



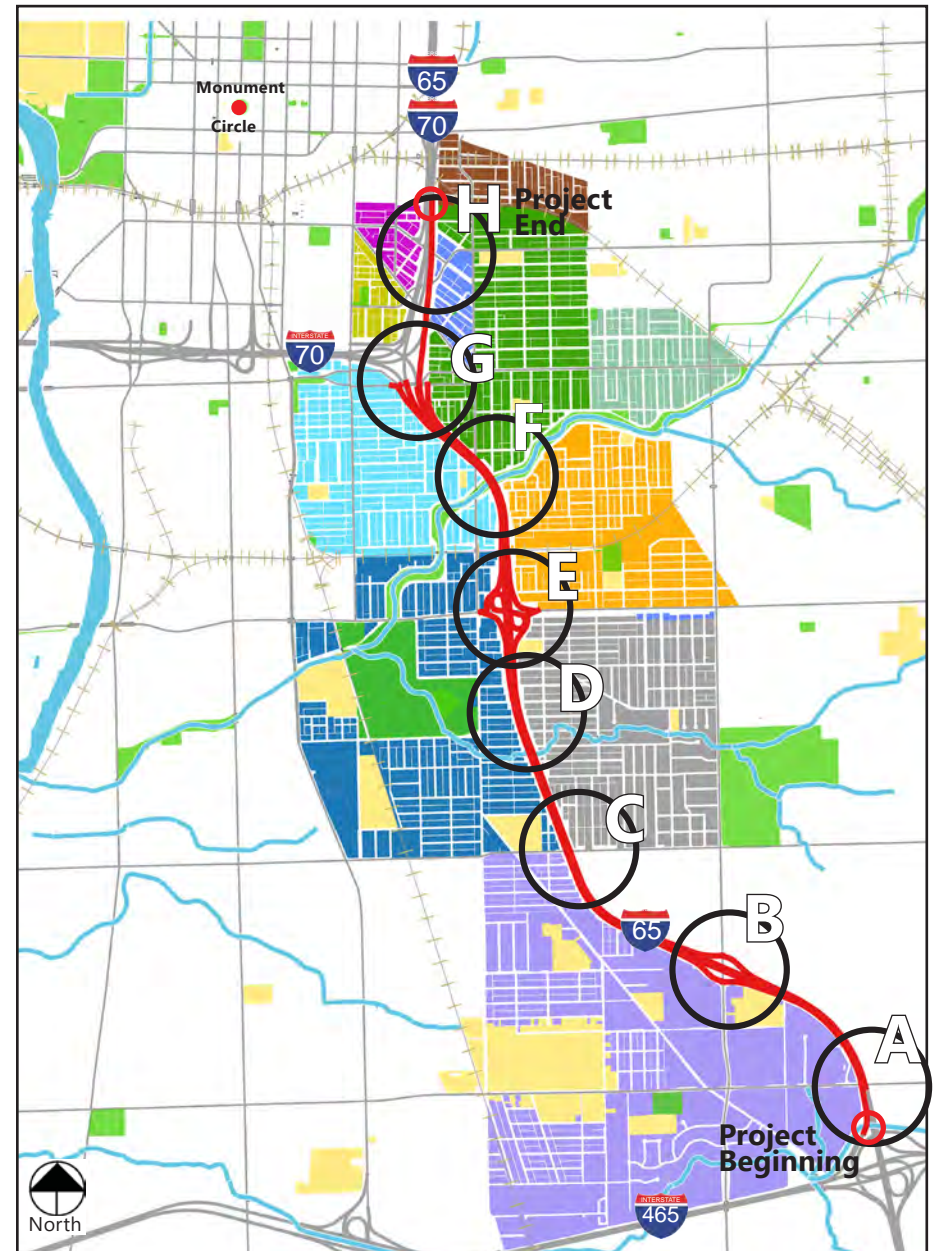
## Consulting Party Comprehensive Report of Observations and Requests regarding the I-65 Safety & Efficiency Project [I-65 SAFE] Indianapolis, Des No. 1400073

Note:  
These comments are intended to be helpful to all parties, including INDOT, City and adjacent neighborhoods. It may be that some comments are more applicable to either INDOT or the City - but the jurisdictional responsibilities are unclear, therefore the intent is to discuss the recommendations and then determine responsibility and implementation.

ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE  
August 22, 2023

**UPDATE: September 20, 2023**  
(subsequent to INDOT Public Information meeting held 8/29/23) .

Note: A future update may be released before the September 29, 2023 comment period closure.



**LOCATION, INTERFACING NEIGHBORHOODS & PORTALS**

## INTRODUCTION

*Rethink Coalition appreciates the opportunity to submit this follow up to our May 14, 2023 consulting party letter regarding the I-65 SAFE project. It is in the form of a comprehensive report of observations and requests. As stated in the letter, we support the safety, efficiency and mobility objectives of the I-65 SAFE project.*

*Rethink Coalition qualifies that support by recommending:*

- *That the Purpose & Need statement for the project be updated to reflect the recently awarded Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program grant and ProPEL Indy projects.*
- *That the project neither widen bridges nor expand pavement beyond the existing outer shoulder. The purpose of expansion can be achieved more efficiently through strategies developed in this report that stay within the bounds of an interim vs major project and reduce project environmental effects on adjoining neighborhoods.*
- *That cost savings that result from the recommendations in this Report include rather than exclude safety, mobility and efficiency improvements beyond the Interstate mainline to benefit those that passover or under the Interstate to access employment, education, and local multimodal transportation opportunities.*
- *That the project employ a noise reduction strategy that avoids the high cost of noise barrier walls while creating multiple safety and life-cycle cost benefits for the overall system.*

*The impacts of the original interstate construction half a century ago persist, still affecting neighborhoods with safety, economic and environmental justice burdens. This Rethink Coalition report demonstrates how many of those continuing impacts can be*

*mitigated by the SAFE project without compromising project purpose.*

*Recommendations focus on I-65 bridge and interchanges as portals between separated neighborhoods, and range from broadly schematic to fairly detailed. They convey reasonable, pragmatic and cost effective alternatives and strategies to achieve safe and equitable connectivity. They have been informed by extensive neighborhood engagement that revealed a collective need for multimodal safety and mobility for all interfacing modes of travel within the I-65 SAFE project influence area.*

*The recommendations demonstrate how an urban interstate can leverage investment in infrastructure in a collaborative and multi-jurisdictional way that serves multiple purposes and needs.*

*Rethink Coalition and its community partners look forward to partnering with the INDOT project team on the development of a community-responsive and fiscally responsible interim project, delivered on time and on budget as a shared commitment.*

*Rethink Coalition's approach allows recently inaugurated planning processes for rebuilding the Inner Loop to advance, informed but not constrained by this important I-65 interim project.*

*Sincerely,  
Rethink Coalition, Inc.*

*Charles T. Richardson  
Co-Chair, Rethink Coalition Board of Directors*

*Russell Menyhart  
Co-Chair, Rethink Coalition Board of Directors*

*Brenda Freije  
President and CEO, Rethink Coalition Inc*

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## ***Navigating the Report***

### **Section 1**

*Establishes and summarizes the foundational basis of the report's recommendations.*

### **Section 2**

*Documents, through an environmental justice lens, the places and the voices of the people affected by the interstate corridor by proximity and isolation.*

### **Section 3**

*Applies design elements to the recurring and specific conditions of each Neighborhood Portal... the passages through the interstate barrier...where observations and community conversations resulted in specific recommendations.*

### **Appendix**

*Contains technical resource material for deeper dives into the complexities of an interstate highway and the potential of the places/connections considerations of the transportation systems that underlay and define, for better or worse, our city and region.*

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## Rethink Coalition

### RETHINK COALITION AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Charles T. Richardson, Board Co-Chair  
Russell Menyhart, Board Co-Chair  
Brenda Freije, President and CEO  
Adairius Gardner  
Marjorie Kienle

### CICF DIRECTORS

Lourenzo Giple  
A'Lelia Bundles

### INDY CHAMBER DIRECTORS

Sarah Hempstead  
Taylor Hughes  
Stacia Murphy

### INDIANA LANDMARKS DIRECTORS

Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows  
Bruce Buchanan

### I-65 SAFE PROJECT ADVISORY TEAM

Bruce Colville, Community Organization  
Jordan Ryan, Historian  
A-V-A Video Productions [drone observations]

### RETHINK COALITION LEAD CONSULTANT AND REPORT AUTHOR

Storrow Kinsella Associates/Transportation Planning & Urban Design

## Corridor Stakeholders

### I-65 SAFE PROJECT CORRIDOR NEIGHBORHOODS & DISTRICTS

- Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Association
- Bean Creek Neighborhood Association
- Big Car Collaborative
- Fountain Fletcher District Association
- Fletcher Place Neighborhood Association
- Fountain Square Alliance Neighborhood Association
- Fountain Square Neighborhood Association
- Garfield Park Neighborhood Association
- North Square Neighborhood Association
- Prospect Falls Neighborhood Association
- Reconnecting to Our Waterways
- University of Indianapolis
- University Heights Neighborhood Association

## Agency Partners

### INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Brian Shattuck, I-65 SAFE Project Manager  
Andy Dietrick, Major Projects Communications

### PARSONS CORPORATION I-65 SAFE PROJECT CONSULTANT

Mindy Peterson, Public Involvement Director  
Toby Randolph, Project Manager  
John LaBlonde, Deputy Project Manager  
Juliet Port, Environmental Lead  
Allee Hersman, Roadway Lead

### CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS I-65 PROJECT/LOCAL COORDINATION

Ericka Miller, DPW Deputy Director  
Jill Palmer, DPW Program Manager  
Nathan Sheets, DPW Administrator  
John Bowen, DPW Chief Engineer  
Lane Wolf, DPW Public Information Officer  
Caitlin Morgan, Mayor's Neighborhood Advocate

*This report was prepared with engagement, ideas and insights from the Rethink Coalition's I-65 SAFE Project Advisory Team and members of the thirteen I-65 SAFE project corridor's neighborhoods and districts listed above. Its general scope and purpose took shape through early conversations with the Agency Partners listed on this page as part of the environmental review phase of the I-65 Safety & Efficiency Project.*



# Analogy, Opportunity, Imperative

## An Analogy

The riverine terrain of Indianapolis has been shaped by glaciers, streams and rivers over epochs of geologic time to form the places and connections of the city. The unintended consequences of urbanization and industrialization on that terrain prompted the *Commercial Club* [now Indy Chamber] to sponsor the early 20th century transformation of the city's compromised waterways into a now-celebrated amenity of open space and connectivity corridors. It is known as the *Indianapolis Historic Park and Boulevard System*, now Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Indianapolis Greenways and the Indianapolis Cultural Trail built on that legacy to create a ubiquitous urban network of open space connectivity along Fall Creek, Pleasant Run and the White River into downtown. That still-growing system continues to transform how the city is experienced, perceived and *grows*.

That analogy informs the Rethink Coalition vision.



## The Opportunity and Imperative

Rethink Coalition views the interstate corridors that flow to and through the city as a *constructed* terrain embedded into the fabric of the city fifty years ago. It is analogous to the Indianapolis riverine terrain that was disrupted by industrialization and urbanization but since transformed.

Achieving that same potential is both opportunity and imperative. It can begin with the I-65 SAFE project, as a model for other I-65/70 spokes that will be studied through INDOT's *ProPEL Indy* process for their optimal synergy between transportation infrastructure purpose and the interfacing community.

**Rethink Coalition recommendations are feasible steps towards that opportunity and imperative within the constraints of an interim project. The constraints require prioritization of efforts towards *Equitable Safety and Mobility* for local multimodal interfaces with the corridor, and reduction of impacts of an expanded mainline on adjacent populations. The recommendations support the Big Idea of *Interstate Corridors as the Constructed Terrain of Urban Connectivity and Quality of Life*.**

The I-65 Safety & Efficiency Project (I-65 SAFE) is almost five miles long from the I-465 interchange to its terminus just north of Fletcher Avenue where it engages the I-65/70 North Split project's south terminus. Its purpose is to reduce congestion and improve safety and mobility as an Interim [near-term] rather than Major [long-term] project, as differentiated by expenditure thresholds.

It defines a major input to the Inner Loop at a critical stage in the overall system's long term reconstruction planning. That planning includes two concurrent and complementary initiatives: *Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program* (RCPP) planning grant for the Southeast leg of the Inner Loop; and *ProPEL Indy*, a multi-year study by INDOT to select a preferred alternative for the rebuilding of the 65/70 Inner Loop and its major spokes downstream of the I-465 belt.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Rethink Coalition agrees with many of the I-65 SAFE project objectives, but qualifies its support with the following recommendations:

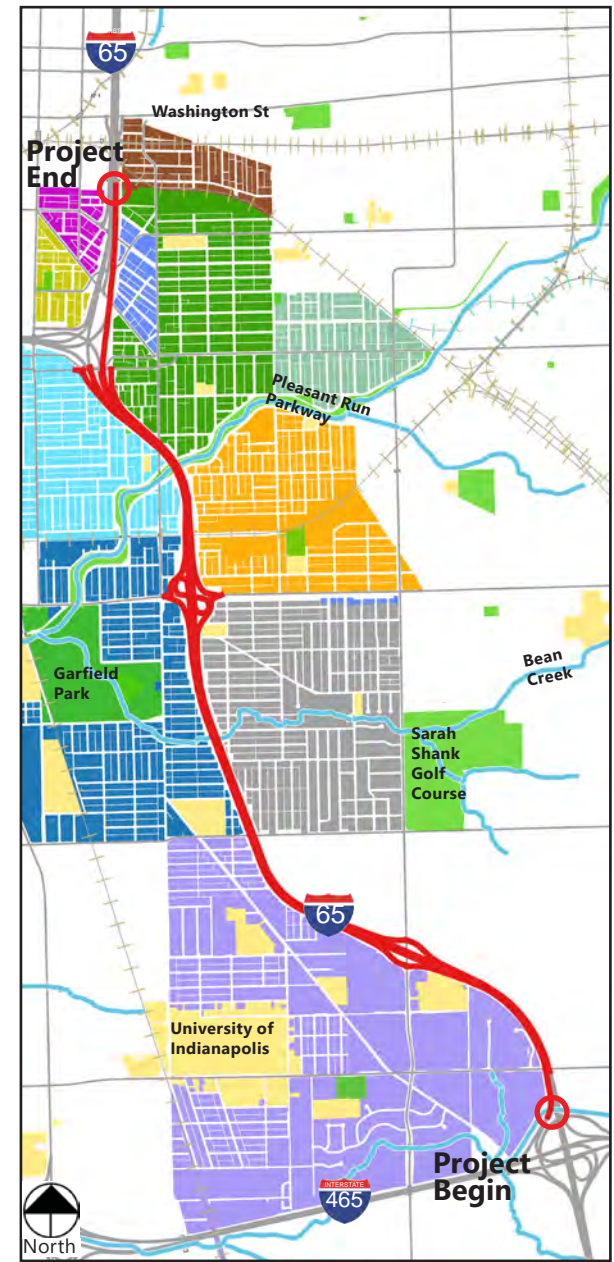
- Address environmental justice issues experienced by multiple affected neighborhoods that Rethink Coalition engaged in robust conversation. Their recommendations inform a balanced approach to interstate safety, congestion mitigation and neighborhood connectivity while maintaining the essential purpose and need of the I-65 SAFE project.
- Eliminate costly bridge widening and defer construction of an additional lane from the

Raymond Street interchange northward. Additional Washington Street exit capacity can be achieved as a near-term need north of the Morris/Prospect I-65 NB bridge.

- Limit bridge changes to rehabilitation and preservation, deferring major changes to completion of South Split planning studies which will better coincide with bridge useful life cycles. At that time utilize accelerated bridge replacement techniques to reduce reconstruction impacts on system traffic.
- Apply project savings realized by that scope reduction to address local multimodal connectivity now conspicuously absent from the project but crucial to repairing interstate barriers to neighborhood mobility as well as functionality of the transportation network.
- Implement recommended median and edge barrier improvements that mitigate wheel-pavement noise, eliminate the cost of problematic noise barrier walls and provide significant safety and life cycle cost benefit.

Rethink Coalition's recommendations align with current USDOT/FHWA policy for multimodal safety and mobility for all interfacing modes of travel. The recommendations also include several related *big ideas* that go well beyond project scope but that need to be adopted into long term plans (ProPEL Indy).

Rethink Coalition's collaboration with INDOT and the City is intended to keep the project on schedule and on budget while meeting project and community objectives consistent with a 21st century urban Interstate...a near term strategy for a more positive long-term outcome.



I-65 SAFE PROJECT INFLUENCE AREA



# Executive Summary: Environmental Justice Recommendations

## Study Area A

### HANNA AVE BRIDGE

Stats: Ex. bridge length 225 feet | INDOT RW length 300 feet

- Widen an additional 12-feet +/-
- Provide 8' shared-use path both sides with continuous safety rail
- Provide safety fence both sides
- Extend shared-use path to RW extents for future city connection
- Provide "Lick Creek Greenway" name both sides

## Study Area B

### KEYSTONE AVENUE INTERCHANGE

Stats: INDOT RW length E 785 feet | INDOT RW length W 800 feet

- Improve signalization and crosswalk design within Interstate ROW

## Study Area C

### TROY AVENUE UNDERPASS

Stats: Influence zone N side 500 feet | Influence zone S side 585 feet

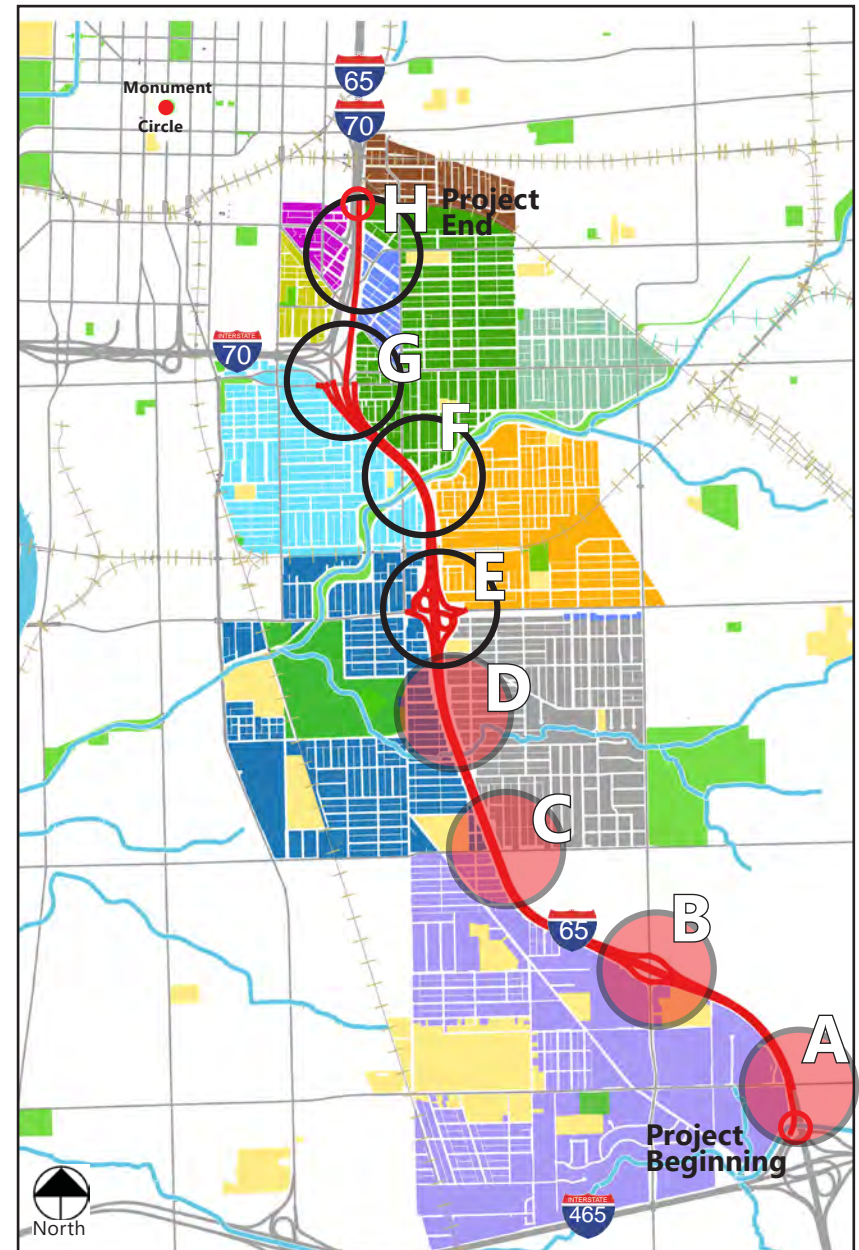
- Fix scupper drainage
- Pave bare dirt both sides
- Provide curb/barrier rail along N side
- Provide curb along existing sidewalk S side

