

November 2023



Public Information Meeting #2 Summary



Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	I
CHAPTER 1 – MEETING OVERVIEW.....	1
1.1 Meeting Purpose.....	1
1.2 Event Information and Format	1
1.3 Attendance	1
1.4 Submission of Comments	2
CHAPTER 2 – MEETING MATERIALS	3
2.1 Informational Materials.....	3
2.2 Comment Form.....	3
2.3 Availability of Documents	4
CHAPTER 3 – OUTREACH EFFORTS	6
3.1 Notifications.....	6
3.2 Website	6
3.3 Social Media.....	7
3.4 Outreach to Communities with Environmental Justice Concerns.....	7
CHAPTER 4 – COMMENTS.....	9
4.1 Comments Received.....	9
4.2 Summary of Comments	10
4.3 Preferences Among the Build Alternatives.....	11
4.4 US 50 Terminus Preferences.....	13
4.5 Suggestions for Additional or Modified Alternatives	14
APPENDIX A – BOARDS AND MAPS	A-1
APPENDIX B – PRESENTATION	B-1
APPENDIX C – OVERVIEW HANDOUT	C-1
APPENDIX D – COMMENT FORM.....	D-1
APPENDIX E – NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS AND POSTCARD.....	E-1

APPENDIX F – STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEMBERSF-1
APPENDIX G – NOTIFICATIONSG-1
APPENDIX H – COMMENTSH-1
APPENDIX I – PUBLIC MEETING LISTENING SESSIONS I-1

CHAPTER 1 – MEETING OVERVIEW

The purpose of this document is to summarize the activities associated with and comments received following the second public information meeting for the Link 101 Project. As described below, Public Information Meeting #2 (PIM #2) consisted of a number of activities to share information with and collect feedback from project stakeholders.

1.1 MEETING PURPOSE

The purposes of PIM #2 were to:

- Provide an update on project process and timeline,
- Present the project’s draft purpose and need,
- Share ten preliminary alternatives, and
- Solicit feedback regarding the draft purpose and need and preliminary alternatives.

1.2 EVENT INFORMATION AND FORMAT

INDOT held an in-person public information meeting on August 2, 2023, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. eastern standard time (EST) at South Dearborn High School and on August 3, 2023, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. EST at Switzerland County Middle School/Jefferson-Craig Elementary School. An additional virtual public information meeting was held on August 8, 2023, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. EST.

The in-person public meeting was conducted in three parts: an “open house” where attendees could review display boards and maps about the project and have one-on-one conversations with members of the project team (INDOT and consultant staff), a presentation, and a listening session. The open house was available starting at 5:30 p.m. At 6 p.m., a PowerPoint presentation was given by Dan Prevost, the consultant project manager, and Mindy Peterson, the project public involvement lead. A listening session was held following the presentation. Attendees signed up to speak for up to one and a half minutes. Following the presentation and listening session, the open house format continued until the meeting concluded at 7:30 p.m.

The same PowerPoint presentation was given during the virtual public meeting. At the end of the presentation, Dan Prevost and Mindy Peterson took questions from the participants submitted via the chat function. Virtual attendees were given the opportunity to unmute following the presentation to share verbal comments. The comments were transcribed and included in this summary.

1.3 ATTENDANCE

Not including project staff, 119 people signed in at the August 2 in-person public meeting and 125 people signed in at the August 3 in-person public meeting. Not all individuals signed in, especially when attending with others. Total attendance was estimated at 260 individuals. There were 71 participants logged into the virtual public meeting.

1.4 SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS

The public information meetings initiated a comment period that ended on September 8, 2023. During this period, the public was invited to submit comments using a form that could be submitted in-person during the August 2 and August 3 meetings; in-person or by mail to the project office (Switzerland County Technology and Education Center, 708 W. Seminary St., Box #8, Vevay, IN 47043); by email (info@link101corridor.com), or via upload to the project website. The form could also be obtained from the project website (www.link101corridor.com) and uploaded directly. Additional information about the comment form is provided in Section 2.1. The comment form was also available at nine area locations, along with project information. Additional information can be found in Section 2.3.

