

Federal Highway Administration
Planning & Environment Linkages Questionnaire¹
ProPEL US 30 East Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study Report

This questionnaire is intended to act as a summary of the planning and environment linkage (PEL) process and ease the transition from planning to a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. This questionnaire is consistent with the 23 CFR 450 (Planning regulations) and other FHWA policy on PEL process.

1. Background

a. Who is the sponsor of the PEL study? (state DOT, Local Agency, Other)

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in Cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

b. **What is the name of the PEL study document and other identifying project information (e.g. sub-account or STIP numbers, long-range plan, or transportation improvement program years)?**

The ProPEL US 30 East Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study Report documents the PEL study process. During the study, the following documents were prepared to inform and develop the PEL Study Report and are included as appendices:

- Appendix B: ProPEL US 30 East Final Environmental Constraints Report
- Appendix C: ProPEL US 30 East Existing Transportation Conditions Report
- Appendix D: ProPEL US 30 East Final Purpose & Need Report
- Appendix E: ProPEL US 30 East Final Universe of Alternatives (Level 1) Screening Report
- Appendix F: ProPEL US 30 East Final Level 2 Screening Report
- Appendix G: ProPEL US 30 East Final Level 3 Screening Report
- ProPEL US 30 East Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement (RASPI) Summary Reports:
 - Appendix H: RASPI Summary #1
 - Appendix I: RASPI Summary #2
 - Appendix J: RASPI Summary #3
 - Appendix K: RASPI Summary #3 – Addendum 1

The documents listed above are included as appendices to the PEL Study Report and are available on the study website (<https://propelus30.com/30doclibrary/>).

c. **Who was included on the study team (Name and title of agency representatives, consultants, etc.)?**

INDOT Central Office

Sandra Flum – Project Manager

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¹ https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx, Updated April 5, 2011

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Stacey Osburn – ProPEL US 30/US 31 Studies Technical Advisor Team

- d. **Provide a description of the existing transportation facility within the corridor, including project limits, modes, functional classification, number of lanes, shoulder width, access control and type of surrounding environment (urban vs. rural, residential vs. commercial, etc.)**

The existing transportation facility within the US 30 East study area extends from the intersection of Beech Road in Marshall County to the Indiana/Ohio state line at State Line Road in Allen County, excluding the section that overlaps with I-69 and I-469 near Fort Wayne. The corridor spans approximately 60 miles across northern Indiana and traverses Marshall, Kosciusko, Whitley, and Allen Counties.

Throughout the study corridor, US 30 is a four-lane divided highway with a typical cross-section consisting of two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction, 10-foot outside shoulders, and 4-foot inside shoulders. A grassy median, generally 30 to 50 feet wide, separates eastbound and westbound traffic. The study corridor features open drainage and rural design elements, with existing right-of-way widths ranging from approximately 150 to 300 feet of total width.

US 30 is functionally classified as a “Principal Arterial” and is designated as part of both the National Highway System (NHS) and the National Truck Network (NTN), indicating its statewide and national significance for freight and intercity mobility. The facility traverses a mix of rural and urban contexts, with notable urbanized segments in Warsaw, Columbia City, and near Fort Wayne.

There are 27 signalized intersections and numerous unsignalized crossroad intersections along the corridor. Two intersections (CR 500 E in Whitley County and SR 101 in Allen County) are configured as reduced conflict intersections (RCIs), which restrict direct crossings and mainline left turns. There are no at-grade rail crossings on US 30 within the study area, but one rail overpass exists just east of SR 15. A parallel railroad line runs within 500 feet of the highway in select segments.

The corridor includes 35 bridges and 30 culverts. Bridge condition ratings range from good to poor, with multiple structures exhibiting fair conditions. Several culverts are rated “poor” or “serious,” indicating potential needs for future rehabilitation or replacement.

There is limited pedestrian, bicycle, or transit infrastructure along US 30. Isolated sidewalk segments exist in Warsaw, Pierceton, and Columbia City, but they typically terminate before reaching the US 30 intersections. Only one dedicated trail facility crosses the corridor—under the US 30 bridge over the Blue River in Columbia City.

Access to US 30 is partially controlled, with frequent at-grade intersections and some direct driveway access in rural areas. Speed limits are generally posted at 60 mph but are reduced to 45–55 mph through the urbanized areas of Warsaw and Columbia City. Speed data from 2022 shows that vehicles typically travel 5–10 mph below the posted limit due to congestion, particularly during midday and in urban segments.

Crash data from 2017 to 2021 reveals that rear-end collisions are the predominant crash type, especially in signalized urban areas. Multiple intersections in Warsaw, Columbia City, and near Fort Wayne have been identified as critical safety locations due to high crash frequencies and severities, primarily linked to congestion and limited visibility.

Land use along the corridor is predominantly agricultural, with pockets of residential, commercial, and industrial development concentrated around Warsaw, Columbia City, and Fort Wayne's periphery.

