
OAK HILL ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

EVANSVILLE, VANDERBURGH COUNTY, INDIANA
DES. NO. 2002538

PROJECT INFORMATION PACKET



AMERICAN
STRUCTUREPOINT
INC.

Contact: Preeti Samra, American Structurepoint, Inc.

(317) 547-5580 or psamra@structurepoint.com

March 11, 2024

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

The purpose of this Project Information Packet is to explain the proposed Oak Hill Road Improvement project (Des. No. 2002538) and to receive your comments, concerns, suggestions, and/or request for a public hearing. There are several ways your comments may be submitted, as outlined below:

1. **Complete a comment form** and return it to American Structurepoint, Inc. (see below). Comment forms are included in your information packet. Comment forms are also available at the project website at www.structurepointpublic.com/oakhill.
2. **E-mail comments** to Preeti Samra of American Structurepoint, Inc. at psamra@structurepoint.com.
3. **Mail comments** to Preeti Samra of American Structurepoint, Inc. at 9025 River Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240.
4. **Fax comments** to Preeti Samra of American Structurepoint, Inc. at (317) 547-2070.

Please submit comments by (or have comments postmarked by) **March 25, 2024**. Comments will be reviewed and considered as part of the decision making process. If you have any questions concerning the proposed project or submitting comments, please contact Preeti Samra of American Structurepoint, Inc. at (317) 547-5580 or psamra@structurepoint.com.

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

1. In-person at:
 - a. Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library, 200 SE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Evansville, IN 47713
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. Website - www.structurepointpublic.com/oakhill

The Oak Hill Road Improvement Project Team thanks you for your participation in this project.

Project Description

Vanderburgh County, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and administrative oversight from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), is developing plans for the proposed Oak Hill Road Improvement project (Des. No. 2002538) located on Oak Hill Road beginning at Lynch Road and extending 1.012 mile north to St. George Road in Evansville, Vanderburgh County, Indiana.

The need for this project is evidenced by a lack of pedestrian facilities as well as the number of rear-end crashes along the project area as a result of vehicles stopping while attempting to turn left across the roadway. Of the ten intersecting roadways on this corridor, only three (Mariner Drive, Bergdolt Road, and St. George Road) have dedicated left turn lanes. Additionally, there are approximately 62 access points along this section of Oak Hill Road at intersection roadways, businesses, and residences which provide the sole access point for approximately 212 residential units and four businesses. This results in traffic queue as vehicles must block the travel lane and wait for a gap in opposing traffic, which is free flowing, before they attempt left turn movements from the northbound and southbound travel lanes to adjacent roadways, businesses, and residences. The vehicles attempting left turns and the subsequent backup of vehicles along Oak Hill Road results in increased risk of rear-end accidents. Based on 2016 to 2020 crash data for the project area, a total of 79 crashes have occurred including 3 incapacitating crashes, 17 crashes with injuries, and 1 crash involving pedestrians. In addition, the existing sidewalks within the project area lack connectivity, which results in pedestrians utilizing the roadway or an area immediately adjacent to the roadway. Because of this, there is an increased potential for vehicle and pedestrian conflict.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve left turn mobility for vehicles, reduce the number of opportunities for rear-end vehicle conflicts, and improve access to existing pedestrian facilities along Oak Hill Road.

As proposed, the project will widen Oak Hill Road to include two 11-foot wide travel lanes (one northbound and one southbound), a 12-foot wide two-way left turn lane, two 5-foot wide on-street bike lanes (one northbound and one southbound), as well as curb and gutter throughout project area. A six-foot wide sidewalk will be installed along the east side of Oak Hill Road. The proposed alternative does not have dedicated shoulders. However, the 5-ft wide bike lanes could be used in an emergency by motorists to pull over to the side of the roadway. Storm sewer will be constructed along Oak Hill Road throughout the project area to collect runoff from the new curb and gutter. Three existing unnumbered culverts, which convey unnamed tributaries (UNTs) 1, 2, and 3 to Pigeon Creek beneath Oak Hill Road, will be replaced and realigned to provide connectivity to the new storm sewers.

