



Resource Agency, Stakeholder & Public Involvement Summary #2

12/6/2024



Prepared By:



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Study Overview

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is initiating ProPEL Indy, a Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study on I-65 and I-70 within I-465 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Analysis and planning activities will be conducted in coordination with resource agencies, stakeholders, and the public. Transportation planning documents from the PEL study will shape and inform subsequent project-specific environmental reviews conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

ProPEL Indy is a unique opportunity for Indianapolis residents to envision the future of the urban interstates. This process will inform the next 20 years of investment in our interstates as INDOT identifies ways to modernize these roads and improve the region's overall mobility, equity, economic opportunity, and quality of life. The goal of ProPEL Indy is to identify transportation needs and community goals along I-65 and I-70 inside I-465. ProPEL Indy will develop a set of alternatives to be considered that meet those transportation needs and community goals. This will set the long-term vision for investment in the interstates.

The ProPEL Indy study limits include approximately 11 miles of I-65, 14 miles of I-70, and one mile where I-65 and I-70 overlap. The study limits are broken into the following "spokes" as an organizational tool:

- **65 Spoke** – From the I-465/I-65 interchange on the northwest side to the 21st Street interchange.
- **65/70 Downtown Spoke** – I-65 from the 21st Street interchange south to Alabama Street (west end of North Split project), I-65/I-70 from Washington Street (south end of North Split project) south to the South Split interchange, and I-70 from just west of the West Street interchange east to the South Split interchange.
- **70 West (W) Spoke** – From the I-465/I-70 interchange on the west side to just west of the West Street interchange.
- **70 East (E) Spoke** – From just west of the Keystone Avenue/Rural Street interchange (east end of North Split project) to the I-465/I-70 interchange on the east side.

The study limits extend slightly beyond I-465 and the I-65/I-70 South Split interchange to consider the potential influence of those system interchanges. Two active federally funded projects under construction (I-65/I-70 North Split) or in NEPA (I-65 Safety and Efficiency) are largely excluded from the study limits. ProPEL Indy's study area does overlap with the I-65 Safety and Efficiency project on the southeast side of Indianapolis. The overlap with I-65 Safety and Efficiency extends from north of Fletcher Avenue on I-65/I-70 to the South Split interchange, ending south of Morris Street along I-65. The remainder of the I-65 Safety and Efficiency project area, which extends south on I-65 to I-465, is excluded from the study limits.

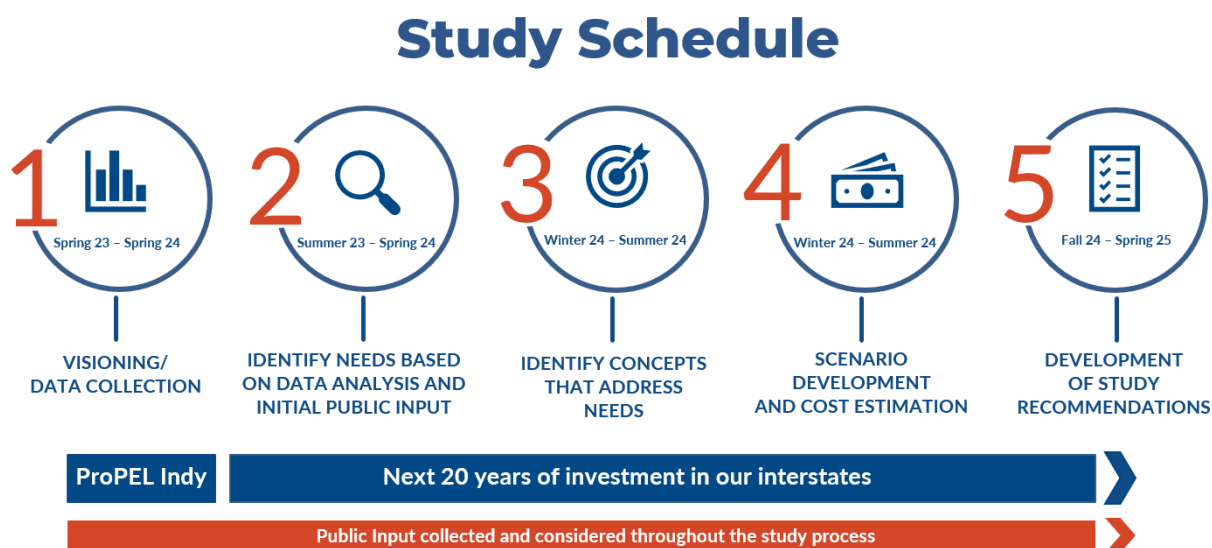
This report provides a summary of the information provided and feedback collected at 11 stakeholder meetings, four community events, four neighborhood office hours, four in-person Community Conversations, one virtual meeting, two Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings, and additional public feedback collected February 1 through June 30, 2024. It also includes the information presented and feedback received from additional stakeholder meetings, as well as a resource agency meeting. Public feedback will continue throughout the remaining phases: Universe of Concepts Analysis and Screening; Alternative Scenario Analysis and Screening; and Study Report and Recommendations.