In addition to the form, the public could submit comments by letter, email, in-person visits to the project office, or phone (844-546-5101). Regardless of the method, all comments received were documented by project staff and included in the project record. Only comments received by September 8, 2023, are summarized here. However, the public may continue to provide input throughout the NEPA process, and all comments received will be documented and made part of the Administrative Record.

CHAPTER 2 – MEETING MATERIALS

2.1 INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

As described in Chapter 1, the “open house” portion of the in-person public information meeting provided attendees the opportunity to review project information depicted on display boards and maps of the preliminary alternatives (see Appendix A). The boards were exhibited throughout the meeting, including during the presentation. Brief descriptions of the boards are provided below:

- Welcome to the Public Information Meeting
- Project Area: map depicting the project limits
- Project Overview and Environmental Study: alternatives selection process and the general contents of the NEPA document
- Purpose and Need and Feedback: reasoning for the completion of the project based on travel time and distance, safety, and geometric deficiencies
- Preliminary Alternatives: proposed typical section, preliminary alternatives screening process, four 8' x10' vertical panel maps, and two sets of table-top maps that could be marked with comments
- What to Expect: next steps in the NEPA process and general timeline
- Contact Us: where to obtain project information and submit comments

The PowerPoint presentation (see Appendix B) provided additional information from the display boards. Briefly, the presentation included:

- Meeting overview
- Project overview
- Purpose and need
- Preliminary alternatives
- Project process
- Next steps
- Contact channels

In addition to the display boards and PowerPoint presentation, participants were given a handout (see Appendix C) that contained much of the information noted above as well as information on how to submit feedback or contact the project team; a Spanish version of the handouts was also available (see Appendix C).

2.2 COMMENT FORM

As noted above, a comment form was made available to the in-person meeting attendees as well as being available on the project website and at nine locations in the project area (see Appendix D). In addition to asking for contact information (name, email, mailing address and phone number), the form first asked participants to respond to the following 6 questions:

- What is your interest in the Link 101 project? (Multiple responses can be selected among the choices.)

- Live in the area
- Work in the area
- Drive through the area
- General interest in the project
- Which preliminary alternatives do you believe meet the needs of the project area? Can circle multiple.
 - Alternative A
 - Alternative B
 - Alternative C
 - Alternative D
 - Alternative E
 - Alternative F
 - Alternative G
 - Alternative H
 - Alternative I
 - Alternative J
 - Other
- Is there an alternative that you believe best meets the needs of the project area?
- Which connection location (terminus) along US 50 do you think best meets the needs of the project area?
- For the alternative(s) you circled above, why do you think that alternative(s) best meets the needs of the project area?
- Do you have any suggestions for improving any of the alternatives?

Finally, the form provided space for the commenter to share open-ended comments or additional feedback on the preliminary alternatives.

2.3 AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

All documents associated with PIM #2 were available and continue to be available on the project website (www.Link101Corridor.com). During the in-person public meeting, the handout and comment form were available at the sign-in station. Furthermore, the comment form and overview handout were made available at nine locations around the project area as identified in Table 2.3-1. A sealed box was provided at each location for completed comment forms. The Project Team picked up completed forms at the end of the comment period and they were added to the project record.

The comment period and availability of the materials was shared via email, the project website, project social media channels, and ads placed in the Versailles Republican, the Vevay Reveille Enterprise, and the Switzerland County Democrat. The set of ads promoting the public meeting were published the week of July 26 and the set of ads promoting the comment period were published the week of August 28 (see Appendix E).

Table 2.3-1. Materials Available in the Project Area

LOCATION	ADDRESS
Dillsboro Public Library	10151 Library Ln, Dillsboro, IN 47018
Dillsboro Town Hall	13030 Executive Drive, Dillsboro, IN 47018
Dearborn County Chamber of Commerce	320 Walnut Street, Lawrenceburg, IN 47205
Ohio County Public Library	502 2nd Street, Rising Sun, IN 47040
Rising Sun City Building	200 N Walnut St, Rising Sun, IN 47040
Switzerland County Public Library	205 Ferry St, Vevay, IN 47203
Switzerland County YMCA	1114 West Main St, Vevay, IN, 47043
Versailles Town Hall	128 N Main St, Versailles, IN 47042
Ripley County Indiana Tourism Bureau	220 US 50, Versailles, IN, 47042

CHAPTER 3 – OUTREACH EFFORTS

The project team used a range of outreach and engagement tactics to develop awareness about the project and the public meetings and to encourage participation from a wide range of stakeholders.