- e. **Provide a brief chronology of the planning activities (PEL study) including the year(s) the studies were completed.**

Study milestones and key planning activities include:

- US 30 East PEL Study Kick-off (Summer/Fall 2022)
 - Initiated data collection
 - Identified study stakeholders and developed a plan to engage them
- Vision/Scoping (Fall/Winter 2022)
 - Public Information Meeting #1 (December 2022)
- Baseline Line Conditions Assessment (Spring/Summer 2023)
 - Existing Transportation Conditions Report (April 2023)
 - Environmental Constraints Report (August 2023)
- Purpose & Need (Summer 2023)
 - Purpose and Need Report (June 2023)
 - Public Information Meeting #2 (June 2023)
- Alternatives Development and Evaluation (Late 2023 to Late 2024)
 - Universe of Alternatives (Level 1) Screening (November 2023)
 - Level 2 Screening Report (March 2024)
 - Level 3 Screening Report (November 2024)
 - Public Information Meeting #3 (November 2024)
- ProPEL US 30 East PEL Study Completion (Summer 2025)
 - Public Information Meeting #4 – Virtual (June 2025)

Are there recent, current, or near future planning studies or projects in the vicinity? What is the relationship of this project to those studies/projects?

The ProPEL US 30 East study is one of four PEL studies that comprise INDOT's ProPEL US 30 & US 31 initiative. Together the four studies encompass 180 miles of US 30 and US 31 across 12 counties (Allen, Fulton, Hamilton, Howard, Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall, Miami, Porter, Starke, Tipton, and Whitley). Splitting the PEL studies into four distinct study areas enabled each study team to more closely consider community needs and goals. The four PEL studies were closely coordinated to ensure potential solutions are integrated and work together across study area boundaries.

The overall study area, established as a direct result of stakeholder input, includes US 30 from Valparaiso to the Indiana/Ohio state line (excluding the I-69/I-469 section around the north side of Fort Wayne) and US 31 between Hamilton County and US 30 (excluding the US 31 Kokomo bypass).

As one of the first steps in the study, the study team collected and reviewed previously completed land use plans, transportation plans, and planned transportation projects that influence the study area. A total of 25 plans were reviewed as part of this task. The purpose of this effort was to:

- Inform and establish a planning context for the corridor.
- Inform the public and stakeholder outreach process.
- Support the development of the purpose and need for the ProPEL US 30 East study.
- Inform the development of study area goals.
- Inform the early phases of the alternatives development and evaluation.

See Section 1 of the PEL Study Report for further information on the specific plans reviewed and how they informed the PEL study process.

2. Methodology used:

a. **What was the scope of the PEL study and the reason for completing it?**

The scope of and reason for completing the ProPEL US 30 East study was to identify a reasonable range of alternatives for the study area. The study included several objectives to achieve this outcome:

- Engage the public, study stakeholders, and resource agencies throughout the study.
- Identify community goals for the study area.
- Identify transportation needs within the study area.
- Develop the purpose and need for improvements in the study area.
- Identify and develop alternatives that meet the identified needs and consider community goals.
- Evaluate alternatives and eliminate unreasonable alternatives.
- Carry forward a smaller number of alternatives for further consideration in future planning and/or project development, including NEPA environmental reviews.
- Document the study process.

b. Did you use NEPA-like language? Why or why not?

Yes, NEPA-like language was used to ensure a smoother transition between the planning study subsequent NEPA processes.

- c. What were the actual terms used and how did you define them? (Provide examples or list)

The PEL study used the same terms that are used in NEPA such as study area, purpose and need, range of reasonable alternatives, reasonable alternatives, environmental constraints, alternatives development and evaluation, alternatives screening, and No-Build Alternative. The definitions of these terms were the same as the common understanding of the NEPA terms.

- d. How do you see these terms being used in NEPA documents?

The terms used in this PEL study are consistent with terms commonly used in the NEPA process and are intended to make inclusion into future NEPA documents seamless. As a result, the planning products from the PEL study, which include NEPA terms, can be incorporated via reference to guide, inform, or shape future NEPA documents. Depending on project scope and timing of advancement, this may require supplementing, refining, or reconfirming the information, analysis, and decisions from the PEL studies during the NEPA process.

- e. **What were the key steps and coordination points in the PEL decision-making process? Who were the decision-makers and who else participated in those key steps? For example, for the corridor vision, the decision was made by state DOT and the local agency, with buy-in from FHWA, the USACE, and USFWS and other resource/regulatory agencies.**

The key steps in the PEL decision-making process included the following:

- Identifying existing conditions
- Determining the purpose and need for improvements in the study area
- Developing, evaluating, and screening improvement alternatives
- Identifying a reasonable range of alternatives to be carried forward for further evaluation in future planning and/or NEPA

The primary decision-makers participating in these key steps included INDOT and FHWA. INDOT and FHWA held regular coordination meetings throughout the duration of the PEL study. In addition, INDOT solicited feedback from resource agencies, cultural resources stakeholders, and federally recognized tribes at each of these key decision points. Two Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SACs) were also formed for the study area.

Multiple coordination meetings with the SACs, as well as the resource agencies, cultural resources stakeholders and federally recognized tribes were held throughout the study process. See Section 5 of the PEL Study Report for further information on the public involvement and agency coordination efforts.

- f. **How should the PEL information be presented in NEPA?**

The information presented in this PEL study is intended to serve as a foundation for additional analysis and refinement during the NEPA phase. The information, analysis, and planning decisions from the PEL study will be presented as a transportation planning study intended to inform the NEPA review. The following planning products from the PEL study may be appended to or incorporated by reference to guide, inform, or shape future NEPA documents:

- ProPEL US 30 East Final Environmental Constraints Report
- ProPEL US 30 East Existing Transportation Conditions Report
- ProPEL US 30 East Final Purpose & Need Report

- ProPEL US 30 East Final Universe of Alternatives (Level 1) Screening Report
- ProPEL US 30 East Final Level 2 Screening Report
- ProPEL US 30 East Final Level 3 Screening Report
- ProPEL US 30 East Final PEL Study Report

Depending on project scope and timing of advancement, this may require supplementing, refining, or reconfirming the information, analysis, and decisions from the PEL studies during the NEPA process.