Purpose of Public Engagement

Public and stakeholder feedback is vital to the success of the study. The ProPEL Indy study team is gathering public feedback throughout the planning process. The second round of public engagement occurred from May 20 to June 30, 2024, as part of the Purpose and Need Phase of the ProPEL Indy study. The purpose of the engagement was to:

- Report on insights gained from the public during the Visioning Phase.
- Share additional information gathered from the study team’s collection and analysis of data.
- Provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes) identified in the study area.
- Solicit input on the Draft Purpose and Need and community goals developed by the study team.

Figure 1: ProPEL Indy Schedule



Outreach and Advertisement

The study team conducted stakeholder and public outreach to raise awareness of the ProPEL Indy study; encourage participation; report on insights gained from the study’s Visioning Phase; provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs), desired outcomes (purposes), and community goals identified in the study area; and solicit feedback during the public comment period. Outreach efforts included public information meetings, community outreach events, neighborhood office hours, and stakeholder meetings. **Table 1** contains a summary of these efforts.

Table 1: ProPEL Indy Outreach Efforts

Outreach Efforts		Date(s)
Website Information	ProPELIndy.com	5/20/2024
Purpose and Need Press Release (Appendix A)	INDOT media list	5/20/2024
PIM Press release (Appendix B)	INDOT media list	6/4/2024
Social media posts (Appendix C)	Facebook, Instagram & LinkedIn posts with information about Purpose and Need release and comment period	5/20/2024 6/10/2024 6/27/2024

Outreach Efforts		Date(s)
	Facebook, Instagram & LinkedIn with public meeting information	6/4/2024 6/11/2024 6/13/2024 6/18/2024 6/26/2024
Stakeholder email blasts and newsletters (Appendix D)	63% open rate and 409 recipients	2/20/2024
	56% open rate and 412 recipients	3/19/2024
	56% open rate and 411 recipients	4/18/2024
	69% open rate and 414 recipients	5/20/2024
	67% open rate and 413 recipients	6/4/2024
	59% open rate and 418 recipients	6/12/2024
	58% open rate and 413 recipients	6/27/2024
Public notice (Appendix E)	Indy Recorder	5/31/2024
	IndyStar	5/24/2024 5/26/2024
Community Conversations	Rhodius Park Family Center	6/11/2024
	Julia M. Carson Government Center	6/13/2024
	Martin University	6/18/2024
	Guion Creek Middle School	6/26/2024
Stakeholder Meetings	Indianapolis Department of Public Works (DPW) Meeting	2/14/2024
	Windsor Park Neighborhood Meeting	4/29/2024
	Bean Creek Neighborhood Meeting	5/9/2024
	Grace Tuxedo Park Neighborhood Meeting	5/13/2024
	Eli Lilly Employees	5/28/2024
	St. Joseph Neighborhood Meeting	6/4/2024
	Indianapolis MPO	6/5/2024
	Near Southside Businesses and Organizations	6/10/2024
	Central Indiana Regional Transit Authority	6/11/2024

