theresa Buehler, [REDACTED]
9 Creek Drive. And I would like to make a comment on
10 the crosswalk on 1100.

11 The town emailed us answers to our questions
12 and you said, the one just west of 11th Street, and
13 that because no one complained, there's no problem.

14 We have tried to cross there and have chosen
15 to just cross at the stop sign because cars don't
16 stop for you. I don't know if it's because they
17 just stopped and they don't want to stop again, but
18 it's much easier to cross at the stop sign so we
19 choose not to take it.

20 I wasn't aware that we should be complaining
21 to the town that that crosswalk does not work.
22 They don't respect blinking yellow lights.

23 So if you wanted to cross there, maybe you
24 need to have the police department educate our town
25 drivers on respect for walkers and bikers.

1 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you, very much.

2 Is there anybody else?

3 I believe -- thank you.

4 MS. BOZOVICH: Hi. I am Tiffany Bozovich. I
5 live at [REDACTED]. I've lived in
6 Chesterton my entire life. Living here, kids on
7 bikes, we would always ride around town. Having
8 the bike trail was amazing when that got put in
9 because we could get to places we couldn't before.

10 Kids are always going to take the shortest
11 path, not necessarily the path that is there. So
12 we are now giving our children permission because
13 there's going to be a trail out of Tamarack to get
14 to the schools to get to downtown.

15 When we're not with these kids -- they're
16 kids. They're going to take the shortest route.
17 So they're going to come down 100 East. They are
18 not going to go down 1100, cross, come through
19 Tamarack. And I'm not just talking about our kids.
20 I'm talking about the kids on the east side of
21 100 East because now these kids are going to be
22 told there's now a path that you guys can take to
23 get into town and you don't have to go down
24 100 East. These kids are not going take that path.
25 They are going to go down 100 East and that is

1 going to cause a huge problem because already
2 people are walking or riding their bikes or running
3 down that road. I almost hit a runner because I
4 didn't even see him and I was going the speed
5 limit. But it's sometimes hard to see. There's no
6 sidewalk there.

7 A sidewalk would benefit the entire town. And
8 I understand that -- you know, we are all in favor
9 of having a trail, but we want the safest trail by
10 far. Not a trail that's going to cause all of
11 these turns and kids are just going to go down
12 100 East and that's what I'm most scared of.

13 I'm also scared of the crosswalk, but everyone
14 said it. I don't think I need to repeat that part,
15 but I wanted to bring attention to -- I think more
16 people are going to be running or biking down
17 100 East and it's going to be kids.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

20 MR. MRAK: My name is George Mrak. I live in
21 Eagle Crossing apartment complex, so I'm
22 tangentially affected by this plan. It's right off
23 of Kelly Drive.

24 One thing that I noticed is you're going to
25 have a walking bridge, or whatever you call it,

1 going through wetlands and having culverts for the
2 tributary and pulp ditch.

3 How much is it going to cost to maintain this
4 bridge or this walkway? Obviously it's going to be
5 more labor intensive than taking care of the
6 sidewalk. And I just want to know if when you
7 discarded the idea of going from 1100 North down
8 100 East, how much wetland was affected there? I
9 know you're talking about a right-of-way and trees,
10 but I think it would be much less intrusive to the
11 environment if you just put a sidewalk along an
12 existing road.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much, sir.

15 See Meghan for the sign-in sheet. Sir, will
16 you please sign in. Thank you.

17 Is there anybody else who would like to give
18 a -- please come to the front.

19 MS. MANOJLOVIC: Hi. I'm Jessica Manojlovic.
20 I live at [REDACTED] and a lot of you are
21 coming from parents' perspective or more of the
22 older generation perspective, but coming from a
23 teenager and someone who has lived their entire
24 life in Tamarack, I can tell you firsthand how much
25 a crosswalk or a road on -- going from Railroad

1 straight to downtown would be so much more
2 beneficial. There's been multiple times where me
3 and my friends have gone from my house through the
4 town walking in that grass wooded section. Never
5 would we ever go through a back area to take a
6 giant U-turn to go to downtown.

7 Plus, I also would personally feel unsafe and
8 much less safe knowing how kids talk nowadays and
9 all the gossip and stuff that you hear from other
10 people. I know multiple people that have gotten
11 pulled over from speeding on that road. That's a
12 very common spot that police will look at because
13 of how common people will speed down that road or
14 1050, which, in this case, isn't super important,
15 but it's very, very important. I myself have
16 almost gotten pulled over on that road. Not for
17 speeding, but I had a taillight out and they were
18 telling me about that. But that's just another
19 instance how police are constantly catching people
20 in that spot.

21 They can sit at that Life Church. That's not
22 necessarily going to stop kids from speeding,
23 especially being right by a high school with a lot
24 of inner-school traffic and people being late for
25 school. It's just even more dangerous than being

1 at a light telling you to go or stop and you can
2 see.

3 Also, walking up having a concrete place for
4 kids to designatedly walk to get to downtown is so
5 much more safe than us to having us watch behind
6 our backs to walk to town because of cars.

7 I've always wanted a path down that road, but
8 we've never had one and when they actually put
9 the -- I think you said it was the second trail
10 that was by the Around The Clock and all that area
11 down there. We used that and we loved it because
12 it was in a good area. No one is going to want to
13 go back and get bitten by mosquitos just to go
14 downtown. They're just going to want the straight
15 shot.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much.

18 Please sign in. Please remember to sign in.

19 Is there anybody else who would like -- okay.

20 Thank you.

21 Yes.

22 MS. FILIPEK: I'm Lisa Filipek. I live in
23 Tamarack.

24 And according to your presentation, you've
25 totally tabled and gotten rid of the route that

1 everyone here is interested in.

2 I think that given the number of people that
3 see this as a valid route, along with the fact that
4 county is on board and you may not have had that
5 information originally, I think that it needs to be
6 reopened and reconsidered as a viable option.

7 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

8 Is there anybody else?

9 Oh, hold on, sir. There's someone coming from
10 the back.

11 MR. SHUMATE: Hi. My name is Tom Shumate. I
12 live at [REDACTED]. I'm not a part of
13 Tamarack. I have just been listening. I wasn't
14 really going to come here to talk. I just wanted
15 to come here and observe it because it's near me.
16 It's right across the street from where I live at.

17 And just listening to everybody talk, I think
18 it's pretty clear that the path is kind of a dumb
19 idea. It seems like you guys are trying to connect
20 two dots and you're just looking for any way to get
21 to it instead of the easiest path.

22 I like to bike. How many times do I go out on
23 the road a year? Maybe once. Why? Because I live
24 right on 1100 and I don't feel like going out onto
25 the road right there. I've got seven kids. How

1 many times do they go out on that road? Zero.

2 Where do they ride their bikes? They ride in
3 my driveway and that's the only place they're going
4 to go. They're not going out on the road.

5 I think there's a disconnect between you guys
6 and the public because we live there. I live on
7 the road. You could do all your studies and your
8 observations you want, but you guys don't live in
9 Tamarack. The path isn't going through your
10 neighborhood. You're not living on 1100.

11 All you do is observe and report your facts
12 and things, but we live it. We're there.

13 And after listening to them, I think it's a
14 pretty poor decision on your part to do this.

15 The other thing I thought was interesting,
16 which kind of sucks for me, but it looked like in
17 your video it had a guardrail in front of my house.
18 I thought I was going to be able to cross the road
19 now and make it to the safe sidewalk, but now you
20 guys put a guardrail up there. But then you think
21 where else in the town do you have a guardrail that
22 guards the sidewalk? Why would we have that? Oh,
23 maybe because the road is dangerous. Maybe that's
24 why. So you guys already know that.

25 Anyway, I'm going to close with my opinion and

1 your guys' plan is two thumbs down for the record.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

4 Sir -- yep.

5 MR. WOJEWNIK: Hello. I'm Dominick Wojewnik
6 from [REDACTED]. I think everyone here --
7 well, with the exception of maybe one person, I
8 hear -- thinks this is a poor idea.

9 I could say for certainty that when I was
10 looking -- I acquired the house about six years
11 ago.

12 And I could say for certainty that if I had
13 seen the plan that you're talking about
14 implemented, I might have had reservations about
15 acquiring a house in that neighborhood.

16 It's a nice area, people are kind and
17 considerate. By the way, I have the loud boxer
18 that runs around constantly and I'm so very sorry.

19 The general thought though is that you have a
20 general opinion here. You have people that want
21 the trail, but the design is -- needs to be
22 reconsidered.

23 The one thing I did do is I did drive around
24 and I noticed that 50 East has a sidewalk that goes
25 all the way down.

1 Why not continue that at the end point and
2 just carry it down to 100 East? That's the
3 alternative. It probably saves some money. You
4 just have to do a little bit more development to
5 that existing sidewalk, but that presents an
6 alternative to the 100 East issue.

7 That's it. Thanks.

8 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much.

9 MR. NORDER: My name is Roy Norder. I live at
10 [REDACTED]. I have been a resident of
11 Tamarack for 22 years, so my property is not one
12 that's directly affected by the trail.

13 I would have to say my goal for many, many
14 years has been to get a safe route to walk from our
15 isolated neighborhood downtown. I have spoken to
16 our representative on counsel, Jim Ton, about this
17 many times. I feel like when I leave our
18 subdivision and get on 100 East and walk, I
19 certainly can walk in the grass if it's not the
20 wintertime or if it's the wet season, but you have
21 to. Most drivers are considerate, but not all. I
22 certainly wouldn't want my grandchildren riding
23 bikes or doing that.

24 So I'm in favor of a trail, a safe trail to
25 town, but it appears that there's a lot of

1 inconsistencies with this trail and what we
2 currently have as trails in connecting one part of
3 town out to the Coffee Creek section.

4 I mean, the current sidewalk on Railroad, as
5 someone previously mentioned, is overgrown with
6 trees and almost impassable in spots. And when you
7 get out near Coffee Creek, it switches to narrow
8 sidewalks again.

9 The sidewalks in Tamarack, why can't they be
10 utilized? Why do we have to have an eight-foot?
11 If the trail does come in through the park, which
12 has its own problems, but if the trail comes in
13 through the park, why can't the existing sidewalks
14 on both sides be used and potentially the street
15 used as a bike lane? Many other cities put bike
16 path paintings on the road. It's a lot cheaper
17 than putting in an eight-foot sidewalk -- sidewalk
18 just to make it consistent with a federal
19 mandated-type trail type thing. It seems
20 ridiculous for the amount of volume that it would
21 get.

22 There's other accesses to the trail in town
23 and you can't access the Prairie Dune Trail
24 without -- at the trailhead without traveling on
25 city streets or narrow sidewalks. You have to go

1 all the way to 23rd to get a wide sidewalk and even
2 that's not 100 percent.

3 There's a section just south of Texas Street
4 that's a narrow sidewalk also.

5 Cyclists are going to use the road. Not the
6 path. On Railroad, they don't use the path that's
7 there. They use the roads. They use the roads.
8 It makes more sense. And the cyclist, I thought
9 who spoke earlier, was very -- was very succinct in
10 his remonstrations.

11 The trail proposed takes property that is
12 city-owned, but it's been maintained and paid for
13 in the trees and the mowing by the residents there.
14 It's not in my front yard, but I certainly wouldn't
15 want it in my front yard.

16 You say access to a trail adds value. Yeah.
17 If you can -- access to the trail means like if I
18 can walk a block or a quarter mile on a sidewalk
19 and get to a trail, not going through my front
20 yard. So the impact on home values, I believe, is
21 going to be there.

22 Again, taking property that the city owns and
23 has the right to take diverts it from those
24 homeowners' use, basically their front yard that
25 they use, and turns it into a use for someone else,

1 who potentially is not paying city property taxes.

2 And let's be honest. Our assessed valuation
3 doesn't just go to the property line. Okay. We're
4 not assessed for that piece of property between the
5 sidewalk and the street, but we're assessed on the
6 way our home looks. We're assessed on the
7 saleability and having an eight-foot path -- why an
8 eight-foot path? Okay. At worst case, add a foot
9 to it so you don't have to take the trees out or
10 whatever. There's lots of alternatives. You've
11 heard them here tonight.

12 And I understand people on 100 East. They
13 might not want to be affected either except -- look
14 at it. They get a sidewalk. We have sidewalks.
15 We just can't go anywhere on them out of our
16 neighborhood.

17 One other comment. I saw it stated somewhere
18 that the school board was in favor of it and
19 someone said, yeah, that just means they're okay
20 with it. My question is, once a safe path from
21 Tamarack provides access to the local schools, will
22 the student from Tamarack continue to be bused?
23 You know, now we're within a mile of schools.
24 What's the busing policy for how close? Having
25 served on an elementary school board in Illinois

1 many, many years ago, that was one of the
2 considerations for busing is how close do you live.
3 Well, if I was on a school board, I would be in
4 favor of it too if I was able to eliminate a bus.
5 I don't know what the rules are here with
6 regulations. Just a question that I have.

7 MR. IDDINGS: Sir, you're at six minutes.

8 MR. NORDER: Thank you very much.

9 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you.

10 Is there anyone else who would like to give a
11 verbal comment? Finished?

12 If that -- is there anybody else?

13 Sir, you in the back, are you getting up to
14 stretch?

15 Oh, sorry. I didn't see it.

16 MR. HILGEMAN: Hi. My name is John Hilgeman.
17 I live at [REDACTED]. My property is
18 nowhere near the trail as far as seeing it. But
19 coming into the neighborhood, I'm going to see it,
20 right? We come off of 100. It's going to be ugly,
21 for one.

22 The second part that I don't know if anyone is
23 even thinking about, the wooden pathway that you're
24 going to put through the wooded area. So there's
25 lots of trees back there. You're talking about

1 keeping the mature trees, cutting down the small
2 trees. Part of the year, the leaves fall off the
3 trees, right? Who is going to maintain, for one,
4 to clean that pathway? It's going to be slippery.

5 And the question I have is what is the
6 material going to be made out of for that
7 boardwalk? Is it wood? Is it plastic? What is it
8 going to be, so I would like to know that.

9 And just the -- and you're saying it's going
10 to be a cable, right? So it's going to be a
11 horizontal cable. So if someone is walking with a
12 stroller on there and a kid is getting kind of
13 antsy inside the stroller or whatever is going on
14 or if someone on a bicycle and they kind of come
15 over too far, their tire is going to fall right off
16 this path that you're putting in, this wooden path.
17 So for those reasons alone, it's not safe just the
18 way it is, even walking.

19 So if you have leaves covered over this
20 pathway and you slip off this thing, now you're
21 going to -- in marsh, swamp, whatever the hell it
22 is, sorry about the cuss, but how do you get out,
23 right? How high off the ground is this going to
24 be?

25 I think the most logical way, like everyone

1 has pointed out, is come down 1100 where you want
2 it. And I love what he said back there, as far as
3 the guardrail. He can't even use it. It's in his
4 front yard. He thought, oh, great, I can bring my
5 kids to town crossing the street. Obviously, he
6 can't. There's a guardrail, for the reasons he
7 pointed out, because it's a fast travel lane.

8 So if you're going to do it, come down 1100,
9 like everyone has said. Come down 1100 and connect
10 it to Railroad. That's the most logical point.

11 It's the way you guys are doing it. And, you
12 know, is it -- does it come to we've already made
13 promises to concrete companies? Have you made
14 promises to deck building companies? Made contacts
15 with tree cutting companies? I mean, all this
16 money you guys are wasting to put an unnecessary
17 trail through woods, which -- I'm sure the two
18 people on the other side of those woods that live
19 in those two homes off of 1100, I'm sure they don't
20 want a pathway coming between their houses.

21 So I just -- I don't know what the deal is as
22 far as how you guys came up with this idea being
23 the best, but I can tell you right now it's not.

24 So that's all I got.

25 MR. IDDINGS: Thank you very much.

1 Okay. I think that concludes the verbal
2 comments session. We're going to dismiss to the
3 open house.

4 If you have any questions, please see a team
5 member in the back.

6 If you need to sign in or want to check the
7 sign-in sheet for accuracy, please see Maryssa or
8 Meghan.

9 Thank you all for coming out tonight.

10 (The hearing concludes at 7:50 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF INDIANA

2 COUNTY OF PORTER

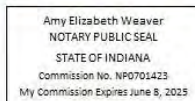
3
4 I, Amy E. Weaver, a Notary Public in and for
5 said county and state, do hereby certify that the
6 foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place
7 heretofore mentioned between 6:07 p.m. and 7:50 p.m.;

8 That said hearing was taken down in
9 stenograph notes and afterwards reduced to typewriting
10 under my direction; and that the typewritten
11 transcript is a true record of the testimony given;

12 I do further certify that I am a disinterested
13 person in this cause of action; that I am not a
14 relative of the attorneys for any of the parties.