Project Schedule

Milestone	Completed/Expected Dates
Environmental Document Release for Public Involvement	February 29, 2024
Public Comment Opportunity	March 25, 2024
Right-of-Way Appraising Begins	July 2024
Anticipated Construction Start	Summer 2025

Description of Right-of-Way

The project will require the acquisition of right-of-way (ROW). Acquisition information can also be viewed at the project website at www.structurepointpublic.com/oakhill or <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real-estate/right-of-way/>. The project requires approximately 4.77 acres of permanent ROW and 0.33 acre of temporary ROW along the west and east sides of Oak Hill Road throughout the project area. Permanent ROW will extend approximately 40 feet east and 40 to 45 feet west of the centerline of Oak Hill Road post construction. Temporary ROW will be acquired at several locations along the west and east sides of Oak Hill Road at driveway connections for driveway construction or grading or for drainage tie ins. The proposed project will not result in the relocation of businesses, residences, or farms along the project corridor.

Estimated Project Cost

The estimated cost for this project is \$9,985,955 which includes design, right-of-way, and construction costs. Both federal and local funding will be used. The project is included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2028 Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Program (EMPO TIP) which has been directly incorporated into the FY 2024-2028 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Maintenances of Traffic (MOT)

The MOT plan for the project involves the full closure of Oak Hill Road, from Lynch Road to St. George Road. During the closure of this segment of Oak Hill Road, northbound traffic will be detoured from the intersection of Lynch Road and Oak Hill Road east to North Green River Road, north along North Green River Road to Heckel Road, then west along Heckel Road to Oak Hill Road. Southbound traffic will be detoured along the same route, beginning at the intersection of Heckel Road and Oak Hill Road. This detour has a total length of approximately 3.53 miles. Access to businesses and residences will be maintained for the duration of the road closure. The proposed start of construction is Summer 2025 and will continue through Summer 2027.

Environmental Documentation

The FHWA and INDOT have reviewed the Categorical Exclusion (CE) Level 2 environmental document prepared by American Structurepoint, Inc. for this project and released the document for public involvement on February 29, 2024. The CE evaluates the impact of the Oak Hill Road Improvement Project on the natural and human environment. No area of potentially significant impacts have been identified.

Water Resources

A wetland delineation was completed on April 10, 2023, that identified any water resources within the project area. It was determined that Four streams (UNTs 1,2 and 3 to Pigeon Creek and UNT to Licking Creek), and Two wetlands (Wetlands A and B), were located within the project area. All features appear to have jurisdictional connection to Pigeon Creek, a Traditionally Navigable Waterway (TNW). Therefore, these features are anticipated to be jurisdictional waters of the U.S. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) makes all final determinations regarding jurisdiction.

UNT 1 to Pigeon Creek is located approximately 55 feet north of Elmridge Drive and flows east to west. The ordinary highwater mark (OHWM) of UNT 1 to Pigeon Creek is 2.7 feet wide by 0.5 feet deep. It is anticipated that approximately 31 linear feet of UNT 1 to Pigeon Creek will be impacted by the project due to the extension of the unnumbered culvert associated with the storm sewer work as well as placement of scour protection. The culvert extension will result in new encapsulation of the stream. Approximately 2 linear feet of temporary impacts will occur to UNT 1 to Pigeon Creek due to the placement of scour protection.

UNT 2 to Pigeon Creek is located approximately 175 feet south of Aspen Drive and flows east to west. The stream begins east of Oak Hill Road and is conveyed beneath the roadway via an unnumbered culvert. The OHWM of UNT 2 to Pigeon Creek is 2.7 feet wide by 0.5 feet deep. This portion of UNT 2 to Pigeon Creek is associated as part of the Sonntag-Stevens legal drain. It is anticipated that approximately 99 linear feet of UNT 2 to Pigeon Creek will be impacted by the project due to the replacement of an unnumbered pipe which conveys UNT 2 to Pigeon Creek under Oak Hill Road. Approximately 12 linear feet of temporary impacts will occur to UNT 2 to Pigeon Creek due to the placement of scour protection.

UNT 3 to Pigeon Creek is located approximately 165 feet north of Aspen Drive and flows east to west. The stream begins at the outlet of an unnumbered stormwater drainage pipe. The OHWM of UNT 3 to Pigeon Creek is 3.2 feet wide by 1.2 feet deep. It is anticipated that approximately 31 linear feet of UNT 3 to Pigeon Creek will be impacted by the project due to the extension of the unnumbered culvert associated with the storm sewer work as well as placement of scour protection. The culvert extension will result in new encapsulation of the stream. Approximately 2 linear feet of temporary impacts will occur to UNT 3 to Pigeon Creek due to the placement of scour protection.