## Study Area D

### NELSON AVE UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 150 feet - two sides

- Fix scupper drainage
- Pave bare dirt both sides
- Improve lighting



STUDY AREAS

# Executive Summary: Environmental Justice Recommendations

## Study Area D

### BEAN CREEK UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 150 feet - two sides

- Fix scupper drainage
- Stabilize creek bed/bare dirt
- Improve lighting

## Study Area D

### SOUTHERN AVE UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 140 feet - two sides

- Fix scupper drainage
- Stabilize creek bed/bare dirt
- Improve lighting

## Study Area D

### BRADBURY AVE UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 170 feet - two sides

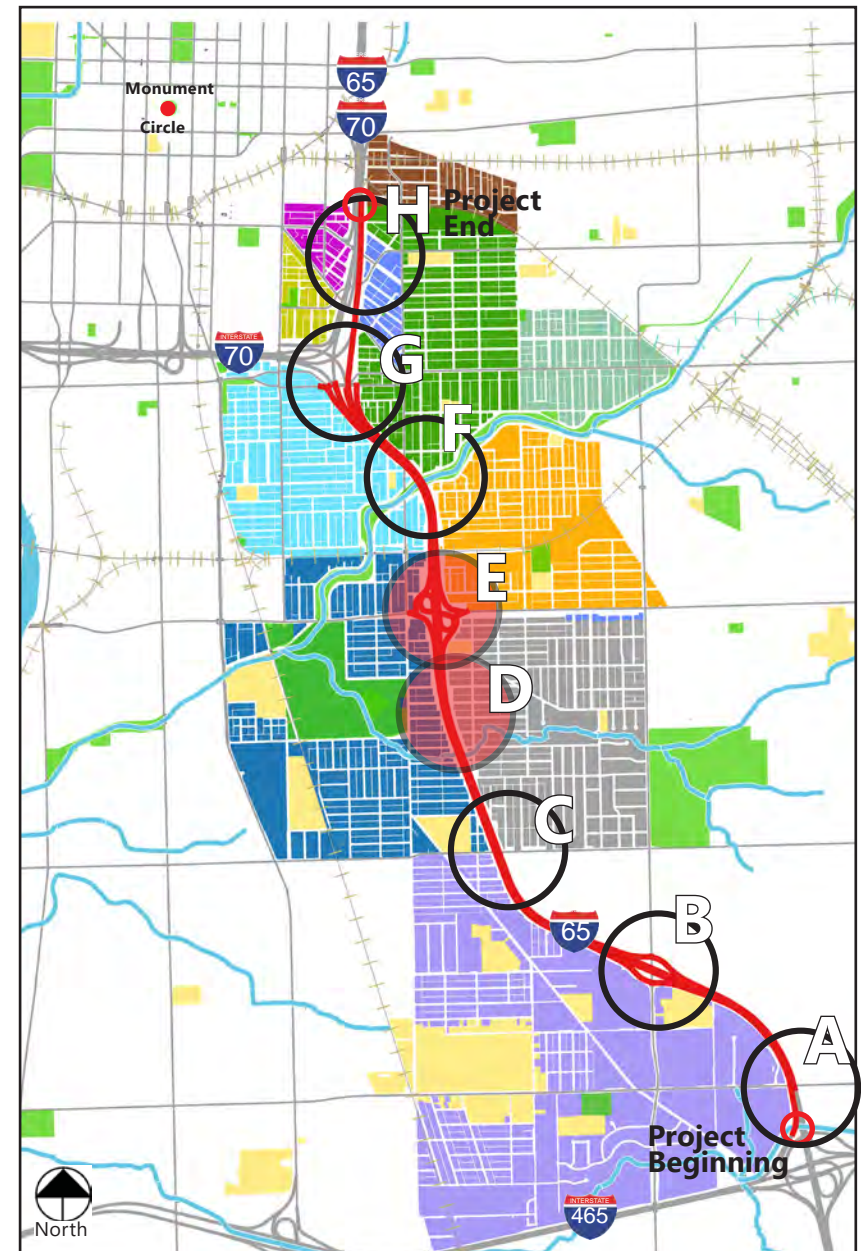
- Fix scupper drainage
- Pave bare dirt both sides
- Improve lighting

## Study Area E

### RAYMOND STREET INTERCHANGE

Stats: Underpass length 150 feet - two sides

- Convert the "rural" partial cloverleaf to a compact urban diamond interchange and lengthen the space between Shelby and I-65 ramp signals
- Create safe bike/ped passage under the bridge with kneewall widening of walk and low profile barriers at the curb line
- Free-flow shared use paths under ramps with no bike/ped vehicle conflicts and not crosswalks



STUDY AREAS



# Executive Summary: Environmental Justice Recommendations

## Study Area F

### NAOMI STREET UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 145 feet - two sides

- No bridge widening
- Fix scupper drainage
- Pave bare dirt both sides
- Kneewall widening of walk
- Improve lighting

## Study Area F

### PLEASANT RUN SOUTH PARKWAY UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 140 feet - two sides

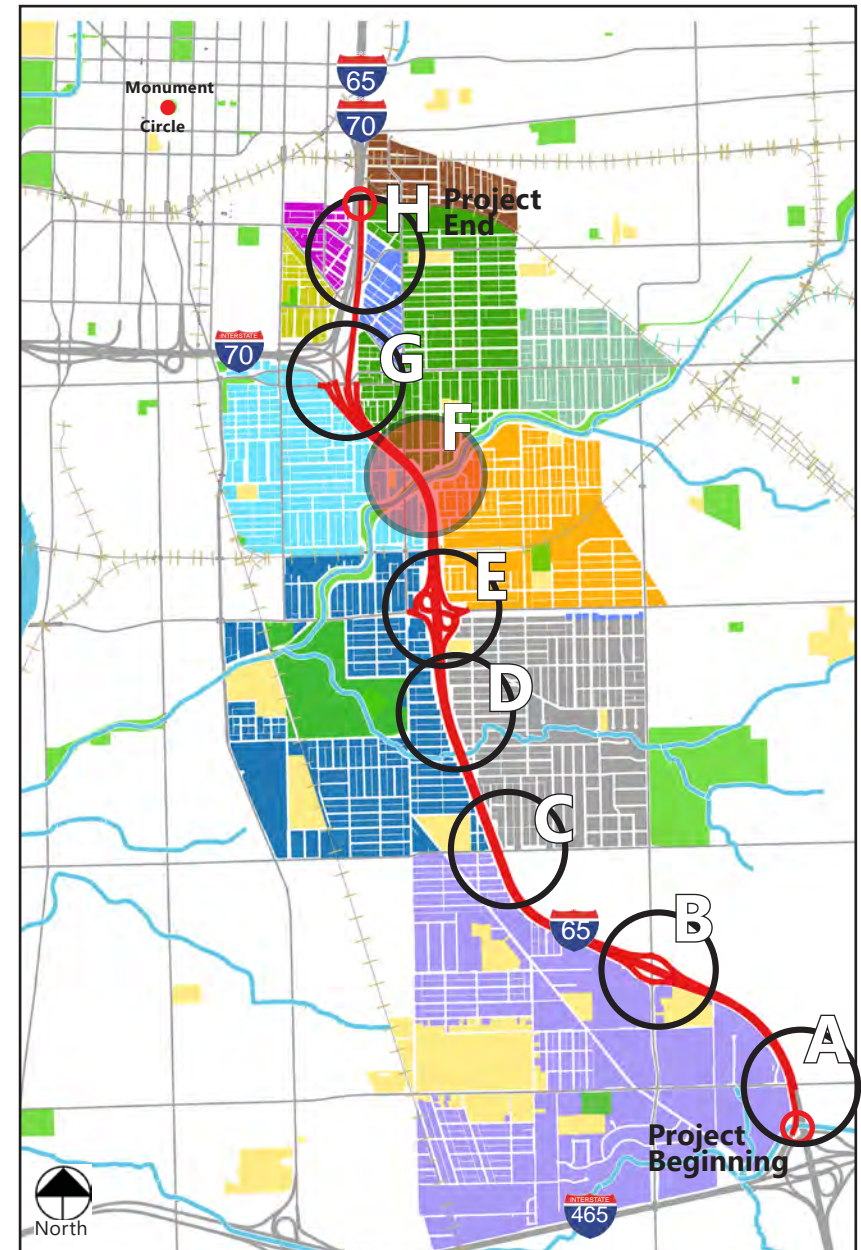
- No bridge widening
- Fix scupper drainage
- Pave bare dirt both sides
- Improve lighting
- Context sensitive design and 4f review (recognize national register listing)

## Study Area F

### PLEASANT RUN NORTH PARKWAY UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 140 feet - two sides

- No bridge widening
- Fix scupper drainage
- Pave bare dirt both sides
- Improve lighting
- Context sensitive design and 4f review (recognize national register listing)



STUDY AREAS

## Study Area F

### SHELBY STREET UNDERPASS

Stats: Underpass length 205 feet - two sides

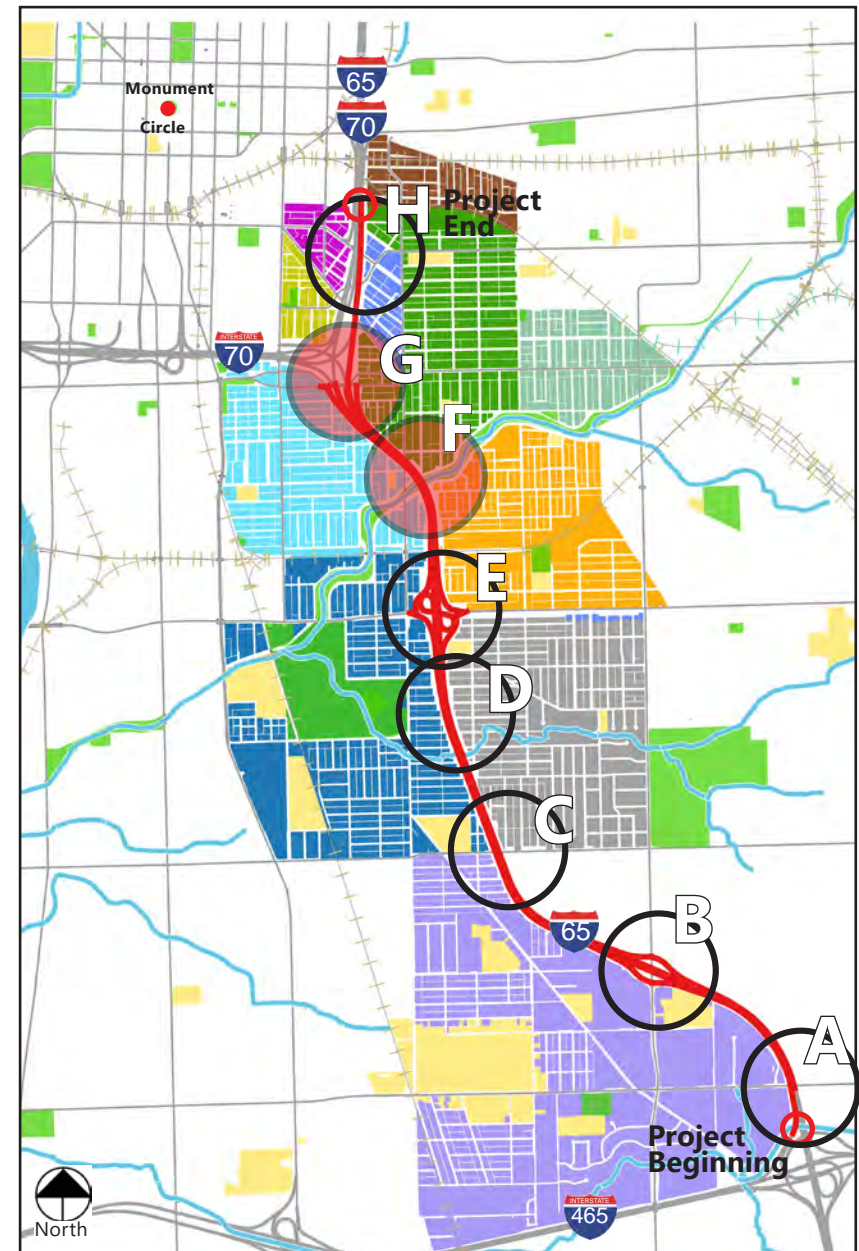
- Reconfigure all lanes to minimum standards.
- Reconfigure intersections at each end to reduce conflicts, and convert cycle-track to shared-use path.
- Protect bridge columns and bike/ped lanes & walks with low-profile median barriers.
- Design/install a balanced day/night lighting system.
- "Permit" a well-lit mural to Celebrate Shelby Street [Per the 10th St].
- Adjust Eskenazi Health parking lot movement and relocate police fence.
- Work with city to improve the transitions between cycle trak and shared-use-path north and south of the Shelby Street underpass which are now unsafe.

## Study Area G

### MORRIS/PROSPECT STREET INTERCHANGE AND BRIDGES

Stats: Underpass length 140 feet - two sides

- Reconfigure four travel and one turn lane to a lengthened turn lane and one travel lane in each direction. Create bike/ped shared use paths in place of existing narrow walks and outer travel lanes.
- Change ramp entrances from free-flow to all-way stop for bike/ped safety & metered gap flow to I-65, by utilizing single travel lanes on Morris/Prospect one way pair.
- Develop Leonard/Prospect Street all-way stops north of Morris.
- Eliminate parking restrictions for one travel lane on eastbound Morris from East Street with Street tree curb extensions.
- No overpass widening (ProPEL Indy and RCPP grant impact) and pushes columns too close to the signalized intersection of Leonard/NB ramp, making the transition from Prospect to the underpass difficult.
- No auxiliary lane creating a fifth lane into the Inner Loop which requires bridge widening.



STUDY AREAS



# Executive Summary: Environmental Justice Recommendations

## Study Area H

### VIRGINIA/CALVARY/FLETCHER BRIDGES & ABANDONED RR BRIDGE

- Limit to work that does not impact recently received USDOT grant for Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (RCPP). INDOT is a Rethink Coalition partner on the RCPP Planning project.
- Planning work to begin late 2023/early 2024 and complete in 12-15 months - concurrent with I-65 SAFE Project.

### Overarching EJ Recommendation 1 THE I65 SAFE GREENWAY LOOP

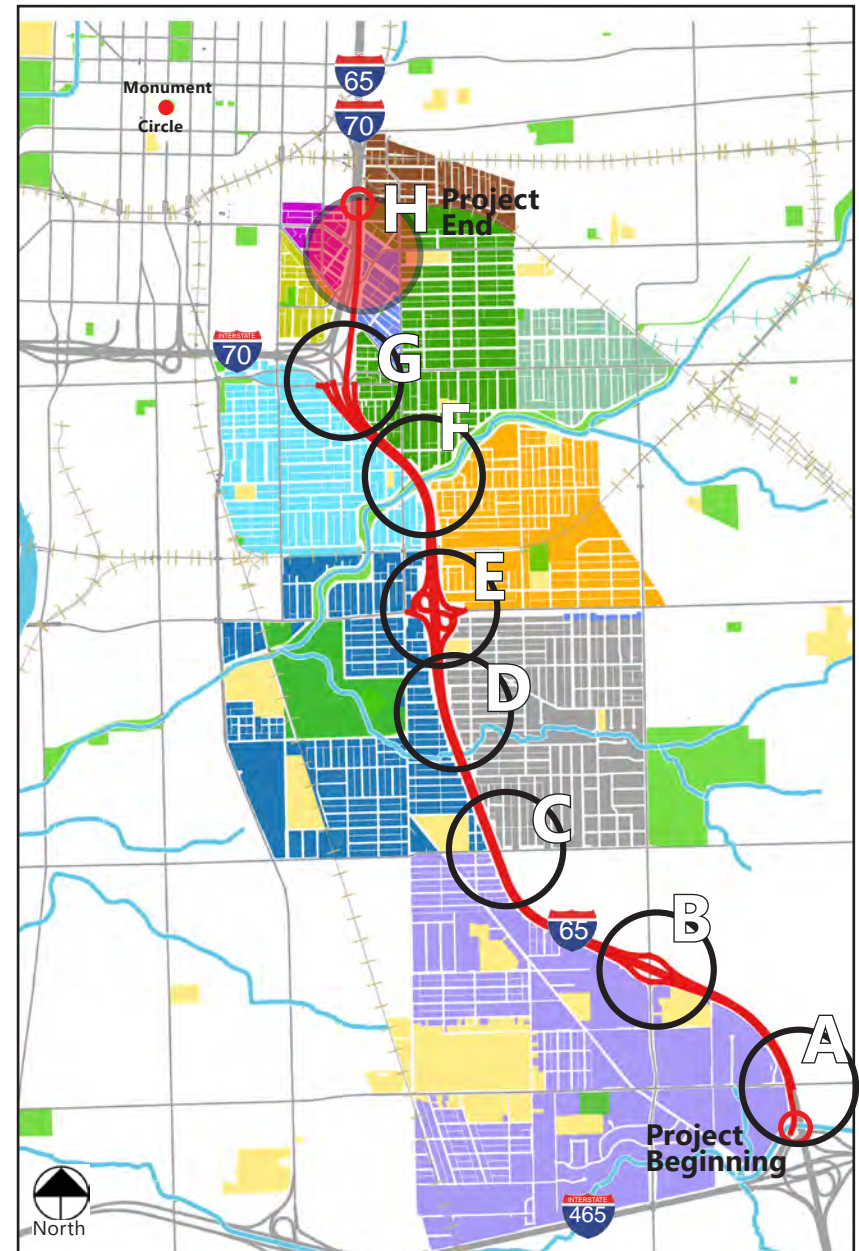
- Connect Lick Creek Greenway with Bates-Hendricks/Fountain Square.
- 8 miles (no acquisition/utilize INDOT RW)
- Rethink ask: permission for City to build (over time)

### Overarching EJ Recommendation 2 NOISE MITIGATION COUNTERMEASURES

- Use continuous outer lane F-shape truck height concrete barriers and enhanced pavement in lieu of sound walls.

### Overarching EJ Recommendation 3 ELIMINATE ADDED LANE AND BRIDGE WIDENING

- Eliminate fifth (auxiliary) lane from Raymond to Washington to reduce potential constraints on USDOT grant project awarded to Rethink Coalition.
- Eliminate all bridge widening from I-65 SAFE Project because of neighborhood impacts and high cost and the need to reallocate funding to underpass improvements.



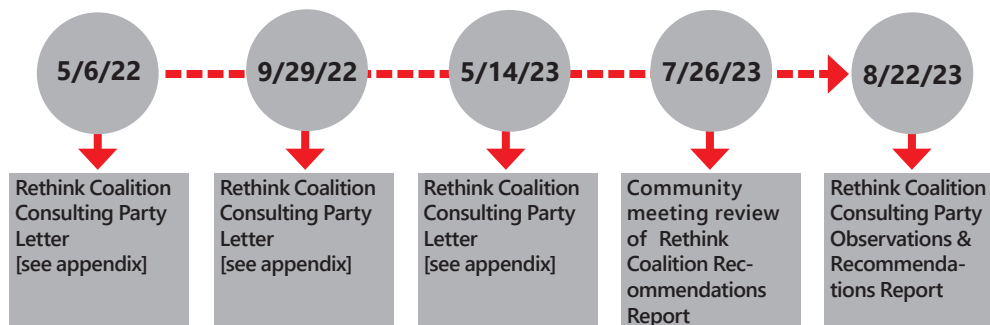
STUDY AREAS

# Executive Summary: Environmental Justice Recommendations

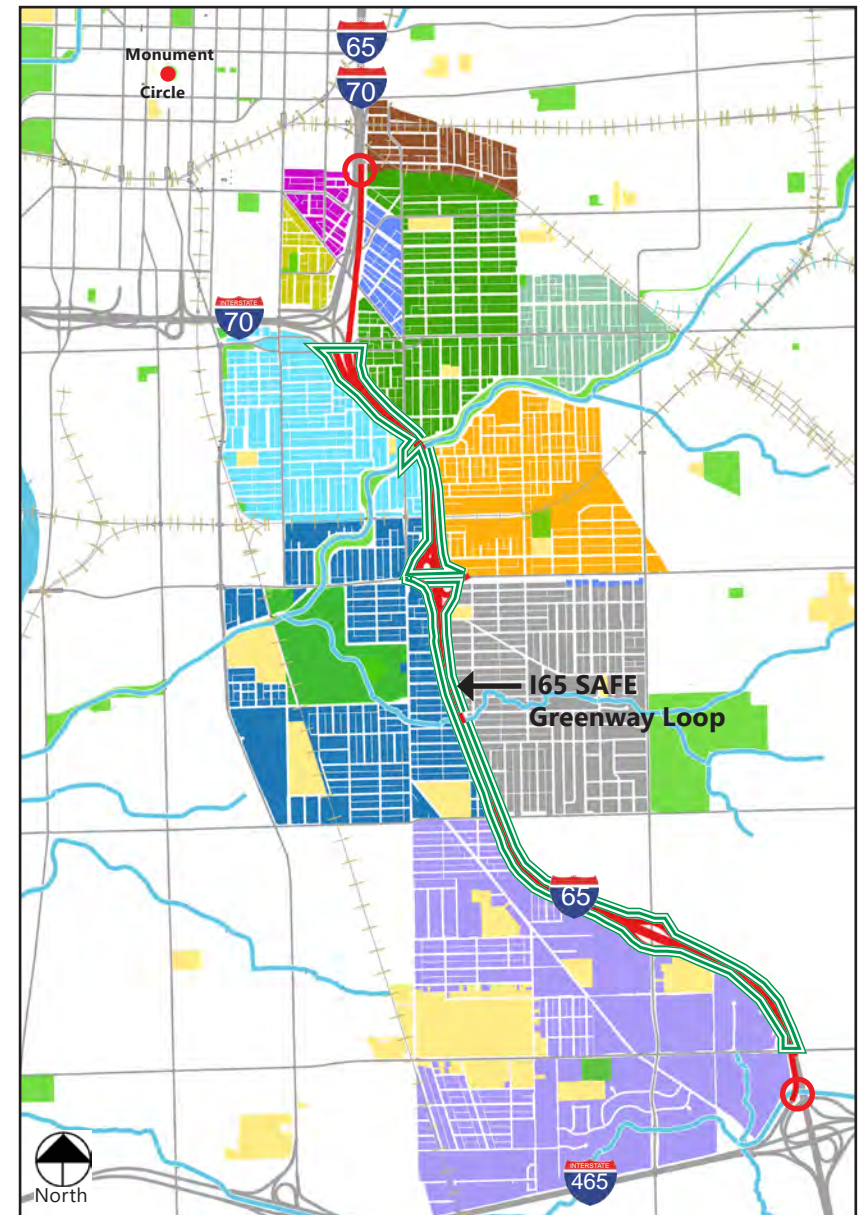
## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE BUDGET SUMMARY TABLE

Area	Description	Est. Construction Cost
	<b>INDOT PROJECT BUDGET</b>	<b>\$65,000,000</b>
	<b>RETHINK COALITION EJ RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
A	Hanna Ave Bridge	\$480,000-\$528,000
B	Keystone Ave Interchange	\$824,000-\$906,000
C	Troy Ave Underpass	\$282,100-\$310,310
D	Nelson Ave Underpass	\$72,800-\$80,080
E	Raymond Street Interchange	\$3,764,400-\$4,140,840
F	Naomi Underpass	\$75,400-\$82,940
F	PR South Underpass	\$72,800-\$80,080
F	PR North Underpass	\$72,800-\$80,080
F	Shelby Street Underpass	\$406,000-\$446,600
G	Morris/Prospect Bridge/Interchange	\$680,550-\$748,605
1	<b>Overarching Recommendation: SAFE Greenway Loop</b>	\$0 (permission to build in ROW)
2	<b>Overarching Recommendation: Noise Mitigation Countermeasures</b>	\$8,448,000-\$9,292,800
	<b>SUBTOTAL EJ RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>\$17,000,000</b>
3	<b>Overarching Recommendation: credit eliminate added (5th) lane from Raymond to Morris/Prospect and all bridge widening.</b>	<b>(\$19,850,000)</b>
	<b>BUDGET CHANGE</b>	<b>\$ 0 - (2,850,000)</b>

Budget estimates based on sketch concepts to provide a rough order of magnitude for discussion.