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
16 hand and affixed my notarial seal this 4th day of May,
17 2023.

18 *Amy E. Weaver*



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21 My Commission Expires:
22 June 8, 2025

23 Job No. 180418

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INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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PHONE: (855) 463-6848

Eric Holcomb, Governor
Michael Smith, Commissioner

April 26, 2022

Mr. Jermaine R. Hannon, Division Administrator
FHWA Indiana Division
575 North Pennsylvania St., Room 254
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Ms. Kelley Brookins, Regional Administrator
FTA Region 5
200 West Adams St.
Suite 320
Chicago, IL 60606-5253

Dear Mr. Hannon /Ms. Brookins:

The Indiana Department of Transportation is pleased to submit its Draft FY 2022-2026 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for review and comment by your offices.

Included in the final submitted document is a listing of the state’s expansion/preservation and local small urban and rural and rural transit projects. The following Metropolitan Planning Organization TIP’s will be included in the FY 2022-2026 STIP by reference, pending FHWA approval in May 2022.

Area Plan Commission of Tippecanoe County (APCTC)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/10/2022</i>	
Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPPO)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/11/2022</i>	
Columbus Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/22/2021</i>	
Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission (DMMPC)	FY 2022-2025
• <i>Version 12/15/2021</i>	
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (EMPO)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/10/2022</i>	
Kokomo-Howard County Governmental Coordinating Council (KHCGCC)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/10/2022</i>	
Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA)	FY 2020-2025
• <i>Version 3/29/2022</i>	
Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (IMPO)	FY 2022-2025
• <i>Version 8/18/2021</i>	
Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/09/2022</i>	

Madison County Council of Governments (MCCOG)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 7/13/2021</i>	
Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/28/2022</i>	
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)	FY 2022-2026
• <i>Version 3/17/2022</i>	
Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI)	FY 2020-2023
• <i>Version 03/10/2022</i>	
Terre Haute Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (THAMPO)	FY 2020-2024
• <i>Version 08/26/2021</i>	

In addition, INDOT has expanded our public involvement process by taking advantage of virtual meeting techniques and allowing accessibility to online documents, materials, virtual meeting registration, recorded virtual meetings, and comment forms. INDOT also leveraged our planning partner contacts (MPOs, RPOs, LTAP), social media, and notifications sent to local libraries, housing authorities, senior aging centers, and local newspapers across the state.

We greatly appreciate FHWA/FTA support in the development of the STIP 2022-2026 and look forward to working together to achieve our mutual goals. Should you have any questions pertaining to this amendment, please contact Michael McNeil, STIP Specialist at 317-232-0223 or at mmcneil@indot.in.gov.

Sincerely,



Michael Smith, Commissioner
Indiana Department of Transportation

cc: (w/enclosure): FTA
Michelle Allen, FHWA
Jeffrey Brooks, INDOT
Kristin Brier, INDOT
Kathy Eaton-McKalip, INDOT
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Larry Buckel, INDOT
Jay Mitchell, INDOT
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Michael McNeil, INDOT

NOTE: Attachments have been removed for the purposes of this NEPA document.



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U.S. Department
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Federal Highway Administration
Indiana Division
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Indianapolis, IN 46204-1576

June 17, 2022

Mr. Michael Smith
Commissioner
Indiana Department of Transportation
100 N Senate Ave. N955
Indianapolis, IN 46204

SUBJECT: Indiana FY2022-2026 STIP Approval and Associated Federal Planning Finding

Dear Mr. Smith:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have completed our review of the FY2022-2026 Indiana Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (INSTIP), which was submitted by the INDOT request letter dated April 27, 2022.

Based on our review of the information provided, certifications of the Statewide and Metropolitan transportation planning processes for and within the state of Indiana, and our participation in those transportation planning processes (including planning certification reviews conducted in Transportation Management Areas), FHWA and FTA are jointly approving the FY2022-2026 STIP, including the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) directly incorporated into the STIP, subject to the corrective actions identified in the attached Federal Planning Finding (FPF) report. FHWA and FTA consider the projects in the 5th year for informational purposes only, and our approval does not exceed four years per 23 CFR 450.220(c).

FHWA and FTA are required under 23 CFR 450.220(b) to document and issue an FPF in conjunction with the approval of the FY2022-2026 STIP. At a minimum, the FPF verifies that the development of the STIP is consistent with the provisions of both the Statewide and Metropolitan transportation planning requirements. FHWA and FTA find that the Indiana FY2022-2026 STIP substantially meets the transportation planning requirements and are approving the STIP subject to the corrective actions outlined in the FPF. This approval is effective June 17, 2022, and is given with the understanding that an eligibility determination of individual projects for funding must be met, and INDOT must ensure the satisfaction of all administrative and statutory requirements, as well as address the corrective actions outlined in the attached report. FHWA and FTA will continue to partner with INDOT to ensure the previously developed action plan (attached) is implemented to address the corrective actions. If progress is not made in addressing the corrective actions, future amendments to the FY2022-2026 STIP, or adoption of the FY2024-2028 STIP, may not be approved by USDOT.

If you have questions or need additional information concerning our approval and the FPF, please contact Ms. Michelle Allen of the FHWA Indiana Division at (317) 226-7344, or by email at michelle.allen@dot.gov, or Mr. Jason Ciavarella of the FTA Region 5 Office at (312) 353-1653, or by email at jason.ciavarella@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

**KELLEY
BROOKINS** Digitally signed by
KELLEY BROOKINS
Date: 2022.06.13
10:08:34 -05'00'

Kelley Brookins
Regional Administrator
FTA Region V

Sincerely,

**JERMAINE
R HANNON** Digitally signed by
JERMAINE R
HANNON
Date: 2022.06.13
15:57:46 -04'00'

Jermaine R. Hannon
Division Administrator
FHWA Indiana Division

cc: (transmitted by e-mail)
Louis Feagans, INDOT
Roy Nunnally, INDOT
Karen Hicks, INDOT

**NOTE: Attachments have been removed
for the purposes of this NEPA document.**

Local projects

NOTE: This is a page from the 2022-2026 STIP, Appendix C - NIRPC.

Chicago Urbanized Area (UZA)

TIP ID	Work Type	Project Title	Lead Agency	Funding Type	FED	STATE	LOC	PE	RW	CN	CE	Funding in Prior Years	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total Project Costs	Air Quality Exempt
1601147	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities	Multi-use Trail at Marquette Trail	Burns Harbor	CMAQ Chicago UZA	\$647,341	\$0	\$161,835	\$0	\$40,000	\$649,176	\$120,000	\$40,000	\$769,176	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$809,176	Yes
2101110	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities	Complete Streets sidewalks on 133rd and Morris	Cedar Lake	CMAQ Chicago UZA	\$1,861,300	\$0	\$437,825	\$110,000	\$0	\$2,189,125	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$110,000	\$0	\$2,189,125	\$0	\$2,299,125	Yes
1902832	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities	Multi-use paths / Westchester-Liberty Phase 3	Chesterton	TAP Chicago UZA	\$1,400,000	\$0	\$350,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$1,600,000	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$1,600,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,750,000	No
2101117	Signal - Other	Installation of EVP devises on traffic signals	Chesterton	STBG Chicago UZA	\$1,751,940	\$0	\$281,790	\$183,941	\$0	\$1,849,789	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$183,941	\$0	\$1,849,789	\$0	\$2,033,730	Yes
NIRPC 2700502	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities	Veterans Memorial and Pennsey Greenway Trails in Crown Pointe	Crown Point	TAP Chicago UZA	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500,000	\$0	\$2,500,000	Yes
1901948	Intersection or Intersection Groups	Intersection Improvement-Roundabout US 231 & 113th	Crown Point	STBG Chicago UZA	\$1,195,948	\$0	\$277,962	\$308,910	\$0	\$1,165,000	\$0	\$308,910	\$0	\$1,165,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,473,910	Yes
1601146	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities	Multi-use Trails at Marquette Trail	East Chicago	CMAQ Chicago UZA	\$1,075,840	\$0	\$268,960	\$309,800	\$0	\$1,035,000	\$0	\$309,800	\$0	\$1,035,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,344,800	No
901321	Intersection or Intersection Groups	Intersection Improvement; Local Street	East Chicago	Federal Special-EDA	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,250,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,250,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,250,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,250,000	No
2101118	Pavement Reconstruction/R ehabilitation	Michigan Ave Reconstruction- FUTURE PROJECT	East Chicago	STBG Chicago UZA	\$3,592,206	\$0	\$898,052	\$0	\$0	\$4,490,258	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,490,258	\$4,490,258	Yes
900064	Roadway Reconstruction/R ehabilitation	Road Rehabilitation	East Chicago	DEMO	\$642,584	\$5,000,000	\$168,784	\$843,920	\$0	\$4,967,448	\$0	\$843,920	\$4,967,448	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,811,368	Yes
1802973	Pavement Reconstruction/R ehabilitation	Roadway Improvement/ Road Reconstruction at 15th Ave	Gary	STBG Chicago UZA	\$3,196,000	\$0	\$799,000	\$245,000	\$0	\$3,750,000	\$0	\$245,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,750,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,995,000	Yes

Westchester-Liberty Trail Construction Abbreviated Engineers Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Existing Facility..... 2-3
Identification of Proposal 3-4
Estimated Costs 4
Environmental Issues..... 4
Right of Way Impacts 4
Traffic Maintenance 5
Appendices 6

APPENDIX

Appendix A – Project Location Map (1 Page)

Appendix B – Ground Level Photographs (2 Pages)

Westchester-Liberty Trail Abbreviated Engineers Report

Type of Work:	Shared-Use Trail Extension
Route:	Westchester-Liberty Trail: Shared Use Path
Des. No.	1902832
Functional Classification:	Shared Use Path (Urban)
Location:	City of Chesterton, Indiana in INDOT's LaPorte District
Posted Speed Limit:	N/A mph

PROJECT LOCATION

The project begins at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 E and continues east along the north side of CR 1100N for approximately 0.45 miles, terminating at an existing sidewalk. A second trail segment begins at a point along CR 1100 N approximately 1,130' west of CR 100 E and continues south for approximately 0.30 miles to Laurel Creek Drive where it continues east along Laurel Creek Drive to CR 100E, and continues south along CR 100 E to a point of termination at Rail Road. The project is located in the City of Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana. See **Appendix A** for project area and location.

PROJECT NEED AND PURPOSE

The primary need for this project is to provide connectivity from the existing portion of the Westchester-Liberty Trail beginning at CR 50 E to other trails (i.e. Dunes-Kankakee Trail) in the Town of Chesterton as part of the community's and region's commitment to creating livable communities. This will allow pedestrians and cyclists with a safe passage across CR 1100 N and access between the neighborhood along Laurel Creek Drive and the surrounding area.

A secondary need for this project is the substandard pedestrian and handicap-accessible facilities within the project limits. Sidewalks are not continuous throughout the project limits; moreover, existing sidewalk curb ramps fail to meet current ADA specifications.

EXISTING FACILITY

The existing shared-use facility begins at Dogwood Park, approximately 1.15 miles west of the project limits and terminates at the beginning of the project limits. No sidewalk or designated on-street facilities for pedestrians or bicyclists are present between the beginning and end project limits along CR 1100 N (CR 50 E to a point located approximately 250' west of CR 100 E).

An existing 5-foot sidewalk is located along Laurel Creek Drive within the project limits; however it does not meet the design criteria for a shared-use path and is not continuous to the intersection of CR 100 E and Rail Road.

The apparent existing right-of-way width along the north side of CR 1100 N within the project limits is the edge of traveled way, approximately 12' north of the section line/centerline of the road. The right-of-way width along the south side of the road varies. The existing right-of-way total width along Laurel Creek Drive is 60'. The total right-of-way width along CR 100 E varies but is generally 50' wide.

Utilities visually observed within the project limits include overhead electric power lines running along the southern side of CR 1100 N with a few service lines crossing over to poles on the northern side. Gas is present on the north side of the road on CR 1100 N and is present along the south side of Laurel Creek Drive. Sanitary manholes were observed in the center of the roadway throughout Laurel Creek Drive and CR 100 E, but no manholes were present along CR 1100 N. Indiana American Water Company has water mains along the south side of Laurel Creek Drive and East side of CR 100 E.

The designer will further coordinate with the local utility companies during the design stage for verification of utilities, conflict review, and work plan development.

Drainage along CR 1100 N currently either sheet flows off site to the north or drains through road side swales. Runoff ultimately discharges into a Pope O’Conner Ditch, one of its tributaries or isolated wetlands. The project area located within City property contains 2 wetlands. Stormwater sheets into the wetlands where it either infiltrates or evaporates. Stormwater along Laurel Creek Drive drains into existing inlets and storm sewers.

IDENTIFICATION OF PROPOSAL

The proposed project will create a continuous shared-use path that will extend the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail from its existing terminus at CR 50 E to an existing sidewalk just west of CR 100E. The multi-use path will also be extended from CR 1100 N south through a City owned property to Laurel Creek Drive, east to CR 100E, then south to an existing multi-use path at Rail Road. The project will consist of approximately 4,000 feet of new shared use path. The typical section will consist of an 8’ concrete shared-use path. Approximately 750 feet of the new shared use path will be constructed of an elevated wooden boardwalk. The boardwalk will be located in and adjacent to wetlands located within the Town of Chesterton property between Laurel Creek Drive and CR 1100 N. Gabion baskets will be provided adjacent to a tributary to Pope O’Conner ditch along the north side of CR 100 N to minimize trail fill impacts to the tributary as well as wetlands.

- Design Standards

- Westchester-Liberty Trail

Geometrics:	INDOT Design Manual, Chapter 51 & <i>AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities</i>
Functional Classification:	Shared Use Path, Urban
Design / Posted Speed:	15 mph / N/A
Terrain:	Level
Clear Zone	3’ from the edge of shared-use path

- Pavement Recommendation

The pavement for the shared-use path will meet the standards as set forth in the INDOT standard drawing E 502-NVUF-01. The trail will consist of 4” of PCCP on 4” compacted aggregate No. 53 Base, on a 6-inch subgrade treatment section.

- Vertical and Horizontal Alignments

The horizontal and vertical alignments have been coordinated to maintain the existing drainage patterns to maximum extent possible, minimize the required earthwork, and minimize the amount of required right-of-way.

- Hydraulic Improvements

Drainage improvements will include 2 culvert pipe extensions under CR 1100 N, a new culvert for a tributary of Pope O’Conner ditch, and a few inlets, storm sewers, and driveway culverts to facilitate drainage along CR 100 N. All necessary signage and pavement markings will be incorporated as needed.

ESTIMATED COSTS

Construction Items (Year*)	Estimated Costs
Roadway Construction (2023)	\$ 1,603,000
<u>Construction Engineering (2023)</u>	<u>\$ 200,375</u>
Construction Items Total	\$ 1,803,375
Non-Construction Items	Estimated Costs
Prelim. Engineering	\$ 240,000
<u>Right of Way (2022)</u>	<u>\$ 150,000</u>
Non Construction Total	\$ 390,000
Total Cost	\$ 2,193,375

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The environmental impacts of the project are currently being analyzed and early coordination is underway with various federal, state, and local regulatory entities. While a public school property is in the project vicinity, it does not appear that the proposed project will impact portions used for recreational purposes. Therefore, it is not expected that the proposed project will result in a Section 4(f) use. It is anticipated that a Level 2 Categorical Exclusion document will be required for the proposed project at this time. Final wetland impacts are in process of being determined and if impacts are greater than 0.1 acres, a CE Level 3 document will be required for the proposed project. The preliminary Red Flag Investigation indicates that:

- 1) Two (2) pipelines (NIPSCO and Marathon Pipe Line Co.) have been identified within the geographical limits of the proposed project area.
- 2) The Chesterton High School facility has been identified 0.25 miles west of the project area. No impact is expected.
- 3) Six (6) wetlands and two (2) streams have been identified within the project area.

At this time, it is anticipated that the project will require a Section 401 – Water Quality Certification; Section 404 – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Permit; and a Rule 5 Submission for Erosion and Sediment Control

RIGHT OF WAY IMPACTS

It is anticipated that additional permanent right-of-way will be required for the completion of the proposed project. It is currently estimated that less than 2.00 acres of permanent right-of-way will be required along the corridor. Right-of-way impacts will be assessed further as the design of the project continues.

TRAFFIC MAINTENANCE DURING CONSTRUCTION

Traffic along CR 1100 N, Laurel Creek Drive, and CR 100 E is expected to be minimally impacted. The work will primarily be performed outside the limits of the roadway. Temporary flagging to provide access for large construction vehicles (i.e. concrete trucks and trucks to remove spoils) is possible; however, the roadways will not be closed during construction. Access shall be maintained to all residences and businesses throughout construction.