Outreach Efforts		Date(s)
	Old Southside Neighborhood Meeting	6/12/2024
	Sheridan Heights Association for Neighborhood Excellence, Audubon Gardens, Keystone-Millersville, Oxford, Arlington Woods Meeting	6/24/2024
Elected Official Briefings	Office of Congressman Andre Carson	4/5/2024
	Councilor Keith Graves	4/24/2024
	Purpose and Need Release Elected Official Briefing	5/20/2024
ReThink I-65/I-70 Coalition	Hybrid meetings	2/15/2024; 4/30/2024; 6/25/2024
Resource Agency Meeting	Resource Agency Meeting #1, Virtual	6/14/2024
Stakeholder Advisory Committees	Equity Committee Meeting, Indianapolis Urban League	4/29/2024
	Meeting #2, Ivy Tech Conference Center	6/3/2024
Neighborhood Office Hours	Switchboard	5/22/2024
	Indianapolis Public Library – Haughville	5/30/2024
	The Coffee Haus at Guggman	6/6/2024
	American Legion Post 64	6/20/2024
Community Events	Haitian Community Festival	4/13/2024
	Earth Day Indiana Festival	6/1/2024
	The Original Farmers Market	6/12/2024
	Patchwork Indy Community Resource Fair	6/22/2024

Stakeholder Meetings

The ProPEL Indy study team identified and met with various stakeholder groups during the Purpose and Need Phase of the study. These groups included neighborhood associations, local agencies, and community organizations. The purposes of these meetings were to provide an overview of the ProPEL Indy study, report on insights gained from the study’s Visioning Phase, provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes), and community goals identified in the study area; preview next steps; solicit feedback during the public comment period; and answer any questions from attendees. See **Table 1** for dates of these outreach efforts.

ReThink I-65/I-70 Coalition Meetings

The ProPEL Indy study team met with the president and CEO of the ReThink I-65/I-70 Coalition on three occasions during the Purpose and Need Phase of the study. In general, the purposes of these meeting were to provide

regular updates about the study process, facilitate coordination with the coalition’s upcoming study within ProPEL Indy’s study limits, and answer questions.

Resource Agency and Tribal Coordination

An invitation letter to ProPEL Indy, a link to the Draft Purpose and Need Report, and a link to the Draft Environmental Constraints Report were emailed to resource agencies on May 20, 2024. The Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, Indianapolis Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), Indy Parks and Recreation, and IDNR Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA) provided comments. The invitation letter and comments received are included in **Appendix F**.

From February 1 to June 30, 2024, one coordination meeting was held with resource agencies. This virtual meeting took place on June 14. The purposes were to provide an overview of the ProPEL Indy study, report on insights gained during the study’s Visioning Phase, provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes) identified in the study area, preview next steps, and solicit input and feedback. Meeting materials and a summary are included in **Appendix F**.

An invitation letter to ProPEL Indy, the Archaeological Cultural Resources Identification Memorandum, a link to the Draft Purpose and Need Report, and a link to the Draft Environmental Constraints Report were emailed to Tribal Nations on May 21, 2024. The Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians provided comments. The invitation letter and comments received are included in **Appendix F**.

Stakeholder Advisory Committees

The ProPEL Indy study team established four Stakeholder Advisory Committees, each representing one of the study’s four pillars: Quality of Life, Economic Growth and Opportunity, Transportation and Mobility, and Equity. Each committee includes representatives from a broad collection of neighborhoods, businesses, and organizations.