UNT to Licking Creek is located at the intersection of Oak Hill Road and St. George Road and flows southwest to northeast. The OHWM of UNT to Licking Creek is 5.5 feet wide by 1.0 foot deep. It is anticipated that approximately 35 linear feet of UNT to Licking Creek will be impacted by the project due to riprap placement. It is anticipated that approximately 3 linear feet of temporary impacts will occur to UNT to Licking Creek due to the placement of scour protection.

Total permanent stream impacts for the project are approximately 196 linear feet. Total temporary stream impacts for the project are approximately 19 linear feet. Mitigation for stream impacts is not anticipated but will be determined during the permitting process. Measures to minimize stream impacts have been incorporated into the design to the maximum extent practicable.

Wetland A is located approximately 50 feet south of UNT to Licking Creek within a roadside ditch. Wetland A was delineated for 0.042 acre and is located wholly within the project area. It is anticipated that approximately 0.042 acre of Wetland A will be permanently impacted by the project due to roadway construction.

Wetland B is located within a roadside ditch in the southwest quadrant of the Oak Hill Road and St. George Road intersection. Wetland B was delineated for 0.006 acre within the project area and extends west beyond the project area. No impacts to Wetland B are anticipated as a result of the project. Avoidance measures of the potential wetland must be implemented prior to the start of and during construction. The potential wetland area will be marked as "*Potential Wetland, Do Not Disturb*" on the final plans and on the project site. Therefore, no impacts are expected.

It is anticipated that a 404/401 Nationwide Permit (NWP) will be required for all waterway impacts. It is anticipated that a legal drain discharge permit will be required for impacts to UNT 2 to Pigeon Creek, a Vanderburgh County legal drain.

Terrestrial Habitat

Approximately 2.36 acres of terrestrial habitat will be impacted as a result of the project. Approximately 0.27 acre of tree removal will occur as a result of the project. All tree removal will occur during the bat inactive season (October 1 to March 31). Impacts to terrestrial habitat, including tree removal, cannot be avoided due to their location adjacent to Oak Hill Road.

Protected Species

Project information was submitted through the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) portal, and an official species list was generated. The project is within range of the federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the federally endangered northern long-eared bat (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*). Other species were generated in the IPaC species list along with the Indiana bat and NLEB. Refer to paragraph below.

The project qualifies for the *Rangewide Programmatic Informal Consultation for the Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat (NLEB)*, dated May 2016 (revised in 2018), between FHWA, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and USFWS. A culvert inspection occurred on October 18, 2022, by American Structurepoint, Inc., and the results indicated no signs of bats were present. Bridge/Structure Assessments are only valid for two years. If construction will begin after October 18, 2024, an inspection of the structures by a qualified individual must be performed. Inspection of the structures should check for presence of bats/bat indicators and/or presence of birds. The results of the inspection must indicate no signs of bats or birds. If signs of bats or birds are documented during this inspection, the INDOT District Environmental Manager must be contacted immediately.

An effect determination key was completed on March 3, 2023, and based on the responses provided, the project was found to “Not Effect – Not Likely to Adversely Affect” the Indiana bat and/or the NLEB. INDOT reviewed and concurred with the effect finding on March 6, 2023, and requested USFWS review of the finding. No response was received within the 14-day review period; therefore, it was concluded that they concur with the finding.

The project is within range of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), which is listed as a candidate ETR species; the whooping crane (*Grus americana*), which is listed as a non-essential experimental population; and the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*), which is listed as a proposed endangered species. The project qualifies for the most current INDOT/USFWS agreement. Further coordination with USFWS is not required and no impacts to the monarch butterfly, whooping crane, or tricolored bat are expected.

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 project plans are changed, USFWS will be contacted for consultation.

Cultural Resources

A Phase 1a Archaeological Reconnaissance report was completed for the project area. Shovel probes were excavated, and visual walkovers were performed throughout the project area. One previously undocumented archaeological site, 12VG2106, was recorded within the survey area. The site was determined to not be eligible for listing in the Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures (IRHSS) or the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and Weintraut & Associates, Inc. recommended that the project be allowed to proceed as planned.