Prepared By: GL 11/22/2021
Greg Lorig, PE Date
American Structurepoint, Inc.

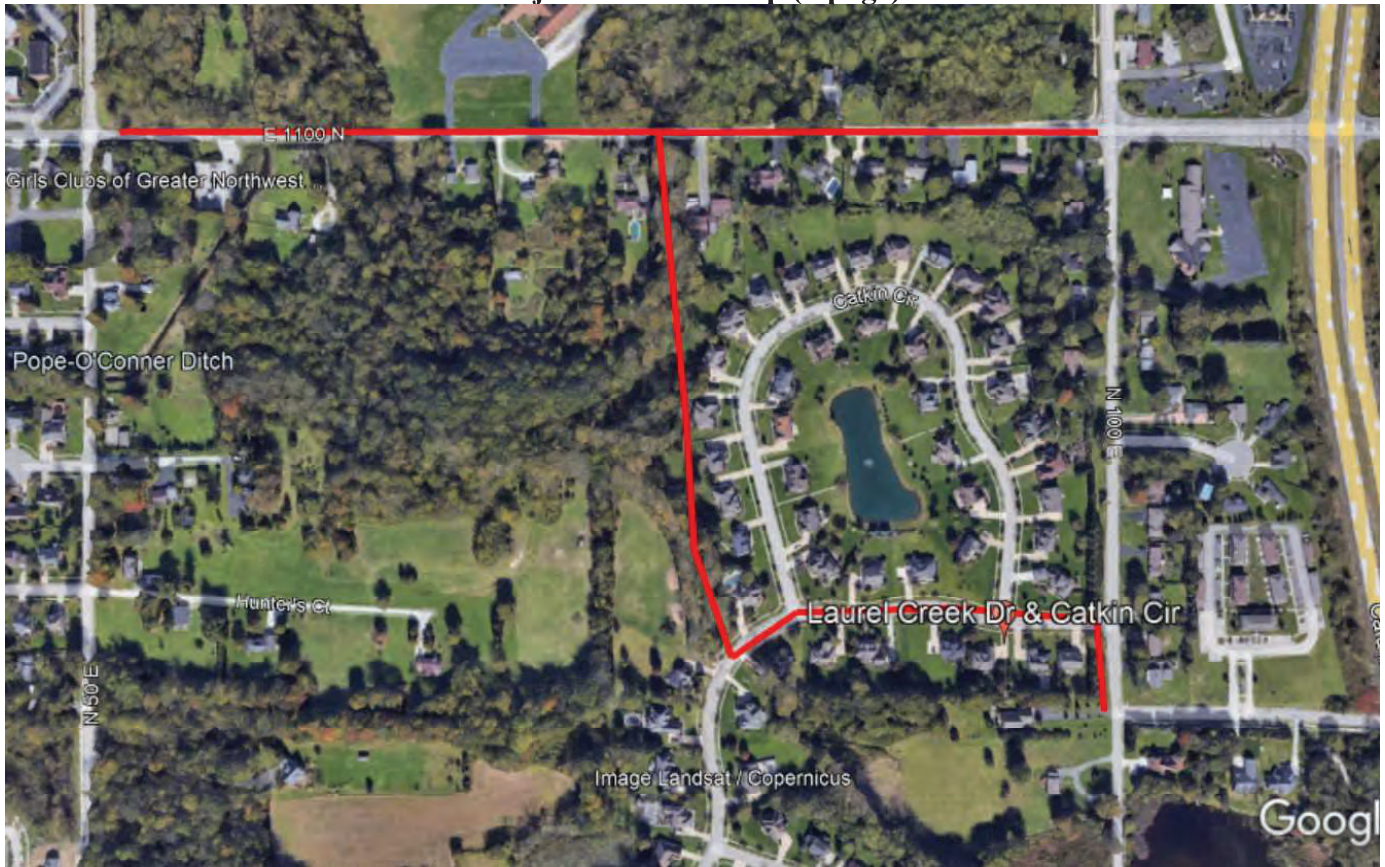
CONCURRENCE

Mark O'Dell 11/22/2021
Mark O'Dell, PE Date
Town Engineer
Chesterton, Indiana

NOTE: Appendix A
of Abbreviated
Engineer's Report

Appendix A

Project Location Map (1 page)



**NOTE: Appendix B
of Abbreviated
Engineer's Report**

Appendix B

Ground Level Photographs (2 pages)



Westbound on CR 1100 N along "W-1-A"



Forested Area between CR 1100 N and Laurel Creek Drive (Line “W-2-A”)

Chesterton, Indiana

Comprehensive Plan 2010

Statement of Objectives for the Development of Public Ways of the Town of Chesterton

Introduction

The Town of Chesterton is generally served by a traditional grid system to the west of Indiana 49 and a curvilinear system to the east of Indiana 49. The east and west sides of Town are connected by Indian Boundary Road, Porter Avenue, 1100 North, Rail Road, and Old State Road 49. The roadways range from being part of the regional transportation system, to providing connections to neighboring communities, to connecting the Town's neighborhoods and activity centers.

The objectives and policies outlined in this section reference Section III: Statement of Objectives and Policies and constitute Chesterton's Statement of Policy for the Development of Public Ways of the jurisdiction.

Public Ways—Connecting Places

Creating connected places means forming a system of trails, sidewalks, and local streets to interconnect Chesterton's neighborhoods and other major destinations throughout the community. Encouraging walking and biking will give Chesterton's urban fabric a more intimate feel. This system will foster greater social interaction and connectivity and encourage regular use of these spaces. There shall also be stronger connections to area transit systems that attracts ridership and caters to the appropriate needs of the community. Future growth can then be targeted, with an emphasis on areas that can be well-served by this transit system.

Principle 1: The street system will foster safe passage to destinations throughout Chesterton.

Policy 1.1

Develop a pattern of interconnected streets that allow residents to easily navigate throughout the community.

Policy 1.2

Encourage frontage roads and shared parking opportunities between businesses within an activity center, especially in locations where traffic congestion exists or is likely to exist in the future due to ingress/egress onto collector/arterial roadways.



Section Six

Alternative Transportation System

The Town of Chesterton supports an enhanced regional trails system. Several regional trails will, one day, serve the residents of Chesterton. New trails include:

Extension of the **Prairie Duneland Trail** from its current terminus at Broadway and 15th Street to Town Square Park at the intersection of Calumet Road and Broadway.

Brickyard Trail. The Brickyard Trail will begin at the Prairie Duneland Trail (Broadway and 15th Street) and will extend north through the Town of Porter and link to the Calumet Trail at U.S. 12 and Mineral Springs Road.

Dunes Kankakee Trail. The Dunes Kankakee Trail will begin at the Indiana Dunes State Park and will extend south through Porter, Chesterton, unincorporated Porter County, Valparaiso, and Kouts and terminate at the Kankakee River. The proposed route through Chesterton is along Calumet Road.

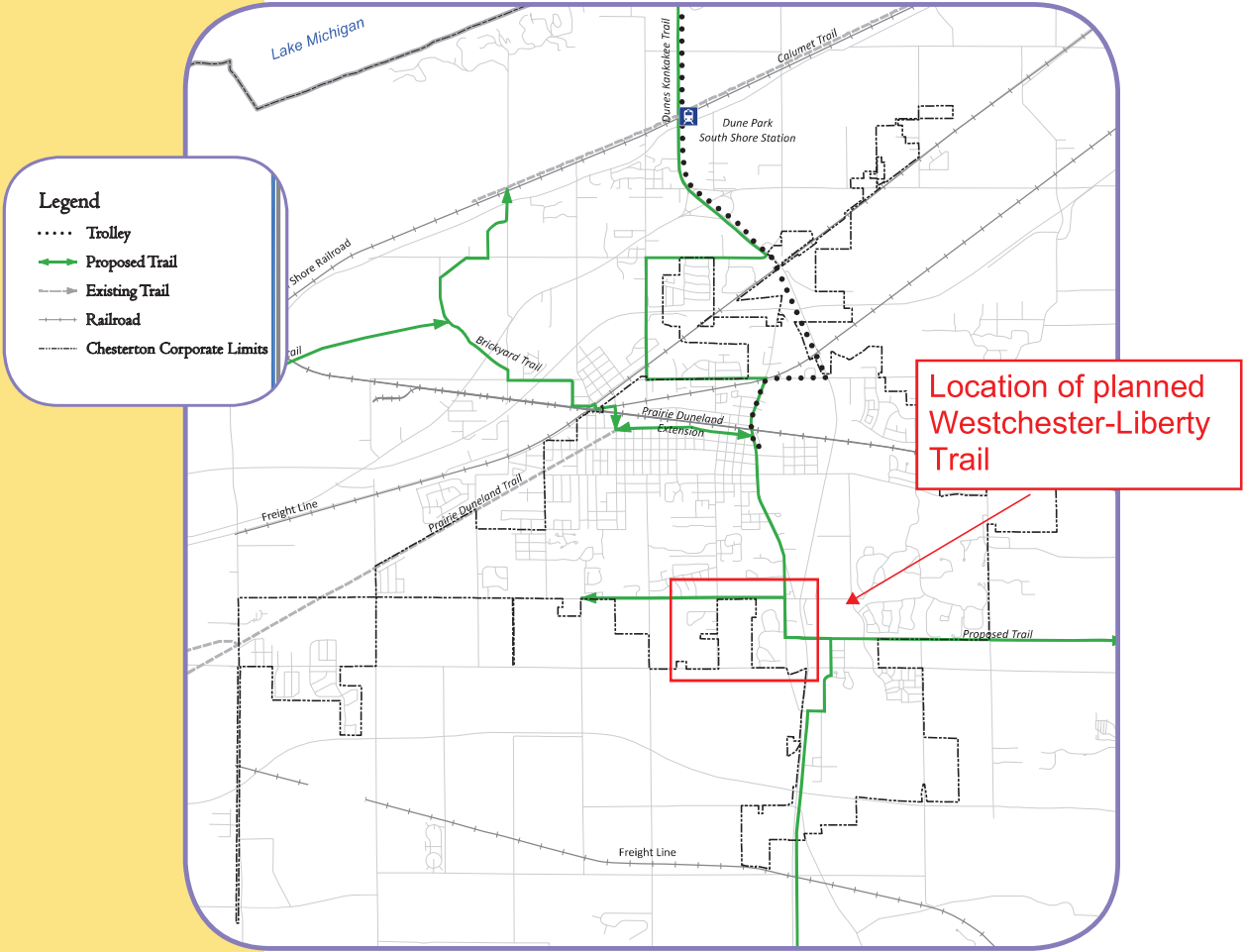
Marquette Greenway Trail. The Marquette Greenway Trail is proposed to link the east and west units of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore through Porter, Burns Harbor, Portage and Ogden Dunes. The trail will begin at Howe Road/Brickyard Trail and extend west linking to the Douglas Trail, near West Beach.

Westchester/Liberty Trail. The Westchester/Liberty Trail is an extension of the Iron Horse Heritage Trail from its current terminus at the Prairie Duneland Trail at Imagination Glen—Portage, Indiana east along portions of the abandoned Wabash Railroad right-of-way and 1100 North to 350 East.



Section Six

Statement of Objectives for the Development of Public Ways of the Town of Chesterton



Future Alternative Transportation Plan

Thoroughfare Plan

An efficient, safe, and integrated transportation system is vital to the long-term viability and sustainability of a community. Coordinating transportation needs with land use decisions will allow Chesterton to become the community it wants to be. The following are transportation system improvements suggested to accommodate the community envisioned in the comprehensive plan.



RESOLUTION 2010- 06

REC FEE: \$14.00
PAGES: 2

A RESOLUTION OF THE CHESTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, Indiana Code 36-7-4-501 requires that a comprehensive plan be adopted for the promotion of public health, safety, morals, convenience, order or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of development; and

WHEREAS, the Chesterton Town Council previously adopted a Comprehensive Plan on September 27, 2004; and 2004-034038

WHEREAS, the Chesterton Advisory Plan Commission has prepared a Comprehensive Plan to replace the Comprehensive Plan adopted on September 27, 2004; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held after notice by the Chesterton Advisory Plan Commission on September 16, 2010, at which time the Chesterton Advisory Plan Commission approved and certified the Comprehensive Plan which is attached to and made a part of this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, the matter has been studied by the Town of Chesterton and its Town Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Chesterton Town Council as follows:

SECTION ONE. That the certified Comprehensive Plan attached to this Resolution is hereby approved.

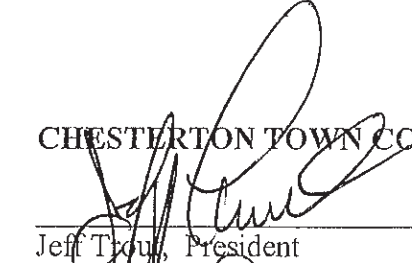
SECTION TWO. That, upon approval, the Clerk-Treasurer is hereby directed to place one (1) copy of the Comprehensive Plan on file in the Office of Porter County Recorder.

SECTION THREE. This Resolution shall be full force and effect upon its passage.

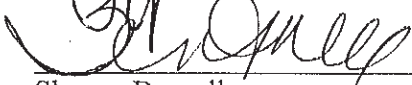
ALL OF WHICH IS PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Chesterton Town Council this

6th day of December, 2010.

CHESTERTON TOWN COUNCIL



Jeff Trout, President




Sharon Darnell



David Gincoski

Nick Harding

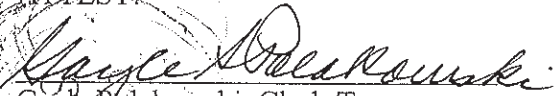


Emerson Delaney




James G. Ton

ATTEST:



Gayle Polakowski, Clerk-Treasurer

I AFFIRM, UNDER PENALTIES FOR PERJURY, THAT I HAVE TAKEN REASONABLE CARE TO REDACT EACH SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER IN THIS DOCUMENT, UNLESS REQUIRED BY LAW.


GAYLE S. POLAKOWSKI
CLERK-TREASURER

H:\H\TCC\Resolutions\2010-adopting comprehensive plan\sh

MEMO

To: Chesterton Town Council

From: Advisory Plan Commission

Date: November 22, 2010

Subject: Certification to the Chesterton Town Council of the 2010 replacement Comprehensive Plan, as revised, for the Town of Chesterton, Indiana

The purpose of this letter is to certify to you that the Town of Chesterton Advisory Plan Commission has voted to forward the attached Comprehensive Plan 2010 to the Chesterton Town Council with a favorable recommendation.

This Comprehensive Plan includes revisions to the Existing Land Use and Future Land Use maps from the Comprehensive Plan previously certified.

The favorable recommendation regarding the attached Comprehensive Plan, as revised, was made by the Plan Commission at its November 18, 2010 meeting. The Plan Commission voted to favorably recommend the revisions to the Existing Land Use map by a 6 to 0 vote of the six (6) Plan Commission members present. The revisions to the Future Land Use Map were favorably recommended by a 5 to 1 vote. A Public Hearing was previously held on the Comprehensive Plan on September 16, 2010, the entire Comprehensive Plan being on file for examination by the public for at least ten (10) days prior to the Public Hearing. Notice of the September 16, 2010, Public Hearing was published in the Chesterton Tribune at least ten (10) days prior to the Public Hearing.

Sincerely,

Gail L. Murawski, Sec.

Gail Murawski, Secretary
ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION

As people move from concentrated urban centers to suburban and rural areas, residential densities have decreased and more land per household is consumed. This development pattern will continue to put stress on the transportation network and will ensure the inefficiency transit, trail, and other modal connections. Building infrastructure without addressing inefficient land use patterns results in expensive transportation investments that could have been avoided.

As a Transportation Management Area (TMA) conducting metropolitan transportation planning for an Urbanized Area greater than 200,000 in population, the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is required to follow a Congestion Management Process (CMP) pursuant to 23 CFR 450 Part 322. The CMP is a process that the MPO uses to select transportation projects to effectively manage congestion by ensuring that capacity adding transportation projects such as new roads or added travel lanes only be selected after considering non-capacity adding alternatives. Examples of non-capacity adding alternatives include both supply and demand management strategies. Examples of supply management strategies include better land uses that generate less travel demand, overhead traffic message signs, more transit, and electronic tolling, while examples of demand management strategies include carpooling and flexible work scheduling. The capacity adding projects included in the NWI 2050 Plan have been filtered through the CMP and are strategy of last resort per the CMP.

