PUBLIC HEARING

Chicago Street Widening and Reconstruction
Indiana/Illinois State Line to White Oak Avenue
Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Designation No. 1297017

INFORMATION PACKET

Wednesday, April 22, 2015
Formal Presentation: 6:00 p.m.

Washington Irving Middle School Auditorium
4727 Pine Avenue
Hammond, Indiana

Prepared By:

American Structurepoint, Inc.
7260 Shadeland Station
Indianapolis, Indiana 46256
(317) 547-5580
April 22, 2015

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

Welcome to the City of Hammond’s public hearing regarding the proposed Chicago Street Widening and Reconstruction Project from the Indiana/Illinois State Line to White Oak Avenue.

The purpose of the public hearing is to explain the proposed project and receive comments, concerns, and suggestions. We appreciate the opportunity to be here this evening and look forward to listening to the concerns and issues that are important to this community. Comments can be presented in several ways.

1. You may verbally express your comments here tonight during the public statement session held after the formal presentation. You may do this by signing the Speaker’s Sign-In Sheet located at the table with the handout materials. **All statements will be recorded and transcribed in order to be included in the official public hearing transcript.**

2. You may complete one of the comment sheets (attached) and return utilizing one of the following methods below.
   a. Hand deliver to one of the hearing representatives from American Structurepoint in attendance this evening
   b. Mail to Briana Hope at American Structurepoint, Inc., 7260 Shadeland Station, Indianapolis, Indiana 46256
   c. Fax to Briana Hope at (317) 543-0270
   d. Email to GoChicagoStreet@structurepoint.com

**Should you choose to submit comments by mail, please have them postmarked by May 7, 2015.** All comments submitted will become part of the transcript and be addressed in subsequent project documentation, along with the verbal comments presented here tonight.

All substantial comments received will be evaluated and responded to in writing within subsequent project documentation. The documentation will address all concerns raised during the public hearing process and describe the final decisions reached following careful consideration of the views and concerns of the public.

The approved environmental document is available for public review and inspection online at GoChicagoStreet.com and at the Hammond Public Library, 564 State Street, Hammond, Indiana.

This notice is published in compliance with: 1) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771 (CFR 771.111(h)(1) stating, “Each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program.”); 2) 23 CFR 450.210(a)(1)(ix) stating, “Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate.”; and 3) The INDOT Public Involvement Policies and Procedures approved by the Federal Highway Administration on August 16, 2012.
Hearing Agenda

American Structurepoint Staff will be available in the display area to explain proposed project details and environmental impacts before and after the official hearing. A Spanish interpreter will also be available to help facilitate discussions.

1. Meeting Called to Order  Chris Murphy  
   American Structurepoint

2. Explanation of the Hearing Purpose and Process  Briana Hope  
   American Structurepoint

3. Project Description  Eric Wolverton  
   American Structurepoint

4. Environmental Document  Amy Marlatt  
   American Structurepoint

5. Public Statement Session  Briana Hope  
   American Structurepoint

6. Adjournment  Briana Hope  
   American Structurepoint

7. Questions and Answers – Engineers and project representatives will be available in the display area to answer questions.
Project Description

The City of Hammond is developing a Federal-aid project to improve the Chicago Street Corridor (former SR 312) from the Indiana/Illinois state line to White Oak Avenue. The Chicago Street corridor utilizes three streets: Gostlin Street (from the Indiana/Illinois state line to Sheffield Avenue), Sheffield Avenue (from Gostlin Street to Chicago Street), and Chicago Street (from Sheffield Avenue to White Oak Avenue). The purpose of this project is to improve safety, reduce congestion, enhance mobility, address deteriorating infrastructure, and create a unified east-west corridor through the City of Hammond.

The project will consist of approximately 2.1 miles of road reconstruction. New concrete curb and gutter and enclosed storm sewer will be installed throughout the project corridor. The project is broken into four segments, described below. Construction activities will be phased in order to allow the road to remain open throughout construction. However, temporary road closures and/or temporary widening may be required for the completion of work in some areas. Access shall be maintained to all residences and businesses throughout construction.

The proposed project will require 35 residential, 7 commercial, and one industrial relocation. For the entire proposed project, a total of approximately 7.48 acres of new permanent and 2.34 acres of temporary right-of-way will be required. Based on 2013-2016 costs, the total estimated cost of the project is $21.6 million.

**Segment 1: Gostlin Street, from the Indiana/Illinois state line to Sheffield Avenue**
The typical section of the realigned roadway will consist of two 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction, a 17-foot wide raised median, and a 5-foot wide sidewalk offset 5 feet to the north of the roadway. The horizontal curve radius on Gostlin Street near the state line will be corrected in order to meet INDOT design standards for a 40 mph design speed. The 40 mph design speed is intended to serve as a transition between the 45 mph speed limit in Illinois and the 35 mph speed limit in Indiana. This correction will be made by realigning the roadway to the south. The existing Gostlin Street will be retained and improved. Clark Avenue, Grover Avenue, and Wabash Avenue will not connect to the realigned roadway. Traffic from these streets will use Dearborn Avenue to connect to the realigned roadway. The existing Gostlin Street will no longer connect to Brainard Avenue or Sheffield Avenue. The intersection of the realigned roadway and Sheffield Avenue will be reconstructed as a one-lane roundabout with a right turn bypass lane from eastbound Gostlin Street to southbound Sheffield Avenue.