An archaeological survey was conducted on September 29 and October 3, 2022, to evaluate the project area. On May 2, 2022, the INDOT Cultural Resources Office (CRO) determined that this project falls within the guidelines of Category A, Type 3 and Category B, Types 1 and 3 under the Minor Projects Programmatic Agreement.

No further consultation is required. This completes the Section 106 process and the responsibilities of the FHWA under Section 106 have been fulfilled.

Community Impacts

Though this project may cause minor delays to the motoring public during construction, the work will not result in permanent community or economic impacts to the surrounding area. It is anticipated that MOT will involve a road closure. Access to properties within the project area will be maintained at all times during project construction.

Approximately 4.77 acres of permanent ROW and 0.33 acre of temporary ROW is required for the completion of the project. While the amount of permanent ROW results in a loss of property tax base, such impacts should be offset by a safer roadway for the betterment of the community. The contractor will be responsible for following INDOT Design Manual and Standard Specifications and the Uniform Traffic Control Manual to implement the MOT.

In order for a municipality to be eligible to receive federal funds they must have in place, or at least under development, an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan. The Transition Plan inventories the municipality's infrastructure identifying those areas with features (i.e., sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, building access, etc.) that are not in compliance with the ADA and establishes a plan to program funding for improvements intended to bring the facilities into compliance.

According to the City of Evansville website (<https://www.evansvillegov.org/city/>), Vanderburgh County's ADA Transition plan has been completed and was last revised in August of 2015. The proposed project complies with the Vanderburgh County ADA Transition plan by constructing all sidewalks and curb ramps in accordance with the plan.

The City of Evansville website (<https://evansvilleevents.com/>) was checked to identify events or festivals occurring during the proposed construction period. To date, no events are listed for 2025. However, if an event occurs during the construction period, accommodations will be made to maintain access to local special events and/or festivals.

Hazardous Material & Regulated Substances

Based on a review of GIS and available public records, the RFI was completed on March 3, 2023, and INDOT Site Assessment & Management (SAM) provided their concurrence on March 23, 2023.

One leaking underground storage tank (LUST) site, Marathon Unit #2073, 3900 Oak Hill Road, AI ID 45463, is located adjacent to the west of the southern terminus of the project area. An Environmental Restrictive Covenant (ERC) was recorded on the deed of the property on July 18, 2007. The site received a No Further Action (NFA) determination from IDEM on September 28, 2007. Benzene remains in soil on-site above the

RISC residential default closure level. If excavation occurs in this area, it is possible that petroleum contamination may be encountered. Proper handling, removal, and disposal of soil and/or groundwater may be necessary. An environmental professional should be onsite or available when construction activities, specifically excavation, are occurring in the vicinity of a target site. If any contamination is encountered, ongoing coordination with INDOT SAM will be required.

One Institutional Control site, Marathon Unit #2073, 3900 Oak Hill Road, AI ID 45463, is located adjacent to the intersection of Oak Hill Road and Lynch Road. An ERC was recorded on the deed of the property on February 20, 2007. Coordination will be conducted with the IDEM Institutional Controls section (institutionalcontrols@idem.IN.gov) before RFC.

For more information regarding the project plans and potential impacts of the proposed project, please refer to the CE document, which is available at the following locations:

1. In-person at:
 - a. Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library, 200 SE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Evansville, IN 47713
2. Online at the American Structurepoint, Inc. website – www.structurepointpublic.com/oakhill

Comment Sheet

Please provide your comments, concerns and/or suggestions regarding the proposed Oak Hill Road Improvement Project (Des. No. 2002538) located in Evansville, Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Your comments are important to us, and we sincerely appreciate your time and participation. Please submit comments by **March 25, 2024**. **Comments may be mailed, faxed, emailed, or submitted online:**

Mail:

American Structurepoint, Inc.
Attn: Preeti Samra
9025 River Road, Suite 200
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

Email:

psamra@structurepoint.com

Fax:

(317) 543-0270

Online:

www.structurepointpublic.com/oakhill

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

COMMENT: _____

SIGNATURE: _____