Creating an active transportation culture in NWI will not be possible without officials and leaders committing to implementing first-mile and last-mile connections with sidewalks, protected bike lanes and signage. Taken together these represent a network approach, with trails continuing to be an important NWI connector. As connections between trails and communities become more commonplace, it is important to have regional wayfinding signage and trail standards to orient along these trails. Since regional trails are often managed by local municipalities, users can easily lose their way with varying signage standards when crossing into the next community. To aid with this issue, NIRPC created a Unified Trail Wayfinding Guide to link region communities together with a mutual signage design.

Regional Trail Network

168 miles completed, 44 miles funded, and 113 miles to go. NWI's active transportation users have a bright future!

NWI has made its way to becoming a connected region by expanding its 13 miles of off-road trails in 1990 to well over 160 miles in 2019. Regional leaders were able to leverage the abandoned rail corridors with federal funding to create an expansive trail network. However, gaps in the regional bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure network are still commonplace, especially in the region's main centers. These gaps are known as the "first-mile and last mile" problem. It is a term that summarizes a chronic issue where to start or end a trip by bicycle, foot, or bus. On a route, the trip is complicated because critical infrastructure at the beginning or end of the trip is missing. The missing infrastructure could be sidewalks connecting to and from a bus stop, a protected bicycle lane on a street to or from a multi-use trail, or a bus from the South Shore Line to a neighborhood beyond walking distance from a station. This is a critically important issue for NWI's transportation network because it too often makes the travel choices of bicycling, walking, or taking transit unsafe. This is especially problematic for individuals with disabilities in the region that must have accessible infrastructure to provide mobility options.



1990 = 13 miles **2019** = 168 miles



NWI's 2040 Plan's vision statements remain the foundation for the NWI 2050 Plan. These vision statements and goals were reviewed early in the NWI 2050 Plan development by residents, NIRPC Commissioners, and NIRPC's topical committees. All were asked "what is most important to you" regarding plan focus areas and vision statements.

Vision statements and goals were revised based on the input given. Public feedback resulted in four refined vision statements, two former 2040 plan focus areas combined into one, and the development of 16 critical paths aimed at achieving the vision statements. Conventional goal statements were replaced by these critical paths. Each plan focus area links to a vision statement that creates a critical path.

A long-range transportation plan has a strong vision that guides development, transportation programming, and the overall direction of the region for the next thirty years. A shared vision sets priorities throughout the planning process and informs decision makers about community and regional values, translating those values into actions.



NWI's people have accessible, safe, and equal opportunities for working, playing, living and learning.

The vision statement of A connected NWI primarily speaks to the region's transportation network. Most importantly it serves as the bridge of a connected transportation network to other components of the plan.

How "A Connected NWI" Evolved:

In the 2040 Plan, this vision statement was summed up in the term "Accessible." Based on public feedback, the word "Connected" better addressed linking the plan's focus areas. Only 18% of respondents weighted "Accessible" as the vision word most important to them. "Connected" serves as a fundamental component of the vision and provides the foundation for an accessible and safe region as it relates to being linked to opportunities residents may seek from employment, recreation, quality of life, and higher-learning. The transportation system operates as a key organizational feature of the region, and represents the shared public realm facilitating social and economic activity of our daily lives.

Why is "A Connected NWI" Important?

A Connected NWI brings benefits to people and provides access to opportunities. It supports a robust transportation network and its interaction with land uses and the environment. This vision is all about better transit, finishing the multi-use trail network, implementation of "complete streets" that accommodate a variety of transportation modes, and the removal of barriers in our transportation system.

Existing Conditions

Economy and Place

NWI represents an interconnected region stretching across county and municipal boundaries. While the region comprises 41 distinct cities and towns, the lives of everyday residents depend on the interconnectivity of the transportation network. The region generates approximately 60,000 residents from NWI commuting into Illinois every day for work. Within the region residents depend on connectivity. Every day, 24,625 residents commute between Lake and Porter Counties and 6,856 individuals commute between Porter and LaPorte Counties. Commuting data only accounts for two daily trips of working population. The total number of trips an average NWI resident makes is far more significant, with frequent travel between municipalities and counties.



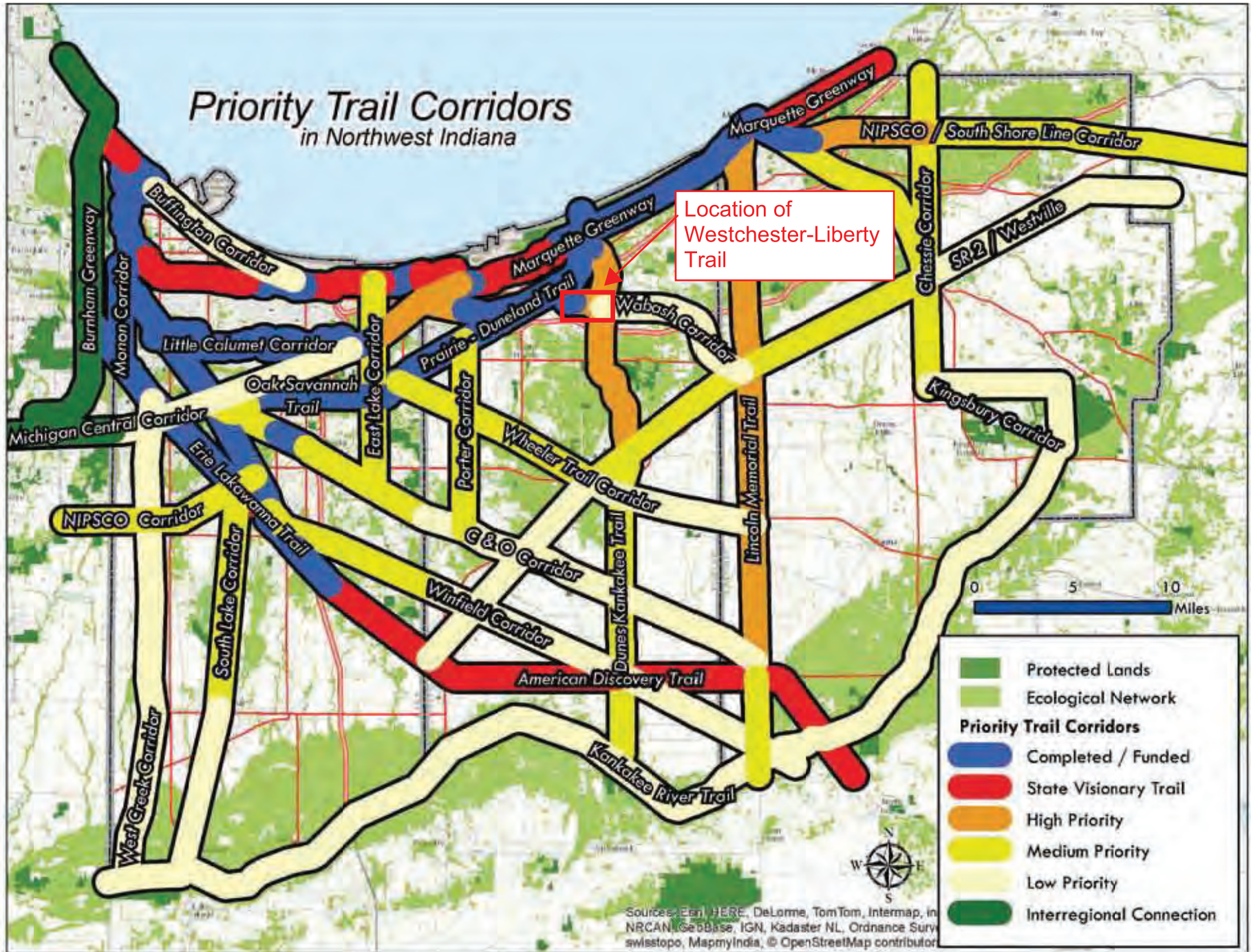


Figure II-1 Priority Regional Trails & Corridors Map

Helms, Alexa

From: Fair, Terri <TFair@indot.IN.gov>
Sent: Thursday, July 28, 2022 10:56 AM
To: Helms, Alexa; Miller, Brandon
Cc: Ross, Anthony; Passmore, Andrew D
Subject: EJ Analysis, Westchester-Liberty Trail, Des. No. 1902832
Attachments: jul 28 22 EJ Analysis Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3_Des. No. 1902832.pdf

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

INDOT-Environmental Services Division (ESD) has reviewed the project information along with the Environmental Justice (EJ) Analysis for the above referenced project. With the information provided, the project may require minimal right-of-way, require no relocations, and would not disrupt community cohesion or create a physical barrier. With the information provided, INDOT-ESD would not consider the impacts associated with this project as causing a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority and/or low-income populations of EJ concern relative to non-EJ populations in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23a. No further EJ Analysis is required.

Environmental Justice/Community Impacts Analysis

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 – Des. No. 1902832

Chesterton, Indiana

Prepared for:
City of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana 46304

Prepared by:
American Structurepoint, Inc.
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240

May 12, 2022

Under FHWA Order 6640.23A, FHWA and the Town of Chesterton, as a recipient of funding from FHWA, are responsible to ensure that their programs, policies, and activities do not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority or low-income populations. Per the current INDOT Categorical Exclusion Manual, an Environmental Justice (EJ) Analysis is required for any project that has two or more relocations or 0.5 acre of additional permanent right-of-way (ROW). This project will require 1.60 acres of additional permanent ROW and no relocations. Therefore, an EJ Analysis is required.

Potential EJ impacts are detected by locating minority and low-income populations relative to a reference to determine if populations of EJ concern exist and whether there could be disproportionately high and adverse impacts to them. The reference populations may be a county, city, or town and is called the community of comparison (COC). In this project, the COC is the combined data from Census Tracts 501.04 and 502.03. The community that overlaps the project area is called the affected community (AC). In this project, the AC's are Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04 and Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03. An AC has a population of concern for EJ if the populations is more than 50% minority or low-income or if the low-income or minority population is 125% of the COC. Data from the 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates were obtained from the US Census Bureau Website (<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>) on May 5, 2022 by American Structurepoint, Inc. The data collected for minority and low-income populations within the AC are summarized in the below table.

	COC – Census Tracts 501.04 and 502.03	AC-1 – Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04	AC-2 – Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03
Percent Minority	12.70%	25.29%	10.48%
125% of COC	15.88%	AC > 125% COC	AC < 125% COC
EJ Population of Concern		Yes	No
Percent Low-Income	6.93%	3.70%	14.11%
125% of COC	8.66%	AC < 125% COC	AC > 125% COC
EJ Population of Concern		No	Yes

AC-1, Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04, has a percent minority of 25.29%, which is below 50% but is above the 125% COC threshold. AC-2, Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03, has a percent minority of 10.48%, which is below 50% and is below the 125% COC threshold. Therefore, AC-1 has a minority population of EJ concern.

AC-1, Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04, has a percent low-income of 3.70%, which is below 50% and is below the 125% COC threshold. AC-2, Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03, has a percent low-income of 14.11%, which is below 50% but is above the 125% COC threshold. Therefore, AC-2 has a low-income population of EJ concern.

The need for Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 project is evidenced by the current connectivity between the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail corridor segments and an existing sidewalk segment in the northeast quadrant of the project area. The existing project area is reliant on pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. This results in potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles between existing corridors of the Westchester-Liberty Trail. The purpose of the project is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling between the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail corridor segments and the existing sidewalk segment.

The proposed project will consist of the construction of an eight-foot-wide shared-used path, the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3. The shared-use path will exist within three connected segments. The first segment (Segment 1) begins at the intersection of CR 1100 North and CR 50 East and extends approximately 0.45 mile east along the north side of CR 1100 North, where an existing sidewalk begins. The second segment (Segment 2) exists between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive, beginning 0.21 mile west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East

and extends south approximately 0.30 mile on a new alignment through a wooded area. The third segment (Segment 3) begins where Segment 2 ends, along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive, and extends east 0.20 mile to the intersection of North CR 100 East and Laurel Creek Drive. Segment 3 then extends south approximately 0.05 mile along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road. Additionally, curb ramps would be constructed adjacent to roadways as needed, as well as two pedestrian crosswalks at trail crossings along CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East. Culverts will be constructed where streams cross underneath the new shared-use path. Further, the existing sidewalk along Laurel Creek Drive will be removed and replaced with a new eight-foot-wide shared-use path. See the attachments for an aerial map showing the segments.

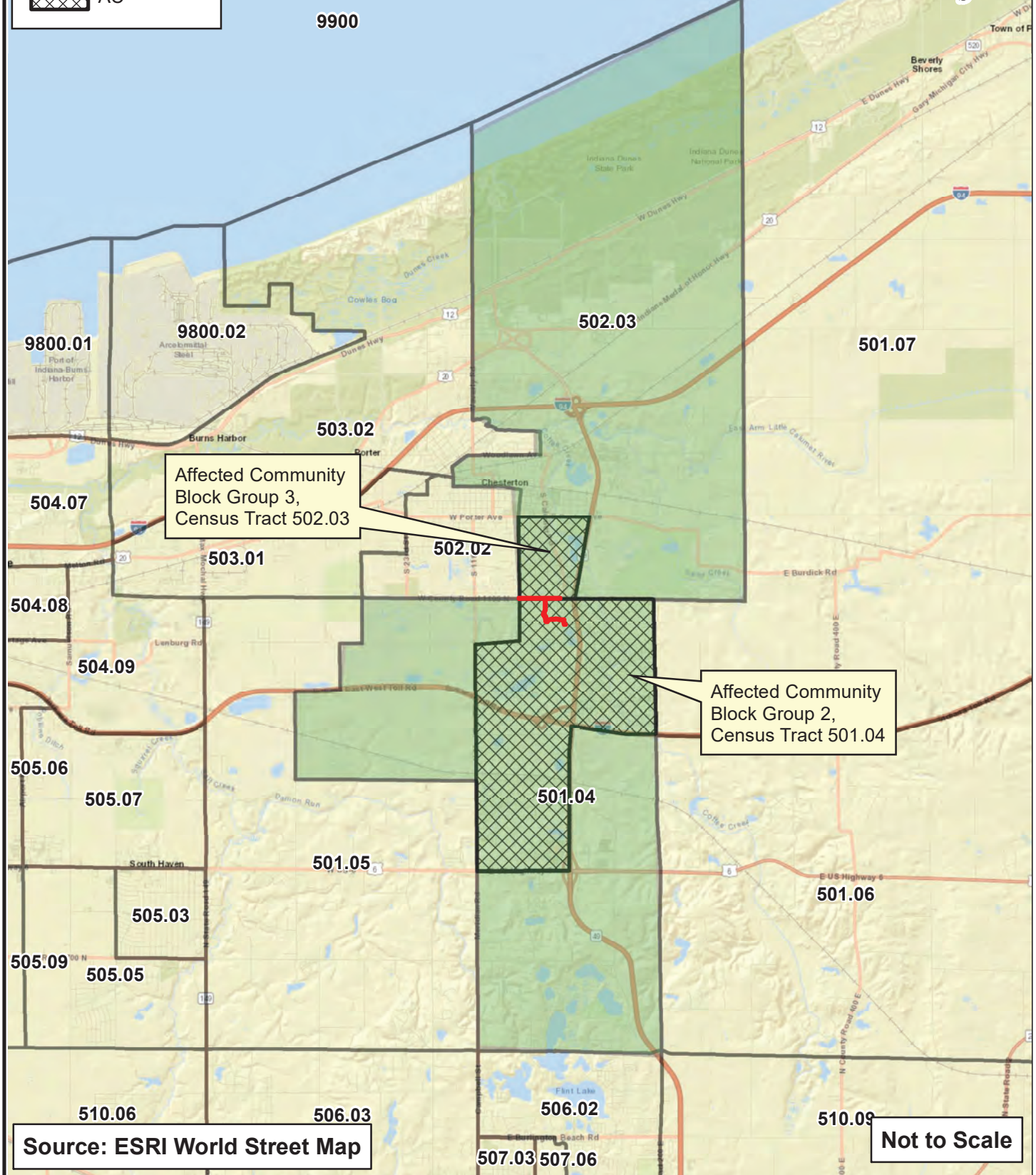
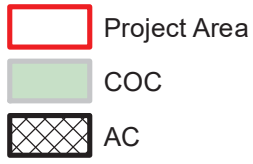
The project will require 1.60 acres of new permanent ROW and 0.006 acre of temporary ROW for the construction of the new shared-use path. Within Segment 1, the current existing ROW extends to the edge of roadway along the north side of CR 1100 North. Within Segment 2, the current existing ROW is located between CR 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive and ranges from approximately 60-foot wide to 280-foot wide within this segment. Within Segment 3, there is current existing ROW along Laurel Creek Drive and North CR 100 East, extending approximately 30 feet north and south, and 30 feet west, respectively, from the center of the roadways. The project will require new permanent ROW from commercial, residential, and institutional properties, wetlands, and forest along CR 1100 North within Segment 1, from wetlands within Segment 2, and from residential properties along Laurel Creek Drive within Segment 3. For Segment 1, the new ROW extends approximately 25 feet north from the existing ROW. For Segment 2, there will be no changes in ROW widths. For Segment 3, the ROW widths along Laurel Creek Drive will remain the same and the ROW along North CR 100 East will extend approximately an additional 30-foot west from existing ROW.