The project team contacted organizations, elected officials, media outlets, residents, and institutions in a variety of ways, including e-mail blasts, flyers, direct emails, postcards, electronic fliers for distribution by stakeholders, and direct calls.

3.1 NOTIFICATIONS

A series of meeting notifications were shared with residents and stakeholders via e-blasts delivered using GovDelivery. Recipients included a distribution list managed by the Seymour district and a project email list created that includes all individuals that have provided email addresses to the project team to date via Public Information Meeting #1, the project website, or individual request. These lists total 3,366 individual email addresses. Social media posts were also created to share how and why to sign up for project updates.

The following notifications (Appendix G) were shared with the lists noted above:

- Meeting Notification (July 19, 2023)
- Meeting Reminder (July 31, 2023)
- Meeting Materials at Area Locations/Comment Period (August 8, 2023)

The same reminders were also shared with elected officials in the area, members of our Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and members of our Environmental Justice (EJ) Working Group. A list of members of the CAC and EJ Working Group can be found in Appendix F.

Postcards were sent via the US Postal Services Every Door Direct Mail service to every mailing address within the project area, a total of 13,250 addresses. A copy of the postcard is provided in Appendix E.

3.2 WEBSITE

The project website allows the public to sign up electronically for project emails and text alerts as well as provides the opportunity for two-way communication between the public and Project Team. It also serves as a clearinghouse for timely information updates about the NEPA process and related project activities. The site provides a public facing presence that clearly identifies project scope, intent, and progress. It also serves as a primary point of access for the public or other stakeholders to view and submit feedback or questions on informational materials. The site has been operational since January 2023 and has been widely publicized as a primary source of project information.

A notice regarding PIM #2 was posted on the website's News page corresponding with the dates above. As described in Section 2.3, all meeting documents, including the comment form, were uploaded to the website's Project Documents page on the day of the first meeting, August 2,

2023. A recording of the virtual meeting was posted August 9, 2023, the day after the virtual meeting. A banner was also added to the homepage of the project website to make all meeting materials easy for visitors to find.

3.3 SOCIAL MEDIA

Project-specific social media channels ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)) were used to share 23 social media posts leading up to the public information meetings and during the comment period to share information about the meetings, meeting materials, the comment period, and where meeting materials could be found in the project area. The three Facebook posts promoting the two in-person and one virtual public information meetings had over 13,000 impressions; the three Facebook posts on the day of the public information meetings accrued just over 8,500 impressions; and the 17 Facebook posts over the course of the comment period accrued 25,000 impressions.

3.4 OUTREACH TO COMMUNITIES WITH ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONCERNS AND UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Federal regulations and policies require that projects such as Link 101 take steps to engage with and account for underserved communities that may have barriers to participation in the decision-making process or may be impacted differently than the population at-large. Reaching these communities is a priority and is especially important as transportation needs and possible solutions are identified as part of this project. Underserved communities are often underrepresented, and as such, it is important that the Project Team engage these communities, residents, motorists, businesses, resource agencies, and others to identify issues and long-term solutions for the project area.

Underserved communities include:

- Communities with environmental justice (EJ) concerns: minority and low-income populations, Tribal Nations, and individuals with disabilities, and
- Other underserved communities, including persons with limited English proficiency (LEP); persons with disabilities; households with limited vehicle access; households with limited internet access; Amish and/or Mennonite communities; and federally subsidized communities.

Several tools and tactics were used to help ensure wide and equitable outreach over the course of the public meeting advertisement period and for the duration of the comment period, including:

- Asking for feedback from communities with EJ concerns and other underserved communities at all public outreach points (the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), EJ Working Group, and Public Information meetings);

- Identifying and communicating with outreach ambassadors to routinely share project information;
- Targeted and direct outreach to several Amish communities identified in the project area through 10 in-person meetings;
- Hosting five mobile office hours in the project area (Dillsboro Public Library, Switzerland County YMCA) during the comment period, in addition to weekly project office hours; and
- Postcards send to 13,250 homes through Every Door Direct Mail (to help reach those with limited internet access).