3. **Agency coordination:**

- a. **Provide a synopsis of coordination with Federal, tribal, state and local environmental, regulatory and resource agencies. Describe their level of participation and how you coordinated with them.**

At each key step of the ProPEL US 30 East study, coordination was completed with resource agencies, cultural resource stakeholders, and federally recognized Tribes. Six coordination meetings were held during the study:

- Three coordination meetings during the Vision/Scoping phase;
- Two coordination meetings during the Purpose and Need phase; and
- One coordination meeting during the Alternatives Analysis phase.

Note: The Alternatives Analysis phase included three screening steps. The draft screening reports at each step were provided via email to the resource agencies, cultural resources stakeholders, and federally recognized Tribes for review and comment. The study team offered to hold coordination meetings upon request; however, no requests for meetings were received.

Attachment 1 (at the end of this document) contains a table listing the agencies, cultural resources stakeholders, and federally recognized tribes there were invited to participate in the PEL study:

- b. **What transportation agencies (e.g. for adjacent jurisdictions) did you coordinate with or were involved during the PEL study?**

In addition to regular coordination with FHWA, the following transportation agencies were involved throughout the PEL study process:

- Allen County Highway Department
- New Haven Public Works Department
- Warsaw Public Works Department
- Fort Wayne Public Works Division
- Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council
- Michiana Area Council of Governments

- c. **What steps will need to be taken with each agency during NEPA scoping?**

Formal NEPA early agency coordination and scoping, including tribal coordination, will be needed to initiate the NEPA process and to help define the level of NEPA documentation and studies. Cooperating and participating agencies were not identified and invited during the PEL study, so that coordination will need to occur at the beginning of NEPA (as needed). If possible, current agency contacts will be preserved once NEPA is initiated to leverage previous knowledge and streamline the NEPA process.

4. **Public coordination:**

a. **Provide a synopsis of your coordination efforts with the public and stakeholders.**

The information below provides a high-level summary of the coordination efforts with the public and study stakeholders. More information on each discussion is provided in Section 5 of the PEL Study and the RASPI Summaries (Appendix H, I, J, and K of the PEL Study Report).

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meetings

Due to the length of the ProPEL US 30 East study corridor and its separation at Fort Wayne, two committees were formed. Each committee included representatives from local agencies, residents, community organizations, churches, social service providers, emergency service providers, businesses, and business organizations. Virtual meetings occurred with each SAC during each of the three study phases, for a total of six meetings.

In addition to the SAC meetings, a total of five meetings were also held with the US 30 Coalition.

General Stakeholder Coordination

Over the course of the study, the study team coordinated and staffed a total of 84 Community Office Hours events at a variety of times and locations along the study corridor, which were informal, in-person conversations where interested individuals or groups could ask questions and provide input. INDOT plans to hold additional Community Office Hours events once the PEL Study Report is published. In addition, the US 30 East study team coordinated participation at 18 community events, such as fairs and festivals, in various counties within the study area. The study team held one-on-one stakeholder meetings, upon request.

Traditional Media

The study team used traditional media channels and outlets to regularly communicate study milestones and events, such as publication of draft reports for public review and comment as well as announcements of public information meetings. This included publishing public notices in local newspapers such as the Post and Mail in Columbia City, Journal-Gazette in Fort Wayne, Times-Union in Warsaw, and the online edition of El Puente in Northern Indiana.

INDOT also issued media advisories and press releases to coincide with these events and milestones.

Study Website

From the outset of the ProPEL US 30 East study, a dedicated study website was implemented and regularly updated to serve as a central hub for public engagement and information sharing. The website was designed to:

- Keep stakeholders and the public informed throughout the study process.
- Provide 24/7 access to relevant materials, allowing people to explore information on their own time.
- Host draft reports during public review periods.
- Enable study stakeholders and other interested individuals and groups to easily provide their feedback via an online comment form.
- Serve as the portal for virtual public information meetings, as well as hosting copies of content shared at in-person public information meetings.

- Feature interactive tools, including a mapping application and video content, to help users better understand the technical analyses, and how they informed the study's recommendations.

This approach helped the study team maintain transparency, encourage meaningful public input, and make complex information more accessible.

Social Media

Social media was used throughout the study process to help keep stakeholders engaged and informed. The social media efforts included Twitter/X, Facebook, and Instagram. Further information about social media efforts, including documentation of social media posts is provided in the RASPI Summaries (PEL Study Appendices H, I, J, and K of the PEL Study Report).

Targeted Outreach

The study team completed targeted outreach to ensure sensitive communities were engaged as part of the study process. These efforts included targeted outreach to mobile home parks, the Amish community, and low-income communities within the study area, as well as providing translated study materials for limited English proficiency (LEP) populations.

Postcard Mailings

The study team completed several direct mailings of postcards to resident and business addresses in the study area. As part of each mailing, approximately 33,500 postcards were distributed. The postcards contained information such as the locations and dates of upcoming public meetings, instructions on how to access digital and hard copies of draft reports published for public review, as well as instructions for how to provide comments to the study team. To accommodate populations with limited English proficiency, the back of the postcard was translated into Spanish.