All permanent ROW is being acquired for the development of a new shared-use path, which will be a net benefit to both EJ and non-EJ populations. The benefits of the project include reducing the potential pedestrian/bicyclist conflicts with motor vehicles to get to other trails or sidewalk facilities in the immediate area. The maintenance of traffic (MOT) will require temporary lane closures while curb ramps are being constructed adjacent to roadways and existing trails. Additionally, there will be temporary sidewalk and existing trail closures throughout the project area. The lane, sidewalk, and trail closures will pose a temporary inconvenience to all motorists.

A do nothing alternative was considered which would eliminate all impact to EJ populations, but would not address the objectives of the purpose and need of this project, which is to reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles. Additionally, an alternative was considered which would construct a shared-used path along existing roadways. The shared-use path would have been constructed along the north side of CR 1100 North between North CR 50 East to the existing sidewalk approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East. The shared-use path would then extend south along the west side of North CR 100 East to the intersection with Rail Road. This alternative would meet the purpose and need of the project, but would increase ROW impacts to residential and commercial properties, and thus increase impacts to potential EJ populations, and would extend beyond the limits of the Town of Chesterton and into an unincorporated portion of Porter County.

The proposed project will reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles for both EJ and non-EJ populations. Further, this project will increase pedestrian access throughout the area and is a net benefit to all users, including EJ populations. The proposed project will not disrupt community cohesion nor create a physical barrier. Therefore, the identified populations will not experience a disproportionately high and adverse impact from the proposed project.

The census data sheets, maps, and calculations are attached. No further environmental justice analysis is warranted.



Affected Community Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03

Affected Community Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04

Source: ESRI World Street Map

Not to Scale

Path: P:\2018\022818\Drawings\ArcView\Westchester Phase 3 Trail\2018_022818_EV_2022-01-13_EJ_map_Westchester_ABH.mxd Date: 5/5/2022 User: ahelm



Environmental Justice Map

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana 46304

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Des. No. 1902832

Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Date: 1/13/2022

Appendix I
I-23

American Community Survey

B17010 | POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS OF FAMILIES BY FAMILY TYPE BY PRESENCE OF RELATED CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS BY AGE OF RELATED CHILDREN

2020: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables | Universe: Families

Notes |
 2 Geos |
 Years |
 1 Topic |
 Surveys |
 123 |
 Hide |
 Transpose |
 Margin of Error |
 Restore |
 Excel |
 CSV |
 ZIP |
 Print |
 Map

Label	Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04, Porter County, Indiana		Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03, Porter County, Indiana	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
▼ Total:	460	±95	241	±103
▼ Income in the past 12 months below poverty level:	17	±26	34	±50
▼ Married-couple family:	17	±26	0	±12
▼ With related children of the householder under 18 years:	0	±12	0	±12
Under 5 years only	0	±12	0	±12
Under 5 years and 5 to 17 years	0	±12	0	±12
5 to 17 years only	0	±12	0	±12
No related children of the householder under 18 years	17	±26	0	±12
▼ Other family:	0	±12	34	±50
▼ Male householder, no spouse present:	0	±12	0	±12
▼ With related children of the householder under 18 years:	0	±12	0	±12
Under 5 years only	0	±12	0	±12
Under 5 years and 5 to 17 years	0	±12	0	±12
5 to 17 years only	0	±12	0	±12
No related children of the householder under 18 years	0	±12	0	±12
▼ Female householder, no spouse present:	0	±12	34	±50
▼ With related children of the householder under 18 years:	0	±12	34	±50
Under 5 years only	0	±12	0	±12
Under 5 years and 5 to 17 years	0	±12	0	±12
5 to 17 years only	0	±12	34	±50



All **Tables** Maps Pages

American Community Survey

B17001 | POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE

2020: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables | Universe: Population for whom poverty status is determined

Notes |
 4 Geos |
 Years |
 1 Topic |
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 123 |
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 Margin of Error |
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 CSV |
 ZIP |
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 Map

Census Tract 501.04, Porter County, Indiana

Census Tract 502.03, Porter County, Indiana

Label	Census Tract 501.04, Porter County, Indiana		Census Tract 502.03, Porter County, Indiana	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
▼ Total:	4,660	±534	6,545	±815
▼ Income in the past 12 months below poverty level:	286	±187	490	±281
▼ Male:	161	±141	206	±113
Under 5 years	29	±44	34	±47
5 years	0	±12	0	±17
6 to 11 years	55	±81	0	±17
12 to 14 years	0	±12	60	±66
15 years	0	±12	0	±17
16 and 17 years	0	±12	2	±4
18 to 24 years	0	±12	34	±42
25 to 34 years	0	±12	17	±24
35 to 44 years	0	±12	0	±17
45 to 54 years	41	±58	31	±40
55 to 64 years	25	±28	12	±20
65 to 74 years	11	±19	16	±28
75 years and over	0	±12	0	±17
▼ Female:	125	±72	284	±196
Under 5 years	0	±12	19	±31
5 years	0	±12	0	±17
6 to 11 years	0	±12	0	±17
12 to 14 years	0	±12	55	±75



American Community Survey
B03002 | HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN BY RACE

2020: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables | Universe: Total population

Notes 4 Geos Years Topics Surveys Codes 123 Hide Transpose Margin of Error Restore Excel CSV ZIP Print Map

	Census Tract 501.04, Porter County, Indiana		Census Tract 502.03, Porter County, Indiana		Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04, Porter County, Indiana		Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03, Porter County, Indiana	
Label	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
▼ Total:	4,939	±583	6,742	±817	1,985	±342	964	±291
▼ Not Hispanic or Latino:	4,452	±637	6,259	±800	1,630	±289	937	±297
White alone	4,269	±651	5,928	±865	1,483	±300	863	±297
Black or African American alone	37	±52	16	±18	37	±52	0	±12
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	6	±11	0	±17	0	±12	0	±12
Asian alone	19	±26	150	±124	2	±4	0	±12
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	±12	0	±17	0	±12	0	±12
Some other race alone	1	±3	0	±17	0	±12	0	±12
▼ Two or more races:	120	±138	165	±141	108	±136	74	±107
Two races including Some other race	0	±12	0	±17	0	±12	0	±12
Two races excluding Some other race, and three or more races	120	±138	165	±141	108	±136	74	±107
▼ Hispanic or Latino:	487	±233	483	±279	355	±201	27	±37
White alone	323	±204	301	±181	221	±174	22	±35
Black or African American alone	15	±28	0	±17	15	±28	0	±12
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0	±12	0	±17	0	±12	0	±12
Asian alone	17	±28	0	±17	17	±28	0	±12
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	±12	0	±17	0	±12	0	±12
Some other race alone	39	±36	138	±200	37	±36	0	±12
▼ Two or more races:	93	±71	44	±49	65	±59	5	±11
Two races including Some other race	24	±32	44	±49	24	±32	5	±11
Two races excluding Some other race, and three or more races	69	±65	0	±17	41	±49	0	±12

EJ Analysis Summary Table for CE
Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 (Des. No. 1902832)

	COC	AC 1	AC 2
	Census Tract 501.04 and 502.03	Block Group 2, Census Tract 501.04	Block Group 3, Census Tract 502.03
Low-Income Population			
Total Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined	11,205	460	241
Total Population Below Poverty Level	776	17	34
Percent Low-Income	6.93%	3.70%	14.11%
125 Percent of COC	8.66%		
AC Percent Low-Income Greater Than 125 Percent of COC?		No	Yes
AC Percent Low-Income Greater Than 50 Percent?		No	No
Population of EJ Concern?		No	Yes
Minority Population			
Total Population	11,681	1,985	964
Total Minority Population	1,484	502	101
Percent Minority	12.70%	25.29%	10.48%
125 Percent of COC	15.88%		
AC Percent Minority Greater Than 125 Percent of COC?		Yes	No
AC Percent Minority Greater Than 50 Percent?		No	No
Population of EJ Concern?		Yes	No

2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Town of
Chesterton
INDIANA

Office of the Town Manager

Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III

Des. No. 1902832

February 14, 2022

Alexa Helms
American Structurepoint, Inc.
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240

RE: Section 4(f) Coordination
Des. No. 1902832
Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III
Chesterton, Porter County, Indiana

Dear Ms. Helms,

We understand that the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project will affect the Tamarack Subdivision Park that exists approximately 0.4 mile southwest of the intersection of Laurel Creek Drive and Catkin Circle and serves as a general resource to the public. Additionally, the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project will affect a portion of the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail that exists along Rail Road and serves as a general resource to the public. The city park and the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail are owned by the Town of Chesterton and are managed by the Town of Chesterton. The Tamarack Subdivision Park and the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail are considered Section 4(f) resources under the US Department of Transportation Act.

The Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project will construct a shared-used path to provide connectivity between the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail and the planned Dunes-Kankakee Trail. As part of the project, a four-foot-wide gravel path along the eastern edge of the park will be temporarily impacted for construction of a portion of the shared-use path within the forested area between County Road 1100 North and Laurel Creek Drive so that the existing trails and the Tamarack Subdivision Park will have connectivity. The Tamarack Subdivision Park will be impacted for a limited amount of time (2 to 4 weeks) within the construction window of April 2023 to November 2023, in which the park will still be open and available to the public. During the remainder of construction, the park will be unaffected by the proposed project. Additionally, due to the construction of the new shared-use path, the project would acquire 1.62 acres of permanent right-of-way; however, as the park is already owned by the Town of Chesterton, none of the permanent right-of-way will be purchased adjacent to or within the Tamarack Subdivision Park.

Additionally, as part of the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project, the portion of the of the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail along Rail Road will be temporarily impacted for the addition of an ADA-compliant curb ramp at the intersection of North County Road 100 East and Rail Road so that the existing trail segment and the planned trail segment will have connectivity. The existing Westchester-Liberty Trail will be impacted for a limited amount of time (approximately 5 days) within the construction window of April 2023 to November 2023, in which the trail will still be open and available to the public. During the remainder of construction, the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail will be unaffected by the proposed

project. Further, the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III project will not impact the portion of the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail located within the southwest quadrant of the intersection between County Road 1100 North and North County Road 50 East. The new trail will be constructed beginning in the northeast quadrant of the intersection between County Road 1100 North and North County Road 50 East. In order to provide connectivity, crosswalks will be added at the intersection. As mentioned above, due to the construction of the new shared-use path, the project would acquire 1.62 acres of permanent right-of-way; however, as the existing trail is already owned by the Town of Chesterton, none of the permanent right-of-way will be purchased adjacent to or within the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail.

Based on the information provided (scope of the project, aerial photography, and the project plan sheets) and as the Official with Jurisdiction over the Tamarack Subdivision Park and the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail, we agree that this transportation enhancement activity constitutes a no use under Section 4(f), as described in the Federal Highway Administration's *Section 4(f) Policy Paper (dated July 20, 2012)*, for the following reasons:

- The area of the new trail connection within the Tamarack Subdivision Park is used for recreational purposes and would qualify for protection under Section 4(f);
- The area of the new trail connection and corresponding ADA-compliant curb ramp to the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail is used for recreational purposes and would qualify for protection under Section 4(f);
- The scope of work concerning the new trail connection described above would be considered a transportation enhancement activity, feature, or attribute that qualifies the property for Section 4(f) protection; and
- the use of the Section 4(f) property would meet the exception for transportation enhancement activities under 23 CFR 774.13(g).

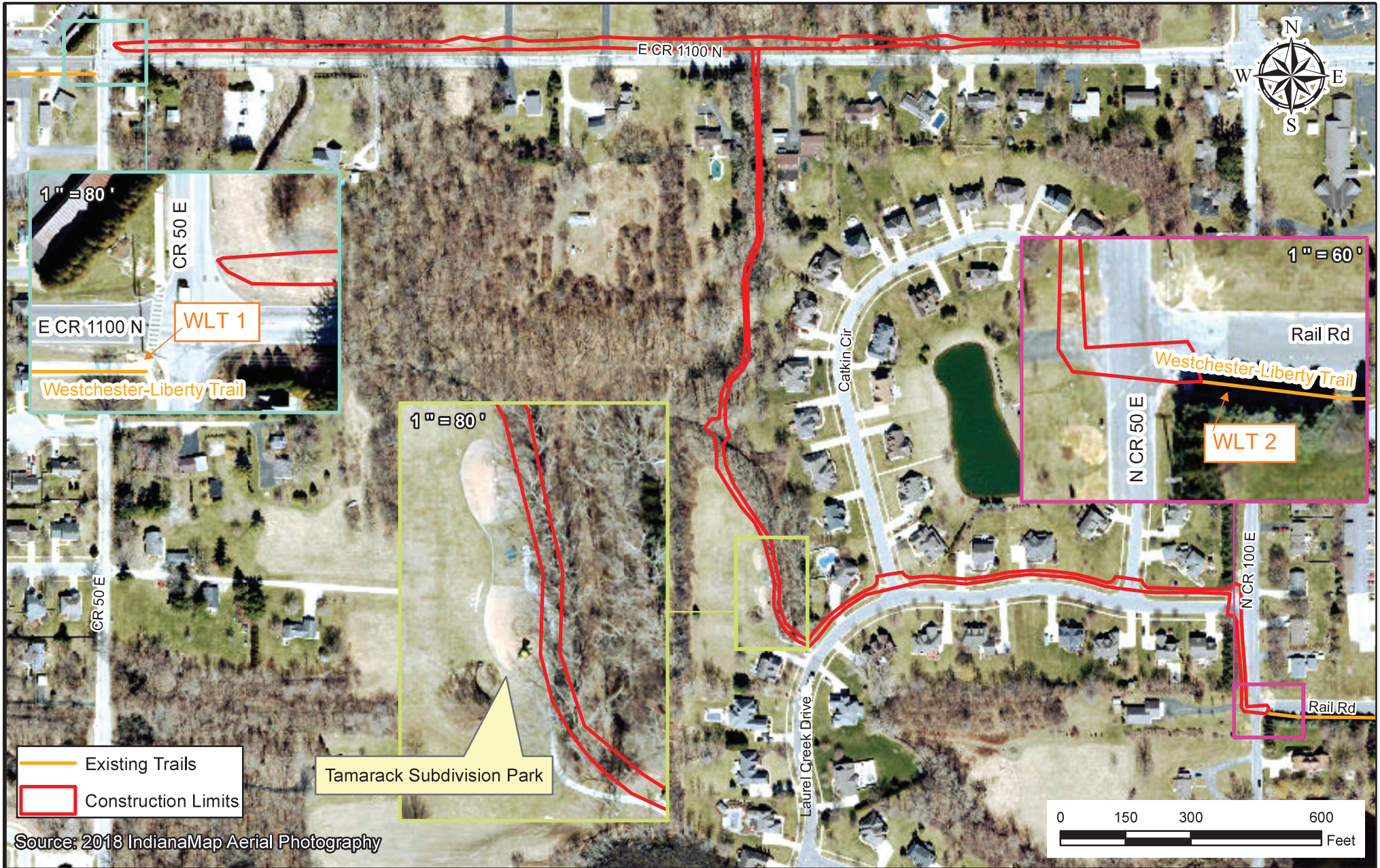
Therefore, we agree the project will not adversely affect, but will enhance the recreational activities, features, and attributes that qualify the trail for protection under Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act.

Sincerely,

(Signature) 

(Date) 02/14/2022

Dave Cincoski
Chesterton Town Manager
Town of Chesterton, Official with Jurisdiction



AMERICAN
STRUCTUREPOINT
INC.

2018 Aerial Photography

Town of Chesterton
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana, 46304

Westchester Phase 3 Trail
Des. No. 1902832
Location: Chesterton
Township: Westchester and Liberty
County: Porter
State: Indiana

Date: 1/17/2022

Appendix I
I-30

Helms, Alexa

From: Michels, Stewart <SMichels@indot.IN.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 3, 2022 12:35 PM
To: Helms, Alexa
Cc: Iddings, Joshua
Subject: RE: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832) - Transportation Enhancement Section 4(f) Exemption

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Alexa,

Thank you very much for the great synopsis. I really appreciate it. It seems every time 4(f) comes up, I must read through the whole policy. I concur with your assessment (i.e., exception). Concerning the letter, I'm sure you have verified that the Board or Board President/Chair is not simply advisory and is the proper OWJ, as opposed to the Town Mgr. or Superintendent? Also, I'm assuming you have previously coordinated with the Board/OWJ? I saw the project was identified in a Master Plan Update (2021 -2025). Sorry for all the questions. Thank you for your consideration and, again, thank you for the great outline of the matter.