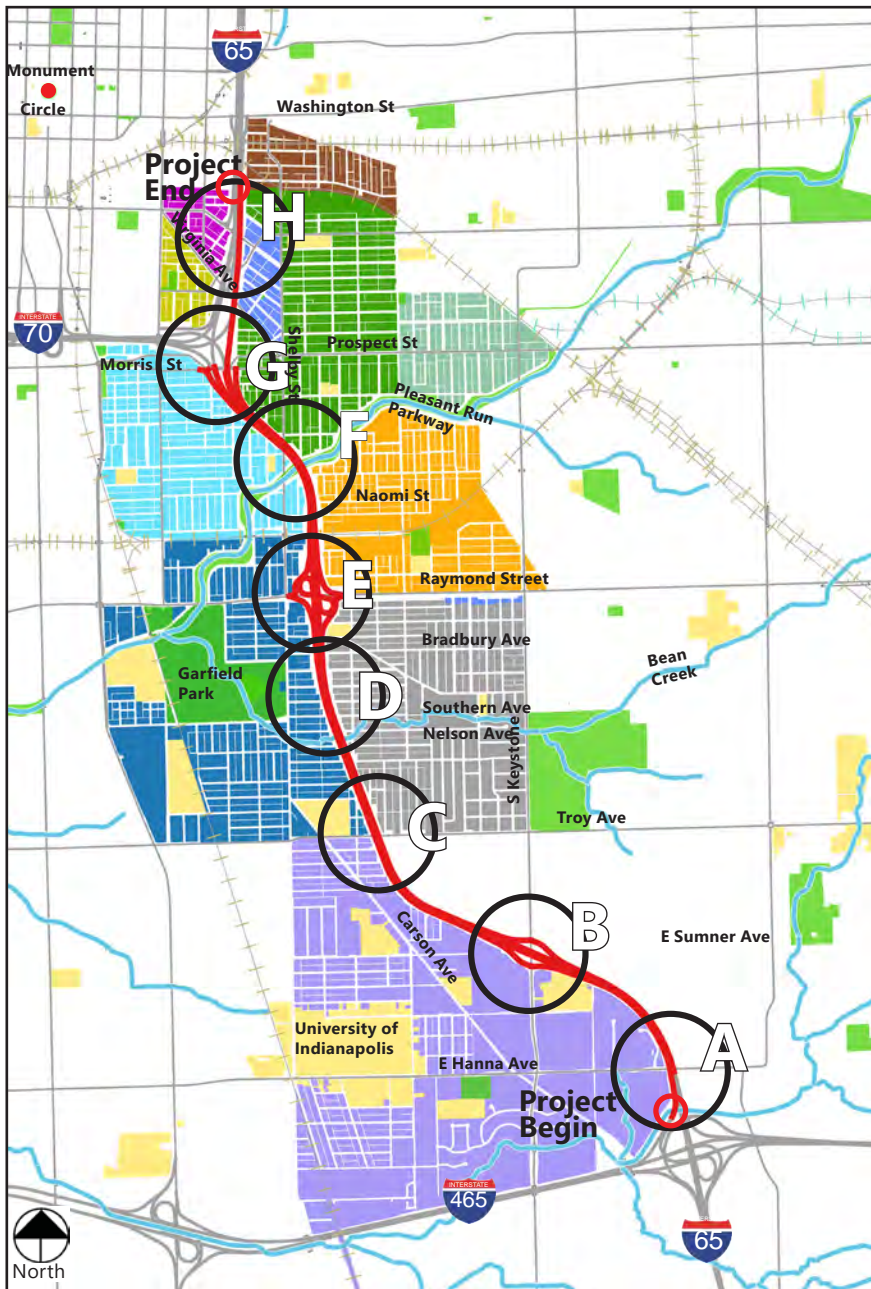
## RETHINK COALITION CONSULTING PARTY RESPONSES



## RETHINK COALITION OVERARCHING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE RECOMMENDATIONS



# Section 2: Context



## I-65 SAFE PROJECT AREA

- Indy Parks
- Schools
- A Rethink Coalition I-65 SAFE Project study locations based on neighborhood connectivity portals

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***Response to an emergent social issue... the interstate underpass as refuge of last resort rather than a neighborhood's safe passage to destination now separated by the interstate.***

The underpasses are portals between residential districts, employment destinations, shopping and access to the Red Line Bus Rapid (BRT) transit route. The prohibitions addressed by the sign above are better addressed by making these spaces attractive, convenient and safe as connectivity features designed in a way that disincentivises their use as shelter.



***An example of a commonly heard concern: "... the underpass feels unsafe and hazardous for pedestrians and even experienced cyclists"***

The Shelby Street underpass shown above is a major bike/ped link between Fountain Square and Garfield Park, a functional extension of the Cultural Trail, and a Red Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route. It is also unsafe.

This report develops design considerations for each of the I-65 SAFE project crossings, or portals, to provide safe travel options that reconnect neighborhoods to each other and to destinations.

## APPROACH

The Rethink Coalition's approach to the I-65 SAFE project has been to listen to the community not as experts but as peers actively collaborating to turn deeply concerning issues into actionable opportunities.

Listening and learning and exploring what-if scenarios often went well beyond formal project influence and jurisdictional boundaries. But in doing so something obvious emerged...transportation, in the true multimodal sense of connectivity is a fundamental and ubiquitous human need [and right] that transcends boundaries, demographic differences and silos of expertise.

But those context-setting explorations always circled back to pragmatic solutions to community-experienced interface issues with an Interstate highway corridor that disruptively passes over and across multiple neighborhoods like a fortress wall.

Through these conversations that wall's underpass openings are now seen by the community as potential portals of connectivity that can and should be addressed by the I-65 SAFE project regardless of an original project constrained to Interstate mainline improvements.

# Community listening sessions

## RETHINK I-65 SAFE PROJECT LISTENING SESSIONS

### ***Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association***

- December 2, 2022
- January 13, 2023

### ***Bean Creek Neighborhood Association***

- November 18, 2022
- January 20, 2023

### ***Big Car Collaborative***

- January 20, 2023

### ***Fletcher Place Neighborhood Association***

- December 9, 2023

### ***Fountain Square Alliance Neighborhood Association***

- November 18, 2022

### ***Fountain Square Neighborhood Association***

- December 9, 2023

### ***Garfield Park Neighborhood Association***

- November 18, 2022
- January 20, 2023

### ***North Square Neighborhood Association***

- December 2, 2022
- January 13, 2023

### ***Prospect Falls Neighborhood Association***

- December 2, 2022
- January 13, 2023

### ***Reconnecting to Our Waterways***

- January 20, 2023

### ***Fountain Fletcher District Association***

- February 3, 2023

### ***Site Walks/Drone Videography***

- October 19, 2022 - Morris/Prospect Bridge focus
- October 25, 2022 - all crossings
- January 24, 2023 - pm peak hour video
- February 14, 2023 - am peak hour video
- June 5, 2023 - am & pm peak hour video

### ***University of Indianapolis***

- January 13, 2023

### ***University Heights Neighborhood Association***

- January 13, 2023

## PURPOSE & PROCESS

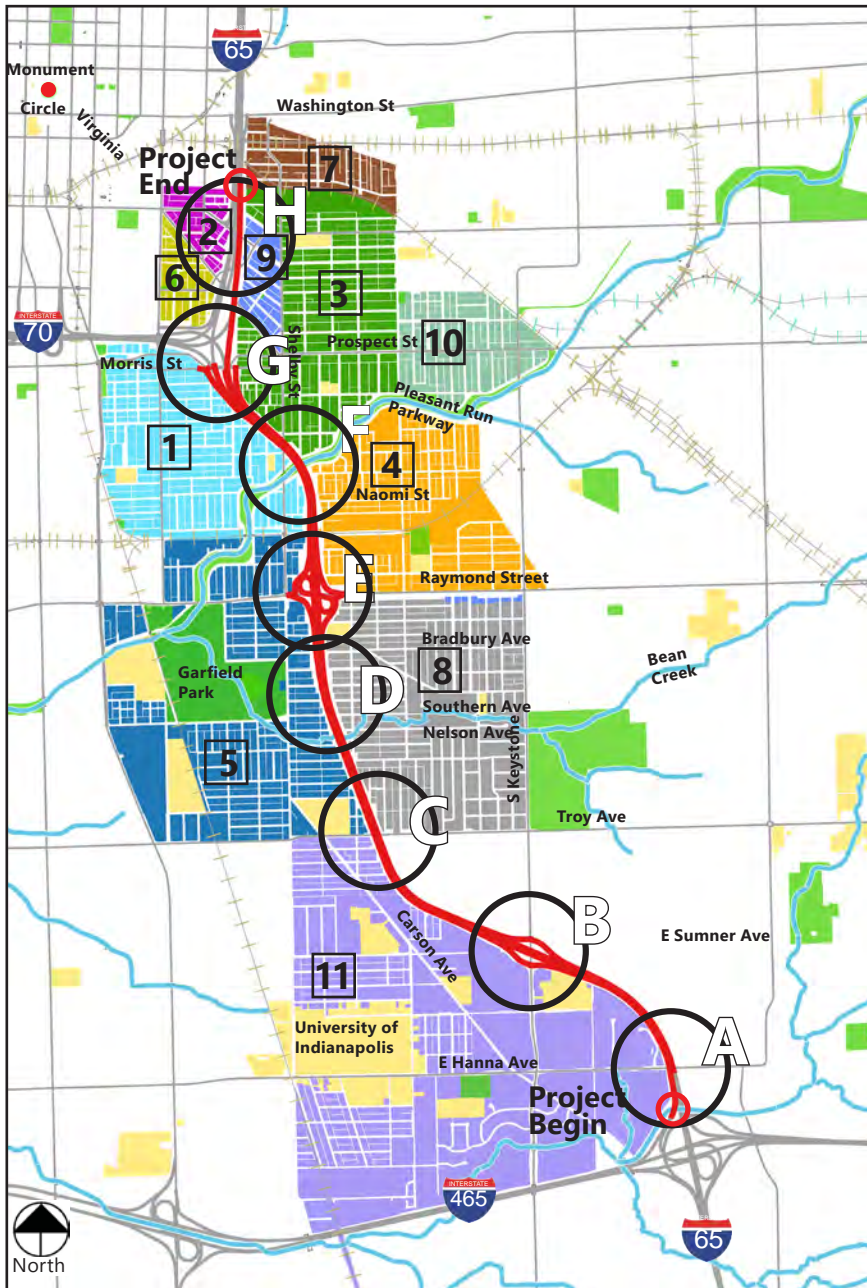
The Rethink Stakeholder listening sessions sought the experience of Interstate neighbors and communities, and how those experiences inform and expand traditional transportation project objectives. From those conversations Rethink distilled environmental justice principles and priorities articulated by the neighborhoods for increased mobility choices. Those include:

- Safe travel for all transportation modes between neighboring communities adjacent to the interstate divide
- Removing felt barriers between adjacent communities;
- Linking to transit stops by utilizing the interstate corridor underpasses;
- Mitigating interstate generated traffic impacts on adjacent communities;
- Mitigating environmental health and safety impacts on adjacent communities;
- Quality of life initiatives that align with federal and state interstate standards and guidelines promulgated by current policy.

In addition to the small group listening sessions with the leadership of the adjoining communities, Rethink conducted extensive field observation and videography to inform this report. Rethink met with most leadership groups twice; the first time to listen and understand the issues in the neighborhood as it related to the interstate, and a second time to discuss potential solutions and hear feedback.



# I-65 SAFE Project Neighborhood Map



## NEIGHBORHOOD KEY

- 1** Bates-Hendricks
  - 2** Fletcher Place
  - 3** Fountain Square
  - 4** Fountain Sq. Alliance
  - 5** Garfield Park
  - 6** Holy Rosary
  - 7** Irish Hill
  - 8** Bean Creek
  - 9** North Square
  - 10** Prospect Falls
  - 11** University Heights
- Indy Parks
  - Schools
  - Rethink Coalition I-65 SAFE Project Study Areas

## I-65 SAFE PROJECT NEIGHBORHOODS

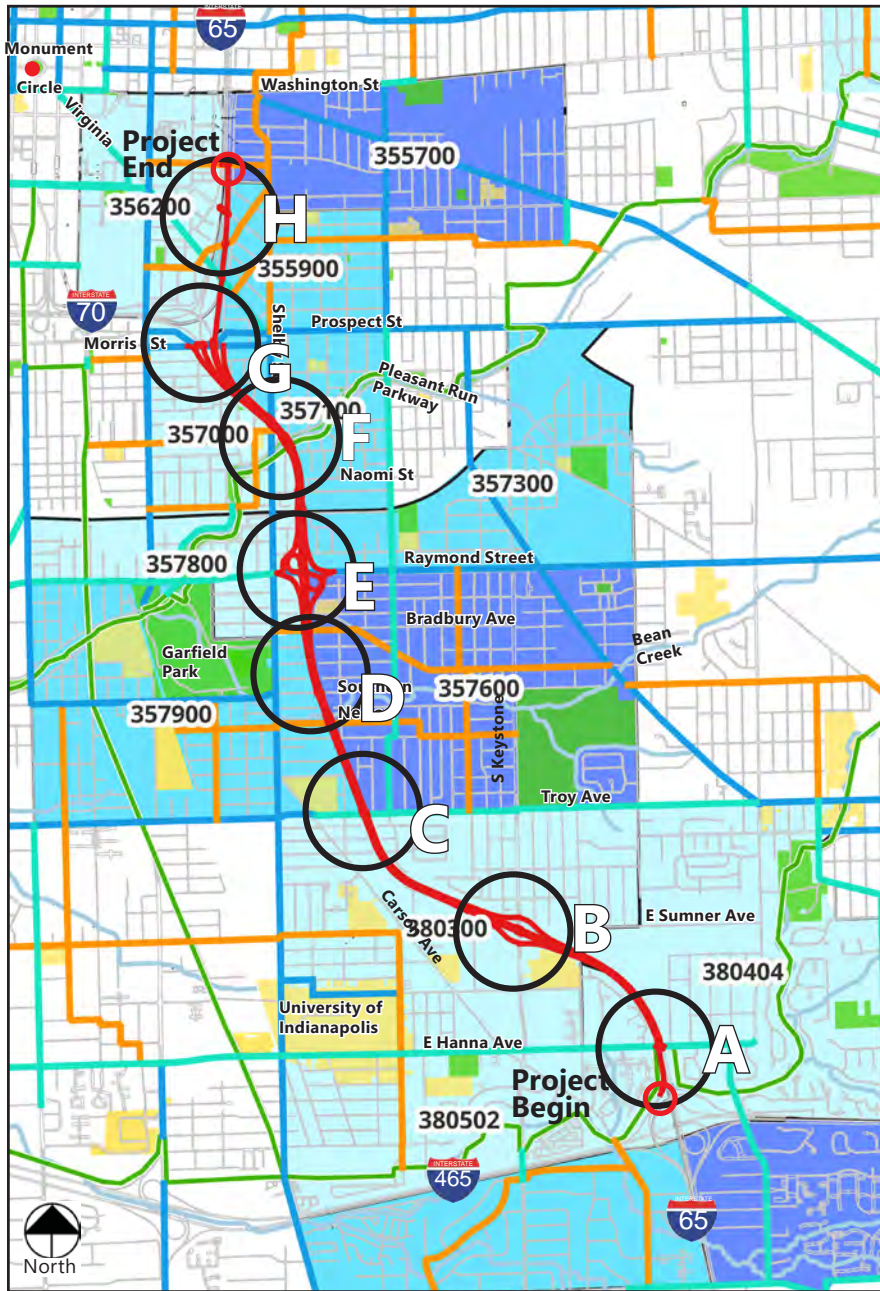
Neighborhood listening sessions were organized around I-65 portals, those crossing/bridge/intersection nodes between I-465 and the Inner Loop of I-65/I-70 and their logical lateral extensions to destinations or transit stops.

## I-65 SAFE PROJECT STUDY AREAS

- A** Hanna Street Bridge
- B** Keystone Avenue Interchange
- C** Troy Avenue Bridge
- D** Nelson/Southern/Bradbury Underpasses
- E** Raymond Street Interchange
- F** CSX/Naomi/Pleasant Run/Shelby Street Underpasses
- G** Bridges
- H** Virginia/Calvary/Fletcher Street Bridges



# I-65 SAFE Project Census Tract Map

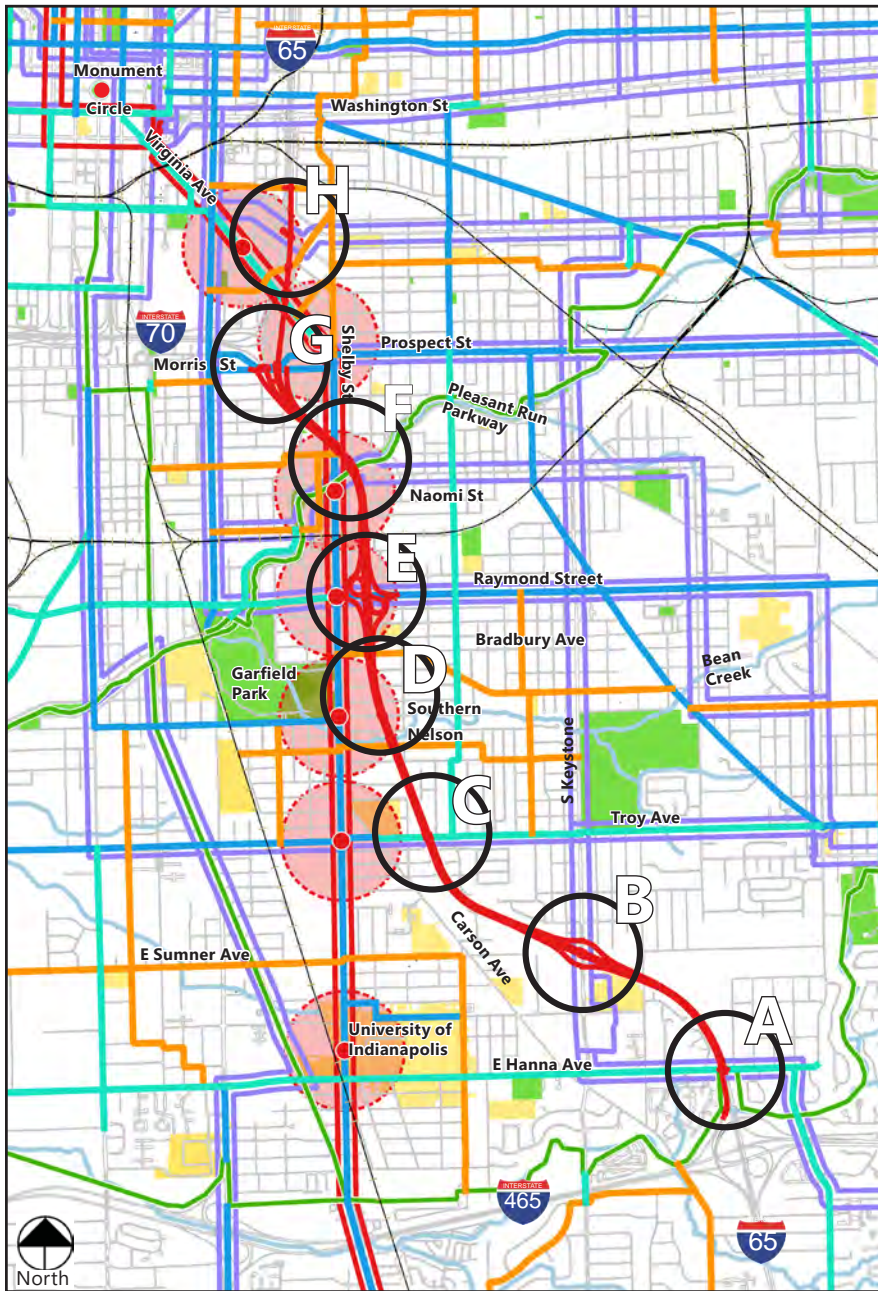


## USDOT HISTORICALLY DISADVANTAGED TRANSPORTATION COMMUNITIES

USDOT utilized 22 indicators collected at the census tract level and grouped into six (6) categories of transportation disadvantage to determine Disadvantaged Transportation Communities ranked from 1-5. All census tracts along the SAFE project area have an aggregate ranking of 3 and above. The numbers in parenthesis show how many indicators fall in that category (USDOT):

- **Transportation access disadvantage:** communities and places that spend more and take longer to get to where they need to go. (4)
- **Health disadvantage:** variables associated with adverse health outcomes, disability, as well as environmental exposures. (3)
- **Environmental disadvantage:** disproportionately high levels of certain air pollutants. (6)
- **Economic disadvantage:** high poverty, low wealth, lack of local jobs, low home ownership, low educational attainment, and high inequality. (7)
- **Resilience disadvantage:** vulnerable to hazards caused by climate change. (1)
- **Equity disadvantage:** a high percentile of persons (age 5+) who speak English "less





## I-65 SAFE PROJECT MAP WITH INDY MOVES PLAN OVERLAY

Existing & Planned Bike/Pedestrian System

- █ Greenway
- █ Multi Use Path
- █ Neighborway
- █ Bike Lane

IndyGo Public Transit System

- █ Local Transit
- █ Route

Red Line BRT Stop  
1/4 Mile R Walkshed

- █ Indy Parks
- █ Schools

I-65 SAFE Project Study Areas

## I-65 SAFE PROJECT STUDY AREAS

- A** Hanna Street Bridge
- B** Keystone Avenue Interchange
- C** Troy Avenue Bridge
- D** Nelson/Southern/Bradbury Underpasses
- E** Raymond Street Interchange
- F** CSX/Naomi/Pleasant Run/Shelby Street Underpasses
- G** Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges
- H** Virginia/Calvary/Fletcher Street Bridges & abandoned RR Bridge

## SAFETY, MOBILITY, EFFICIENCY THRU AN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LENS

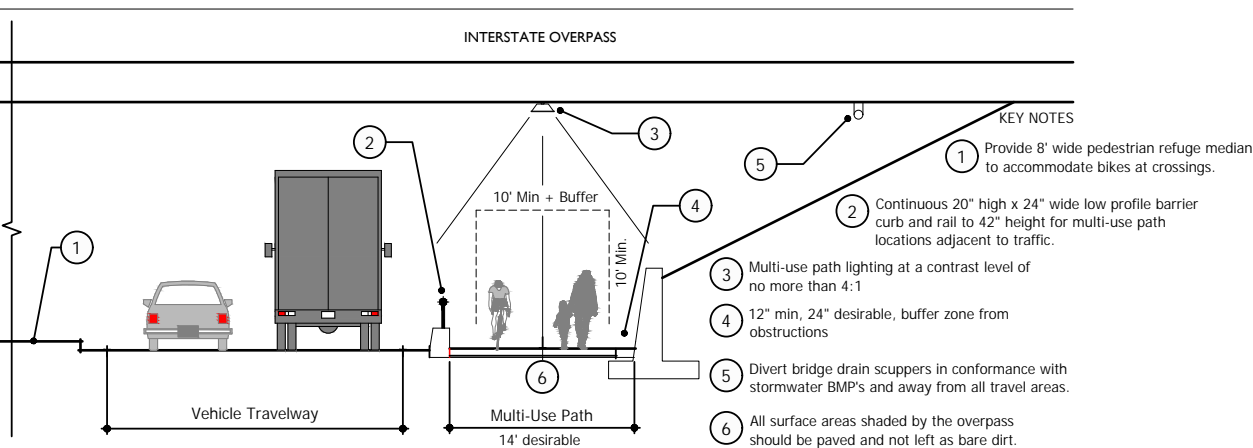
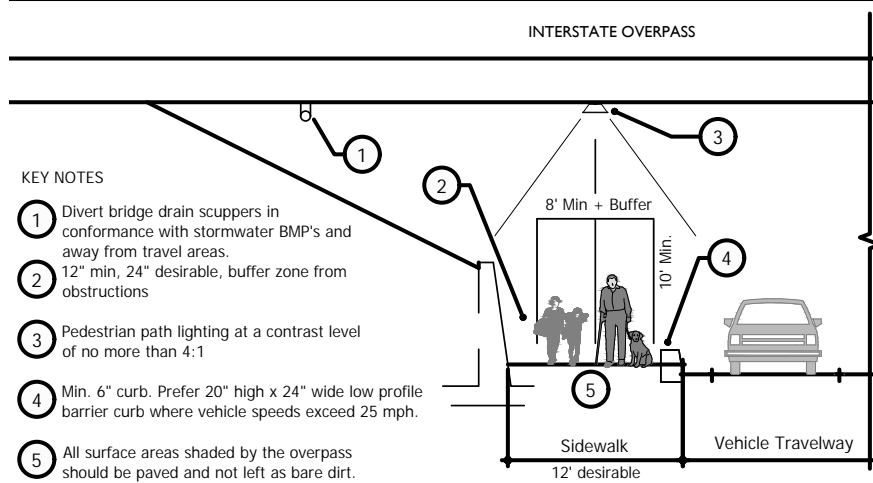
The principles and priorities in this report can help ensure that the SAFE Project enhances safety, mobility and efficiency for all interfacing travel modes including those utilizing local arterials, streets and transit.

