



# Elkhart Local Trax Railroad Grade Separation DES# 1801913



## Introduction

To address safety and mobility issues, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Elkhart County are partnering to study, design and construct the Local Trax Railroad Grade Separation at Sunnyside Avenue/Concord Mall Drive and County Road (CR) 13 in Elkhart County.

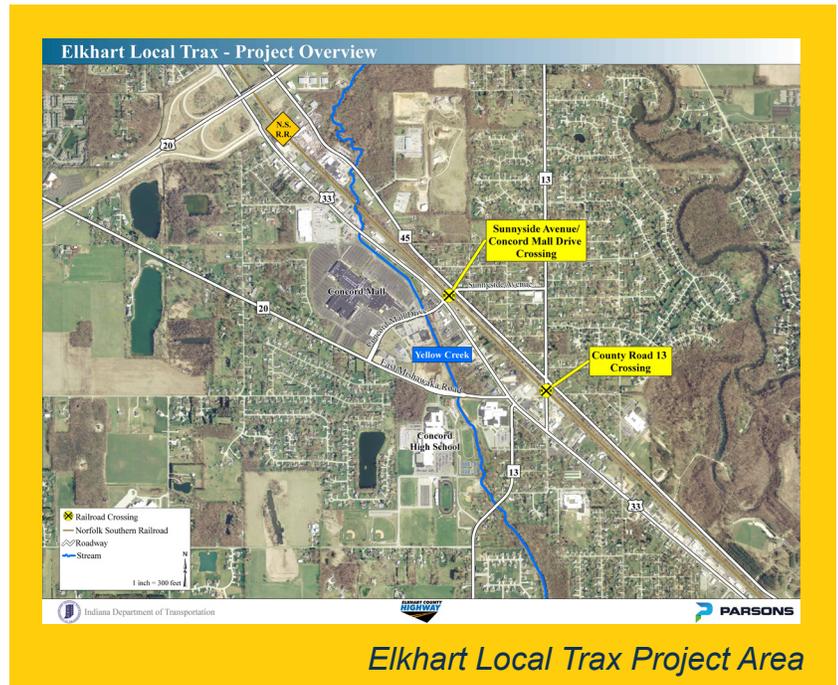
## Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Local Trax Railroad Grade Separation Project is to improve the safety and mobility issues for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and trains at the two at-grade railroad crossings at Sunnyside Avenue/Concord Mall Drive and CR 13.

Norfolk Southern trains typically run through these crossings 80 times a day which delay traffic and emergency vehicles access to the communities north of the tracks.

The needs of the project include:

- Improving Safety – There have been 45 accidents at these two crossings in the last three years with 17 train/vehicle accidents, including three fatalities, since 1976.
- Reducing Delays – Trains regularly stop on the tracks creating congestion and excessive delays.



*Elkhart Local Trax Project Area*

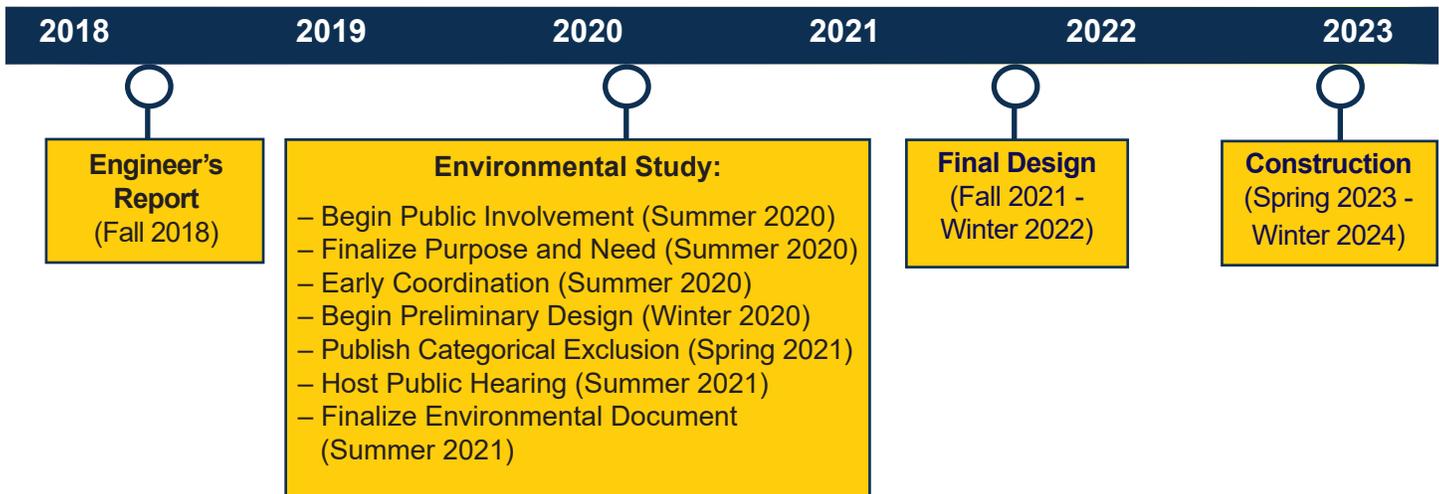
## Project Scope

Several alternatives were considered to determine the best solution. Those alternatives were highlighted in the 2018 Engineer's Report.

The project team determined that Central Alternative 3, which carries traffic over the railroad and eliminates the at-grade crossings at Sunnyside Avenue and CR 13, warrants further study. The new bridge provides an overpass across US 33, the railroad and CR 45. The new roadway includes two 12-foot lanes with curbs and gutters on both sides.

The impacts of this alternative on people and the natural environment will be documented in a Categorical Exclusion - Level 4, as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

## Current Schedule



## Environmental Study

NEPA was signed into law on January 1, 1970. It requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. NEPA is broad and includes constructing highways and other publicly-owned facilities. The Categorical Exclusion (CE-4) will document potential impacts to:

- Streams, wetlands and other waters
- Floodplains
- Endangered and threatened species
- Cultural resources (historical and archaeological)
- Parks, trails and recreational lands
- Air quality
- Right-of-way/relocations
- Noise
- Community impacts
- Low-income and minority populations (Environmental Justice (EJ))
- Hazardous materials

The CE-4 will also document public involvement efforts, permitting needs and how impacts to the items listed above will be mitigated.

## Questions or Comments?

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*Please mention "Elkhart Local Trax Project" in your correspondence.*