Best,
Stew

From: Helms, Alexa <ahelms@structurepoint.com>
Sent: Monday, January 31, 2022 5:15 PM
To: Michels, Stewart <SMichels@indot.IN.gov>
Cc: Iddings, Joshua <Jiddings@structurepoint.com>
Subject: Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 Project (Des. No. 1902832) - Transportation Enhancement Section 4(f) Exemption

****** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email. ******

Good afternoon,

We would like your consultation regarding Section 4(f) Coordination for the Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase 3 project. This project would construct a shared-use path to connect the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail to the Wabash Corridor Trail. Additionally, the new trail would be built along an unnamed public park owned by the town of Chesterton. The project is located in Chesterton, Westchester and Liberty Townships, Porter County, Indiana. The project begins at the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 50 East, at the end of the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail, and extends 0.45 mile east to an existing sidewalk, approximately 250 feet west of North CR 100 East. Approximately 1130 feet west of the intersection of CR 1100 North and North CR 100 East, the project extends south for approximately 0.30 mile before connecting with the existing sidewalk along the north side of Laurel Creek Drive. The project then continues along Laurel Creek Drive to North CR 100 East and continues south along North CR 100 East for 0.05 mile to the intersection of North CR 100 East and Rail Road and connects with the Wabash Corridor Trail.

The development of the new shared-use path would not impact the existing Westchester-Liberty Trail, as the connection between the existing trail and the new shared-use path would occur at the intersection of CR 1100 N and CR 50 N and

would require only the installation of a crosswalk. The new shared-use path would minimally impact the Wabash Corridor Trail, as a new curb ramp is being installed at the western end of the Wabash Corridor Trail. The trail will remain open, however. Additionally, the new shared-use path would minimally impact the public park while the path is being constructed along the eastern edge of the park and may briefly close a section of a gravel path within the park. The park will also remain open, however, and access to the park's resources will not be impacted during construction. Once the new shared-use path is complete, there will be connectivity between the existing trails and better access to the park. Therefore, we believe this project would fall under a Section 4(f) exemption for a Transportation Enhancement Activity as:

- The use of the Section 4(f) property is solely for the purpose of preserving or enhancing an activity, feature or attribute that qualifies the property for Section 4(f) protection.

Further, as the Transportation Enhancement Activity exception requires "The official(s) with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) resource [to] agree," I have attached draft letters with attachments to send to the officials with jurisdiction (OWJ).

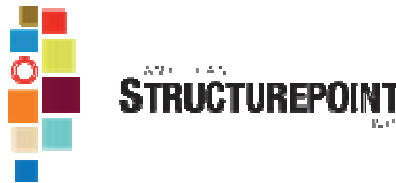
For this reason, we do not believe this project will result in Section 4(f) use and falls under the Transportation Enhancement Activity exemption. Please let us know if you concur with our determination and have any comments on the letter.

Thank you,

Lex Helms

Alexa Helms
Environmental Scientist

9025 River Road, Unit 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.547.5580 OFFICE
structurepoint.com WEB



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Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) County Property List for Indiana (Last Updated July 2020)

ProjectNumber	SubProjectCode	County	Property
1800037	1800037	Porter	Woodland Park
1800050	1800050	Porter	Forest Park Golf Course
1800065	1800065	Porter	Woodland Park
1800080	1800080	Porter	Woodland Park
1800127	1800127	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park & Dunes Nature Preserve
1800130	1800130	Porter	Bicentennial Park, Northside Park
1800171	1800171E	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park
1800173	1800173	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park & Dunes Nature Preserve
1800270	1800270	Porter	Harold Rogers Lakewood Park
1800276	1800276	Porter	Imagination Glen Park
1800284	1800284	Porter	Dogwood Park
1800304	1800304B	Porter	Moraine
1800312	1800312E	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park
1800327	1800327D	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park
1800349	1800349	Porter	Thomas Drazer Memorial Park & Pleasant Twp. Pool
1800363	1800363M	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park
1800378	1800378B	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park
1800405	1800405Q	Porter	Moraine Nature Preserve
1800407	1800407	Porter	Imagination Glen Park
1800413	1800413L	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park
1800429	1800429	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park & Dunes Nature Preserve
1800443	1800443	Porter	Haven Hollow Park
1800452	1800452	Porter	Sunset Hill Farm County Park
1800460	1800460	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park & Dunes Nature Preserve
1800484	1800484	Porter	Prairie Duneland Trail
1800495	1800495	Porter	Prairie Duneland Trail
1800498	1800498	Porter	Prairie Duneland Trail
1800539	1800539	Porter	Imagination Glen Park
1800591	1800591	Porter	Sunset Hill Farm Park
1800624	1800624	Porter	Imagination Glen Park
1800626	1800626C	Porter	Indiana Dunes State Park

*Park names may have changed. If acquisition of publically owned land or impacts to publically owned land is anticipated, coordination with IDNR, Division of Outdoor Recreation, should occur.

From: [Dean, Kelly](#)
To: [Iddings, Joshua](#)
Cc: [Wolverton, Eric](#); [Lorig, Greg](#); [Hinkle, Meghan](#); [Tennancour, Skip](#)
Subject: Westchester Trail Phase 3 - Tamarack Subdivision
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 9:20:19 AM
Attachments:

Josh, please see Lonnie's response below.

Kelly Dean

Right of Way Manager
Transportation Group

1254 Eton Way
Avon IN 46123
317.547.5580 OFFICE
317.965.0631 CELL (PREFERRED)
structurepoint.com WEB



From: lonnie miller <lmiller-eval@indy.rr.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 9:12 AM
To: Dean, Kelly <kdean@structurepoint.com>
Cc: Tennancour, Skip <STennancour@structurepoint.com>
Subject: RE: Westchester Trail Phase 3 - Tamarack Subdivision

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Kelly-

While I do not know the specifics of the take, I'm not sure what basis the decrease in value is anticipated. It would have to be shown by market data that the trail will decrease the property value. For easement acquisitions related to trails, I have not seen a loss in value. I have seen owners argue that the trail will cause more foot traffic and bring folks in their neighborhood who do not live there, but generally conjecture and speculation are not compensable. In fact, if you look at newer neighborhoods, trails are a selling point along with other outdoor recreational features.

Lonnie



BOARD of PARKS and RECREATION

1415 South 23rd Street
Chesterton, Indiana 46304
Telephone (219) 926-3000

May 10, 1995

✓
To: Advisory Plan Commission
From: Board of Parks & Recreation
Re: Tamarack Development

On 5/3/95, the Park Board voted unanimously to approve developers plans for approximately 4 acres to be set aside for recreational use in proposed Tamarack development.

Plans include a walking trail that connects to County Road 1100 North, a bridge over a creek, a playground and a soccer field.

The Park Board would like to commend these developers for their presentation of an excellent recreational plan. This area will be a recreational benefit for citizens of our community and their future generations.

Sincerely,

Scot McCord (BAM)

Scot McCord, President
Board of Parks & Recreation

**Harris
Welsh &
Lukmann**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

MICHAEL C HARRIS
ROBERT A WELSH
L CHARLES LUKMANN, III

107 BROADWAY
CHESTERTON, INDIANA 46304
TELEPHONE FAX
(219) 926-2114 (219) 926-1503

February 23, 2000

Ms Gayle Polakowski
Chesterton Town Hall
726 Broadway
Chesterton, Indiana 46304

RE: Tamarack Park Land Deed

Dear Gayle:

Enclosed you will find the original corrective warranty deed transferring title to real estate from Tamarack Development, Inc. to the Town of Chesterton for park land purposes. This deed was recorded as Instrument Number 2000-003395 and should be used in place of a warranty deed which was recorded in 1999 as Instrument Number 1999-017302. The corrective warranty deed was made due to an incomplete legal description being supplied. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

HARRIS WELSH & LUKMANN


L. Charles Lukmann, III

LCL/Im
Enclosure

17.00
②

2000-003395

STATE OF INDIANA
PORTER COUNTY
FILED FOR RECORD

02-11-2000 3:11 PM

JACQUELYN N. STERLING
RECORDER

CORRECTIVE WARRANTY DEED

THIS INDENTURE WITNESSETH, that Tamarack Development, Inc., a Delaware Corporation, a/k/a Blue Heron Partnership, of Porter County, in the State of Indiana, conveys and warrants to the Town of Chesterton, of Porter County, in the State of Indiana, whose mailing address for tax purposes is 726 Broadway, Chesterton, Indiana 46304, for and in consideration of Ten Dollars (\$10.00), and other valuable consideration, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, the following described Real Estate in Porter County, in the State of Indiana, to-wit

That part of the East Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 12, Township 36 North, Range 6 West of the Second Principal Meridian, Porter County, Indiana, described as follows:

Commencing at the Southwest corner of said East Half; thence N 00°15'14" E along the West line of said East Half 1395.32 feet to the Point of Beginning (assumed basis of bearing is the West line of said East Half being N 00°15'14" E); thence continuing N 00°15'14" E along said West line 554.41 feet; thence S 89°38'27" E 149.98 feet, thence N 00°00'00" E parallel with the East line of said Northeast Quarter 700.00 feet to the North line of said Northeast Quarter, thence S 89°38'27" E along said North line 60.00 feet; thence S 00°00'00" W parallel with said East line 699.30 feet; thence S 33°27'26" W 142.68 feet; thence S 24°30'43" E 101.98 feet; thence S 33°11'38" E 131.85 feet; thence S 11°35'49" E 120.10 feet; thence S 04°16'23" E 129.44 feet; thence S 30°44'26" E 65.40 feet to the beginning of a non-tangent curve concave Southeasterly having a radius of 330.00 feet, a chord bearing of S 35°24'12" W and a chord distance of 48.33 feet; thence Southwesterly along said curve 48.38 feet to the Northerly line of Tamarack Phase 2, recorded as Document No. 95-07462 on 4/20/1995 in Plat File 25-A-2 in the Office of the Recorder of Porter County, Indiana.; thence N 68°52'48" W along said Northerly line 308.16 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 4.11 acres more or less and subject to all existing easements and rights-of-way.

06-7

Subject to all existing taxes, easements and restrictions of record.

This is a corrective warranty deed correcting that certain warranty deed known as Instrument No. 1999-017302.

In Witness Whereof, the said Grantor has hereunto set its hand and seal, this 4th day of February, 2000.

TAMARACK DEVELOPMENT, INC.,
A Delaware Corporation, a/k/a
BLUE HERON PARTNERSHIP

By.

Gregory Veselica
Gregory Veselica, President

Gary Housman
Gary Housman, Vice President

Rudolf Sutton
Rudolf Sutton a/k/a Rudy Sutton, Vice President

ENTERED IN TAXATION SECTION
FOR ACCEPTANCE FOR TRANSFER

FEB 11 2000

Jacquelyn N. Sterling
RECORDER

STATE OF INDIANA

SS

COUNTY OF PORTER

Before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public, in and for said County and State, this 4th day of February, 2000, personally appeared Tamarack Development, Inc., A Delaware Corporation, a/k/a Blue Heron Partnership, by Gregory Veselica, President, Gary Housman, Vice President, and Rudolf Sutton a/k/a Rudy Sutton, Vice President, and acknowledged the execution of the foregoing Deed.

WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal.

Linda D Miller
Linda D Miller
Notary Public



My Commission Expires: 6/30/00
Resident of Porter County, Indiana

This instrument prepared by: L. Charles Lukmann, III, Attorney, 107 Broadway, Chesterton, Indiana 46304

Twp of Cheston Tamarack Cor Deed 1m

No sidewalks on 100E makes walking perilous for Tamarack residents

By KEVIN NEVERS

Folks who live in the Tamarack subdivision—tucked into a tiny, nearly landlocked pocket of incorporated Chesterton immediately west of unincorporated C.R. 100E and south of unincorporated C.R. 1100N—have no good, which is to say safe, way of walking from their homes to the South Calumet Business District and the Downtown beyond 9/12/16 Or to Chesterton High School.

Or, really, anywhere.

That's because C.R. 100E—which falls soundly within the jurisdiction of unincorporated Porter County—has no sidewalks. Even if it did, neither C.R. 1100N nor C.R. 1050N west of C.R. 100E has sidewalks either. So Tamarack folks either have to walk or run within their subdivision or brave the traffic on C.R. 100E if they want to get anywhere at all by foot.

That was the point Katie Whalen, a resident of Tamarack, made forcefully at the Town Council's meeting Monday night. "We've got all these great places to go but no way to get to them," she said. "Our connectivity really needs improvement."

Whalen's point was well taken by the council. It is, after all, indisputable.

But as several members noted, the issue of sidewalks is a thorny one. And an expensive one.

Eventually, said Member Jim Ton, R-1st, the Westchester-Liberty Trail will run the length of 1100N from Dogwood Park to a point several hundred feet west of C.R. 100E, where it will cross the roadway and connect to Tamarack via a thin corridor of municipal property which is owned by the Parks Department but surrounded by county property. The Westchester-Liberty Trail will then

(Continued on the Back Page)

Sidewalks needed

(Continued from Front Page)

proceed through Tamarack, debouch onto C.R. 100E, and continue east along Rail Road into Coffee Creek Center.

But it could be years before that final stretch of the trail—Phase III—is completed.

How many years? Whalen wondered.

Phase II, which will take the trail as far east as Fifth Street, won't be done anytime before 2017, and the town can't apply for grant moneys to do Phase III until Phase II is finished. Brass tacks: there are no projected dates for the completion of the Westchester-Liberty Trail, Ton said. And were it not for nearly \$1 million in grants from the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, it's virtually certain that the town wouldn't be building the Westchester-Liberty Trail at all. Estimated price tag for Phase II: \$1.2 million.

There's another problem, though, as Member Emerson DeLaney, R-5th observed. C.R. 100E south of C.R. 1100N is a county road, along which the town has no jurisdiction to go building a sidewalk, as excellent an idea as that is.

It's possible, however, that the county might be amenable to pursuing a joint sidewalk project with the town, if in fact there is enough right-of-way to build one, suggested Member Lloyd Kittredge, R-2nd.

Town Attorney Chuck Lukmann promised the council that he would make inquiries at the county level to see whether there's interest in the idea.

Sidewalk Replacement

In other business, the Street Department released its three-year sidewalk replacement list, now in its second year:

•Wilson Street, east side, from Bowser Ave. to East Porter Ave.

•In front of 1606 S. Fifth St.

•Seventh Street, west side, from Broadway to West Indiana Ave.

•Broadway to West Indiana Ave.

•Wabash Ave., north side, from Fourth Street to Third Street.

•Fourth Street, east side, from Broadway south to the alley; and west side, from West Indiana Ave. north to the alley.

•West Indiana Ave., south side, from Fifth Street east 200 feet; and north side, from Fourth Street to Fifth Street.

•West Morgan Ave., north side, from Fourth Street to Fifth Street.

•Lincoln Ave., north side, from Second Street to Third Street.

•Fifth Street, east side, from West Indiana Ave. north to alley.

•Fourth Street, west side, from West Morgan Ave. to Lincoln Ave.

•Third Street, east side, from Lincoln Ave. to West Porter Ave.

•Wabash Ave. from Third Street to North Calumet Road.

•East Indiana Ave., south side, from Landman Street to Jeffrey Street.

•Lincoln Ave., north side, from Fourth Street east 100 feet.

•West Indiana Ave., north side, from Sixth Street to 15th Street.

•Third Street, west side, from Lincoln Ave. to West Porter Ave.

Hogan Ave.

Meanwhile, Jennifer Gregoline, a resident of Hogan Ave., put this question to the council: why has Hogan Ave., after getting a base coat of asphalt some 25 years ago, never received a top coat? The road, she told members, is in pretty rough shape.

DeLaney noted that Hogan Ave. is due for a re-surfacing, it's on Street Commissioner John Schnadenberg's three-year paving list, but based on its age and condition it has a fairly low priority: that is, it's currently No. 50 on a 52-item to-do list. "A lot of other streets are in worse shape," DeLaney said.

Schnadenberg was not himself in attendance on Monday, but his

NIRPC gives high grade to Phase III of 1100N trail

By KEVIN NEVERS

It would be three years at least before ground is broken—and in any event there's many a slip twixt cup and lip—but Phase III of the Westchester-Liberty Trail has received the Northwestern Indiana Regional Plan Commission's highest grade for a multi-use trail project in NIRPC's most recent review of proposed transportation projects from the three counties.