**Segment 2: Sheffield Avenue, from Gostlin Street to Chicago Street, and Chicago Street from Sheffield Avenue to Hohman Avenue**
The typical section of this roadway segment will consist of one 12-foot wide travel lane in each direction, a 14-foot wide two-way left-turn lane, and a 6-foot wide sidewalk on both sides of the roadway. The existing three-way stop intersection at Sheffield Avenue and Chicago Street will be realigned and replaced with a continuous flow curve. A one-lane roundabout with a right turn partial bypass lane from westbound Chicago Street to northbound Hohman Avenue will be constructed at the existing intersection of Chicago Street and Hohman Avenue.
Segment 3: Chicago Street from Hohman Avenue to Baltimore Avenue

The typical section of this roadway segment will consist of two 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction and a 6-foot wide sidewalk on both sides of the roadway. Chicago Street will be widened generally along the existing centerline. The roadway will be realigned slightly north between Towle Avenue and Henry Avenue, and slightly south between Henry Avenue and Torrence Avenue in order to minimize potential right-of-way and residential acquisitions.

Segment 4: Chicago Street from Calumet Avenue to White Oak Avenue

The typical section of this roadway segment will consist of two 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction and a reconstructed 6-foot wide sidewalk on each side of the roadway.

**Description of Right-of-Way**

The project will require the purchase of right-of-way. Refer to the pamphlets distributed at this meeting: ACQUISITION – “Acquiring Real Property for Federal and Federal-Aid Programs and Projects” and RELOCATION – “Your Rights and Benefits as a Displaced Person Under the Federal Relocation Assistance Program”. Acquisition and relocation information can also be viewed at [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/).

It is anticipated that the proposed project will require acquisition of 7.48 acres of new permanent right-of-way and 2.34 acres of temporary right-of-way, primarily from residential and commercial properties. Total acquisition and relocation of 43 residences, 7 commercial properties, and 1 industrial property is anticipated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Impacts</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Temporary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>4.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other: Industrial</td>
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<td>0.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other: Park</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.48</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.34</strong></td>
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**Project Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Expected Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-Way Appraising Begins</td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Begins</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Estimated Project Cost Summary

Based on 2013-2016 costs, the estimated cost for the design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction is approximately $21.6 million. Both federal and local funds sources will be used. The project is included in the 2014-2017 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Environmental Documentation

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by American Structurepoint for this project and approved the document on March 16, 2015. The EA evaluates the impact of the project on the natural and human environment. No areas of potentially significant impacts have been identified. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is anticipated for the project. A FONSI is issued for a project if the undertaking is a major action but is determined to not result in a significant impact based on the EA documentation. Over fifty federal, state, and local agencies and representatives were contacted and asked to provide input regarding the project’s impacts on areas in which they have jurisdiction or special expertise.

Cultural Resources

The project has been coordinated with several state and local historic preservation organizations, including the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), in compliance with FHWA procedures for Indiana projects. The proposed action will not impact items listed on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). INDOT, on behalf of FHWA, has issued a “No Historic Properties Affected” finding for the project. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the finding on August 20, 2013.

Section 4(f) Resources

The US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the use of certain public and historic lands for federally funded transportation facilities unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. The law applies to publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife/waterfowl refuges, and National Register eligible or listed historic properties. These properties are called Section 4(f) resources. Irving Park, operated by the City of Hammond Department of Parks and Recreation, is located south of Chicago Street between Columbia Avenue and Irving Park Drive. Because Irving Park is a publicly owned park/recreation area, this property would be considered a Section 4(f) resource. The proposed project would convert approximately 0.001 acre of land from Irving Park to a transportation use for reconstruction of the sidewalk along Irving Park Drive and Chicago Street. The City of Hammond Parks and Recreation Department has determined that the project would cause no adverse impacts to the recreational facilities within the park. INDOT, on behalf of FHWA, approved the use of a de minimis Section 4(f) finding for this acquisition on May 2, 2013.

Community Impacts

Significant efforts were made to engage and involve the public in the project planning process. A dedicated project website (GoChicagoStreet.com) and email address (GoChicagoStreet@structurepoint.com) were developed, two public information meetings were held on
May 7, 2013, and a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed to gather input from the community and assist in developing the preferred alternative. One CAC meeting was held on July 23, 2013, and an additional CAC meeting will be held after environmental approval as the project team moves forward with design. Significant efforts were made to encourage public participation, including public notices and press releases published in the *Northwest Indiana Times* in both English and Spanish. An environmental justice analysis was conducted to determine if the project would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low-income or minority populations. This analysis indicates the benefits of the project are greater than the identified burdens, demonstrating a lack of disproportionately high and adverse effects. Specifically, the proposed project will reduce congestion and traffic delay, enhance pedestrian facilities, improve motorist safety, improve commercial truck mobility, upgrade deteriorating infrastructure, and establish a gateway to the City of Hammond. Noted negative effects (burdens) include proposed residential and business relocations, increased traffic on Chicago Street, increased traffic noise, tree/greenspace removal, and temporary disturbances due to construction.