On April 29, 2024, the ProPEL Indy study team held a meeting with the study’s Equity Committee. The purpose of this meeting was to recap what was discussed at the Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting in January, continue the discussion as to what Equity looks like for ProPEL Indy, and set the stage for the next Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting in June. Meeting materials and a summary are included in **Appendix G**.

The second Stakeholder Advisory Committees meeting was held on June 3, 2024, at the Ivy Tech Conference Center. This meeting included 31 members from all committees to provide updates on the study, report on insights gained during the Vision & Scoping Phase, share data gathered from engineering and technical assessments, provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes), and community goals identified in the study area, preview next steps, and solicit input and feedback. The study team also encouraged the committee members to assist in raising awareness about the study and its feedback opportunities. Meeting materials and a summary are included in **Appendix H**.

Neighborhood Office Hours and Community Events

During the Purpose and Need Phase, the ProPEL Indy study team began holding Neighborhood Office Hours to build awareness around the study, provide an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to engage with the study team, and receive public comments related to the study and study milestones. From May 20 to June 30, 2024, the study team coordinated and staffed four Neighborhood Office Hours events at a variety of times and locations in the study area. See **Table 1** for dates of these outreach efforts.

In addition, the study team coordinated participation in four community events in the study area. The study team engaged with event attendees to share details about the ProPEL Indy study, provide an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes) identified in the study area, and to encourage feedback and sign-ups for study updates. See **Table 1** for dates of these outreach efforts.

Public Meeting Format

In the Purpose and Need Phase of the ProPEL Indy study, public information meetings were branded Community Conversations. The study team held four in-person meetings:

- June 11, 2024, at Rhodius Park Family Center from 6:30 to 8 p.m.
- June 13, 2024, at Julia M. Carson Government Center from 4 to 6 p.m.
- June 18, 2024, at Martin University from 3 to 5 p.m.
- June 26, 2024, at Guion Creek Middle School from 4 to 6 p.m.

A total of 23 stakeholders attended the in-person meetings during the Purpose and Need Phase. A virtual, on-demand meeting was also available from June 24 to June 30, 2024, and it was attended by 10 stakeholders. All public comments received prior to July 1, 2024, were considered as part of this report.

The format of the meetings was an open house with a presentation (**Appendix I**) from study team members. The open house was held for two hours, with a presentation scheduled for 30 minutes after doors opened. During the presentation, the study team shared an overview of the ProPEL Indy study; reported on insights gained during the study's Visioning Phase; provided an overview of the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes), and community goals identified in the study area; previewed next steps; and solicited input and feedback.

At the in-person meetings, the informational boards and feedback opportunities (**Appendix J** and **Appendix K**) were situated at the back of the meeting room, while the front was dedicated to the presentation portion of the meeting, with chairs in the middle for participants to sit and watch the presentation. The information presented at the meetings was organized into the following stations:

- Welcome/Sign-In
- Station 1: What We Heard
- Station 2: What We Found
 - Bridge and Pavement Conditions
 - Crash Data
 - Roadway Operations
 - Geometric Deficiencies
 - Connectivity
- Station 3: Purpose and Need
 - Feedback exercise: Level of agreement with each of the identified issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes)
- Station 4: Community Goals
 - Feedback exercise: Prioritize community goals
- Station 5: Comment Station

Informational boards included a study overview with a map of the study limits, a summary of public engagement activities and comments thus far, a snapshot of the technical and engineering assessments completed, a list of the identified issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes), and an overview of the community goals defined by the study team.

Two feedback exercises were integrated into the open house. The first asked participants to identify their level of agreement with each of the four identified issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purposes). Of those meeting attendees who participated in this exercise, 45% indicated they either strongly agreed or agreed with all four identified needs, while 92% indicated they either strongly agreed or agreed with three of the identified needs. The second feedback exercise asked attendees to prioritize their top three community goals. The top community goals that were prioritized by meeting attendees who participated in the activity were aligned with two pillars: Quality of Life and Livability, and Transportation and Mobility.