So Chesterton Town Engineer Mark O'Dell reported to the Town Council at its meeting Monday night.

Phase III would continue the eight-foot sidewalk along 1100N from South Fifth Street to 100E. It would be constructed on the north side of 1100N, but approximately half way between the two intersections a spur on the south side would be built leading into park property in the Tamarack subdivision, then continue through the neighborhood until debouching onto 100E where it meets Rail Road, thus effectively linking Dogwood Park with Coffee Creek Center. 2/12/19

NIRPC's score of the project: 75, two points higher than a Marquette Greenway trail project submitted by Hammond.

The total estimated cost of Phase III: \$1,406,250. The town's portion of the cost: \$352,000, with the balance being funded with federal moneys, O'Dell said.

O'Dell noted that MS4 Operator Jennifer Gadzala and Street Commissioner John Schnadenberg assisted in preparing the Phase III application to NIRPC. No construction money would be available until

2022 at the earliest, but if start-up funds were to be released earlier, then Phase III could be engineered ahead of time and ready to go when INDOT got the greenlight from NIRPC to let the project, O'Dell added.

Wayfaring Signage

In other business, on O'Dell's recommendation members voted unanimously to authorize the expenditure of \$11,261 for the purchase of wayfaring signage along Chesterton's stretch of the Prairie Duneland Trail.

The signage is part of a NIRPC project under which uniform wayfaring signage will be erected along the entirety of the Prairie Duneland Trail and other trails in Lake County.

Total cost of the signage: \$56,302, the balance of which will be funded through a NIRPC grant.

A check in the amount of \$11,261 will actually be made over to the Town of Highland, which agreed to be the lead municipality in the project.

"It's a good idea to have the signs matching," said Member Dane Lafata, D-3rd.

11th Street Paving Bids

Meanwhile, Schnadenberg reminded the council that it will be opening bids at its next meeting, Feb. 25, for the re-pave of South 11th Street between Park Ave. and 1100.

That project is one of six being partially funded by a 50/50 Community Crossings state infrastructure grant.

Schnadenberg added that he and
(Continued on the Back Page)

Town gets \$1.2M grant for 1100N trail

By KEVIN NEVERS

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission has officially awarded a grant to the Town of Chesterton for Phase III of the Westchester-Liberty Trail.

So Town Council Member Jim Ton, R-1st, reported at the council's meeting Tuesday night.

The grant totals \$1,209,375.

In February, Ton reported that NIRPC had given its highest grade for multi-use trail projects to Phase III, which will continue the eight-foot sidewalk along 1100N from South Fifth Street to 100E. It will be constructed on the north side of 1100N, but approximately halfway between the two intersections a spur on the south side will be built leading into park property in the Tamarack subdivision, then continue through the neighborhood until

debranching onto 100E where it will meet Rail Road, thus effectively linking Coffee Creek Center with Dogwood Park and—via the sidewalk along 23rd Street—with the Prairie Duneland Trail and points east.

5/27/19
The total estimated cost of Phase III: \$1,406,250. The town's portion of the cost: around \$300,000, with the balance being with federal monies.

RR Quiet Zone

In other business, Town Engineer Mark O'Dell reported that work continues on a request for proposals for a feasibility study on a quiet-zone retrofit of the railroad grade-crossings in Downtown Chesterton.

O'Dell said that, on Associate Town Attorney Chuck Parkinson's suggestion, he's working to add
(Continued on Back Page)

New Firefighter

Police Chief Dave Cincoski took a moment to announce that a new police officer has been given a conditional offer of employment, pending approval by the 1977 Police Officers' and Firefighters Retirement Fund.

His name: Eric Lisoski.

Jarka similarly announced the hire of a new firefighter, whom he will introduce at an upcoming meeting of the council.

right-of-way in the project.

O'Dell noted that a fire hydrant at the intersection has been installed in an easement granted to Indiana American Water Company. "It's right in the middle of things," O'Dell said. "We're trying to find all those red flags."

Business Inspections

O'Dell also told the council that the Building Department and Fire Department have begun working

Council amends Personnel Policy to correct personal-leave day discrepancy

By KEVIN NEVERS

The Chesterton Town Council has addressed the disparity in a benefit which had been provided to career-firefighters but not to the town's other municipal employees: four additional paid days off per year.

In November, Street Commissioner John Schnadenberg submitted to the council a letter signed by himself and the town's other department heads, alerting the council to general unhappiness among their employees that the CFD's career-firefighters enjoy four more paid personal-leave days per year than they do.

The council's solution: to amend the Personnel Policy Handbook, which had stated that municipal employees are entitled to *two* paid personal leave *days* every year. At their meeting Monday night, members voted unanimously to amend the handbook to state that all employees are now entitled to *48* paid personal leave *hours* every year.

Another discrepancy addressed by the amendment: police officers and firefighters are entitled to a full six months of paid major medical leave, equivalent to 1,040 hours. All other municipal employees, under the old Personnel Policy Handbook, were entitled only 960, due to a miscalculation. The amendment approved

on Monday corrects that disparity and grants all municipal employees the full 1,040 hours.

As Town Attorney Chuck Lukmann noted about the handbook, "It's not an aesthetic document. The personal policy manual will always be looked at." 12/26/19

Westchester-Liberty Trail

In other business, Town Engineer Mark O'Dell informed members that the incoming council should be prepared in 2020 to make available \$221,094 in CREDIT moneys as the match for an 80/20 federal grant—approved earlier this year by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission—for Phase III of the Westchester-Liberty Trail.

The \$1.4-million Phase III will continue the eight-foot sidewalk along the north side of 1100N from South Fifth Street to 100E, with a spur crossing 1100N, entering the Tamarack subdivision by way of a corridor owned by the Park Department, and then debouching onto 100E at Rail Road.

The \$221,094 match will pay for 20 percent of necessary right-of-way acquisition and 100 percent of engineering, while the federal portion of the grant will pay for trail construction itself.

2020 Salary Ordinance

2019 Ordinance Amended

Meanwhile, members voted unan-

imously to adopt the 2020 Salary Ordinance, which provides for a 2.04 percent raise for all full-time municipal employees.

They also voted unanimously to amend the 2019 Salary Ordinance after it was discovered that it inadvertently omitted two positions: Police Commission member and Park Board member. "We need to add those positions so those members can be paid," Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Kuziela said.

New CFD Engine

Fire Chief John Jarka reported that the CFD's new engine, currently under construction, should be ready for a final inspection Jan. 6-7.

In related business, members unanimously approved a 2.04-percent, seven-year loan for the engine offered by First State Bank of Porter.

ALS Proposal

While members continue to review a proposal submitted earlier this month by Jarka for the establishment by the CFD of an advanced life support (ALS) ambulance service, Jarka reported that three different billing companies have expressed an interest in the venture. A key component of the success of a CFD-operated ALS service would be recouping the cost of treatment and transport and making it a self-funding function of the department.

Engineering contract awarded for Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase III

By KEVIN NEVERS

At its Zoom meeting Monday night, the Chesterton Town Council voted unanimously to award the contract for engineering and right-of-way acquisition for Phase III of the Westchester-Liberty Trail to American StructurePoint of Highland. 4/27/20

All members and department heads were in attendance.

The contract price: \$296,315. Under the terms of the contract, American StructurePoint must provide \$1 million in professional liability insurance.

Harris Welsh & Lukmann will assist with the appraisal and acquisition of public right-of-way needed for the project, which will extend an eight-foot hike/bike trail along the north side of 1100N from South Fifth Street to 100E. A branch line will also be constructed, roughly

mid-way between South Fifth Street and 100E, across 1100N into the Tamarack subdivision by way of a corridor owned by the Park Department. Then hikers and bikers will be able to access Coffee Creek Center via the Tamarack public sidewalks and Rail Road.

Phase III is being funded by a 75/25 match grant in the amount of \$1,209,375 awarded by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission. Member Jim Ton, R-1st, reminded his colleagues that the town opted to apply for a 75/25 match, rather than the more usual 80/20 grant, to make the Town of Chesterton more competitive and attractive in the grant process. "We beefed it up from 80/12 to win the grant," he said.

When completed, the Westchester-Liberty Trail will link Coffee Creek Center to the 23rd

Street Sidewalk all the way to the Prairie Duneland Trail and beyond.

"It's all about the kids," Ton noted. "We really need to get the kids to school safely."

Ton also congratulated Town Engineer Mark O'Dell on another successful grant application. "You did a tremendous job," he said.

Replied O'Dell, "Street Commissioner John Schnadenberg, MS4 Operator Jennifer Gadzala, and I all worked together on the application. It was a team effort."

Member Bob Allison, thanked O'Dell as well, in part for his skill in explaining the needed civil engineering project. "Kudos to you for explaining these projects in lay terms," he said. "I was able to understand what was being asked for."

Surveying underway for Westchester-Liberty Trail

By KEVIN NEVERS

Construction of Phase III of the Westchester-Liberty Trail--which will extend the eight-foot sidewalk along 1100N from South Fifth Street to 100E--may not actually begin for another four or five years, but surveyors are now at work. 8/25/20

Chesterton Town Engineer Mark O'Dell, questioned by Town Council Member Jim Ton, R-1st, at the council's meeting Monday night, said that the only thing anyone knows with certainty right now about the route is that a branch of Phase III will be built on Park Department property leading into the Tamarack subdivision, which will give bicyclists and pedestrians access to Coffee Creek Center via Rail Road.

Otherwise, O'Dell said, no decision has yet been made about the main route of Phase III. "There may be options. On the north side of 1100N or the south side."

Ton told O'Dell that he was wondering about the route because a Chesterton resident suggested to him that the plan was already a done deal and being concealed from the public. "So there's no design we're keeping under the table?" Ton pressed.

Not at all, O'Dell replied. Preliminary design of Phase III hasn't even begun yet, he said, and "we're still four or five years out" from building it. Possibly in six months, once the surveyors have wrapped their heads around the wetlands and the nuts and bolts of right-of-way acquisition, the engineers

will start their design.

"It's a tough route between 100E and South Fifth Street," Ton noted. "A tough route."

Acceptance of Roadways

In other business, and at Street Commissioner John Schnadenberg's recommendation, members voted unanimously to accept the following public roads in Easton Park: Easton Park Drive, Redwood Lane (public portion), Sequoia Court, Sequoia Lane, Spruce Lane, Timberwood Lane, and Tanglewood Lane.

These roads have all been built to Town Standards and are now open to motorists, Schnadenberg said. Their formal acceptance by the council will enable Schnadenberg to submit them to the state for addition to the town's inventory.

Redevelopment Commission

Earlier in the evening, the Redevelopment Commission held a very brief monthly meeting, at which Schnadenberg reported that nearly all this season's tax increment financing projects have been completed, most recently the replacement of the sidewalk on the east side South Calumet Road between Porter Ave. and Jefferson Ave.

A joint paving project with the Porter County Highway Department is currently being discussed, Schnadenberg added: the re-surfacing of North Calumet Ave. from Ind. 49 to U.S. Highway 6. The town's portion of the project would extend as far south as the North Porter County Conservation Club.

12/13/2021

In other business, Town Engineer Mark O'Dell reported that the preliminary engineering plan for Phase III of the Westchester-Liberty Trail has been submitted to INDOT. That plan was prepared by American StructurePoint, contracted to do so early in 2020 at a price of \$296,315.

The next step, O'Dell said: to prepare a request for proposals for an appraising firm to value property identified by American StructurePoint as necessary right-of-way for the eight-foot sidewalk.

Phase III is being funded by a 75/25 match grant in the amount of \$1,209,375 awarded by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission.

Phase III will be built along the north side of 1100N from South Fifth Street to 100E. A spur—leading into the Tamarack subdivision—will also be built along a piece of property owned by the Park Department on the south side of 1100N. Pedestrians and bicyclists will then be able to access Coffee Creek Center via Rail Road.

When completed, folks will have the means of making their way safely along an asphalt trail or concrete sidewalk all the way from Hobart to Coffee Creek Center via the Prairie Duneland Trail, then 23rd Street, then phases I, II, and III of the Westchester-Liberty Trail.

Hinkle, Meghan

From: Matt Gavelek <mgavelek@chestertonin.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2023 10:48 AM
To: Iddings, Joshua; Hinkle, Meghan; Wolverton, Eric; Lorig, Greg
Cc: Mark O'Dell
Subject: County Participation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe!

Hi Josh,

Here is the background on the County/Town coordination regarding the West Chester Liberty Trail, Ph. 3. The Town did ask if the County would financially contribute to the 100E Route, but the County did not have funding for the sidewalk project at the time of the request. Because the Town determined the preferred alternative is the lowest impact, the Town did not pursue any further discussion with the County.

Respectfully,

M. Matt Gavelek, PE | Asst. Town Engineer
1490 Broadway Chesterton, IN 46304
O: (219) 926-2610 | C: (219) 707-7109
mgavelek@chestertonin.org | ChestertonIN.org



TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
April 10, 2023
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President D. Lafata called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll was called by Clerk-Treasurer C. Udvare; present were Council Member J. Ton, President D. Lafata, Council Member J. Fisher, and Council Member S. Darnell. Council Member L. Kittredge was absent.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member J. Fisher made the motion to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2023 Meeting, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS

Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the claims as presented, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

V. PETITIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Waiver of Minimum Standards- 5352 Elgin St. – Joel Reynolds- Reynolds wishes to add a second driveway on his property leading to a pole barn. Town Attorney C. Nolan stated that the Council typically takes these requests under advisement and refers to department heads for review and report. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to take this under advisement, motion seconded by Council Member J. Fisher; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Deanne Manojlovic- [REDACTED] Manojlovic commented on the Tamarack proposed trail path regarding safety issues. She feels crossing at the light would be safer than crossing on 1100 N and that a logical connection would be located on CR 100. Furthermore, she feels the Town should do everything they can to work with the County on this project regarding crossing locations.

Bob Filipek – [REDACTED] – Filipek commented on the Tamarack path, referencing an HOA meeting from a couple weeks ago. Filipek stated that 50 out of 80 homes attended the

meeting and the homeowners have voiced that they are opposed to the proposed trail path. Filipek further commented that the homeowners were not notified properly and that there are safety issues regarding the route. He also thinks that the proposed route is not cost effective.

Christine Sagarsee- [REDACTED] Sagarsee stated she was upset that she didn't even know the plans for the trail were available. She also agreed with the safety factors mentioned by other residents above.

VI. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS

A. Police—Chief T. Richardson reported on traffic grants during March, stating there were 130 traffic stops and 59 citations. The department focused efforts on Highway 49. Also, Chief Richardson reported that the Back the Blue 2023 event will be held at the Duneland Distillery on May 20th from 3pm to 930pm. This is a fundraising event for FOP 141 which also benefits the CPD.

B. Fire –Chief E. Camel reported on the status of Engine 511, stating that this was previously declared surplus and has since been listed on Govdeals. The engine sold for \$7,600 which is much higher than the initial estimate of \$2,000-\$3,000. Chief Camel also reminded residents that Porter County is a no-burn county. Only recreational fires are permitted. Council Member J. Ton commented that it was a good suggestion on Camel's part to use Govdeals.

C. Clerk Treasurer- No report.

D. Streets, Sanitation, & Central Service- Dates for Spring Clean-Up, First paving project of the year start date- Street Commissioner J. Schnadenberg reported that Spring Cleanup will begin the third week of April. The department will actually start early due to nice weather. The department will be picking up leaves and brush. Next, Commissioner Schnadenberg reported that the entire Town has been street-swept. Lastly, Commissioner Schnadenberg reported on paving projects, stating that the Community Crossing Grant project of Porter Ave will start around May 1st. The 2nd part of the Community Crossing Grant project, which is paving several roads in the Westchester South subdivision, will begin around June 1st.

E. Engineering – Assistant Town Engineer M. Gavelek has been working with NIRPC on the EVP (Emergency Vehicle Preemption program). Next, Assistant Engineer Gavelek provided a statement and information regarding the proposed Westchester Liberty Trail Phase 3 through Tamarack:

“Good Evening Council,

At your request, the Town has scheduled a Public Hearing for the Westchester Liberty Trail, Phase 3. It will be held on Wednesday April 19th, from 6-8pm in the Chesterton Middle School Auditorium. Notices were provided in the following methods: Legal ad in the NWI Times, emails were sent out to residents who submitted previous comments, mailed to residents that live within 300' of project limits, emailed to the Tamarack HOA, and posted on the Town's

Facebook Page. With the Public Hearing comes a new 30-day comment period, which started April 5th and will close May 5th. The Town encourages participation at the Public Hearing and will consider all feedback received from residents. The Public Hearing will be a venue for residents to learn about the project and to submit verbal comments or questions about the project. However, no official replies will be given during the hearing. Rather, all comments received during the hearing and through other venues will be compiled and responded to after May 5th and made public within the project's environmental document. This is a requirement of the NEPA process. Finally, I'd like to highlight that a video has been uploaded to the project's website which explains the project in greater detail and addresses frequently asked questions from the previous comment period. Thank you."