CHAPTER 4 – COMMENTS

This section provides a summary of the input received from the public during the PIM #2 comment period.

4.1 COMMENTS RECEIVED

The comments received by September 8, 2023, following PIM #2, consisted of completed comment forms, emails, and verbal feedback received at the project office, at the mobile office hours, and at the listening session at the end of each public meeting. In total, 1,031 comments were received during the comment period, via the following methods:

- 618 comment forms,
- 291 emails,
- 8 phone calls,
- 22 visitors to the project office,
- 34 visitors to the mobile office hours, and
- 58 people offered verbal comments at the public meeting listening sessions.

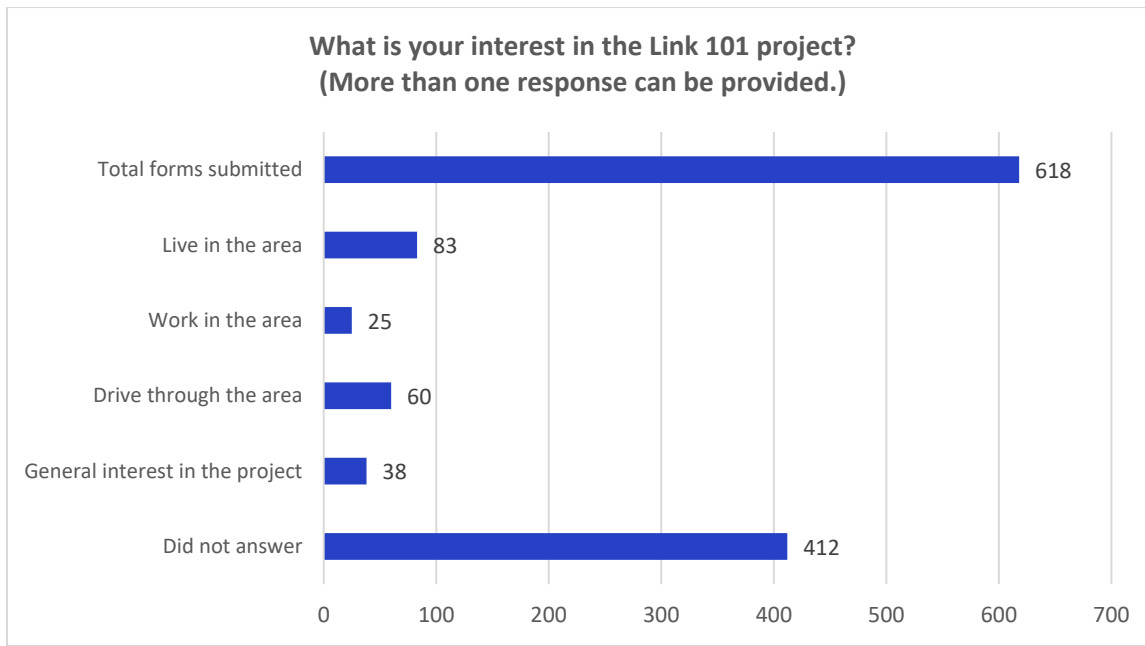
All comments were compiled and included in this summary. Copies of the comment forms and emails, and documented verbal comments are provided in Appendix H. NOTE: Personal contact information has been redacted from all materials. Transcriptions of the public meeting listening sessions are provided in Appendix I.

Comment Form Demographics

Approximately 99% of commenters provided location information (address and/or city) along with their comments, indicating that 86% of comments came from one of the four counties within the project area.

The first question on the comment form asked about the individual's interest in the project. As shown in Figure 4.1-1, about 33% of the 618 comment forms provided a response to that question. Of those, 83 (40%) shared that they live in the project area, while 60 (29%) said they drive through the area.

FIGURE 4.1-1



4.2 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

The following sections outline the themes expressed through all comment sources (comment forms, emails, in-person conversations, etc.).