The City has been diligently working to overcome the interstate barrier between neighborhoods through the *Indy Moves* and IndyGo transit systems. Shown in this map are the existing and proposed *Indy Moves* bicycle/pedestrian facility recommendations and the *Red Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)* stops in the SAFE project area.

The 1/4 mile buffer shown around the BRT stops illustrates the walkable distance zone to a bus stop. During the Stakeholder sessions, many commented that the interstate underpasses felt unsafe for access to the BRT stop. Generally the BRT stops are located at an economic center or major amenity (such as Garfield Park) and correspond to neighborhood destinations for employment, shopping and/or recreation. Many of the BRT stops or *Indy Moves Plan* recommendations correspond to an interstate underpass or crossing impacted by intersection issues controlled by INDOT.

The following guidelines are referenced for each I-65 SAFE crossing area as the basis for the Environmental Justice recommendations in this report.

# Design Toolkit Elements



## GENERALIZED MULTI-USE PATH CONDITION INTERSTATE UNDERPASS

## UNDERPASS IMPROVEMENTS

Address interstate underpass deficiencies to enhance safety, mobility and efficiency not just for main-line users above but for adjacent populations that walk, cycle, drive or ride transit at these widely spaced passages below.

- 1 Improve lighting, not only at night but also in daytime when high contrast lighting levels impact safety. Improve fixtures and spacing to achieve balanced lighting at all times on all surfaces.
- 2 Reduce conflicts between bicycle/pedestrian and vehicular travel through spatially constrained underpasses by widening sidewalks, adding curbs or barriers, and in some cases by truncating slope walls.
- 4 Correct environmental issues, including redirection of bridge drain scuppers that dump contaminated stormwater and debris on surfaces below bridges.
- 6 Hardscape earthen areas under bridges that will not support vegetation.
- 7 Relocate right-of-way fencing as diagonals to bridge ends to eliminate boxed in enclosures and improve landscape maintenance access. In many cases problematic fencing as well as W-beam guardrails can be replaced by the truck height concrete barrier rails recommended for the entire corridor for noise abatement, reduced maintenance and safety.

## PROVIDE SAFE BIKE/PEDESTRIAN WAYS AT UNDERPASS/BRIDGE PORTALS WITH LOW PROFILE MEDIAN/EDGE BARRIERS

Rethink recommends that all shared-use or multi-use paths be protected from counterflow vehicle hazard by either spatial separation, not usually available in underpasses or an unmountable barrier such as the Low Profile Median Barrier [LPMB] which crash test to vehicle speeds up to 45 mph. Rationale:

- Typical six to eight inch high curbs offer little protection from larger vehicles and are a drop-off hazard for bicycles, other personal mobility devices and pedestrians.
- Allows bicycle-rated 42" net height railing vs costly vehicle-rated railing.
- Provides real vs. the perceived protection of flexible wand delineators used along some protected bicycle lanes..



**Low Profile Median Barrier in Speedway**

## MITIGATE NOISE, SAFETY AND LIFE CYCLE COST ISSUES WITH CONTINUOUS TRUCK-HEIGHT F-SHAPE BARRIERS

Rethink recommends extending outer lane truck height F-shape bridge barrier rails continuously between bridges to:

- Prevent truck run off's and roll overs prevalent at curves and elevated sections.
- Eliminate need for most barrier end protection devices.
- Eliminate the high cost and traffic disruption of maintenance or replacement of frequently damaged W-beam barrier rails or bridge end protection devices.
- Contain roadside debris that drifts to adjacent slopes and neighborhoods, simplifying mowing and debris collection.
- Reduce animal-vehicle collisions and mortality, while discouraging human trespass hazards more effectively than W-beam guardrails or right-of-way fencing.
- Reduce frequent hazardous exposure of maintenance workforce to high speed traffic.
- Effects a continuous conspicuous guide rail pavement edge reference for motorists.
- Reduce line-of-sight distractions and provide *near-object effect* traffic calming.
- Reduce wheel-pavement noise impacts by more than five decibels, which in combination with other noise countermeasures can eliminate the need for marginally effective noise walls that cost \$2.5 million per edge mile at 25% of that cost.

## MITIGATE NOISE IMPACTS WITH MULTIPLE NOISE COUNTERMEASURE STRATEGY [WITHOUT NOISE WALLS]

Observed and measured sound levels indicate a need for mitigation of existing interstate-proximate noise levels that will only worsen with proposed higher capacity and higher average speeds and lane expansion towards the right-of-way. The usual solution to highway noise is to construct visually intrusive noise walls. While those can create immediate but short-distanced noise reduction, they also impact areas some distance away by diffraction caused by micro-meteorological conditions. A preferred strategy is to minimize noise at or near its source and predominately caused by tire-pavement interaction (Sandberg and Ejsmont, 2002). Therefore Rethink recommends the following strategy:

- Install continuous outer lane F-shape Truck height concrete barriers that test at a significant 5+ DB noise reduction of tire generated noise, while offering significant safety benefit as well.
- Use quiet pavement technology such as longitudinal microgrooved concrete and open-graded or rubberized asphalt which reduce tire-pavement noise by 5-9 DB.
- Maximise acoustically soft/rough ground surfaces with woody shrubs and coniferous tree planting between noise source and residential or recreational areas.
- And avoid outer lane expansion that moves noise sources closer to the right-of-way.



# Design Considerations

## ELIMINATE COSTLY BRIDGE WIDENING

Since the I-65 SAFE project is an Interim [near-term] rather than Major [long-term] project, as defined by expenditure thresholds, Rethink opposes bridge widening until the outcome of the *Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Grant and ProPEL Indy* studies are known. Overbuilding is not prudent at this time.

Four-lane expansion can still be accommodated by more efficient use of the inner shoulder and by the feasible elimination of two inner lane pinch points near the Morris-Prospect interchange. Traffic assumptions for the need for more than four lanes were based on pre-pandemic trends for peak hour demand.

- There is growing consensus that post pandemic work patterns have stabilized at or near a 24% reduction in the peak hour commuter traffic that was the volume/capacity ratio design basis for this project.
- As an interim project the capacity basis of design can be reasonably deferred until empirical evidence about demand is accumulated over time. That coincides with end of useful life for many of the steel-framed bridges in the corridor, and completion of studies to determine the future form of the inner loop itself.
- Current traffic counts are near meaningless while major segments of the I-465 belt are shut down for multiple bridge projects and I-69 last mile work.

## ELIMINATE OUTER LANE EXPANSION

Rethink highly recommends deferring the addition of a northbound auxiliary lane [a virtual fifth lane] between Raymond Street and the South Split until the full inner lane shoulder reconfiguration to and through the I-70 WB ramp and the I-65 NB bridge is completed and assessed. That work should eliminate two pinch points that contribute to this traffic bottleneck and provide a balanced two and two lane split onto the pair of two-lane bridges without the fifth lane. Concerns:

- The fifth lane would reinstate the current imbalance with an additional bottleneck-inducing weaving dilemma. The apparent need for an additional lane into the I-70 and I-65 merging pattern can be easily accommodated north of the NB I-65 bridge over Morris-Prospect. That need should be validated by the concurrent *Reconnecting Communities and ProPEL Indy planning studies and when more reliable traffic data becomes available*.
- Regarding that data, there is growing consensus that post pandemic work patterns have stabilized at or near a 24% reduction in the peak hour commuter traffic that was the volume/capacity design basis for this project.
- As an interim project the capacity basis of design can be reasonably deferred until the end of useful life for many of the steel-framed bridges in the corridor, and completion of studies to determine the future form of the inner loop itself.

## DISAGGREGATE TRAFFIC DATA

Rethink recommends disaggregation of combined truck and general traffic counts to more fully understand the impact of general traffic commingling with freight within the inner loop and along its approaches. Freight traffic travel-time reliability metrics are a strong industry factor driving congestion mitigation projects such as the SAFE project and its precursor FAST projects. Emerging logistics patterns suggest however that significant improvements to freight efficiency, while needed, are possibly beyond the capacity of the I-65 SAFE *interim* project to resolve. Consideration of more far reaching freight accommodation, such as truck only lanes, may be better addressed by a long term planning horizon rather than by an interim project. Recommendations:

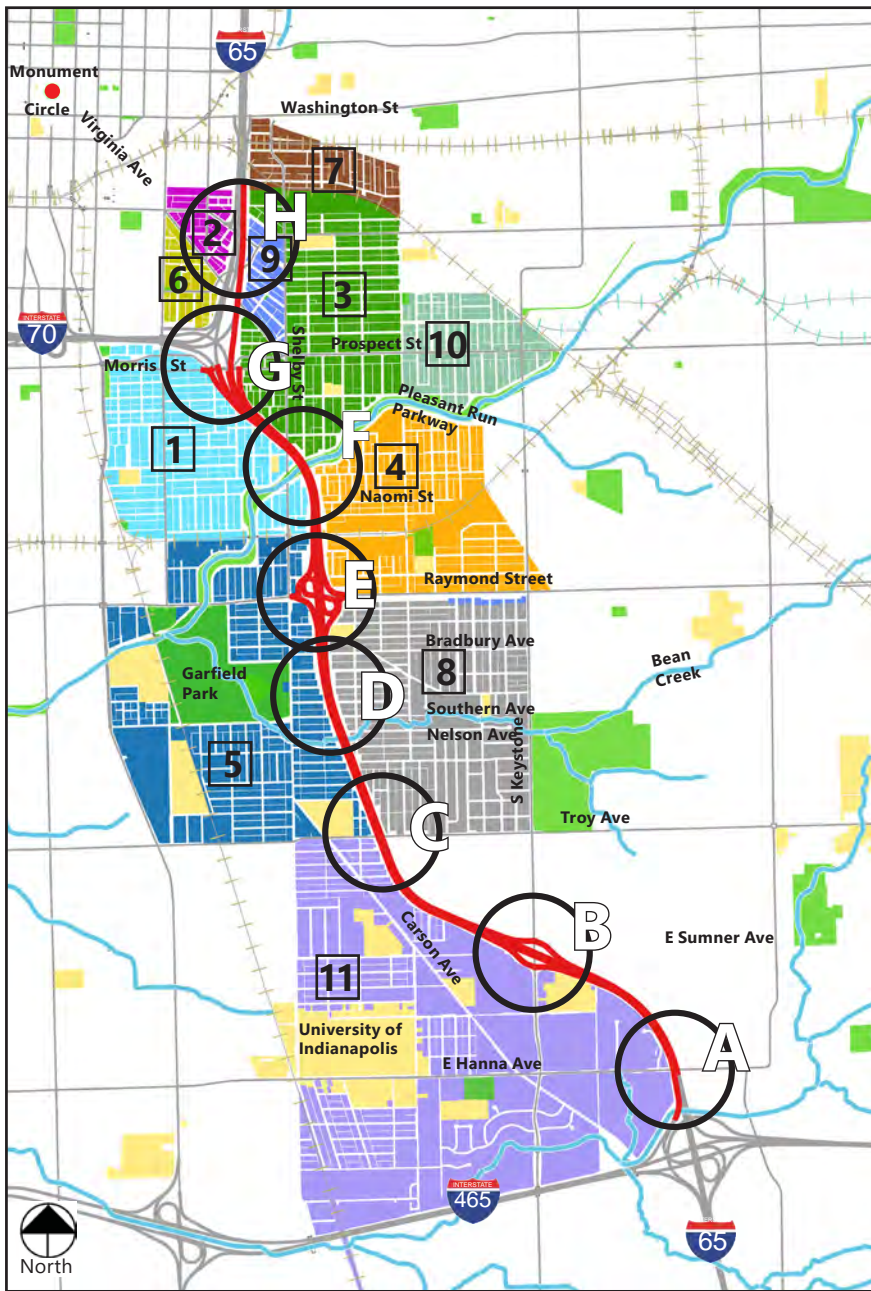
- Develop freight-specific traffic data to inform the *Reconnecting Communities and ProPEL Indy planning process*.
- Initiate a review of new concepts for freight separation such as truck-only lanes as an alternative scenario for future inner loop reconstruction, while providing better political and public understanding of the logistics component of highway usage.
- Current traffic counts are meaningless while major segments of the I-465 belt are shut down for multiple bridge projects and I-69 last mile work.
- *Meanwhile don't overbuild for an unknown.*



*Rethink advisors reviewing connectivity constraints at Morris Street on October 19, 2022. Site reconnaissance informed the recommendations included in this report.*



# Section 3: Study Areas



## NEIGHBORHOODS

- 1** Bates-Hendricks
- 2** Fletcher Place
- 3** Fountain Square
- 4** Fountain Sq. Alliance
- 5** Garfield Park
- 6** Holy Rosary
- 7** Irish Hill
- 8** Bean Creek
- 9** North Square
- 10** Prospect Falls
- 11** University Heights

- Indy Parks
- Schools
- A Rethin Coalition I-65 SAFE Project Study Areas

## SECTION

## PAGE

SECTION 3: STUDY AREAS		
<b>A</b>	Hanna Avenue Bridge	3.2
<b>B</b>	Keystone Avenue Interchange	3.6
<b>C</b>	Troy Avenue Bridge/Underpass	3.10
<b>D</b>	Nelson/Southern/Bradbury	3.14
<b>E</b>	Raymond Street Interchange	3.17
<b>F</b>	CSX/Naomi/Pleasant Run/Shelby Underpasses	3.21
<b>G</b>	Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges	3.28

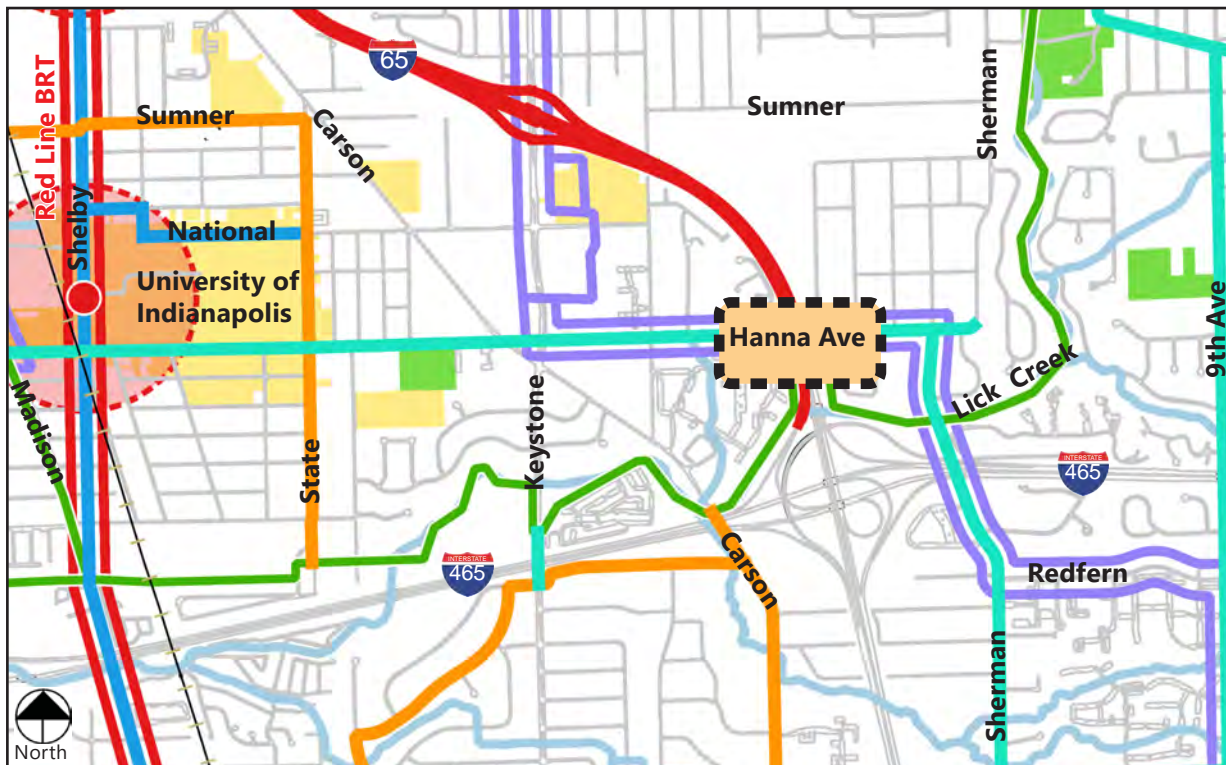


# Study Area A: Hanna Ave Bridge





# Study Area A: Hanna Avenue Bridge/Context



## HANNA AVE PORTAL STUDY AREA

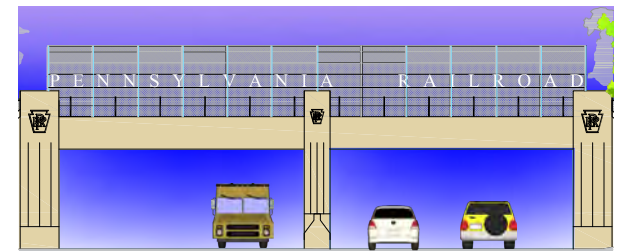
- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Existing & Planned Bike/Pedestrian System | IndyGo Public Transit System          |
| Greenway                                  | Local Transit Route                   |
| Multi Use Path                            | Red Line BRT Stop 1/4 Mile R Walkshed |
| Neighborway                               |                                       |
| Bike Lane                                 |                                       |

### Rethink Coalition Observations

Hanna Ave is designated as a "Complete Street" for the portion over I-65 as shown on the *Indy Moves* plan which includes bicycle/pedestrian facilities, ideally on both sides of the street. Since the I-65 SAFE project will replace the bridge, Rethink Coalition recommends that it comply with recommended practice to include a safety barrier rail between vehicular traffic and counter-flow cyclist traffic on both sides with other considerations. The new usage pattern for this overpass is reason to consider the safety fence indicated on the recommended cross-section to protect interstate motorists.

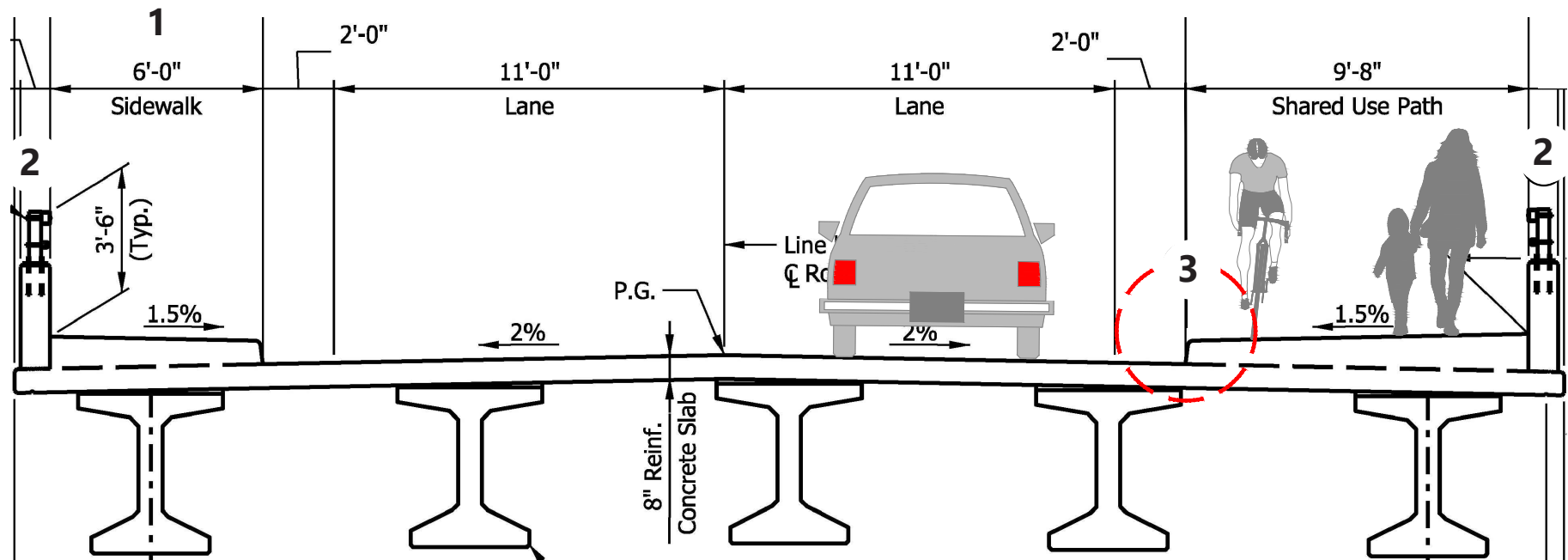


Existing Hanna Avenue Bridge over I-65



An example of a naming opportunity from the Pennsy Trail at the Shadeland Avenue overpass. Substitute "Lick Creek Greenway".

