



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What is a Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study?

The Indiana Department of Transportation is asking for Hoosiers' input as it begins streamlined planning studies along the U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors in Northern Indiana. The PEL process is used by transportation agencies, such as INDOT, to make and document planning decisions. PEL studies allow INDOT to better understand community needs and develop alternatives that meet those needs. The information, analysis and decisions made during the PEL process can be leveraged in later phases in project development (see Question 5).

### 2. What is PROPEL U.S. 30 and PROPEL U.S. 31?

INDOT is sponsoring studies to ProPEL Indiana forward across these two corridors. The U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 corridors are vital to the State of Indiana. INDOT is committed to enhancing safety, mobility and economic development opportunities along these thoroughfares for the benefit of the surrounding communities and all Hoosiers. INDOT will use the PEL process to complete four PEL studies in a 180-mile study area centered along U.S. 30 and U.S. 31. The PEL studies will be collaborative, data-driven and inspired by the public's ideas. Throughout the studies, INDOT is asking for the public's help in identifying what they want the corridors to look like in the future. With help from residents, motorists, businesses and others, INDOT can build infrastructure to better serve our communities. ProPEL studies gather questions, concerns and creative ideas through a variety of means, including project websites, social media and in-person and virtual public information meetings.

### 3. What areas along U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 will be part of the PEL studies?

The 180-mile study area includes U.S. 30 from Valparaiso to the Indiana/Ohio state line (excluding I-69 and I-469 around Fort Wayne), as well as U.S. 31 between Hamilton County and Plymouth (excluding the Kokomo bypass). The study includes the following counties: Allen, Fulton, Hamilton, Howard, Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall, Miami, Porter, Starke, Tipton and Whitley. The PEL studies are about what is possible.

The 180-mile study area includes over 600 access points. Given this size and scale, the analysis will immediately focus on intersections that notably influence mobility in the corridor. Safety and accessibility will be evaluated throughout the entire corridor.

### 4. What happens at the conclusion of the PEL studies?

With the help of the public, the planning studies will likely identify multiple alternatives, including a no-build alternative, for the U.S. 30 and 31 corridors. At the conclusion of the planning study, the alternatives will undergo a greater level of environmental analysis and design in the next phase of project development, as outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The preferred alternative from the NEPA process will enter the design phase. (See Question 5).

## **5. What is the next phase of project development after a PEL study?**

The PEL studies will likely recommend several projects that address the identified needs. After a PEL study is completed, INDOT will begin programming and funding projects for further project development. INDOT must balance this funding of projects across the State of Indiana to meet the needs of all Hoosiers. After the PEL studies are complete and funds are identified for a project, INDOT will move into the project development process using the feedback and alternatives developed in the PEL studies as the starting point. There are four main components to the project development phase:

- Environmental review/preliminary engineering
- Final Engineering
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Construction

## **6. How long will the PEL studies take?**

The anticipated completion date of the U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 PEL studies is Fall 2024.

## **7. Why are there four PEL studies and not just one large PEL study?**

The U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 study corridors include more than 180 miles of existing roadway and traverse 12 counties. Conducting four PEL studies allows for a more focused look at the transportation needs in each study area, as well as development of solutions that best consider different community values and priorities. Each of the four PEL studies will coordinate with each other to develop potential solutions that work together across study area boundaries.

## **8. How will public engagement be implemented during the planning process?**

Feedback from residents, motorists, businesses and others is vital to the success of the studies. INDOT wants to hear from the public about where problems exist in the corridors, as well as what should be done to improve the U.S. 30 and 31 corridors. To align goals and establish a shared vision for U.S. 30 and U.S. 31, it will seek input through a variety of means, including project websites, social media and in-person and virtual public information meetings.

Together we will look at transportation problems and include your ideas on how to improve the corridors. Engineers and planners will evaluate the public's suggestions to provide smart recommendations using engineering, environmental, economic and community factors with a goal to create smarter transportation and stronger communities.

## **9. How many lanes will U.S. 30/U.S. 31 be when the project is complete?**

It is too early to say. INDOT will look to answer this question during the PEL process. Recommended improvements will be based on funding, transportation needs, public and stakeholder input, and environmental and community considerations.

## **10. Will U.S. 31 and U.S. 30 be converted into freeways?**

It is too early to say. New interchange construction will be considered during the PEL process. INDOT will consider several factors when determining the best way to move traffic, including traffic analysis, safety, cost, accessibility and environmental impacts.

### **11. How will the U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 Coalitions be included in the planning study?**

INDOT welcomes participation with both the U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 Coalitions. Both coalitions have information and other resources that will be valuable to consider during the PEL process.

### **12. Are noise barriers planned as part of the project?**

It is too early to tell if noise barriers will be constructed. Each of the PEL studies includes a preliminary investigation of noise sensitive areas. A subsequent phase of project development will determine whether noise barriers are warranted. To learn more about noise barriers and INDOT's noise policy, please read this [brochure](#).

### **13. Will impacts to the environment be considered?**

Yes, the U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 PEL studies will develop and evaluate alternatives based on their impacts to natural and human environmental resources. The benefit of a PEL study is the balance between transportation planning and environmental concerns.

### **14. How can I get involved in the project?**

You can find more information about the studies and submit your feedback on ProPELUS30.com and ProPELUS31.com. Public and stakeholder outreach will be conducted to gather input for use in the decision-making and project development process. The websites can also be used to sign-up for mailing lists to stay informed about the studies and to receive notifications of planned public involvement activities.

### **15. Who can I talk to or contact if I have questions?**

Project personnel will be available on a regular basis for in-person meetings within each PEL study area. The dates, times, and locations of these office hours are still being developed, and will be announced via the project website and/or social media. In the interim, please take a moment to fill out a comment form, which includes the ability to request a follow-up contact from a project representative.

## **WHAT IS PROPEL?**

ProPEL is an INDOT initiative to streamline transportation planning using collaborative PEL studies to consider environmental, community and economic goals early in the planning process. These PEL studies will assess innovative ways to renovate our roadways and corridors, while prioritizing community needs and equitable infrastructure. Together, we can ProPEL Indiana forward.