A large majority of individuals engaging with the project have expressed opposition to the project in one way or another. Of the 1,031 total commenters, 92% expressed opposition to the Link 101 project with specific opposition to any new terrain highway built between the Markland Dam and US 50. This includes all commenters that expressed a preference for the No Build alternative or indicated that a new or upgraded roadway was not needed.

No Build / No Need for the Project

Eighty-five percent of commenters stated that residents in the project area do not find the needs outlined in the draft purpose and need document to be adequate reasons for construction of a new road between the Markland Dam and US 50. Commenters noted that reducing travel time and distance are not a priority and find the existing roads to be adequate for local connectivity and for connection to the major roadways in the region, such as I-74 and I-71.

Acquisition of Residential Property and Farmland

Twenty-eight percent of commenters noted that the acquisition of farmland and residential property and the subsequent roadway construction would adversely impact residents' property valuation, either directly by requiring right-of-way from farms, or indirectly, through increased traffic, including freight movements; induced development of commercial businesses and residences; and increased air and noise pollution. Others contended that the loss of farmland would also have economic impacts on the local communities within the project area. Some also

noted the multi-generational ownership of farm, homestead, or residential land and shared that the project would impact their ability to pass it on to the next generation.

Environmental Impacts

Preserving the natural landscape and environmental resources in the project area was also a priority for 17% of commenters who saw the region's forests, wetlands, riverside zones, and wildlife habitats as important areas to the health and well-being of the residents in the area. Others highlighted the importance of avoiding historical properties, including burial sites, and protecting endangered species located within the project area.

Rural Lifestyle

Thirteen percent of commenters stated that the project would adversely affect the region's rural character and lifestyle. Several commenters noted that they chose to live in the project area because of the current environment, including woodlands and other natural resources. They accept that the amenities of urban life are not available to them and do not mind the winding roads in the project area that result in longer travel times. Commenters accept this as part of living a rural lifestyle and even see this slower pace as a quality-of-life improvement they wish to maintain.

Improvement of Existing Roadways

While a majority of the commenters opposed the creation of new terrain highway to connect US 50 and Markland Dam, 12% of them preferred that project funding be directed towards improving, fixing, or repairing existing roads and bridges in the project area. Both among commenters who oppose and who support the overall project, the need to address flooding, slippages, and terrain in the project area was apparent. Commenters called out State Road 262, State Road 156, and State Road 56 as areas of concern for safety.

Increase in Traffic

Additionally, 10% of commenters voiced their concern regarding the increase in freight movement and overall traffic through the project area, with several believing that the project would not benefit local populations and instead would create additional strain on local infrastructure and emergency services, as well as adversely affecting safety and noise levels in the area.

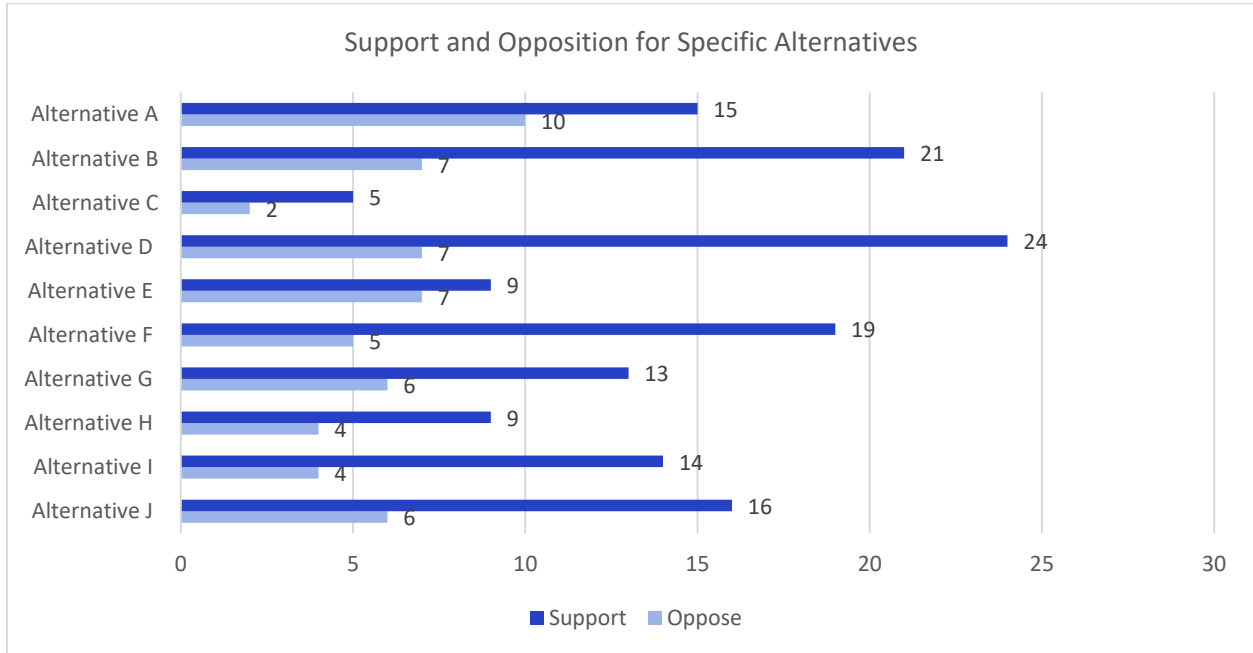
4.3 PREFERENCES AMONG THE BUILD ALTERNATIVES