Postcard mailings occurred at the following milestones:

- May 2023: Announcement of Vision/Scoping phase public information meetings.
- December 2023: Publication of the Draft Universe of Alternatives (Level 1) Screening Report for public review and comment
- April 2024: Publication of the Draft Level 2 Screening Report for public review and comment
- November 2024: Publication of the Draft Level 3 Screening Report for public review and comment. Announcement of public information meetings learn more about the alternatives screening process and its results.

Public Information Meetings

The study team offered public information meetings in a variety of formats, including both in-person sessions and virtual or on-demand options to ensure broad accessibility. These meetings were organized around the three study phases to allow feedback accordingly:

Vision and Scoping Phase

The initial round of public information meetings occurred in December 2022 as part of the Vision and Scoping phase of the study. The study team held two in-person meetings:

- December 5, 2022, at Sweetwater Sound in Fort Wayne
- December 6, 2022, at Lincoln Elementary School in Warsaw

- A virtual, on-demand meeting was also available beginning December 9, 2022, until December 31, 2022.

Purpose and Need Phase

The second round of public information meetings occurred in June 2023 as part of the Purpose & Need phase of the study. The study team held two in-person meetings:

- June 8, 2023, at the New Haven Community Center
- June 13, 2023, at Indian Springs Middle School in Columbia City
- A virtual, on-demand meeting was also available beginning June 16 until July 31, 2023.

Alternatives Screening Phase

The third round of public information meetings occurred in November 2024 as part of the Alternatives Analysis phase of the study. The study team held two in-person meetings when the Draft Level 3 Screening Report was released for public review and comment:

- November 19, 2024, at Indian Springs Middle School in Columbia City
- November 20, 2024, at Lincoln Elementary School in Warsaw
- A virtual, on-demand meeting was also available beginning November 20 until December 13, 2024.

5. Purpose and Need for the PEL study:

a. **What was the scope of the PEL study and the reason for completing it?**

A goal of the ProPEL US 30 East study was to identify a reasonable range of alternatives for the study area. The study included several objectives to achieve this goal:

- Engage the public, study stakeholders, and resource agencies throughout the study.
- Identify community goals for the study area.
- Identify transportation needs within the study area.
- Develop the purpose and need for improvements in the study area.
- Identify and develop alternatives that meet the identified needs and consider community goals.
- Evaluate alternatives and eliminate unreasonable alternatives
- Carry forward a smaller number of alternatives for further consideration in future planning and/or NEPA.

b. **Provide the purpose and need statement, or the corridor vision and transportation goals and objectives to realize that vision.**

The following information is also provided in Section 2 of the PEL Study Report.

Corridor Vision

The following vision² was established for the US 30 corridor during development of the study area purpose and need statement:

The US 30 corridor will continue to serve local, regional, and national travelers by balancing mobility and access considerations in a way that:

- Enhances safety for all users,
- Provides transportation solutions for all, and
- Complements local community goals and objectives, including maintaining the character of the study area.

The corridor vision, which was collaboratively developed for both the ProPEL US 30 East and US 30 West studies, is separate from and does not take the place of the purpose and need statement.

During the Level 3 screening process, INDOT supplemented the corridor vision based on the analysis completed throughout the study. More specifically, INDOT identified a long-term vision of upgrading US 30 in the study area to a free-flow facility, which is a road without traffic signals, stop signs, or yield signs for mainline traffic.

Due to multiple factors, the study concludes that implementation of an entirely free-flow facility on US 30 in the study area will likely extend beyond the study's planning horizon of 2045. In the interim, the study provides INDOT with a flexible guide to incrementally upgrade US 30 in the study area to a free-flow facility.

Transportation Needs

The following transportation needs were identified for the ProPEL US 30 East study area:

- **Safety for all users:** Many locations along the US 30 East study corridor are experiencing a higher-than-average severity and frequency of crashes which is not in line with INDOT's goal of reducing the number of serious and fatal injuries on Indiana's roads.
- **Local Mobility:** Growth in the corridor is anticipated to increase traffic and negatively affect the movement of people, goods, and services crossing, accessing and turning left off of US 30, increasing mobility challenges that impact local residents and business' ability to commute, conduct business, and support recreation.
- **Regional and Statewide Mobility:** Provide safe, high-quality mobility for long-distance passenger and freight trips through and beyond the study corridor.

Purpose

To address the needs identified above, the purpose of the ProPEL US 30 East study is to:

- Improve roadway safety in the corridor for all users;

² The corridor vision was refined in the PEL Study Report based on the passage of several federal and state Executive Orders (EOS) as well as one USDOT order. See **Section Error!** Reference source not found. of the PEL Study Report for additional information.

- Improve mobility for local users along and across the corridor; and
- Enhance the efficiency and reliability of US 30 as a regional and statewide corridor.

Given the size of the study area and the needs identified, the purpose and need statement was developed to support a range of potential improvement solutions. This could include corridor-wide improvements, as well as localized improvements that address the identified needs.

Study Goals

Goals represent overarching outcomes that are desirable, but not specifically required since they are not measurable with respect to identified study area needs. Goals for the US 30 East study corridor were identified primarily through public and stakeholder input and are supported by local, regional, and statewide planning documents. The goals were also aligned with the adjacent ProPEL US 30 West study, as applicable.

The following goals were identified for the ProPEL US 30 East study area:

- Economic Development - Provide transportation infrastructure to support local economies and economic development goals.
- Transportation for All – Provide fair solutions that consider the needs of all communities, including sensitive communities.³
- Multimodal Access & Connections - Accommodate non-motorized, transit, and active modes of travel in and across the study area.
- Emerging Technologies - Support emerging technologies and related infrastructure, including alternative fuel, and autonomous or connected vehicles.
- Fiscal & Environmental Practicality - Identify fiscally responsible improvements and avoid/minimize impacts to the human and natural environment.
- Driver Expectations – Consider roadway enhancements that provide smoother and more predictable transitions between rural and urban segments of US 30 East.