# Study Area A: Hanna Avenue Bridge/INDOT Cross Section



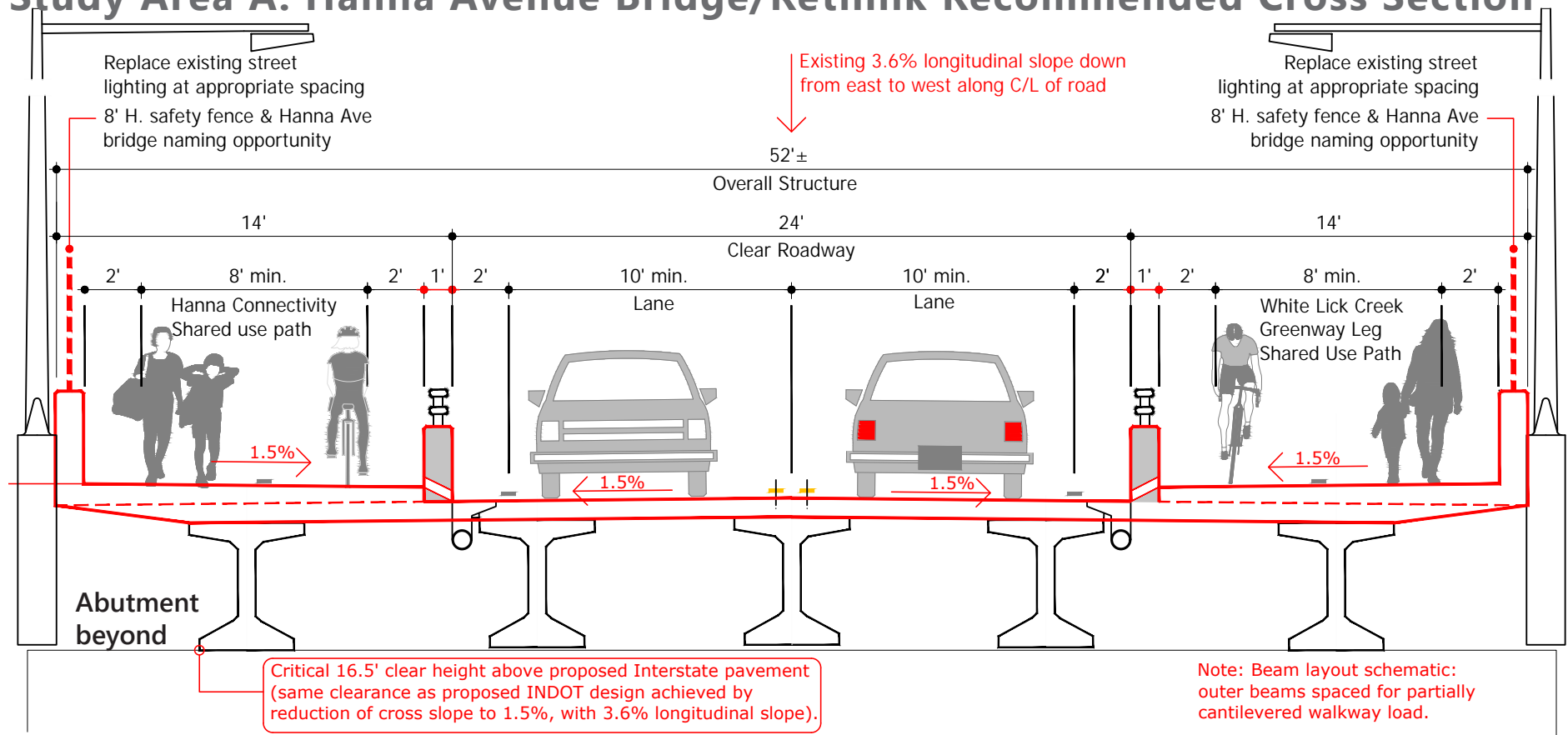
## INDOT PROPOSAL & RETHINK OBSERVATIONS

The proposed Complete Streets improvements to the new Hanna Avenue Bridge are not fully compliant with bicycle/pedestrian path safety standards and do not address the usage distinction between a Lick Creek Greenway leg and Hannah Avenue connectivity. Those combined new uses also create an unaddressed interstate safety hazard:

- 1 Six-foot sidewalk [NIC curb] does not meet city standards, is unsafe for potential cyclist usage that will be generated here.
- 2 Increased usage generated by two planned greenways warrants safety fence installation for protection.
- 3 Insufficient space for shared use path and the safety rail required for protection from counterflow vehicular traffic.



# Study Area A: Hanna Avenue Bridge/Rethink Recommended Cross Section

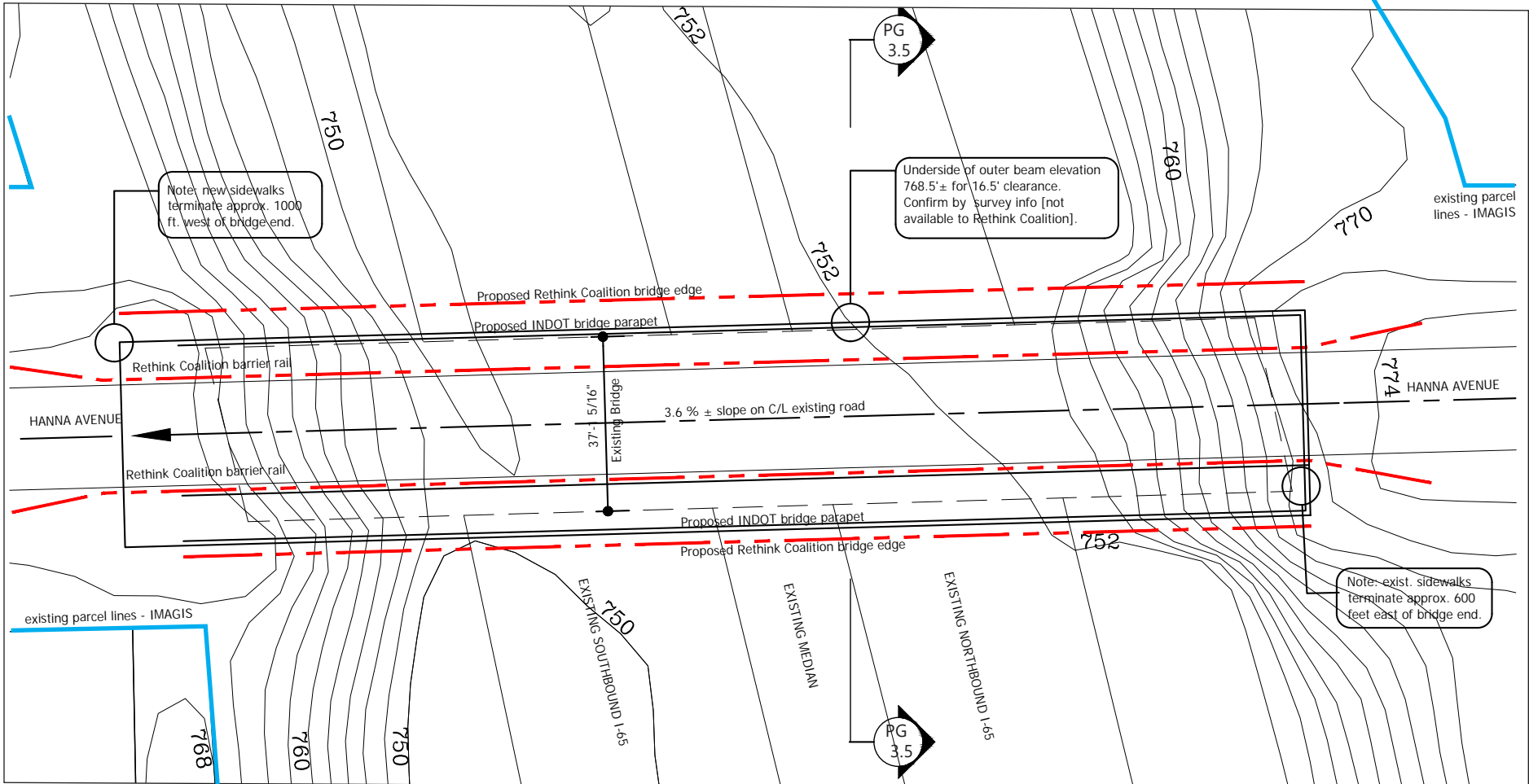


## RETHINK RECOMMENDED CROSS SECTION

Provide a shared use path on both sides to support planned sidewalk development on Hanna as well as the Lick Creek Greenway on the south side of the bridge. The indicated widening of the bridge could be reduced by up to four feet if bicycle use on the north side is considered incidental. Recommended improvements include:

- Eight-foot wide minimum path width plus two-foot shy zone buffers from railings.
- Safety railing protection of cyclists from counterflow vehicular traffic on both sides.
- Safety fence to protect interstate vehicles from objects thrown over bridge railings.
- Bridge lighting at each approach lane to define narrowing of roadway.
- An additional opportunity is to name the Hanna Ave/Lick Creek Greenway on the Safety Fences per the Pennsy Trail example over Shadeland Avenue.

# Study Area A: Hanna Avenue Bridge/Rethink Recommended Plan



**Central Bridge barrier rail along curb line showing end treatment. End treatment same at both ends and symmetrical both sides. If sufficient space is available the end treatment could also flare away from the roadway as shown in the diagram above. Speed limit on Central Avenue is 35 mph, same as Hanna Avenue.**



**EB Hanna Bridge (Existing)**

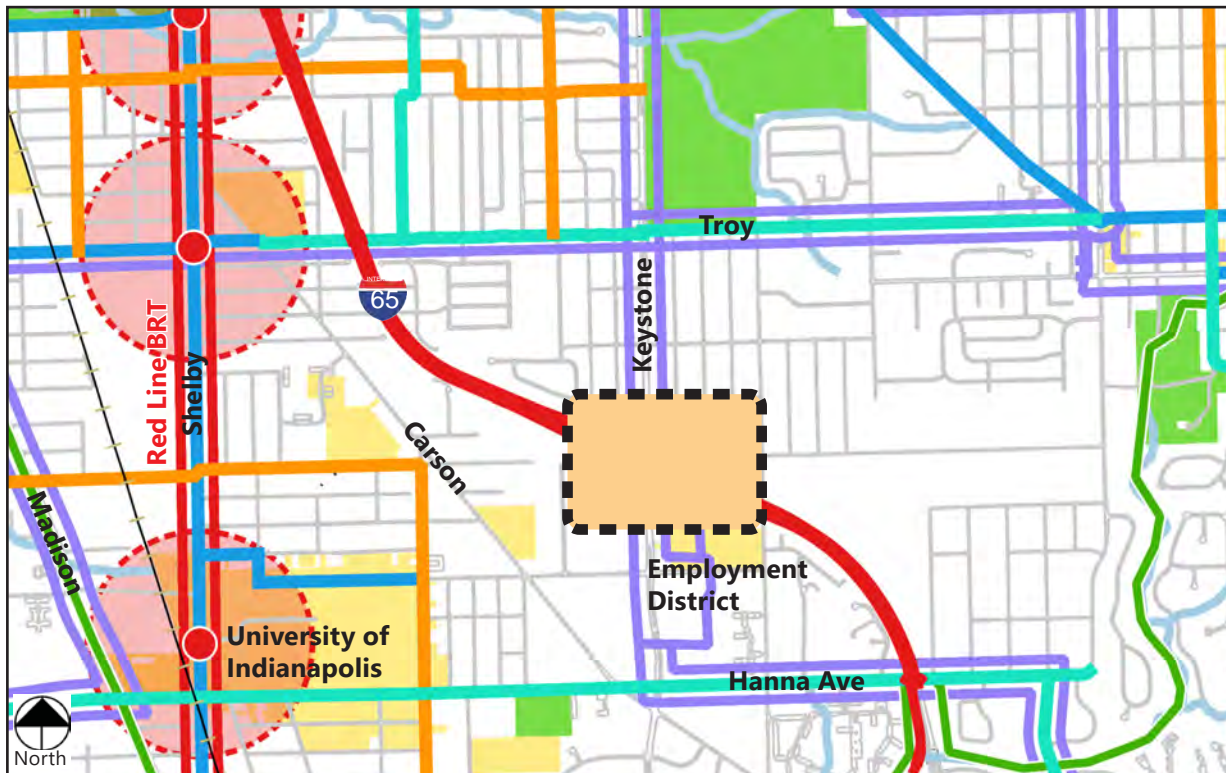


# Study Area B: Keystone Avenue Interchange





# Study Area B: Keystone Avenue Interchange/Context



**KEYSTONE AVE PORTAL STUDY AREA**

- |   |                     |                              |                     |
|---|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Existing & Planned Bike/Pedestrian System |                     | IndyGo Public Transit System |                     |
| Greenway                                  | Local Transit Route | Red Line BRT Stop            | 1/4 Mile R Walkshed |
| Multi Use Path                            |                     |                              |                     |
| Neighborway                               |                     |                              |                     |
| Bike Lane                                 |                     |                              |                     |

## Rethink Coalition Observations

Keystone Ave is designated as a 4-lane Primary Arterial in the *Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan*. The *Indy Moves* plan does not designate any "Pedal Indy" facilities.

The commercial businesses on the west and south sides of the interchange are employment destinations, with dense residential areas north of the bridge.

The new Keystone Bridge seems to work well for vehicular traffic but has poor accommodation for bikes and pedestrians through the underpass, even though the commercial zone is an employment destination.

Rethink Coalition recommends funding from the I-65 SAFE project be utilized to remedy the deficient bicycle/pedestrian facilities through the interchange.

The recent but incomplete work for pedestrian accommodation at Raymond Street could be a model for improved facilities at Keystone: short crosswalk distances, stacking room for a vehicle when a pedestrian is in the crosswalk, and continuous pedestrian travel path.

# Study Area B: Keystone Avenue Interchange/Context



ENLARGEMENT AERIAL FOR KEYSTONE AVE AT I-65



# Study Location B: Keystone Avenue Observations & Recommendations



*75-foot unprotected oblique angle pedestrian crossing incompatible with high speed turning lane to the I-65 ramp*



*87-foot unprotected pedestrian crossing conflicts with high speed turning lanes.*



*75-foot distance across turning lanes with permissive right turn, no physical refuge*

## Pedestrian Crossing Observations

Pedestrians [without disability] need 18-21 seconds at 3.5 to 4 feet per second to cross this 75 foot crossing. Vehicle stopping distance at 40 mph ranges from 80-120 feet once the driver reacts. A significant pedestrian hazard.

It is difficult for a pedestrians or cyclists to safely navigate through any of the free-flowing turning lanes at this interchange which separates residential areas from an employment district.

## Rethink Recommendation

Implement uniform bicycle pedestrian crosswalk safety measures throughout the interchange based on an intersection study.



# Study Area C: Troy Avenue Bridge



**Emma Donnan  
School destination**

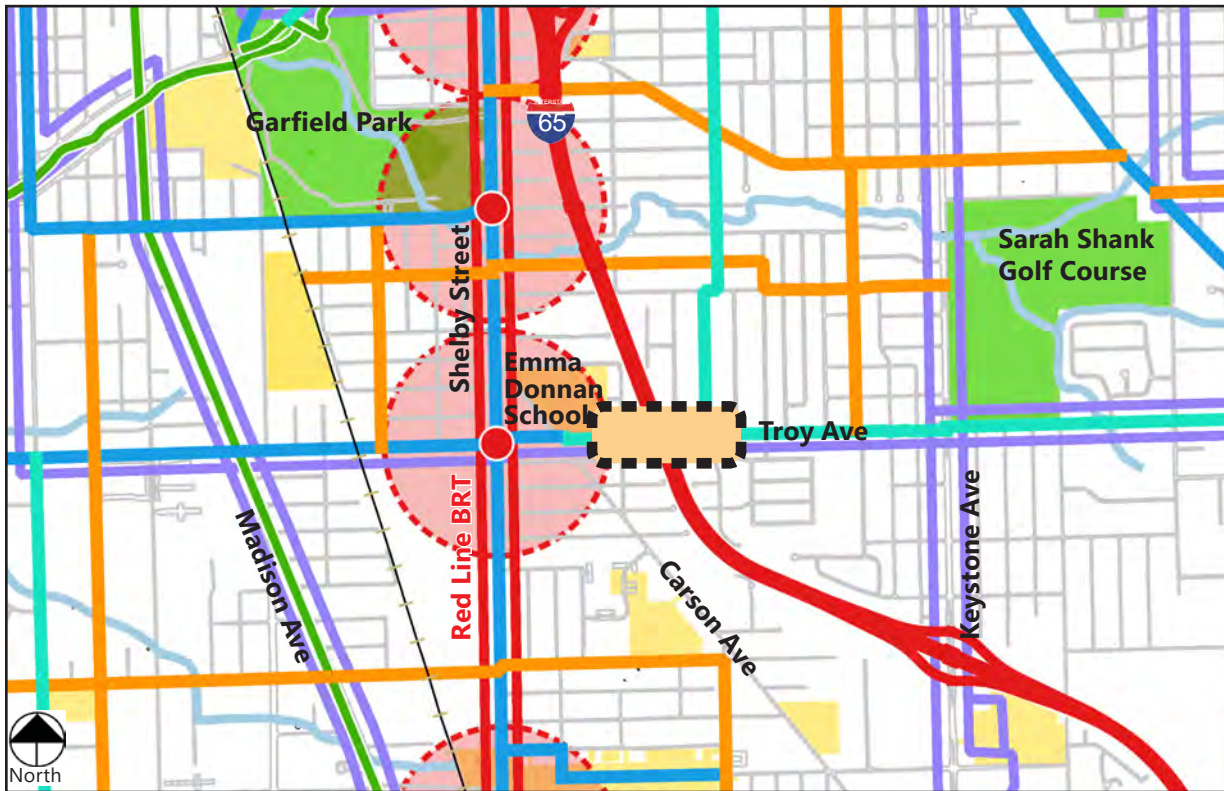
**Bean Creek Neighborhood**  
This census tract has 5 or more indicators of a USDOT historically disadvantaged transportation community.

**Troy Avenue**

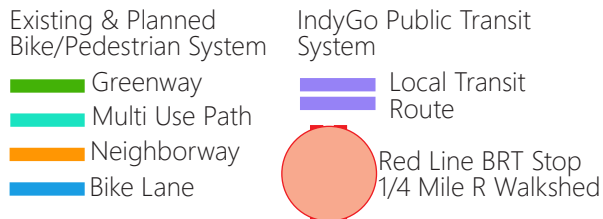




# Study Area C: Troy Avenue Bridge Context



## TROY AVENUE UNDERPASS PORTAL STUDY AREA



### Observations

I-65 passes over Troy Ave, designated a Primary Arterial in the *Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan*. Its four lanes west of the underpass transition to two lanes through and east of the underpass.

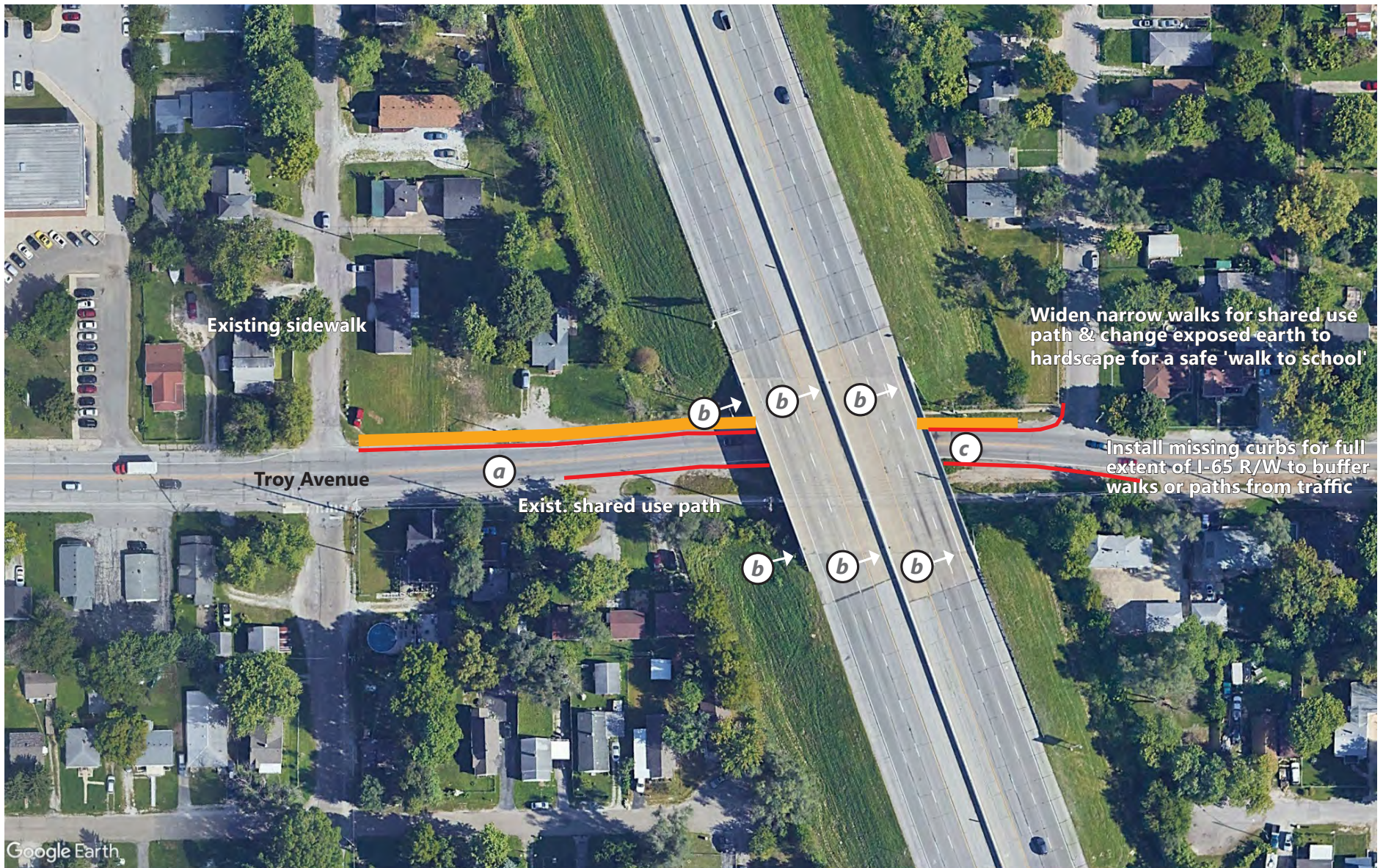
Although the SAFE project's proposed scope of work only includes I-65 resurfacing and re-striping at this location, the underpass conditions caused by the interstate require a broader consideration of that scope to resolve several environmental justice issues regarding its role as a portal for neighborhoods east of the interstate to both the Donnan Elementary/Middle School and to a Red Line BRT stop on Shelby Street.