While the majority of comments opposed the project or preferred the No Build alternative, several commenters expressed preferences for or against specific alternatives.

Data from the comment forms and all other forms of received feedback was used to synthesize the overall support for specific preliminary alternatives. Support for each preliminary alternative is shown in Figure 4.3-1, showing that Alternative D received the largest number of supportive comments. In addition, a large number of comments both in support and in opposition to the

project suggested either the use of Route 129 as an alternative in some form or the need to maintain and improve Route 129.

FIGURE 4.3-1



Commenters also provided more detailed feedback on specific elements of each preliminary alternative, which is summarized in Figure 4.3-2.

FIGURE 4.3-2

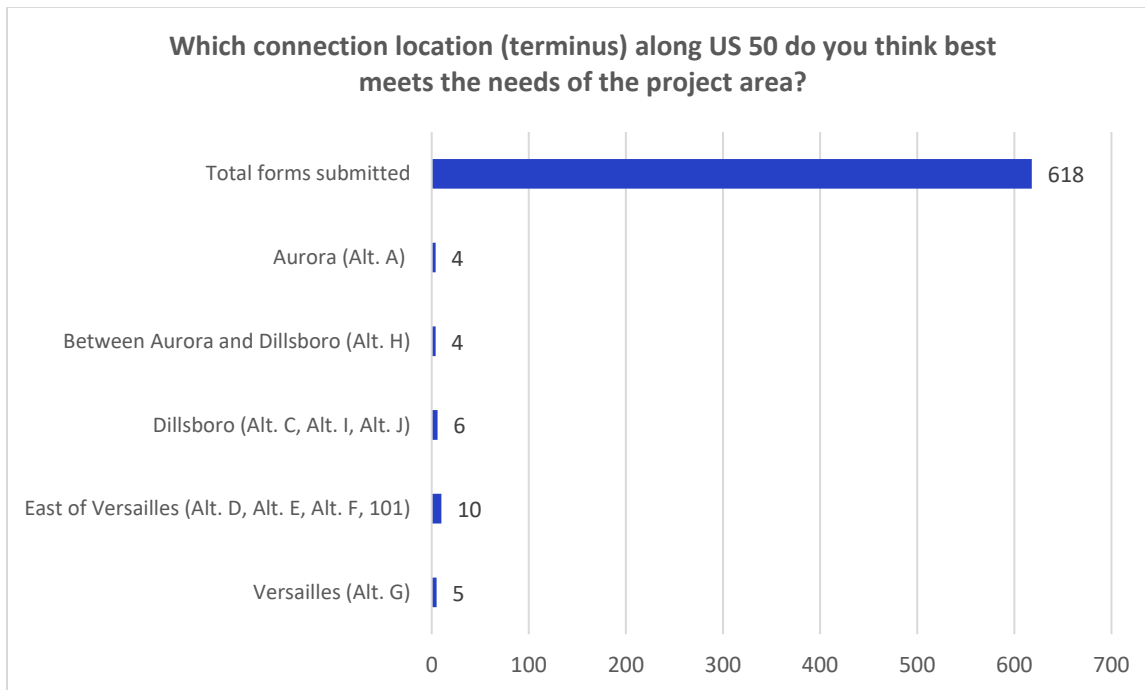
	SUPPORTIVE OF ALTERNATIVE	NOT SUPPORTIVE OF ALTERNATIVE
Alternative A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would provide improved travel to commercial and medical destinations - Would limit noise and land disturbance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would negatively affect Aurora by increasing traffic in an already congested area, impacting the historic district and small-town feel
Alternative B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would avoid existing areas that are prone to slippages and flooding - Would connect to US 50 just east of Dillsboro, which could create positive economic development opportunities - Would keep the roadway/traffic off of the existing SR 56 in Aberdeen and East Enterprise where widening may be difficult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No specific comments provided
Alternative C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would make use of existing roadways where possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No specific comments provided
Alternative D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would provide the most direct route while avoiding existing roads, residences, and towns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would require long bridges a Laughrey Creek and Baum Hollow, adding to the cost