Goals are not the basis of eliminating or carrying forward PEL study alternatives.

- c. What steps will need to be taken during the NEPA process to make this a project-level purpose and need statement?

The purpose and need statement developed for the ProPEL US 30 East study addresses the US 30 East study corridor through Marshall, Whitley, Kosciusko, and Allen counties. It was developed in a manner consistent with FHWA PEL guidance. Therefore, INDOT plans to incorporate it directly or by reference to guide, inform, or shape future NEPA documents. Depending on scope and timing of advancement, this may require supplementing, refining, or reconfirming the information, analysis, and decisions from the PEL studies during the NEPA process.

³ This goal was refined in the *Final Level 3 Screening Report* based on the issuance of several federal and state Executive Orders (EOs), as well as one United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) order, including EO 14154, EO 14148, EO 14173, EO 14281, USDOT Order 2100.7, EO 25-49, EO 25-37, and ES 25-14.

For example, the purpose and need statement may need to be refined or supplemented. It is possible that not all of the needs or purposes would apply to the roadway segment or intersection project being developed. It is also possible that as a project is developed, additional needs specific to the project limits are identified. Therefore, the initiation of any project should revisit the applicability of this purpose and need statement and should consider whether additional public and stakeholder engagement is necessary in that process.

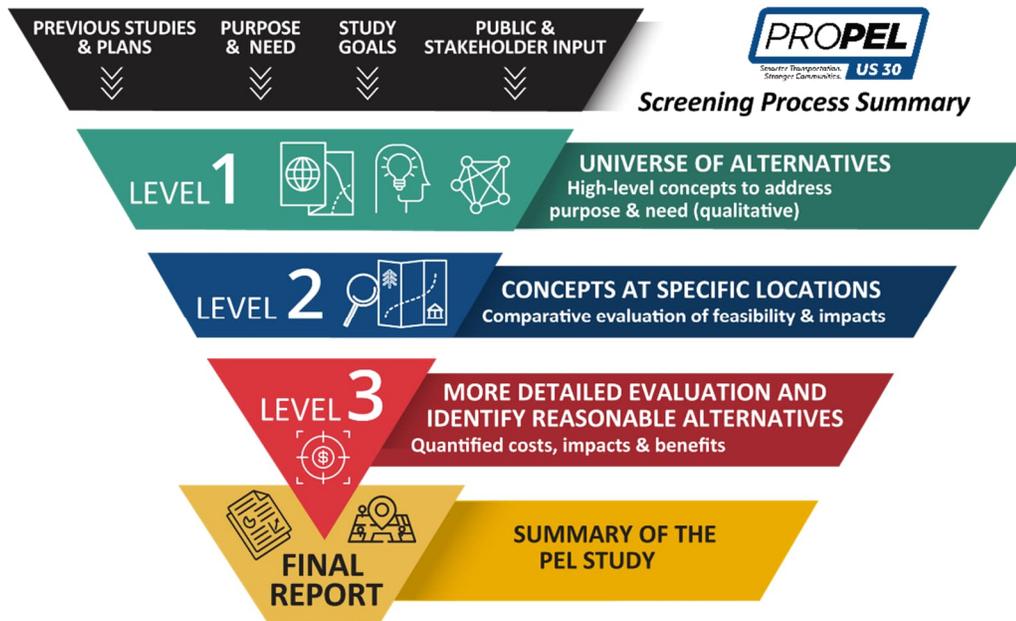
6. Range of alternatives:

Planning teams need to be cautious during the alternative screen process; alternative screening should focus on purpose and need/corridor vision, fatal flaw analysis, and possibly mode selection. This may help minimize problems during discussions with resource agencies. Alternatives that have fatal flaws or do not meet the purpose and need/corridor vision will not be considered reasonable alternatives, even if they reduce impacts to a particular resource. Detail the range of alternatives considered, screening criteria, and screening process, including:

- a. **What types of alternatives were looked at? (Provide a one or two sentence summary and reference document.)**

The ProPEL US 30 East study used a three-level screening process, depicted in Figure 1, to identify reasonable alternatives that address the identified transportation needs and goals of the study area.

Figure 1- ProPEL US 30 East Alternatives Development and Screening Process



The Level 1 screening process considered a set of 55 transportation improvement concepts – also referred to as the Universe of Alternatives – including the No-Build Alternative. Concepts considered included: corridor improvements, off-corridor improvements, intersection improvements, intersection improvements, spot improvements, transportation systems management & operations (TSMO) improvements, potential policy changes, as well as transit & non-motorized improvements.

The Level 2 screening process evaluated improvement alternatives at the 31 primary intersections within the study area for reasonability and potential impacts.

The Level 3 screening combined comprehensive sets of intersection improvements and different access management strategies to create Improvement Packages for sections of the study area. These sections, called Planning Segments, considered improvements at all study area intersections as well as the roadway sections between them. Multiple Improvement Packages were considered in each Planning Segment.

Further information regarding the alternatives development and screening process can be found in Section 4 of the PEL Study Report and Appendix G.

b. How did you select the screening criteria and screening process?