The BRT connects UIndy to downtown and beyond.

The south half of the underpass is now occupied by a multi-use path impacted by bridge drainage and erosion. The north half has a narrow sidewalk mostly covered by roadway debris and eroded soils caused in part, if not entirely, by interstate drainage directed to the uncurbed and unvegetated shoulder areas of the underpass. While residents passionately conveyed to the Rethink Coalition team their daily need to pass through this portal, their hope for a safe passage is silently conveyed by a mural painted on the north slope wall, a testament to their need for a safe direct path between their homes, the school and public transit.



# Study Area C: Troy Underpass Observations & Recommendations



**AERIAL VIEW OF TROY AVE AT I-65**



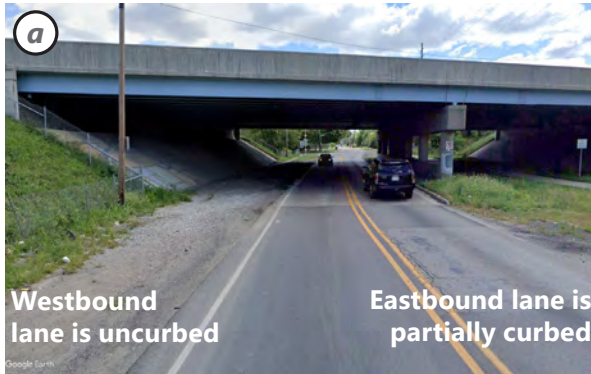
# Study Area C: Troy Avenue Underpass Observations/Recommendations

## Rethink Coalition Recommendations

- Address deficiencies of pedestrian and bicycle facilities through both sides of the underpass.
- Redirect bridge drainage away from the slopewalls.

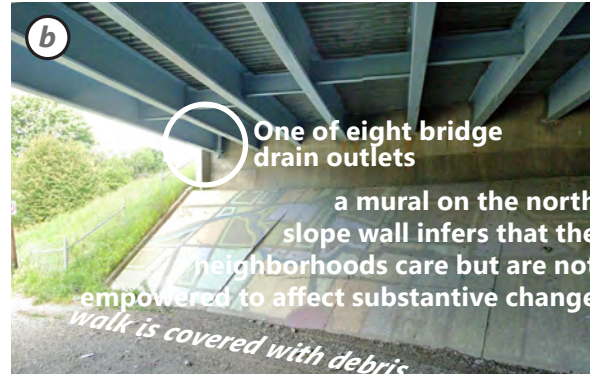
- Replace exposed bridge-shaded erodible soils with hardscape materials .
- Install curbs on all road edges within the I-65 right-of-way to guide vehicles and prevent their intrusion into walk areas.

- Install minimum eight-foot wide shared use path buffered from traffic through the underpass along the westbound lane..
- Work with the city to facilitate connectivity to and beyond the INDOT controlled interstate right-of-way area.



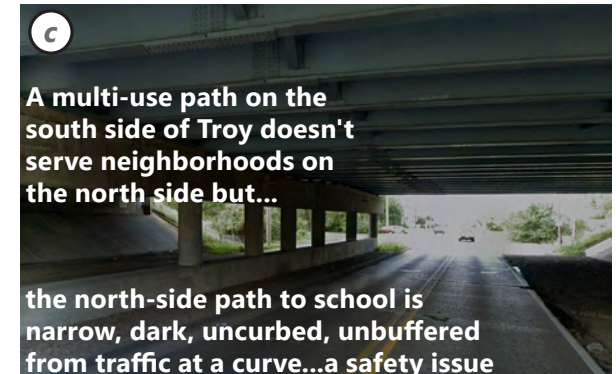
**The SAFE project should address deficient underpass conditions such as this uncurbed narrow path to a school**

The Troy Avenue bridge underpass is characteristic of many if not all such portals between neighborhoods separated by the Interstate. This instance is particularly egregious occurring along a pathway to an IPS elementary/middle school and a Red Line bus rapid transit stop. Although there is a shared use path along the eastbound travel lane there is no comparable passage on the westbound side leading to the school.



**Four bridge inlets at each end of the spans drop water and debris on walkway areas**

Bridge storm water drains to the underpass depositing highway pollutants and debris, causing bare earth erosion and icing of shaded walks that discourages elementary and middle school students from walking or cycling to school.

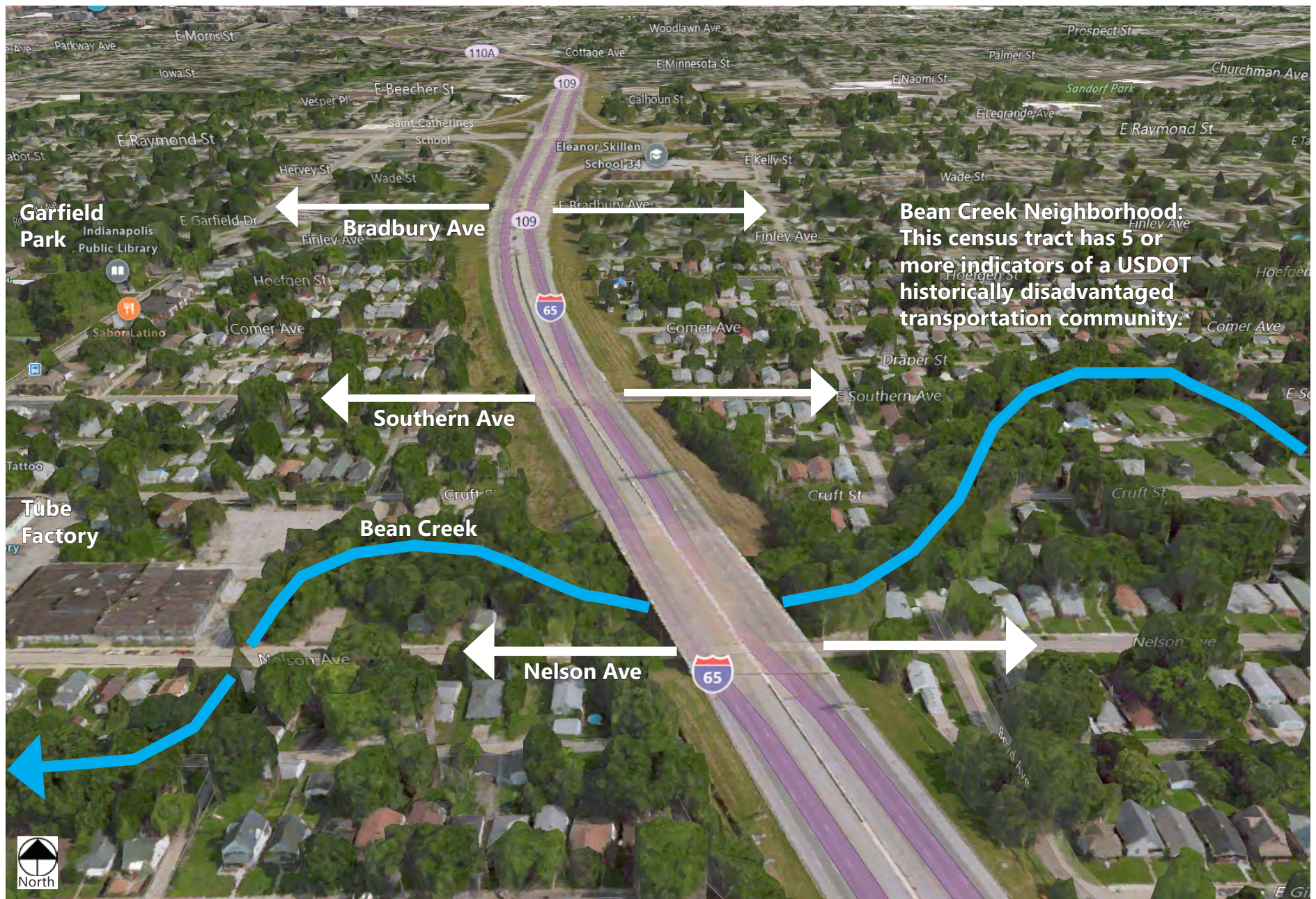


**The dark uncurbed underpass along a curve in the road is a safety concern for pedestrians and bicyclists.**

The absence of effective lighting of the dark side slope areas further diminishes the sense of safety and security for all users including those for whom walking or cycling to the Red Line stop may be a need rather than a choice.

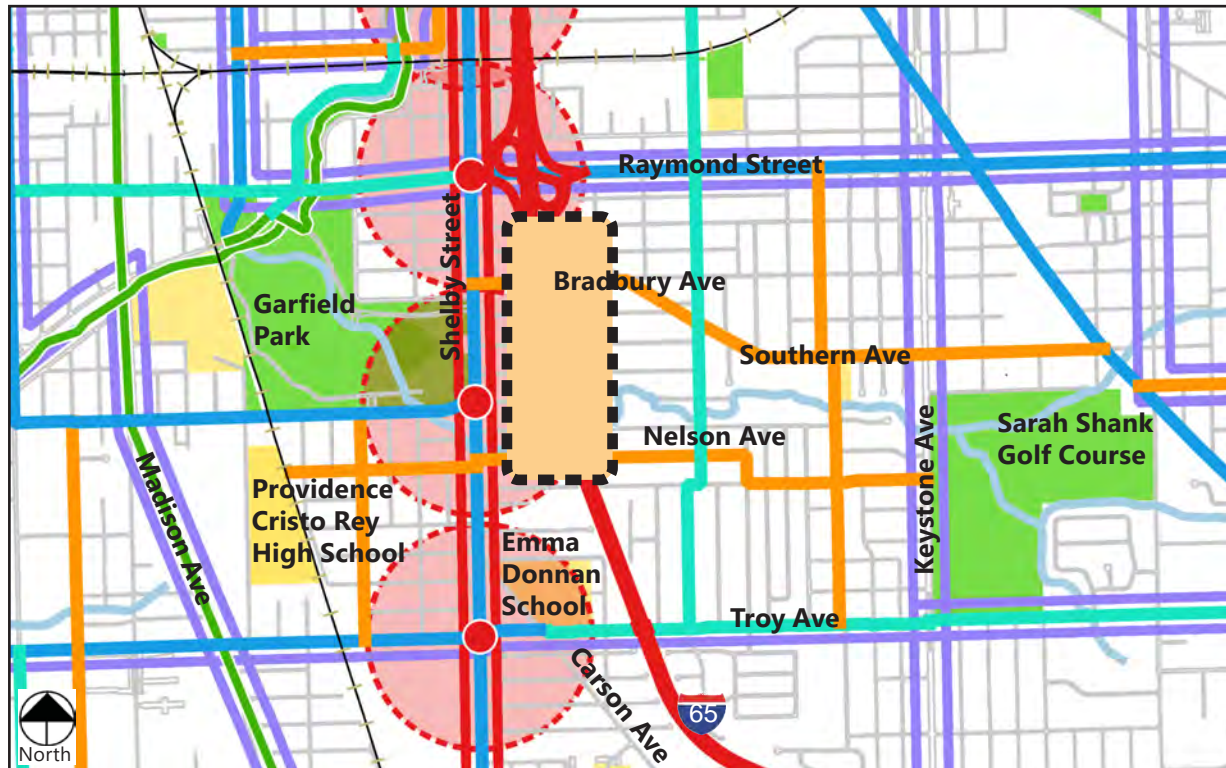


# Study Area D: Nelson/Southern/Bradbury Portals





# Study Area D: Nelson/Southern/Bradbury Portals



**NELSON/SOUTHERN/  
BRADBURY  
PORTAL STUDY AREA**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Existing & Planned<br>Bike/Pedestrian System | IndyGo Public Transit<br>System          |
| Greenway                                     | Local Transit<br>Route                   |
| Multi Use Path                               | Red Line BRT Stop<br>1/4 Mile R Walkshed |
| Neighborway                                  |  |
| Bike Lane                                    |  |

## RETHINK COALITION OBSERVATIONS

Nelson, Southern and Bradbury are all designated Local Streets in the *Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan*.

The *Indy Moves* plan designates Nelson and Bradbury Avenues as *neighborway* bicycle facilities, where most cyclists can safely use low volume, low speed streets through the underpass.

The proposed scope of work for the interstate in the I-65 SAFE Project is indicated as resurfacing and re-stripping. No work is indicated for the underpasses.

Recommendations:

- Fix scupper drainage
- Pave bare dirt both sides
- Improve lighting
- Relocate R/W fence to ease mowing and facilitate maintenance

# Study Area D: Nelson/Southern/Bradbury Bridges



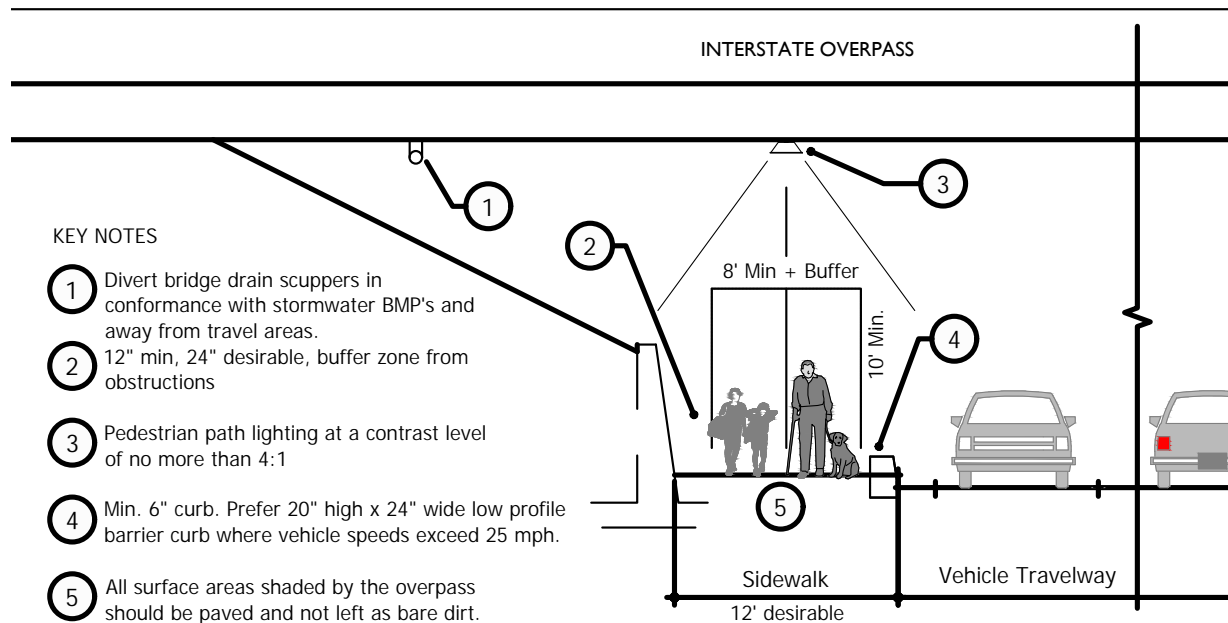
*Nelson Avenue and Bean Creek Underpass*



*Southern Avenue Underpass*



*Bradbury Avenue Underpass*



## *Comments applicable to these underpasses.*

- Generally underpasses in good condition; though fairly long and dark.
- Recommendations: pave bare dirt, redirect drain scuppers from walkways and creek, improve lighting frequency and light slope wall recesses.
- Evaluate chain link fence locations to maintain highway safety but optimize for easier mowing.

## *Rethink Coalition Design Guideline for Bridge Underpasses*



# Study Area E: Raymond Street Interchange Context



Raymond Street is a nearly twelve-mile long divided primary arterial highway and Tier 3 freight corridor with four lanes west of I-65 to the Sam Jones/I-465 interchange and six lanes east of I-65 to the I-74/I-465 interchange [via Southeastern Ave]. The east leg performs as a virtual bypass extension of I-74 to northbound I-65 saving 2.5 travel miles but often burdening the Raymond Street interchange beyond its capacity. That traffic volume contributes to

the identified freight traffic "bottleneck" that at times stretches from this interchange into and beyond the South Split of the 65/70 Inner Loop. Mitigating that bottleneck congestion is a purpose of the I-65 SAFE project.

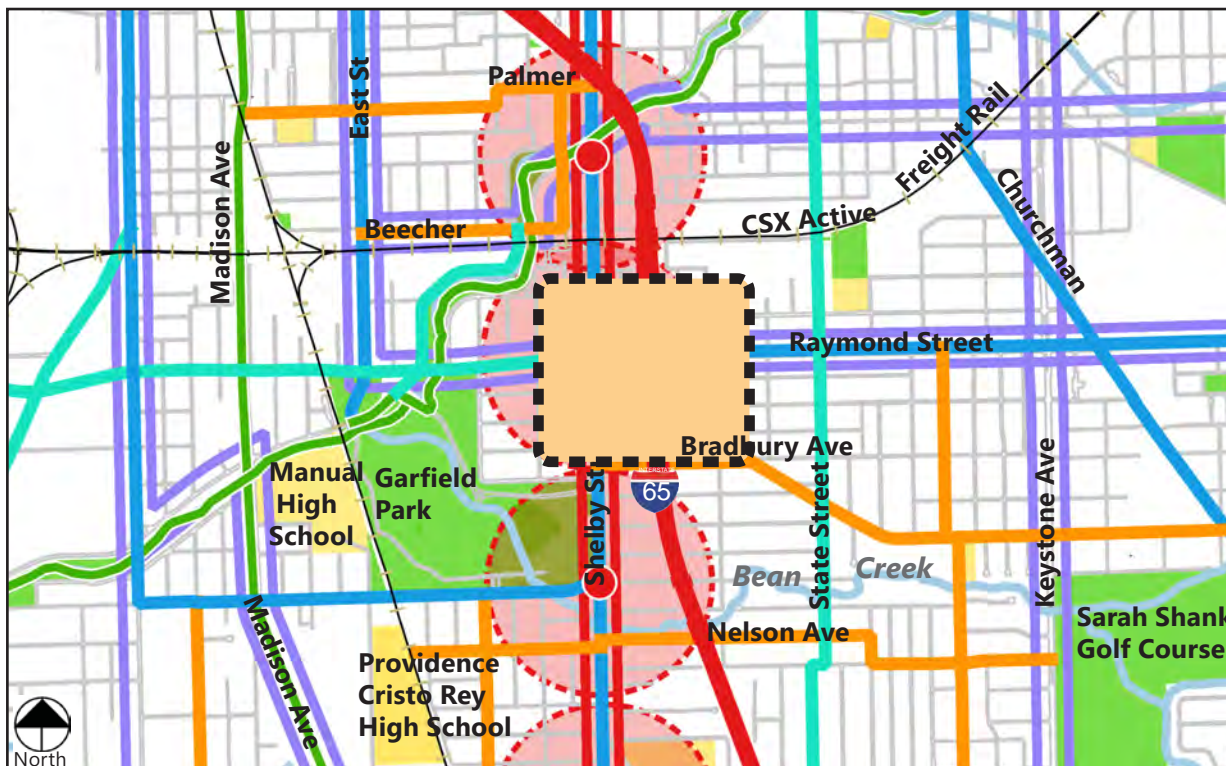
But the Raymond Street interchange underpass is also a portal between neighborhoods east of I-65 and destinations to the west, many clustered around or near Shelby Street, including

convenience shopping, employment venues and a Red Line bus rapid transit station to IU Indy, Garfield Park, Fountain Square, Downtown, IU/Purdue, IU Health and north past Broad Ripple.

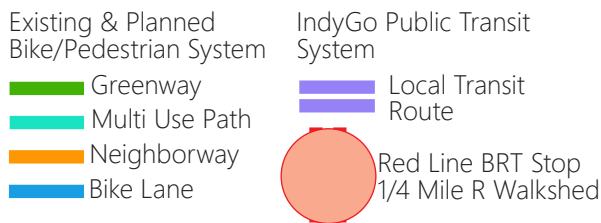
The I-65 Safe project excludes consideration of remedies to serious barriers to the portal's neighborhood connectivity function. This report proposes specific measures that address that omission as well as interchange congestion itself.



# Study Area E: Raymond Street Interchange Context



## RAYMOND STREET INTERCHANGE PORTAL STUDY AREA



### Rethink Coalition Observations

This interchange exemplifies the need for the I-65 SAFE project to eliminate costly widening of three bridges and expansion of pavement beyond existing outer shoulders from the project's scope. Those costs are more appropriately applied to correcting an array of mobility and connectivity issues that make this and Study Area G particularly problematic for all users.