**Hazardous Materials**

A Phase I Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was conducted in accordance with the procedures outlines in the Hazardous Materials Unit Operating Manual published by INDOT Environmental Services. The ISA identified 17 sites along the project corridor that have a recognized environmental condition (REC). In order to further investigate the presence of hazardous materials within the project area, Phase II ISA’s will be conducted on 8 properties after Stage II plans are submitted and the environmental document has been approved.

**Noise**

A noise analysis was prepared in accordance with FHWA’s Highway Traffic Noise: Analysis and Abatement Guidance (July 2010) and INDOT’s Traffic Noise Policy (July 2011). Currently 137 dwelling units experience noise levels that approach or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). Traffic is projected to increase by 2.48 percent annually, meaning that traffic will increase by 84 percent by 2034 with or without the proposed project. This will equate to an additional 58 dwelling units experiencing noise levels that approach or exceed the NAC. A substantial noise increase is an increase in noise levels by 15.0 decibels. Because the project area is already a very busy traffic corridor, no substantial noise increases were identified.

Noise barriers are often used as mitigation for traffic noise impacts. However, noise barriers require long uninterrupted segments to prevent noise from traveling through gaps. Noise barriers would not be feasible for the majority of the corridor due to the large number of driveways. Gaps in noise barriers would not be an issue in the area along Chicago Street at Irving Park. However, the park is bordered by the NICTD commuter rail line and I-90 on the east side, both of which are elevated 15-20 feet from the surrounding grade level. The noise generated by the rail and highway facilities would not be reduced, thereby rendering the noise barrier ineffective to mitigate for noise impacts at Irving Park. Therefore, the noise barrier would not be feasible at this location. No noise mitigation is proposed for this project.
SEGMENT 1: Gostlin Street from the Indiana/Illinois state line to Sheffield Avenue

The typical section of the realigned roadway would consist of two 12-foot-wide travel lanes in each direction, a 17-foot-wide raised median, and a five-foot-wide sidewalk offset five feet to the north of the roadway. The horizontal curve radius on Gostlin Street near the Indiana/Illinois state line would be corrected in order to meet INDOT design standards for a 40 mph design speed. The 40 mph design speed is intended to serve as a transition between the 45 mph speed limit in Illinois and the 35 mph speed limit in Indiana. This correction would be made by realigning the roadway to the south. The existing Gostlin Street would be retained and improved. Clark Avenue, Grover Avenue, and Wabash Avenue would not connect to the realigned roadway. Traffic from these streets would use Dearborn Avenue to connect to the realigned roadway. The existing Gostlin Street would no longer connect to Brainard Avenue or Sheffield Avenue. The intersection of the realigned roadway and Sheffield Avenue would be reconstructed as a one-lane roundabout with a right-turn bypass lane from eastbound Gostlin Street to southbound Sheffield Avenue.

SEGMENT 2: Sheffield Avenue from Gostlin Street to Chicago Street and Chicago Street to Hohman Avenue

The typical section of this roadway segment would consist of one 12-foot-wide travel lane in each direction, a 14-foot-wide two-way left-turn lane, and a six-foot-wide sidewalk on both sides of the roadway. The existing three-way stop intersection at Sheffield Avenue and Chicago Street would be realigned and replaced with a continuous flow curve. A one-lane roundabout with a right-turn partial bypass lane from westbound Chicago Street to northbound Hohman Avenue would be constructed at the existing intersection of Chicago Street and Hohman Avenue.

SEGMENT 3: Chicago Street from Hohman Avenue to Calumet Avenue

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SEGMENT 4: Chicago Street from Calumet Avenue to White Oak Avenue

The typical section of this roadway segment would consist of two 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction and a reconstructed 6-foot wide sidewalk on each side of the roadway.

Improvemnts for All Project Segments

... New concrete curb and gutter
... Storm sewer
... Sidewalks
... ADA compliant curb ramps
... Roadway lighting

Visit GoChicagoStreet.com for project information
Comment Sheet

Please provide your comments, concerns, and/or suggestions regarding the proposed Chicago Street Widening and Reconstruction project. Your comments are important to us, and we sincerely appreciate your time and participation during the public involvement process. Please submit comments by Thursday, May 7, 2015. Comments may be mailed, faxed, or submitted via email to the contact below.

Briana Hope
American Structurepoint, Inc.
7260 Shadeland Station
Indianapolis, Indiana 46256-3957
Fax: (317) 543-0270
Email: GoChicagoStreet@structurepoint.com

Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2015
Project: Chicago Street Widening and Reconstruction Project (Des. 1297017)

Name: (Please print) __________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________

COMMENTS: __________________________________________

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SIGNATURE: __________________________________________