The screening process used a multi-level screening approach to progress from a high-level, qualitative assessment in the Level 1 screening to a more detailed quantitative assessment in Level 3 screening. Screening criteria were developed and utilized at each screening step to assess each alternative's ability to address the purpose and need (i.e., benefits), as well as potential impacts, and costs.

See Section 4 of the PEL Study Report and Appendices E, F and G of the PEL Study Report for further details on the screening criteria and screening process.

c. **For alternative(s) that were screened out, briefly summarize the reasons for eliminating the alternative(s). (During the initial screenings, this generally will focus on fatal flaws.)**

During the screening process, alternatives were eliminated if they did not meet purpose and need and were not considered practicable (Level 1). During the Level 2 and Level 3 screening steps, alternatives with limited benefits compared to its impacts/costs were identified as unreasonable and eliminated from further consideration unless conditions in the study area significantly change in the future (e.g., changes in land use, baseline environmental and/or traffic conditions, etc.).

See Section 4 of the PEL Study Report for further detail on the results of the screening process. For a complete list of alternatives considered and reasons for elimination see the alternatives screening reports in Appendices E, F, and G of the PEL Study Report.

d. **Which alternatives should be brought forward into NEPA and why?**

The alternatives carried forward from the Level 3 screening, which are described in Section 4.4 of the PEL Study Report should be brought forward into subsequent NEPA and project development studies in the relevant planning segment. These alternatives meet the study's purpose and need, support study area goals, and are considered reasonable based on the results of this planning study. Note that some improvement packages may require further analysis in the future to determine if the tradeoffs between the potential benefits, impacts, and costs are a reasonable solution to the planning segment's transportation needs.

Depending on multiple factors, including statewide priorities, and funding availability, improvement packages considered as part of this PEL study could be combined in different ways in the future to address the identified transportation needs and support the goals of the study area.

- e. Did the public, stakeholders, and agencies have an opportunity to comment during this process?

Yes. The public and stakeholders had the opportunity to comment throughout the study process through a series of SAC meetings, public information meetings, Community Office Hours events, individual stakeholder meetings, resource agency and cultural resources stakeholder meetings, tribal coordination meetings, and other public events (e.g., local fairs and festivals). These individuals and groups could also submit comments on the ProPEL US 30 study website at any point during the study.

See Section 5 of the PEL Study Report for further information on the public involvement and agency coordination efforts.

- f. Were there unresolved issues with the public, stakeholders, and/or agencies?

Section 6 of this report provides details regarding study elements or issues that require further consideration during development of any future projects in the corridor. In summary, these topics include:

- The potential to upgrade US 30 to a limited access freeway facility.
- The potential for loss of access to/from/across US 30.
- The use of Reduced Conflict Intersections (RCIs) as a safety improvement strategy in the study corridor.
- Emergency service response times if access is changed.
- The need to complete resource identification and impact assessment at a level appropriate for NEPA documentation.

7. **Planning assumptions and analytical methods:**

- a. What is the forecast year used in the PEL study?

2045

- b. **What method was used for forecasting traffic volumes?**

To estimate future 2045 design year volumes, a traffic growth rate was calculated using outputs from the Indiana Statewide Travel Demand Model (updated for the US 30/31 PEL Studies). This model provided estimated intersection volumes for each of the study intersections for a base year (2019) and a future year (2045). The future year model included both existing and committed projects on, and adjacent to, the US 30 East study corridor. Using these volumes, an average annual growth rate of 1.0% was calculated.

This growth rate was then applied to the 2022 peak season turning movement volumes (TMVs) to estimate the 2045 design year TMVs for the AM and PM peak hours. The peak hour TMVs for each study intersection are provided in the ProPEL US 30 East Existing Transportation Conditions Report (Appendix C). Additionally, this growth rate was applied to the existing (2022) AADT volumes to estimate the 2045 design year AADT volumes. The projected design year (2045) AADT volumes can be found in Section 7.3 and Appendix C of the ProPEL US 30 East Existing Transportation Conditions Report.

- c. **Are the planning assumptions and the corridor vision/purpose and need statement consistent with each other and with the long-range transportation plan? Are the assumptions still valid?**

Yes, the planning assumptions, corridor vision/purpose and need statement, and the applicable long-range transportation plans are all consistent with each other. The assumptions are still valid.

d. **What were the future year policy and/or data assumptions used in the transportation planning process related to land use, economic development, transportation costs, and network expansion?**

The future year assumptions related to land use and economic development come from local government land use plans and the Indiana Statewide Traffic Model.

The assumptions related to transportation costs and network expansion come from the Indiana Statewide Travel Demand Model, the INDOT Long Range Transportation Plan (2018-2045), as well as local transportation plans.

The INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan (2018-2045) identifies US 30 as a major corridor in the state, and thus, critical to mobility and economic activity. The plan identifies an opportunity to enhance system reliability and safety by upgrading rural segments of US 30 into free-flow access and recommends improvements for traffic flow and safety.

8. Environmental resources (wetlands, cultural, etc.) reviewed. For each resource or group of resources reviewed, provide the following:

a. In the PEL study, at what level of detail was the resource reviewed and what was the method of review?