The multimodal connectivity diagram above, derived from the City and IndyGo, shows the complexity of those systems' interface with the interchange. Close inspection reveals multiple

conflict points between the interchange function and local connectivity to the point of avoidance by populations otherwise reliant on that connectivity. At the same time, the interchange function itself is hobbled by correctable geometric issues:

Interchange functional issues:

1. The partial cloverleaf interchange used throughout the rural stretches of I-65 does not fit this urban context.
2. Its 150-foot radius ascending access ramp to southbound I-65 limits acceleration while forcing its adjoining exit ramp too near an arterial intersection.
3. That signalized exit is located less than five car lengths [or 1.5 WB-67 tractor-trailer lengths] from signalized Raymond Street.
4. Result: Spillback blocking condition is frequent and signal progression through the interchange is impossible.

Pedestrian/Cyclist Issues:

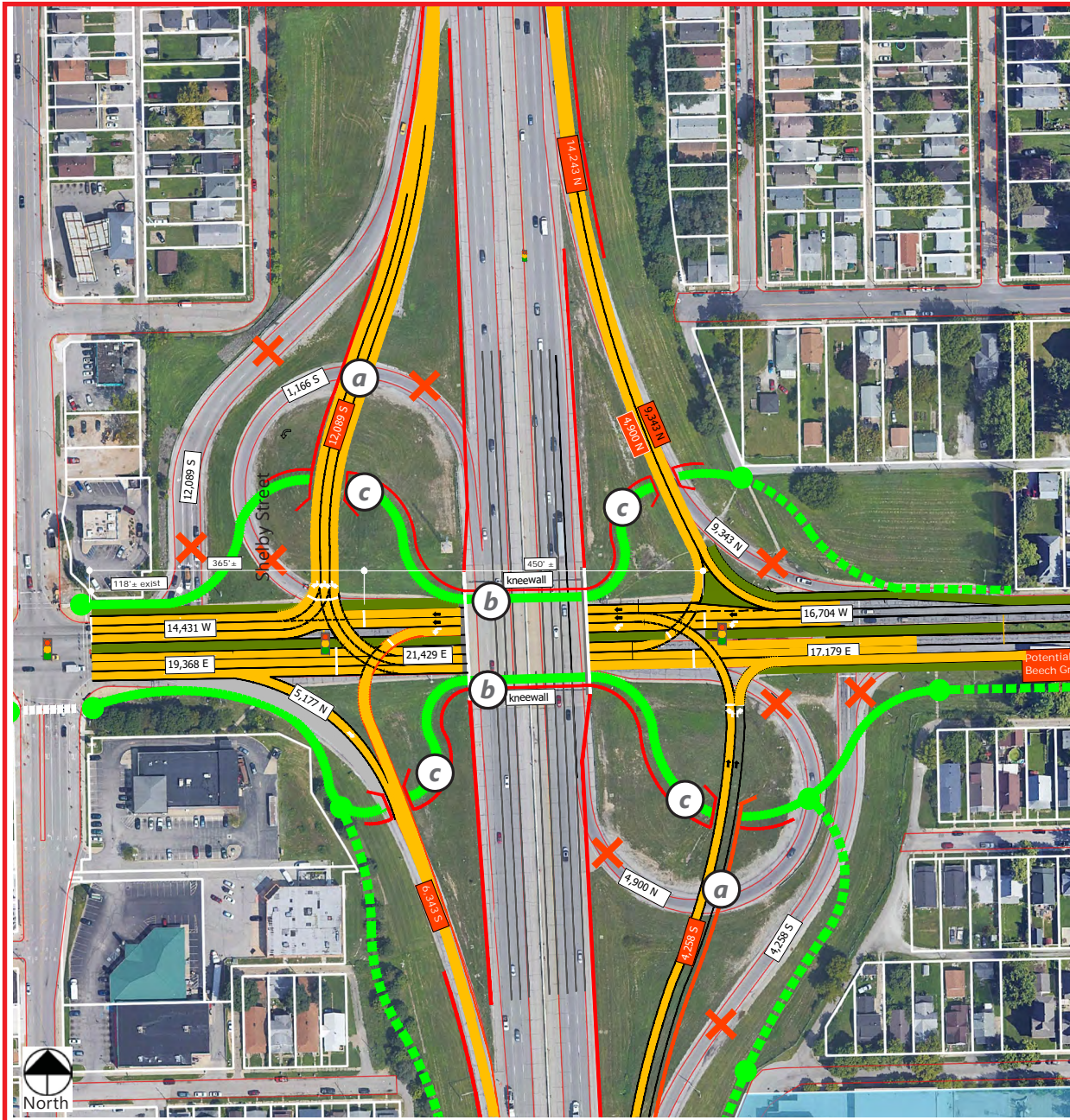
1. The sidewalks and underpasses are generally not bicycle friendly, needing a minimum of eight-foot width or more where walks are adjacent to the curb lines to provide a buffer.
2. The on-ramps are a high-speed geometric that pose hazards to pedestrians and cyclists because cars are intended to yield and pedestrians have their back to traffic.
3. Efforts to correct that can have an impact on ramp capacity.



# Area E: Raymond Street Interchange Recommendation

Raymond Street is a designated freight corridor and a virtual extension of I-74 from I-465 to northbound I-65. This interstate interchange is the beginning of a freight bottleneck well into the Inner Loop. It does not perform well for trucks or people. Recommendations:

- a** Convert the “rural” partial cloverleaf to a compact urban diamond interchange which lengthens the space between Shelby and I-65 ramp signals and more.
- b** Create safe bike/ped passage under the bridge with kneewall widening of walk and low profile barriers at the curb line.
- c** Free-flow shared-use paths with no bike/ped-vehicle conflicts and no crosswalks.

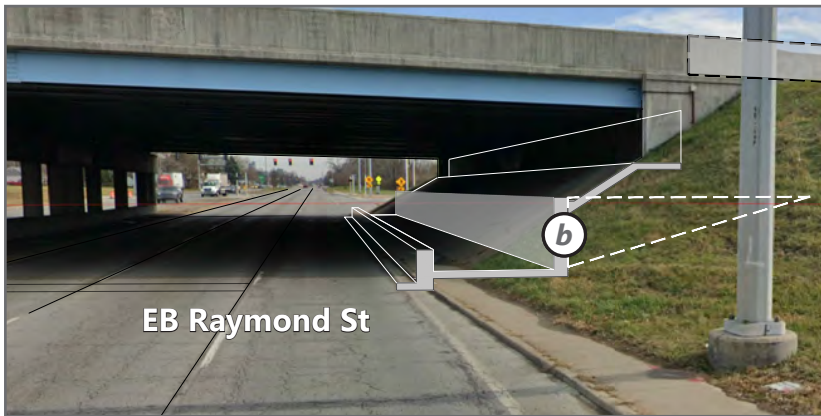


Rev. 9/7/23





# Area E: Raymond Street Interchange Underpass



## Creating a safe portal for cyclists and pedestrians

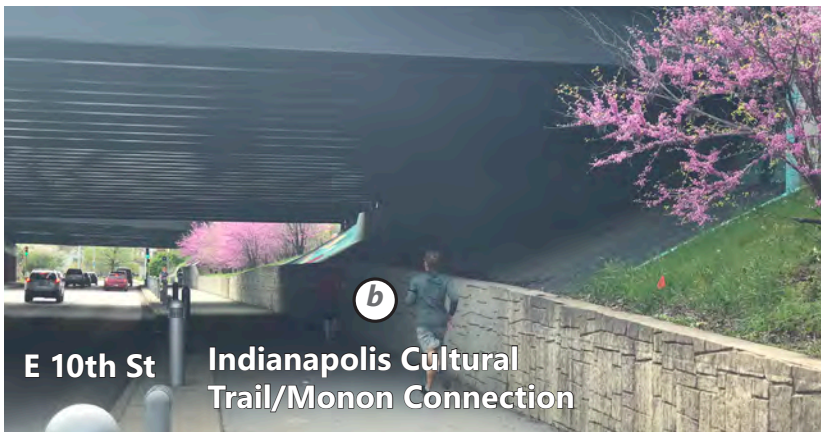
- 1 Truncate slopewall, add retaining kneewall to accommodate safe pedestrian/bicycle passage through underpass.
- 3 Maintain constant curb offset by removing existing curb/walk flare towards travel lane.
- 4 Bend pathway behind sign pole to maintain required pathway buffer from traffic & objects.
- 5 Supplement existing roadway lighting for balanced day/night luminance on pathway & slopewall surfaces.



## Precedence for constructability and performance

An identical condition existed at the E 10th Street underpass of the I-65/70 North Split bridges in 2003. The sidewalk was the connection between the Monon Trail south terminus and the north terminus of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail.

The E 10th Street underpass was avoided by pedestrians and cyclists because of safety, poor lighting, and fast traffic close to the unprotected curb edge. That contributed to a perception of danger that resulted in avoidance. This condition impacted both east/west and north/south connectivity.



## A celebrated and transformational passage was achieved by the INDOT 2020 Hyperfix Project

That project, similar in scale to the I-65 SAFE Project, developed improvements to the E 10th Street underpass that transformed the connection between Mass Ave's commercial district and supercharged the economic development of the E 10th Street area.

Later enhanced by the Superbowl initiative, Hyperfix constructed 600 feet of retaining wall. The Raymond Street interchange underpass would need approx. 300 feet.



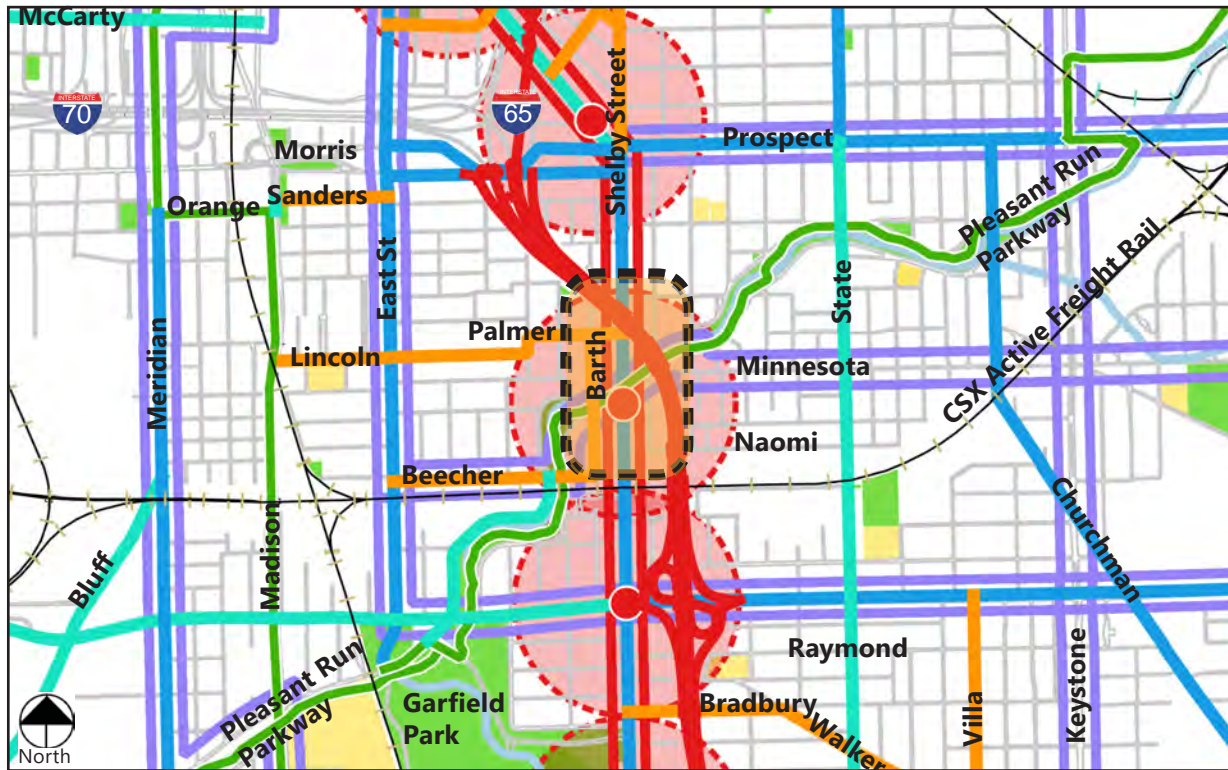
# Area F: CSX/Naomi/Pleasant Run & Shelby Street Bridges Context



*I-65 bridges are "Neighborhood Portals" over Naomi, Pleasant Run N&S, and Shelby.*



# Area F: CSX/Naomi/Pleasant Run & Shelby Street Bridges Context



## NAOMI STREET, PLEASANT RUN & SHELBY STREET PORTALS STUDY AREA

- Existing & Planned Bike/Pedestrian System
  - Greenway
  - Multi Use Path
  - Neighborway
  - Bike Lane
- IndyGo Public Transit System
  - Local Transit Route
  - Red Line BRT Stop
  - 1/4 Mile R Walkshed

### Pleasant Run Parkway Impacts & Remediation Recommendation

The parkway is a component of the *Indianapolis Historic Park and Boulevard System* listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Rethink recommends that the SAFE I-65 project remediate existing drainage/erosion and water quality impacts contributed by the interstate overpass to create a NEPA Section 4F *Net Benefit* to the resource effected by project implementation. Rethink recommendations address how to achieve net benefit.

### RETHINK COALITION OBSERVATIONS

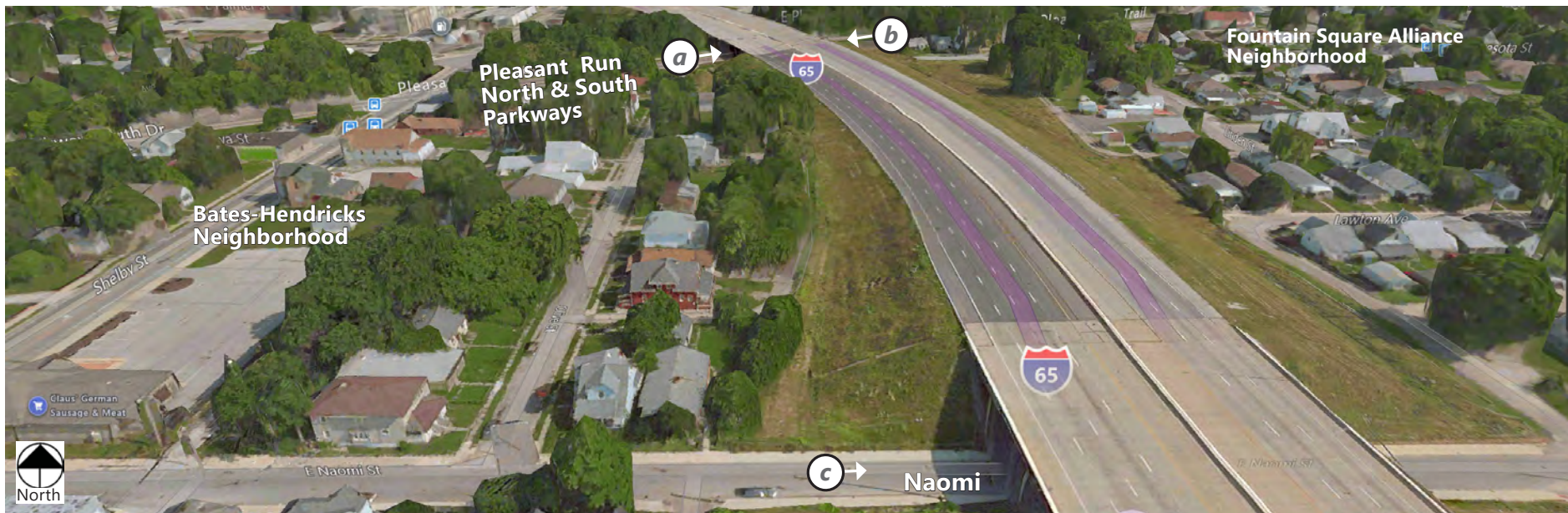
Naomi and Pleasant Run North and South Parkways are designated Local Streets although a section of the latter is both an IndyGo route and a Tier 4 Freight Corridor through the parkway's I-65 underpass. A major Greenway aligns with the south Pleasant Run Parkway.

Primary Arterial designated Shelby Street is both a local and BRT route, a Tier 4 Freight Corridor, and an important two-way protected bike lane. Both underpass corridors have multiple but correctable deficiencies. The Shelby bridge skew exasperates the narrow right-of-way in accommodating the corridor's multimodal functions. Most deficiencies can be remediated as part of the I-65 SAFE project in partnership with the city as a joint undertaking.

Naomi Street is a local street with much less traffic. It is also an important neighborhood portal to Shelby Street transit and bicycle facilities as well as to a Neighborway link to the Pleasant Run Greenway and Garfield Park. Walking or cycling through the underpass to reach those destinations is disincentivised by the underpass's correctable deficiencies. Those include interstate bridge drain outlets that direct stormwater and roadway debris directly onto deteriorating slope walls and across sidewalks wedged between the slopewalls and curbs, unswaled turf embankments that sheet flow erosion onto the already narrow walks and the adjacent pavement, and awkwardly located, poorly maintained right-of-way fencing.



# Area F: Naomi & Pleasant Run Observations



***Pleasant Run Parkway South [View east]***

The greenway path connecting multiple neighborhoods is impacted by roadway debris and eroded exposed soils alongside an uncurbed freight and transit-serving roadway. The apparent brightness is a camera-created illusion.



***Pleasant Run Parkway North [View west]***

There are no sidewalks or protective curbs to serve Fountain Square Neighborhood residents walking or cycling to nearby Shelby Street transit or bike facilities seen beyond, though space exists for both. Drainage issue is apparent.



***Naomi underpass [View east]***

Both north and south slopewall toes limit useful sidewalk width, while rubble & fencing intrudes further. The bridge drains stormwater and interstate debris towards erosive surfaces, walks and the street [not addressed by the I-65 SAFE project].

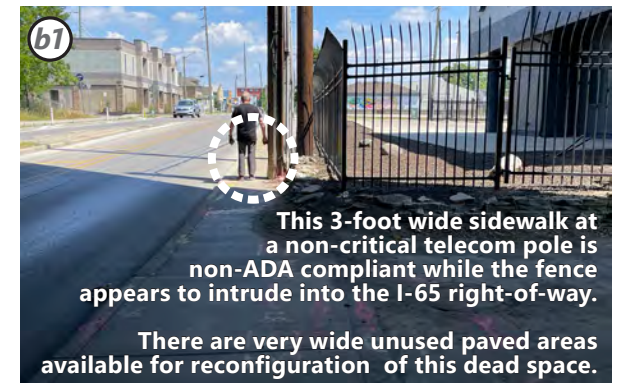


# Area F: Shelby Street Underpass Observations of Existing Conditions



### Shelby Street [View south]

Very narrow southbound travel lanes on a freight and transit corridor threaten counterflow cyclists protected only by flexible wands and a low curb. Excess northbound lanes coexist with a too narrow ADA-noncompliant sidewalk.



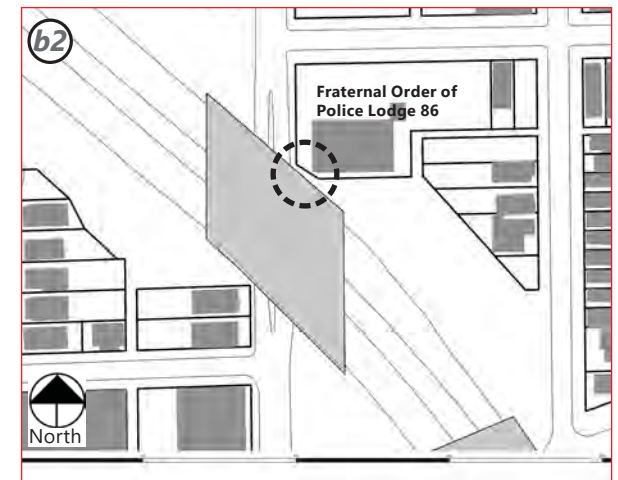
### Shelby Street [View north]

In spite of excess pavement and sidewalk width under the east side of the bridge, the sidewalk width beyond has a pedestrian pinch point between a utility pole and fence that is non-compliant with ADA requirements.



### Traffic Conflicts - N side of Shelby Bridge

Multiple turning movements from Cottage Ave and the Eskenazi clinic in combination with the Cycle Track, create at least eleven traffic conflicts, posing risks to all users, esp. pedestrians.

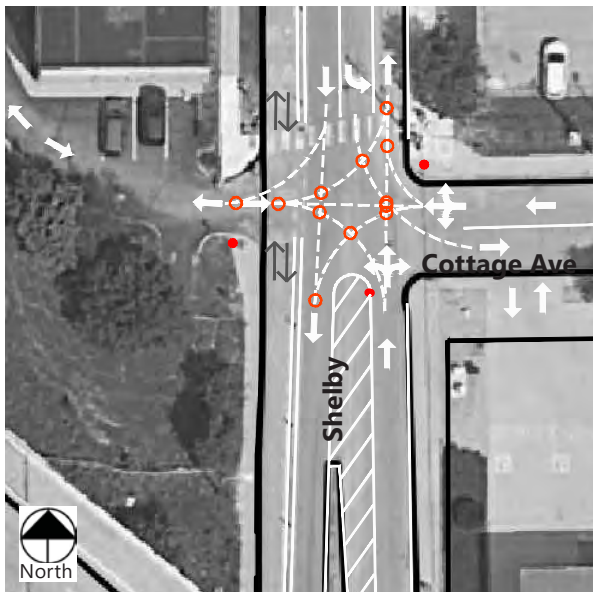


### Map Indy Parcel Lines

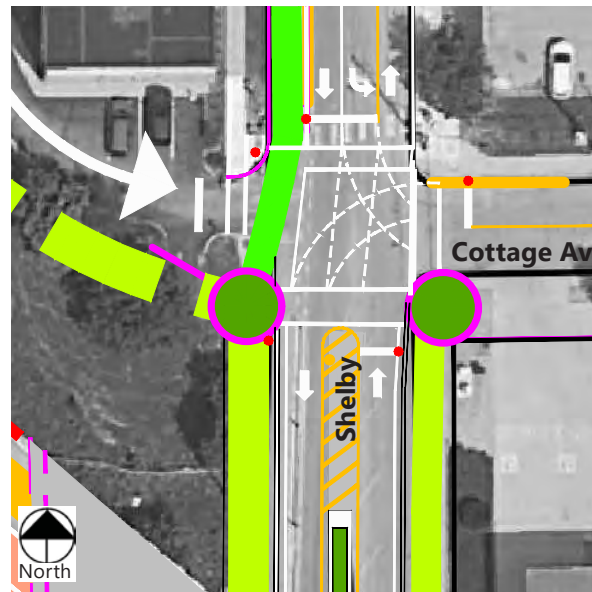
The property line is chamfered at Fraternal Order of Police property. Fence should be aligned with parcel line to allow safe pedestrian travel.



