

## ProPEL / Southeast Neighborhood / Letter

Mr. Tim Miller  
ProPEL Indy / HNTB

November 7, 2023

Dear Mr. Miller and the ProPEL Team:

We represent the leadership and residents of the four neighborhood associations in the southeast corner of the Inner Loop that are divided by the South Split Interchange: Fountain Square, Bates-Hendricks, North Square and Fletcher Place.

We are writing and directly appealing to the ProPEL Indy leadership to intercede and uphold the stated purposes and boundary guidelines of your study. We are specifically pointing to the following conflict of purposes and intent.

\* The Morris/Prospect Bridge is clearly a part of ProPEL Indy (whose boundary goes even farther south on I-65 to about the Shelby Street overpass) as we have viewed your study maps in person at your presentations and on your website and social media pages.

\* I-65 SAFE is predicated by a commitment to ***“not restrict or impede work that is a part of ProPEL Indy.”***

I-65 SAFE has from the beginning stated (*everywhere – publicly, IndyStar, website*) that it would only be adding a 4<sup>th</sup> travel lane to the corridor and mostly by utilizing the interior shoulder space. Any widening of the roadway was designated for the lower portion of the corridor below Keystone Avenue.

However, one year ago (November 1, 2022) and only very recently on their website, I-65 SAFE indicated they were adding a 5<sup>th</sup> Lane from Raymond Street north over the Morris/Prospect bridge and into the South Split. This will widen the Morris/Prospect bridge and overpass by 12-to-24 feet (*also Pleasant Run and Naomi St.*) and alter the current bridge (*precluding changing it*) for 12-to-20 years (as reported by INDOT/Parsons, CAC Meeting, August 22, 2022).

The surrounding South Split neighborhood communities want the NB I-65 and WB I-70 overpasses to go **underneath** the Morris/Prospect bridge, just as the southbound lanes do. We want a safer, surface street path, a host of multi-modal safety (bicycle/pedestrian) improvements combined with traffic redirection and traffic calming (*potentially multi-jurisdictional*), all setting the stage for broader connectivity and development **over** the interstate roadway.

This is what our communities need as an outcome of ProPEL Indy! This is what our communities and our residents across the greater Southside want to speak for, to engage and envision **with you** as participants in the ProPEL Indy over the course of these two years.

We do not expect to have this opportunity, offered to us in ProPEL Indy, restricted, impeded or completely denied to us by I-65 SAFE and this harmful and unnecessary expansion and widening of the I-65 corridor through our neighborhoods.

We are familiar with and cite the many positions and proposals within Rethink Coalition's excellent report on the I-65 SAFE Project. We have endorsed them and we support them.

The Morris/Prospect Street bridge completely divides the historic Fountain Square and Bates-Hendricks neighborhoods, and further isolates the bifurcated South Split communities from the greater southside and downtown center of Indianapolis.

Thank you for all of your work, you and your team, to engage all communities to build a smarter and brighter future for Indianapolis and Central Indiana. We continue to be bold and collaborative partners with INDOT, I-65 SAFE and ProPEL.

We want to build together better neighborhoods and quality of life here. We need your help in stopping the 5<sup>th</sup> Lane and the widening of the Morris/Prospect bridge.

SIGNED,

Gina Christofaro (V.P.)  
Nick Zimmerman (Board)  
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