The environmental review and evaluation were based primarily on existing secondary source data collected from various GIS databases. These sources were supplemented by limited windshield surveys in the corridor, as well as data provided by the public and stakeholders. Full details on the existing environmental data collected is provided in the ProPEL US 30 East Environmental Constraints Report (Appendix B of the PEL Study Report).

b. **Is this resource present in the area and what is the existing environmental condition for this resource?**

The ProPEL US 30 East Environmental Constraints Report (Appendix B to the PEL Study Report) provides a detailed evaluation of the existing conditions for the key resources within the study area. These resources are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1- Existing Environmental Conditions for Potentially Impacted Resources

Resource	Existing Environmental Condition
Socio-economic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-income and minority populations • Limited English Proficiency • Limited Vehicle Access • Limited Internet Access • Persons with Disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43 census block groups with populations of concern • Populations of concern concentrated in Fort Wayne, Warsaw, and rural areas with mobile home communities • Presence of HUD-assisted housing and vulnerable travel populations throughout the corridor

Resource	Existing Environmental Condition
<p>Infrastructure Constraints</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilities present along corridor (overhead, buried) • No at-grade rail crossings; multiple parallel freight rail lines including Norfolk Southern and CSX • One airport (Warsaw Municipal) located adjacent to US 30, with recent and planned runway expansion projects • Active gas, oil, and fiber optic transmission corridors cross US 30 in multiple locations
<p>Parks, Recreation Areas, Wildlife or Waterfowl Refuges, or Publicly Owned Historic Properties (Recreational Facilities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FHWA Section 4(f) Regulations (23 CFR 774) • Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF) of 1965 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 Section 4(f) recreational resources identified, including public parks, trails, and wildlife properties • Three cemeteries identified as potentially eligible for NRHP and Section 4(f) consideration • Section 6(f) property: Morsches Park (Columbia City) confirmed via IDNR records
<p>Natural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWI Wetlands and INDOT Mitigation Sites • Streams (including IDEM 303(d) Listed) • Floodplains • Lakes • Protected Species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 246 NWI-mapped wetlands in the study area • No INDOT mitigation sites within the study area • 144 streams totaling 142.2 miles; 36 cross or parallel US 30 • Multiple IDEM 303(d) impaired waters, including Pole Run Ditch • 49 mapped floodplain polygons, 17 intersect or are adjacent to US 30 • Forested lands total ~9,700 acres • IPaC and agency coordination identify presence of: Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, tricolored bat (proposed), rabbitsfoot and round hickorynut mussels (threatened), salamander mussel (proposed endangered), whooping crane (experimental population), and monarch butterfly (candidate)
<p>Cultural Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Above Ground • Archaeological • Centennial Farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three cemeteries (Oakwood, Hillcrest, Nolt) identified as potentially eligible historic properties • SHPO coordination completed (September 2023) • Numerous potentially eligible aboveground historic structures noted; formal determinations deferred to NEPA • Archaeological resource locations not disclosed per Indiana Code 14-21-1 • 366 Hoosier Homestead farms across the four-county region (Allen, Kosciusko, Whitley, Marshall)
<p>Mineral Resources / Petroleum Wells</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not specifically discussed in the report; assumed present based on regional conditions
<p>Air Quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entire study area is in attainment for all criteria pollutants
<p>Noise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise assessment deferred to future project-level NEPA analyses; no modeled CNAs provided in the constraints report

Resource	Existing Environmental Condition
Hazardous Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 133 sites of environmental concern identified within the study area, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 56 Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites – 7 brownfields – 2 CERCLIS Superfund sites – Additional UST, VCP, and IC sites • Concentrations near Warsaw, Columbia City, and Fort Wayne
Other: Schools, places of worship, cemeteries, hospitals, fire stations, police stations, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 550 total community resources identified within the 0.5-mile buffer • Includes schools, libraries, post offices, emergency services, and religious institutions • Three cemeteries identified as both community and cultural resources

c. What are the issues that need to be considered during NEPA, including potential resource impacts and potential mitigation requirements (if known)?

As projects resulting from the ProPEL US 30 East study move into the NEPA phase, a variety of environmental and community factors will require careful evaluation. These include potential impacts to natural resources, cultural resources and historic properties, local infrastructure, and nearby homes, businesses, and public facilities. While the PEL study identified areas of concern at a high level, NEPA will require more detailed analysis, coordination with agencies, and public input to fully understand and address these impacts.

Key considerations will include avoiding or minimizing disruptions to communities, managing environmental impacts such as water resources or wildlife habitat, and ensuring continued access to essential services. Community impact assessments completed during subsequent NEPA reviews should include consideration of impacts to community cohesion, as well as impacts to local mobility and access that could result from implementation of increased access control along the study corridor. Where impacts are unavoidable, appropriate mitigation strategies will need to be developed to reduce harm and support long-term project sustainability, including but not limited to, avoidance and minimization measures through design, time of year restrictions and best management practices during construction, and enhancement of existing resources.

d. How will the planning data provided need to be supplemented during NEPA?

All applicable resources that may be present and impacted by a project will require more detailed field surveys and/or analysis during the NEPA phase.

9. List environmental resources you are aware of that were not reviewed in the PEL study and why. Indicate whether or not they will need to be reviewed in NEPA and explain why.

All applicable environmental resources were reviewed at a cursory level based on secondary source data. Many of these resources will require more detailed field surveys and/or analysis during the NEPA phase for any projects advanced from this PEL study.

The resources identified during the PEL study are discussed in Section 3 of this PEL Study Report and in the ProPEL US 30 East Environmental Constraints Report (Appendix B of the PEL Study Report)

Numerous archaeological resource sites were identified throughout the study area; however, in accordance with 54 USC 307103 and Indiana Code 14-21-1, which provides protection for archaeological sites and burial sites, information related to such resources is not publicly shared herein.