# Area F: Shelby Street Underpass Observations



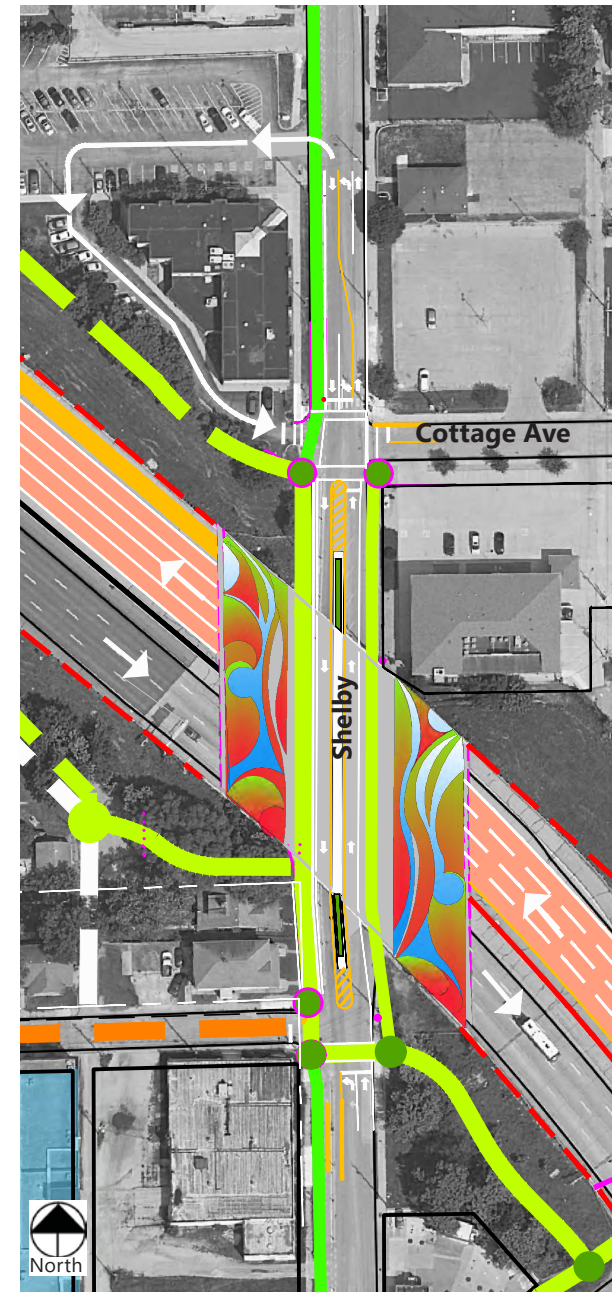
**Traffic Conflicts - N side of Shelby Bridge**  
Multiple turning movements from Cottage Ave and the Eskenazi clinic in combination with the Cycle Track, create at least eleven traffic conflicts, posing risks to all users, esp. pedestrians.



**Opportunity (above)**  
Establish partnership with Eskenazi to modify parking lot movements across from Cottage Ave to be one way.

Install pedestrian crosswalk markings and stop bars as shown that connect the Cycle Track with the Interstate and Pleasant Run Greenway.

**Opportunity (to the right)**  
Consider partnering with the Bates-Hendricks and Fountain Square Alliance neighborhoods for an inspiring mural on underpass side slopes.





# Area F: Naomi/Pleasant Run & Shelby Street Recommendations

## Rethink Recommendation

### Create a Bates-Hendricks Fountain Square Alliance and Garfield Park Greenway Loop

Per Rethink recommendations for the *Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges*, to focus on inner lane shoulder accommodation of the four-lane expansion leading into the South Split rather than outer lane expansion to accommodate an auxiliary lane, means the current bottleneck at the 65/70 split can be managed without bridge expansion at the Naomi and the Pleasant Run bridges.

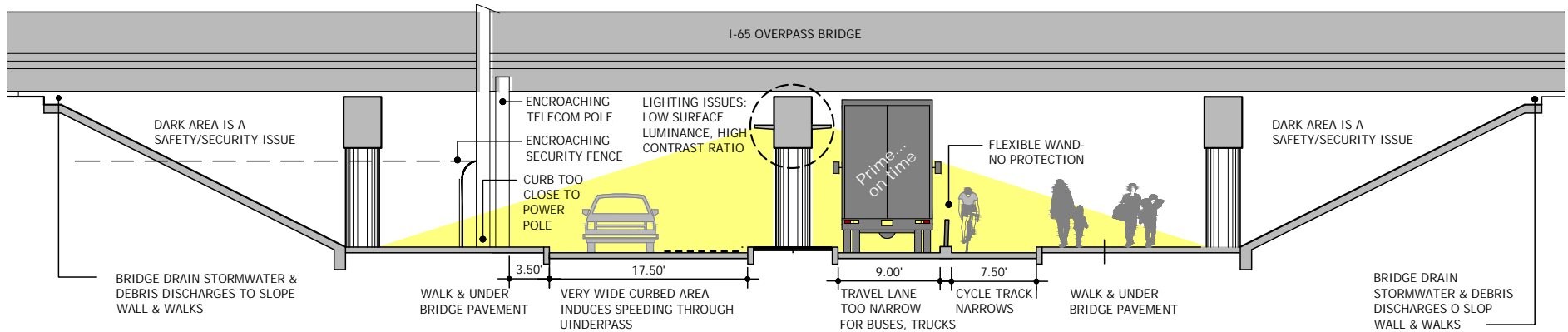
Shown in the sketch are possible greenway or multiuse path connections that will break down the barrier of the Interstate by utilizing both City and INDOT right-of-way to provide critical links between Bates-Hendricks, Fountain Square Alliance and Garfield Park neighborhoods as a Greenway Loop.



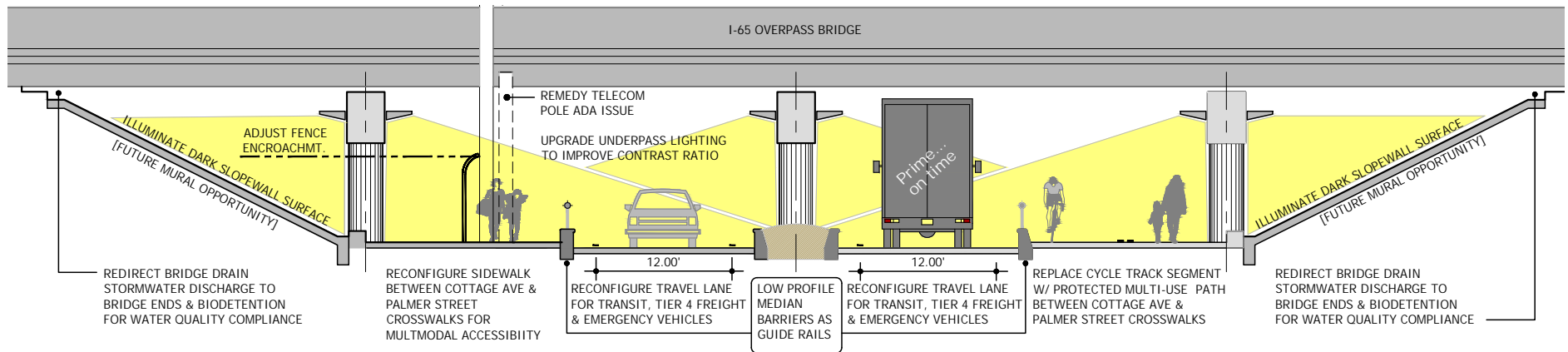
*I-65 Bridges are "Neighborhood Portals" over Naomi, Pleasant Run and Shelby Streets*



# Area F: Shelby Street Underpass Recommendations



## Existing Shelby Street Underpass Looking South



## Recommended Shelby Street Underpass Looking South

Heard: "Shelby Street underpass is a place to be avoided".

Very narrow vehicle lanes along a truck and transit corridor, tight against a narrowed cycle track protected by delineators, and AM/PM dark.

Recommendations:

- Reconfigure all lanes to minimum standards.
- Reconfigure intersections at each end to reduce conflicts, and convert cycle-track to shared-use path.
- Protect bridge columns and bike/ped lanes & walks with low-profile median barriers.

- Design/install a balanced day/night lighting system.
- "Permit" a well-lit mural to Celebrate Shelby Street (Per the 10th St Connec10n).

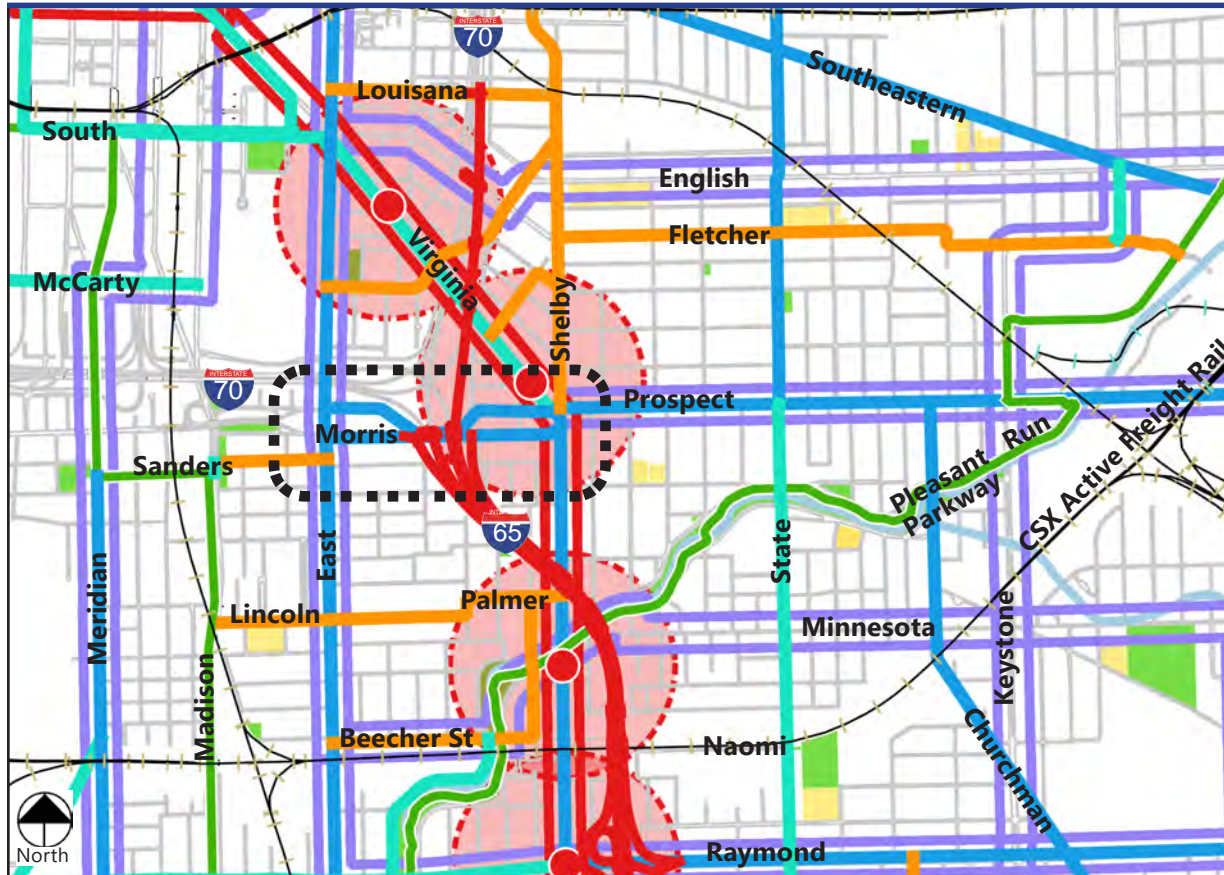
# Area G: Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges



*View North along I-65 towards the Morris Street/Prospect Street Interchange and the I-65/I-70 South Split beyond.  
June 5, 2023, A-V-A Video Productions*



# Area G: Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges Context



**LOCATION & CONTEXT OF MORRIS/PROSPECT STREET INTERCHANGE & BRIDGES**

## RETHINK OBSERVATIONS

The Morris/Prospect Interchange area is a high volume access point to and from I-65 for the southeast sector of downtown Indianapolis. That sector includes the Gainbridge Fieldhouse with 19,000 concert seats, Eli Lilly Corporate Headquarters with 7000 employees and other major employers and destinations. The interchange is unique as the only interstate interchange serving downtown Indianapolis from outside the Inner Loop. The convergence of the Morris/Prospect one-way pair's crosstown traffic with downtown commuter traffic compounds the interstate-caused separation of the Bates-Hendricks and Fountain Square neighborhoods.

In traffic engineering terms, this interchange has a volume/capacity ratio issue in which local street characteristics [capacity] cannot accommodate interchange demand without significant impacts on neighborhood connectivity and quality of life.

The I-65 Safe project proposes to widen the I-65 NB bridge over Morris/Prospect to add an "auxiliary" lane from Raymond to the Washington Street exit. Rethink Coalition opposes widening all bridges, and in particular this bridge, to allow the best long-term solution to be determined through the Rethink Coalition Reconnecting Communities Planning Grant and ProPEL Indy work. Rethink Coalition urges INDOT to allow these planning studies to have a full range of options to explore, including depressing the I-65 NB lane under Morris/Prospect Street. (continued)

### A problematic Interchange

The Morris/Prospect one-way pair of streets is classified as a *Primary Arterial* in the *Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan*. That designation's geometric standards, partially applied to these streets, conflict with the land use characteristics and connectivity needs of the Bates-Hendricks and Fountain Square neighborhoods separated by I-65.

### NAOMI STREET, PLEASANT RUN & SHELBY STREET PORTALS STUDY AREA

- Existing & Planned Bike/Pedestrian System
  - Greenway
  - Shared Use
  - Neighborhood
  - Bike Lane
- IndyGo Public Transit System
  - Local Transit Route
  - Red Line BRT Stop 1/4 Mile Walkshed

## Area G: Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges

Instead Rethink Coalition urges INDOT to address significant interchange issues and opportunities that impact the City's ability to accommodate local transportation needs, including freight, bicycle/pedestrian connectivity and improve safety for all users that serve or co-locate with the interchange. Recent crosswalk improvements do not address bicycle usage and remain problematic for pedestrians in the absence of any change to the high-speed geometric design of the interchange elements. The Morris/Prospect Interchange area is unaccommodating of pedestrian/cyclist connectivity.

Correcting that is not *currently* part of the Safe project scope which is focused on mainline improvements. On-street parking is partially time-restricted to accommodate PM rush hour traffic out of the downtown generated by the Lilly campus, which is both an enforcement problem and a neighborhood inconvenience.

### **Morris-Prospect East of the Interstate**

The two streets constitute a two-lane primary arterial separated one block as a one-way pair, each with a single travel lane and unrestricted parking on one or both curb lines. Both experience congestion of a level to be expected given the development mix and density, and the interruption of many east-west local streets by the interstate. While currently categorized as Primary Arterial, that classification needs to be reconsidered once the future RCPP and the larger ProPEL study are completed.

Prospect is one westbound travel lane between Virginia Ave and Leonard Street with unrestricted parking along both curbs.

Morris is one eastbound travel lane and one unrestricted parking lane between Leonard and St. Patrick Streets, widening to 3-lane with no parking to Shelby Street.

### **Morris Street west of I-65**

Morris is constrained by its residential development pattern to two eastbound lanes from East Street to the SB I-65 ramp, one of which is time restricted parking. It continues over the interstate as two lanes described above even though it narrows down to a single lane beyond.

### **Prospect West of I-65**

Morris-Prospect over I-65/I-70 and under I -70 WB ramp and I-65 North [part of the South Split].

Morris-Prospect join each other here, separated by a median, to constitute a 700-foot long divided primary arterial between the NB and SB I-65 ramps, half of which is an interstate overpass with an additional WB left turn lane onto SB I-65.

The bridge deck is 66-foot wide between curbs, divided in two longitudinal sections of 37-foot wide WB and 24' wide EB between curbs. The sidewalks abutting the curbs are less than the minimum six-foot width for that condition and disincentivises pedestrian use, while the roadway configuration does likewise for bicycle

use, thus denying the sizeable Bates-Hendricks neighborhood safe, convenient multi-modal connectivity to its major destination, the Fountain-Fletcher Virginia Avenue corridor.

### **Recommendations**

Rethink Coalition supports INDOT's proposal to add a lane from I-465 to I-70 for a total of four lanes in each direction to reduce congestion and improve safety.

Rethink Coalition urges INDOT to consider fiscal prudence and defer any bridge widening due to the Reconnecting Communities grant and ProPEL Indy Study.

Rethink Coalition suggests that additional Washington Street exit capacity can be achieved by widening north of the Morris/Prospect I65 NB Bridge as a short-term solution to meet the project's purpose and need without widening bridges.

Rethink-proposed countermeasures to local transportation congestion issues in this area range from modest near-term to major longer-term actions.

This report identifies median barrier improvements that will correct current bottleneck pinch-points without bridge expansion, while also potentially eliminating the need for sound walls through enhanced mitigation of wheel noise.



# Area G: Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges



**MORRIS/PROSPECT RECONFIGURATION  
BIKE/PED CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN BATES-HENDRICKS & FOUNTAIN SQUARE**

## Morris/Prospect Interchange & Portal

Morris-Prospect is a nearly 700-foot gap between Bates-Hendricks and Fountain Square Neighborhoods. It has the potential to be a powerful multimodal connector.

### Recommendations:

#### a

Reconfigure four travel and one turn lane to a lengthened turn lane and one travel lane in each direction. Create bike/ped shared use paths in place of existing narrow walks and outer travel lanes.

#### b

Change ramp entrances from free-flow to all-way stop for bike/ped safety & metered gap flow to I-65. All way stops are an effective alternative to delay-inducing signals and are feasible for single-lane configuration for ramp entrances and Leonard north of Morris Street.

#### c

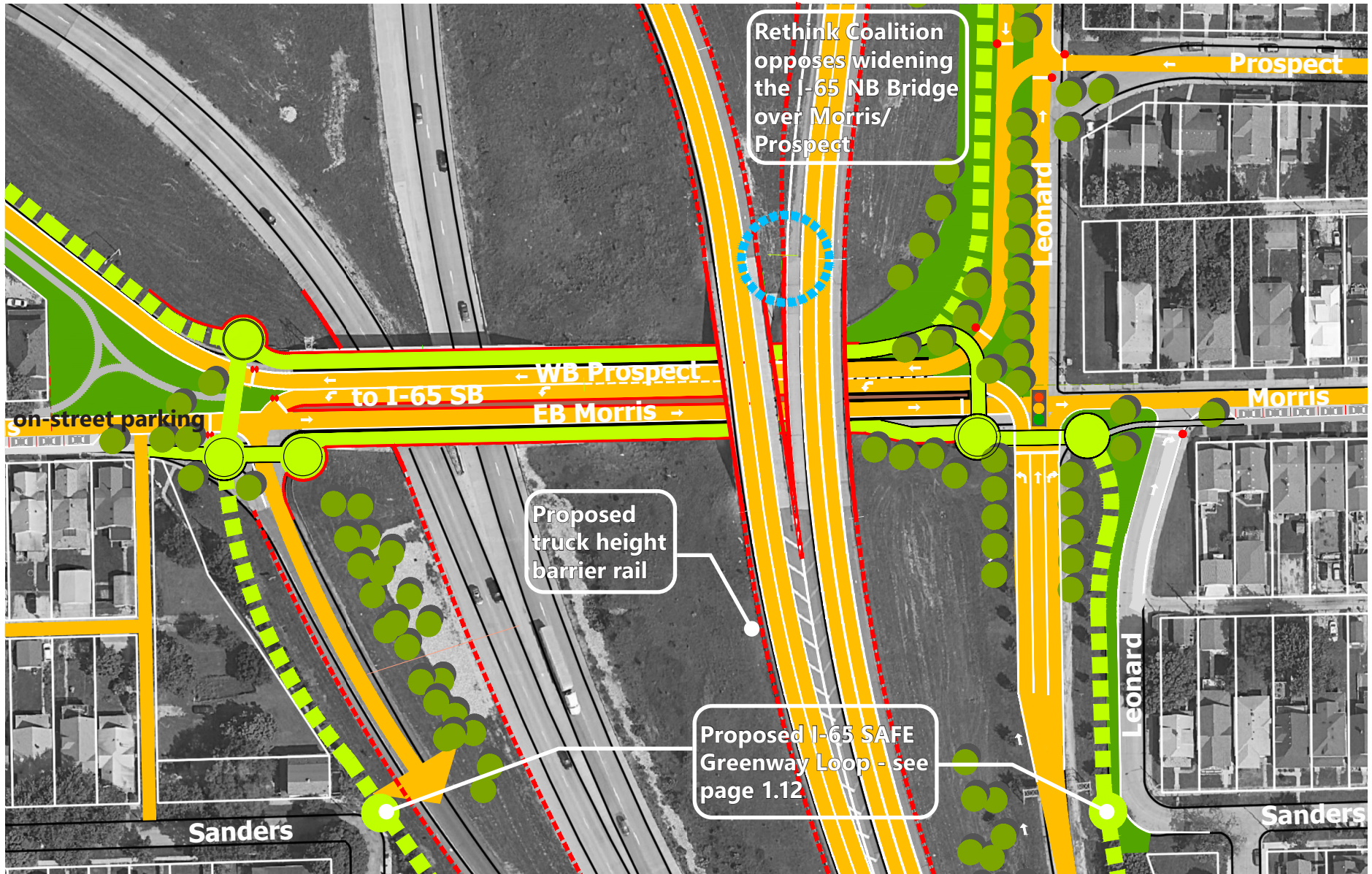
Eliminate parking restrictions for one travel lane on eastbound Morris from East Street with Street tree curb extensions.

#### d

Two pinch points constitute the travel bottleneck for the Raymond to Prospect section of northbound I-65. Modify the transition between the bridge rails and the w-beam rails that are now skewed inward to create a continuous width median shoulder sufficient to carry the four-lanes to split over Morris/Prospect.



# Area G: Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges



*Morris Prospect Lane Re-Configuration to accommodate Bates-Hendricks/Fountain Square Connectivity*



# Area G: Morris/Prospect Street Interchange and Bridges

## I-70 WEST & I-65 NORTH BRIDGES BEYOND