After participants signed in, they were provided with two informational flyers (**Appendix L**): 1) A brief overview of both the transportation issues (needs) and desired outcomes (purpose) identified in the study area, as well as an overview of the community goals defined in the draft Purpose and Need Report. Translated versions of this flyer were also available in languages that included Spanish, Haitian-Creole, and Burmese. 2) A brief description of the study and ways to engage with the study team, including social channels, study website, and a QR code that directed users to the online comment form.

To further provide meeting participants the opportunity to give feedback and ask questions, a QR code was added at the comment station that directed participants to the online comment form in the study’s Public Involvement Management Application (PIMA). PIMA is a virtual platform used to collect, track, and respond to stakeholder feedback throughout the study.

The virtual meeting experience was designed to closely mimic the location-specific and visionary feedback gathering. Virtual attendees navigated through the following experiences at each station:

- Meeting Presentation: A recording of the presentation from the in-person public meeting.
- Study Overview: Information including study limits and study schedule.
- What We Heard: A summary of public engagement and comments received thus far.
- What We Found: A snapshot of the data collected and analyzed by the study team.
- Purpose and Need: A list of the identified issues (needs) and outcomes (purpose). Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of the identified needs.
- Community Goals: An overview of the community goals defined by the study team. Participants were asked to rank their top priorities.
- Comments: A station that solicited comments via the electronic form, as well as prompts to follow the study’s social media channels (Website: ProPELIndy.com; Facebook: @ProPEL Indy; LinkedIn: @ProPEL Indy; Instagram: @ProPEL.Indy) to stay informed and receive updates.

Comment Summary

The study team received more than 200 comments from Community Conversations, community events, stakeholder meetings, and the online comment form during the Purpose and Need Phase. The comments included a variety of ideas, transportation challenges, and community concerns. The study team identified key themes within the content of the comments and aligned them with the study’s four pillars. Key themes from the comments were aligned as follows:

Table 2: Public Comment Key Theme Pillar Alignment

Pillar	Key Themes
Quality of Life and Livability	Community Development: Considerations for overall quality of life and livability, improved walkability, safety, and connectivity.
	Health and Safety: Improve or add lighting, reduce the negative visual, noise, and air pollution impacts from the high volume of traffic, consider impacts of interstates on public health.

	<p>Placemaking & Public Spaces: Improve interstate aesthetics with the addition of landscaping, greenspace, and public art. Improve aesthetics of the interstate to welcome people to Indianapolis, specifically between the airport and I-70.</p>
	<p>Wayfinding & Signage: Improve signage throughout the corridor to provide drivers clear wayfinding, signage for historic neighborhoods or points of interest in downtown.</p>
Economic Growth and Opportunity	<p>Neighborhood Revitalization: Provide better connections for neighborhood vitality, reconnect neighborhoods, and increase multimodal options that support community and business needs.</p>
	<p>New Development Opportunities: Support current development momentum and stimulate redevelopment in underdeveloped areas. Identify opportunities to reconfigure or repurpose surplus right-of-way for development.</p>
	<p>Retail & Commercial Considerations: Support business growth through better connections, improve walkability for residents and visitors, maintain or create appropriate access for commuters, event attendees, emergency needs, etc.</p>
Transportation and Mobility	<p>Connectivity: Restore connectivity to neighborhoods currently divided by the interstate, add or improve sidewalks, walkways, bike crossings along the corridor, consider regional mobility suggestions such as rerouting through traffic to I-465, and/or adding tolls for through traffic downtown.</p>
	<p>Design Alternative / Solution: Recess all or portions of the interstate, building caps over sections to reconnect neighborhoods currently divided by the interstate, remove portions of the interstates within the I-465 loop.</p>
	<p>Lane Management Strategies: Reduce traffic congestion through lane management strategies (such as HOV / Express / Carpool / Freight lanes, etc.), and efficient traffic routing.</p>
	<p>Pedestrian & Bike: Increase walkability and connectivity with the addition or improvement of sidewalks, walkways, bike crossings along the corridor.</p>
	<p>Public Transit: Prioritize the addition of mass transit, such as light rail along the corridor between key locations like downtown and the airport.</p>
	<p>Roadway Design: Make improvements to specific interchanges, add express lanes to reduce the amount of merging required, evaluate number and location of access points along the corridor, make improvements to address congestion concerns and roadway capacity.</p>
	<p>Technology: Consider emerging technologies such as EVs and autonomous vehicles and consider the role technology could play in incident management, speed enforcement, and emergency response.</p>
	<p>Traffic Safety: Improve traffic safety by providing more efficient roadway design (such as by addressing merging issues at specific entry and exit points), better road maintenance, reducing speeds, and more reliable traffic enforcement.</p>
Equity	<p>Climate Resilience & Sustainability: Consider green infrastructure solutions, such as solar powered lights and water reclamation, identify actions to mitigate air, noise, and water pollution, etc.</p>
	<p>Neighborhood Impacts: Consider negative impacts of interstates on local neighborhoods, both when they were constructed and present day. Consider improvements that connect adjacent areas and neighborhoods.</p>
	<p>Public Involvement: Ensure that all stakeholders are engaged in the design and decision-making processes to facilitate the needs of all surrounding organizations, communities, and institutions.</p>
Other	<p>Topics unrelated to purpose and need or options, such as project management, cost considerations, data collection, and schedule.</p>