F. Building —Town Manager D. Cincoski reminded residents that political signs and other signs need to be out of the Town right of way, on public utility poles, and/or on fences.

G. Parks –Superintendent T. McLead reported on the Coffee Creek board walk bid openings. This will be done at a Special Meeting on Monday 17th. The contract will be awarded at the May 3 meeting. Next, Superintendent McLead reported that the department's new Exmark mower will be here tomorrow. The mower was paid for by CEDIT funds. Lastly, Superintendent McLead reported that Rebuilding Together is on April 29th and that the Park Department will be assisting. There will be landscape assistance at Dogwood & Thomas Centennial Parks.

H. Attorney—No report.

I. Utilities- No report.

J. Town Manager- Town Manager D. Cincoski reported that he has received notice from NWI Paddling Association that they will be clearing out the East Arm of the Little Calumet River soon.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS, BID OPENINGS, & REMONSTRANCES

NONE

VIII. ORDINANCES AND/OR RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2023-06- Urban Forestry Days & Arbor Day- Maintains Tree City USA status which has been in place for 27years. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the resolution, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Resolution 2023-07- Supporting Concept of Healthy Living Campus- Chesterton Middle School & YMCA- YMCA Representative Dave Kasarda of 398 Sunrise Blvd in LaPorte, IN – Kasarda appeared before the Council to thank them for their support with this matter. He also thanked Town Manager Cincoski for being an advocate. The goal is to start the project's process on or around June 1st of 2024. This is a great opportunity for the community. Seven partners

have signed MOUs with the YMCA. Mark Chamberlain of 2420 Legend Circle spoke as capital campaign manager for the project, He stated that he moved here in 1968 and has not seen a more transformational project than this. Chamberlain went on to say that this will be a challenge to reach these goals of the project. This is a \$30 million capital campaign which also involves the early learning initiative. Council Member S. Darnell made the motion to approve the resolution, motion seconded by Council Member J. Fisher; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

XI. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

XI. NEW BUSINESS AND/OR UPDATES

Return of Parcel Request- ATC Jackson Creek LLC- Kathy Harris of ATG Real Estate Development, representing ATG Jackson Creek LLC, appeared before the Council and requested the return of a parcel that was deeded to the Town in anticipation to annex Jackson Creek. She referenced the annexation agreement with Olson Farms. This was to be returned since it has been five years with no action. Council Member J. Fisher made the motion to take this under advisement for legal review, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Council Member S. Darnell: Council Member S. Darnell commented bravo YMCA and Duneland Schools- the Healthy Living Center will be life changing for the community. Outstanding.

Council Member J. Fisher: Council Member J. Fisher seconded Council Member Darnell’s comments. She said she is thankful as this is a need for our community, especially in the downtown. This is a good culture change that will benefit us as a community. We are blessed to have people in our community come together. She continued regarding the Westchester Liberty trail project. She said she apologizes for laughing and meant no disrespect. This was a project that came up four years ago and not much has happened since then until now. The goal of the Town Council is to be more transparent. Hence, the Public Affairs Liaison (PAL).

Council Member L. Kittredge: No comment.

Council Member J. Ton: Council Member J. Ton commented that the Healthy Living Campus is a monumental endeavor, and deserves and will receive our full support. Thank you for the concept.

Council Member D. Lafata: No comment.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member J. Fisher made the motion to adjourn, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

ATTEST:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT

CLERK-TREASURER C. UDVARE

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
April 24, 2023
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President D. Lafata called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll was called by Clerk-Treasurer C. Udvardy; present were Council Member J. Ton, Council President D. Lafata, Council Member J. Fisher, Council Member S. Darnell, and Council Member L. Kittredge.

A Point of Privilege was requested by Council Member J. Ton regarding the public input on the Westchester Liberty Trail. Council Member J. Ton gave the following statement: “We have heard a lot of public input on the Westchester Liberty Trail. We look forward to receiving all the comments. The Council intends to make a decision as early as May 8th after the comment period is closed. Right now we cannot engage in the discussion because the comment period is not closed.”

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member J. Fisher made the motion to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2023 Meeting, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS

Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the claims as presented electronically, motion seconded by Council Member L. Kittredge; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

V. PETITIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Astra Safety Award- Jim Anton of Anton Insurance presented the Town with this award. Anton stated that the Town has been with Astra for four years and has been recognized two years in a row with the Astra Public Safety award. The Town has shown responsible and proactive safety in the workplace. David Paul, State Manager of Astra, commented that this was the first multiyear winner for a proactive safety approach. Paul stated that they insure over 200 public entities in the State. Chesterton provides a safe environment for the community and staff. The

Town has reached out for help with safety and loss control services.

Heather Compton- President of Rebuilding Together Duneland- Building Permit Fees Waiver Request- Compton reported that this Saturday is Rebuilding Together Duneland. There are 6 homes and 6 community projects that will be done this Saturday. The focus is to help those who can't help themselves as well as community revitalization. There are two sites in Chesterton. Permits have been filed for the two Chesterton sites. Compton asked that the Council waive the permit fees for the Chesterton sites. Council Member S. Darnell made the motion to waive the permit fees, motion seconded by Council Member J. Fisher; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Duneland Chamber of Commerce- President of Duneland Chamber Maura Mundell- New European Market Contract- Mundell appeared before the Council to request approval of a five year contract for the European Market. The market would start on May 6th and last through the last Saturday of October. Legal has reviewed the contract and received input from Department Heads. Mundell thanked Town Manager Cincoski for his help with questions. Council Member J. Fisher made the motion to approve the contract, motion seconded by Council Member J. Ton; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Deanne Manojlovic of [REDACTED] - Manojlovic appeared before the Council to comment on the Westchester Liberty Trail's proposed path through Tamarack. She asked that the Town work with Porter County on alternatives to trail design. Manojlovic stated that Tamarack residents would like the trail to be on 100 E. Manojlovic also stated that the trail system decreases property values due to proposed walking paths being by private property. Lastly, she requested alternatives to Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Theresa Buehler of [REDACTED] - Buehler referenced an email in which the Town had provided answers to the homeowner's association questions. Buehler further stated that she personally knows someone that wants to move to Tamarack, but they are now apprehensive about it due to the proposed trail system through the subdivision.

Jim Martin of [REDACTED] - Martin appeared before the Council to discuss the Westchester Liberty Trail. Martin thanked the Council for coming to the recent comment session. He wants the Town to do just Phase 1 of the project without Phase 2 and 3 and would rather see the sidewalk on 100E. Martin further commented that he is okay with waiting for the trail if NIRPC's funding is delayed due to the change of plans.

VI. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS

A. Police—2 Hour Parking- Chief T. Richardson reported on this proposed change regarding parking on the east side of Calumet. Businesses have been having issues with customers being able to park. All businesses were in favor of these changes except one. Council Member J. Ton has been contacted by businesses regarding the parking issue. Lastly, Chief Richardson commented it had been very busy at the station today and hats off to those officers that were working the day shift.

B. Fire –Endbridge Grant- Chief E. Camel reported that there are three car seat technicians that took training at the MAC. Next, Chief Camel reported that Engine 510 is officially in service. Lastly, Chief Camel stated that he is looking to move forward with a \$4,000 no match grant for radio equipment. Council Member J. Fisher made the motion to approve Chief Camel proceeding with the grant, motion seconded by Council Member L. Kittredge; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. Clerk Treasurer- Clerk Treasurer C. Udvarc reported that the 2022 American Rescue Plan Act report has been submitted.

D. Streets, Sanitation, & Central Service- Banner Request- Chesterton Duneland Kiwanis- Street Commissioner J. Schnadenberg reported on a banner request for the Chesterton Duneland Kiwanis Trash to Treasure sale on June 23rd and June 24th. The banner request would run from June 9th to June 24th. Council Member L. Kittredge made the motion to approve the banner request, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote. Next, Commissioner Schnadenberg reported that the department is in need of replacing a dump truck. It is currently estimated it will be in the year 2025 to get a Freightliner. Commissioner Schnadenberg explained that Henderson equipment, the company that puts equipment on trucks, has ten extra trucks ordered. The department would like to replace its 2005 GMC. The new truck could be here by the beginning of 2024 if purchased from Henderson. The purchase would be funded by MVH. The Street Department Liaison D. Lafata is in support of this purchase. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to allow Commissioner Schnadenberg to proceed with the purchase, motion seconded by Council Member L. Kittredge; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

E. Engineering – Town Engineer M. O’Dell reported the Council Dr. Storage unit plans have been approved and construction will be starting soon. He also reported that construction activity started at Coffee Creek lots 20-28. There will be a closure at Village Point over the next few weeks so they can tie into the sewer.

F. Building —Building Commissioner M. O’Dell reported on 606 S 2nd St., stating that cleanup has been happening daily and that they are on the 10th dumpster. They will also do the other property later on. Commissioner O’Dell also reported that the Ken Allen project is undergoing its final inspection with occupancy scheduled for May 1st.

G. Parks –Bruce Mathias- Independent Contractor- Park Superintendent T. McLead reported that due to the major illness of a full-time maintenance employee, extra help will be needed in the department. Mathias is willing to help out the department during this time. Attorney C. Nolan explained that an appointed board member working for the Department must be approved by the Park Board, which it was at their last meeting, and also by the Town Council. A Conflict of Interest form will be filled out and sent to the State. Council Member J. Fisher made the motion to approve hiring Mathias as an independent contractor, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote. Lastly, McLead reported that

the bid opening for the Coffee Creek project is still being reviewed and has been taken under advisement.

H. Attorney—No report.

I. Utilities- No report.

J. Town Manager- No report.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS, BID OPENINGS, & REMONSTRANCES

NONE

VIII. ORDINANCES AND/OR RESOLUTIONS

Ordinance 2023-07- Amending Town Code- 2 Hour Parking- Council Member L. Kittredge made the motion to approve the ordinance on 1st reading, motion seconded by Council Member J. Fisher; motion approved by unanimous voice vote. Council Member S. Darnell made the motion to suspend the rules, motion seconded by Council Member J. Ton; motion approved by unanimous voice vote. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the ordinance on 2nd reading, motion seconded by Council Member L. Kittredge; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

XI. OLD BUSINESS

Return of Parcel Request- ATC- Jackson Creek LLC- Attorney C. Nolan stated that it would be appropriate to return the parcel and to authorize Town Manager D. Cincoski to sign the deed on behalf of the Town. Council Member S. Darnell made the motion to authorize returning the parcel and for Town Manager D. Cincoski to sign the documents on behalf of the Town, motion seconded by Council Member J. Ton; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Waiver of Minimum Standards- 535 Elgin St- Reynolds- 2nd Driveway- No concerns were voiced by Department Heads. Council Member L. Kittredge made the motion to approve the waiver of minimum standards, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

XI. NEW BUSINESS AND/OR UPDATES

Taft & London Witte Group Engagement Letters- Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the approval of the Taft and London Witte Group engagement letters for the financial review of the new police station project, motion seconded by Council Member L. Kittredge; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

NIRPC Board Report- Council Member J. Ton reported that the NIRPC executive board met on April 20th. Council Member Ton stated that the 2nd call for Community Crossing grants will open on July 2nd. There is a new grant coming out called Safe Streets and Roads to All that should be looked into.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Council Member S. Darnell:	No comment.
Council Member J. Fisher:	No comment.
Council Member L. Kittredge:	No comment.
Council Member J. Ton:	No comment.
Council Member D. Lafata:	No comment.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member L. Kittredge made the motion to adjourn, motion seconded by Council Member J. Ton; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

ATTEST:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT

CLERK-TREASURER C. UDVARE

Office of the Town Manager

Westchester Liberty Trail Questions and Concerns

1. Route determination – was 1100 N. to 100 E. considered.
Yes. The current trail plan is the one that is being presented at this time because it had the least environmental impact and least amount of property acquisition. The present design is not final and next steps will be determined based upon the comments, public and staff input and Town Council determination.
2. Annexation of County residences – forced annexation and pursue eminent domain.
The Town has always taken the position that annexation into Town is voluntary. So, no, forcible annexation was / is not considered.
3. Trail right-of-way annexation – have current owners in County been approached regarding annexation.
When this portion of the trail plan development began in 2016, some County residents expressed their desire to remain unincorporated.
4. Residents to the east of 100 E. accessibility to downtown.
Currently there is no trail, path or route for this. The presented Westchester Liberty Trail plan was to assist with that accessibility by connecting 1100 N. to the sidewalk on 5th Street. Access along 100 E. would encounter the same difficulty due to unincorporated residences.
5. Trail would devalue or decrease residential properties.
Per the National Association of Realtors website, *“Property values are of utmost importance to homeowners, and living near a park, trail, or greenway may be certainly something to take into consideration. The good news is that recent studies have confirmed living near trails and greenways will likely raise your property value an average of 3-5% and sometimes even as high as 15%. There is also not correlation that trails increase crime in their surrounding areas.”*
6. Projections on trail traffic.
Unless a trail is established and trip counters employed, there really is no way to forecast trail traffic counts.
7. Tree impacts in the park and in the town right-of-way.
Within the park property, the trail would be designed and constructed to minimize impact or cause the removal of large trees. The trail, if constructed, would be laid in a route to maintain canopy cover and go around or avoid large trees.

Within the town right-of-way, the Town will be looking at the possibility of relocating or replanting trees in the right-of-way that would be affected by the trail. The significant tree removal mentioned in American Structurepoint's responses refers to the wooded sections along 1100 N.

8. Utilities – would fiber be affected.

In a perfect world, no. As long as previous contractors that installed the lines and conduit performed properly, any existing lines would be deep enough to not be imposed upon.

9. Maintenance of pathway and trail.

Any and all maintenance of any portion of the trail would be the responsibility of the Town.

10. 15 foot easement versus 30 foot written easement.

This was clarified as a 30 foot right-of-way from the center of the roadway.

11. Can a "shared roadway concept" be utilized.

The design team is considering the safety aspects of this suggestion.

The present design is not final, the Town has the ability to consider alternate options.

12. Is it worth pursuing with County to get right-of-way from 100 E. homeowners.

Nothing formal has been determined with Porter County. If the prepared plan does not progress, then the Town can consider approaching Porter County.

13. Present design affects 9 homeowners – how was this number determined.

7 parcels were initially determined to be impacted by the project. Since then, 1 has been removed. Of the 6 remaining parcels impacted, 5 are along 1100 N. and 1 is at the connection to Rail Road on 100E. .

14. Why not place the trail on the south side of Laurel Creek.

Trail crossing to the south side of Laurel Creek would require crossing the street at a curve, which is a safety concern and still involves the same amount of residences.

15. Why cross 1100 N. midpoint rather than at the intersection of 100 E.

Crossing midpoint requires crossing a shorter lateral distance of the roadway and has better line-of-sight. Phase 2 of the Westchester Liberty Trail has a mid-block crossing west of 11th Street on 1100 N. and there have been no reported issues.

16. Driveway conflicts with pedestrians.

I do not recall or note accurately the question. If it was expressed as a concern, that would exist on both Laurel Creek or 100 E, but we appreciate the feedback.

17. Maintenance of sidewalks, especially wintertime.

The Town would be responsible for repairing and replacing sidewalks. Established trails would also be maintained during winter as soon as staff can reasonably get to them.

18. Proper addresses – inaccurate listings.

American Structurepoint is working to correct the issues as can be determined.

19. Increased criminal activity concerns.

See final sentence in response to #5. The Prairie Duneland Trail is the largest and the most used trail in Chesterton. Within the portions of that trail that fall in Chesterton's corporate limits, there has been no significant criminal incidents within the last 10 years. This pertains to the actual trail itself. The trail did house the skate park at the trailhead for a number of years. Prior to its removal 2 years ago, there were criminal complaints in that area, but those were related to activities at the skate park, not the trail.

20. Why was the current plan put in motion without looking into alternatives.

Other alternatives exist and are still being considered. We are at the point in the process when alternatives are considered. This process for funding began in 2016 when there was expression of public support for extending the trail. The park property extension of the trail minimizes impact to residents and the community. It would be unaffordable to conduct environmental studies on all possible trail options. The environmental study must be conducted as part of the federal award process.