Alternative E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would mostly use existing roads and right-of-way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would be difficult to widen SR 156 - Would not address existing issues with SR 262 - Would increase truck traffic in Vevay and on portions of SR 129 that are prone to slides
Alternative F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would reduce traffic, including trucks, in Vevay - Would provide more direct connection between Markland Dam and SR 129 - Would avoid impacts to Laughery Creek valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not address existing issues with SR 262
Alternative G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would make use of existing roadways where possible and avoid crossing Laughery Creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would be difficult to widen SR 156 - Would not address existing issues with SR 262 - Would increase truck traffic in Vevay and on portions of SR 129 that are prone to slides
Alternative H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would help to improve current traffic volume and keep trucks off local roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would need a 25' bridge that could add to the cost of the project
Alternative I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would mostly use existing roads and right of way - Would provide a safe way to get from Ohio County to Dearborn County when Cole Lane is flooded - Would travel through many undeveloped areas and present long-term growth and economic development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would have to address large gullies and other terrain challenges
Alternative J	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would mostly use existing roads and right-of-way - Would travel through many undeveloped areas and present long-term growth and economic development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would have to address large gullies and other terrain challenges

4.4 US 50 TERMINUS PREFERENCES

The comment form included a question regarding preferences for where a new SR 101 would connect to US 50. As shown in Figure 4.3-1, of the 31 responses to this question, opinions were dispersed along the corridor, with a slight preference for connecting either in Dillsboro or between Dillsboro and Versailles.

FIGURE 4.3-1



4.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL OR MODIFIED ALTERNATIVES

In addition to the proposed preliminary alternatives, commenters also provided suggestions for additional or modified alternatives. Other hybrid or modified alternatives included the following:

- Follow Alternative B from Markland Dam to Aberdeen, then follow Alternative H to US 50
- Follow Alternative I from Markland Dam to Aberdeen, then follow Alternative B up to where Alternative I and B intersect near Laughery Creek. Continue from this point using Alternative I to Route 262 / US 50 terminus in Dillsboro.
- Follow Alternative I north until it intersects with Alt J and then continue to Dillsboro terminus using Alternative J
- Combine Alternative A with Alternative H at their closest point
- A hybrid of D, B, I, and / or J
- A new bridge from the southern terminus of 129 to KY 42

Additional Comments

A portion of commenters addressed concerns about flooding, slippages, and terrain issues in the project area. Comments addressing needs in specific locations included the following:

- Fixing slides and slippages on Route 262, Route 156, and Route 129
- Addressing dangerous winter conditions on Route 262
- Limiting trucks from taking Route 262 due to the dangerous curves
- Widening Route 156

- Adding extra shoulder width on Route 156
- Addressing the flooding on Route 56 south of Aurora
- Raising the Cole Lane approach to the Hartford Bridge to address flooding
- Addressing dangerous terrain and winter conditions on Thuermer Hollow off US 56
- Reinforcing Markland Pike due to heavy rains

Another portion of the commenters noted interest in a US 50 bypass around the Lawrenceburg/Glendale/Aurora area. This work is currently outside of the bounds of the Link 101 project area and is not considered in the project's draft purpose and need document.