10. **Were cumulative impacts considered in the PEL study? If yes, provide the information or reference where the analysis can be found.**

No, cumulative impacts were not considered in the PEL study. They will be considered during subsequent NEPA studies.

11. **Describe any mitigation strategies discussed at the planning level that should be analyzed during NEPA.**

No mitigation strategies were identified during the PEL study but will be developed, as needed, during the NEPA phase.

12. **What needs to be done during NEPA to make information from the PEL study available to the agencies and the public? Are there PEL study products which can be used or provided to agencies or the public during the NEPA scoping process?**

All applicable PEL study information and reports have been made available for public and agency review via public and agency meetings and the study website. This same approach can be used to make these PEL study products available during the NEPA scoping process.

13. **Are there any other issues a future project team should be aware of?**

Examples: Controversy, utility problems, access or ROW issues, encroachments into ROW, problematic land owners and/or groups, contact information for stakeholders, special or unique resources in the area, etc.

Chapter 6 of the PEL Study Report summarizes next steps and key considerations for future project teams. There are no additional issues at this time that a future project team should be made aware of other than what has been detailed in this PEL Study Report and associated appendices.

ATTACHMENT 1 – Agency Coordination Matrix

COORDINATION LIST	STAKEHOLDER TYPE			COORDINATION at STUDY MILESTONES						
	Agency	Resource Agency	Cultural Resources	Tribe	Vision/ Scoping	Invitation to Participate	Purpose & Need	Level 1 (UoA)	Level 2	Level 3
National Park Service	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓	3/9/2023 X	10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X	4/9/2024 Email	11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development	X				1/27/2023 X	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
US Fish & Wildlife Service	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
US Army Corps of Engineers	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Natural Resources Conservation Service	X				1/27/2023 X	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
US Environmental Protection Agency	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
US Coast Guard (9th District)	X				1/27/2023 ✓			10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓	4/30/2024 Email	11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓
IDEM, Groundwater Section	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
IDEM, Wetlands & Stormwater	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
IDNR, Div. Fish & Wildlife	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/22/2023 Email		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓
IDNR, Div. Outdoor Rec.	X				1/27/2023 ✓	7/27/2023 ✓		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
INDOT Office of Aviation								10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Fort Wayne Service Center (Allen County)	X							10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Columbia City Service Center (Whitley County)	X							10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Warsaw Service Center (Kosciusko County)	X							10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Plymouth Service Center (Marshall County)	X							10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District	X							10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Whitley County Soil and Water Conservation District	X							10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X

COORDINATION LIST	STAKEHOLDER TYPE			COORDINATION at STUDY MILESTONES					
Agency	Resource Agency	Cultural Resources	Tribe	Vision/ Scoping	Invitation to Participate	Purpose & Need	Level 1 (UoA)	Level 2	Level 3
Kosciusko County Soil and Water Conservation District	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Marshall County Soil and Water Conservation District	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Maumee River Basin Commission of Local Governments	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓
Allen County Planning Services, Floodplain Management	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓
Kosciusko County Area Planning Department, Floodplain Management	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓
Whitley County Area Planning Department, Floodplain Management	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Allen County Office of Homeland Security	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Kosciusko County Emergency Management	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Whitley County Emergency Management	X			11/15/2022 X	10/28/2022 X	5/23/2023 X	10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		
Allen County Parks Administrative Offices	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Kosciusko County Parks and Recreation	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Warsaw Parks and Recreation Department	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Winona Lake Parks Department	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Columbia City Parks	X						10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC)	X			11/15/2022 ✓	10/28/2022 ✓	5/23/2023 ✓	10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓	4/9/2024 Meeting ✓	12/4/2024 Meeting ✓ 11/12/2024 Meeting ✓
Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG)	X				10/28/2022 X		10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Indiana DNR, Division of Historic Preservation and	X	X		11/30/2022 ✓			10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting ✓		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓

COORDINATION LIST	STAKEHOLDER TYPE			COORDINATION at STUDY MILESTONES					
Agency	Resource Agency	Cultural Resources	Tribe	Vision/ Scoping	Invitation to Participate	Purpose & Need	Level 1 (UoA)	Level 2	Level 3
Indiana Landmarks, Northeast Field Office		X					10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Indiana Freedom Trails, Northeast Region		X					10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society		X					10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Kosciusko County Historical County		X					10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Whitley County Historical Society/Historical Museum		X					10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Indiana Lincoln Highway Association, Inc.		X					10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓
Indiana Historic Michigan Road		X							11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting ✓
Whitley County Historian		X					10/17/2023 Email 11/30/2023 Meeting X		11/12/2024 Email 12/4/2024 Meeting X
Adams Township (New Haven) EMS					10/28/2022 X				
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma			X	2/23/2023 X		7/17/2023 X	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma			X	2/23/2023 ✓		7/17/2023 ✓	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma			X	2/23/2023 ✓		7/17/2023 ✓	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians			X	2/23/2023 ✓		7/17/2023 ✓	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Shawnee Tribe			X	2/23/2023 ✓		7/17/2023 X	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Delaware Tribe of Indians			X	2/23/2023 X		7/17/2023 ✓	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Forest County Potawatomi			X	2/23/2023 ✓		7/17/2023 X	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Wyandotte Nation			X	2/23/2023 X		7/17/2023 X	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma			X	2/23/2023 X		7/17/2023 X	11/20/2023 Email	4/2/2024 Email	12/5/2024 Email
✓ - Attended the coordination meeting X - Did not attend the coordination Meeting									