Figure 2: Summary of Public Comment Key Theme Pillar Alignment

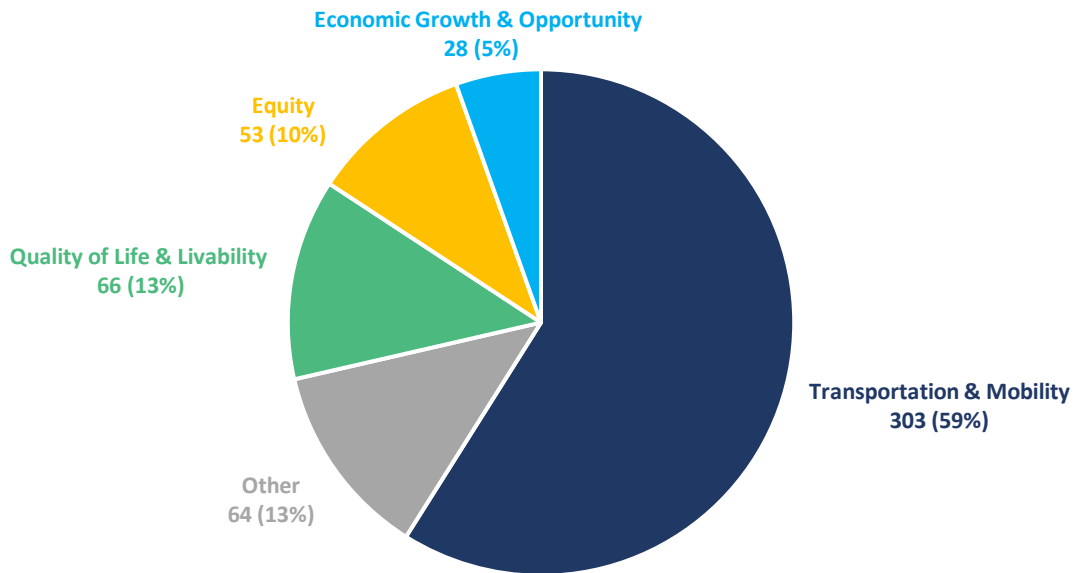
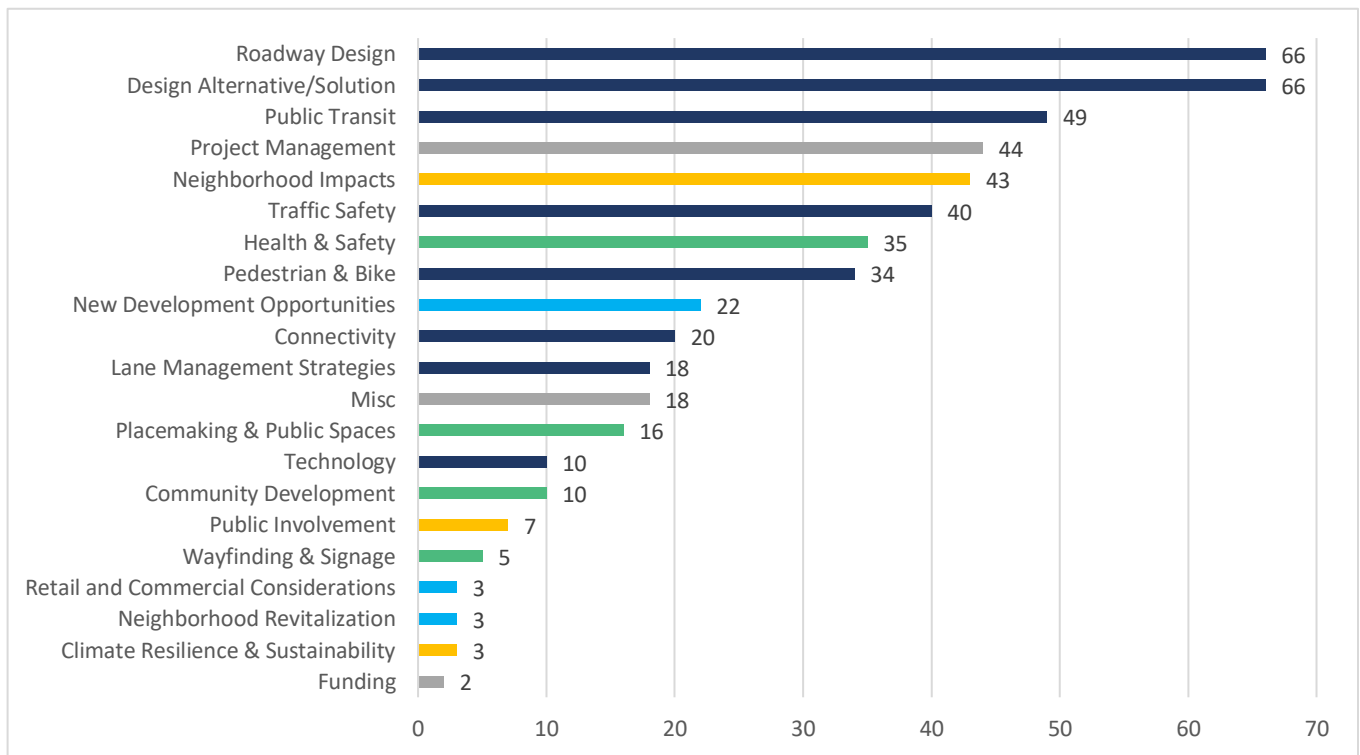
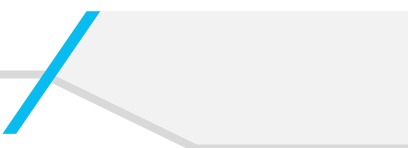


Figure 2: Summary of Public Comment Key Theme Counts





Many of the comments received touched on multiple key themes, therefore the numbers associated with each categorization is greater than the total number of comments received. As shown, the largest percentage of key themes mentioned aligned with the Transportation and Mobility pillar (59%).

The study team will consider public feedback and collected data in the development of the *Universe of Concepts Screening Report* for ProPEL Indy. This report will identify and analyze potential solutions to address the transportation issues in the study area. The *Draft Universe of Concepts Screening Report* will be provided for public, stakeholder, and agency review and comment.

A complete listing of the public comments received, and responses can be found in **Appendix M**.