



# INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

100 North Senate Avenue  
Room N642  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

PHONE: (317) 234-5168

**Eric Holcomb, Governor**  
**Joe McGuinness, Commissioner**

April 22, 2019

This letter was sent to the listed parties.

RE: Des. No. 1592338  
LaPorte County North-South Connector  
US 35 to State Road (SR) 39  
City of LaPorte, LaPorte County, Indiana

Dear Consulting Party (see attached list),

The LaPorte County Commissioners, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration and administrative oversight from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), propose to proceed with a transportation corridor project (Des. No. 1592338). Lochmueller Group is under contract with the LaPorte County Commissioners to advance the environmental documentation for the referenced project.

This letter is part of the early coordination phase of the environmental review process requesting comments associated with this project. We are requesting comments from your area of expertise regarding any possible environmental effects associated with this project. Please use the above Des. Number and project description in your reply and your comments will be incorporated into the formal environmental study.

The proposed undertaking is in north-central LaPorte County, on the east side of the City of LaPorte between US 35 to the south and SR 39 to the north in LaPorte County, Indiana. It is within Center, Kankakee, Pleasant, and Scipio Townships, Springville and LaPorte East USGS Topographic Quadrangles, in Sections 13, 14, 23, 24 and 25, Township 37 North, Range 3 West; Sections 18, 19, 30, 31 and 32, Township 37 North, Range 2 West; and Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8, Township 36 North, Range 2 West.

Existing Severs Road (also identified as W CR 200 N) is a continuous east-west route that extends between SR 39 to Fall Road, and is functionally classified as a major collector. The typical section consists of two 12-foot travel lanes (one in each direction). The posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour (mph).

Existing W CR 300 N is a west-east route that extends from SR 39 to N CR 100 W, and is functionally classified as a local road. The typical section of W CR 300 N consists of two 11-foot travel lanes (one in each direction). The posted speed limit along W CR 300 N is 30 mph.

Existing Boyd Boulevard is a north-south route that extends from SR 2 to US 35, and is functionally classified as a minor arterial road. The typical section of Boyd Boulevard consists of two 12-foot travel lanes (one in each direction) with an 11-foot western shoulder and an 8-foot eastern shoulder. The posted speed limit along Boyd Boulevard is 30 mph.

Land use within the general project area consists of suburban commercial, residential, agricultural, and forested areas.

### ***Purpose and Need***

The need for the project is evidenced by the following:

- *Congestion in the City of La Porte:* La Porte's major north-south and east-west arteries are severely impaired because they function as both the City's main streets and major throughways.
- *Frequency of crashes:* according to the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)'s 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan and its Update Companion, four of the 11 roads with the highest crash rates in LaPorte County were in the City of La Porte. These were two sections of US 35, SR 2, and Lincoln Highway.
- *Truck traffic in the City of La Porte:* future traffic projections anticipate a level of service (LOS) of E or F (unstable or forced flow) at key intersections in the central business district in the City of La Porte, particularly due to truck traffic according to the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan. These key intersections include:
  - Fail Road from US 20 to SR 2 (3.34 miles) – LOS E
  - SR 2 from US 421 to SR 39 (9.08 miles) – LOS E
  - SR 2 from 6th Avenue to Boston Street (1.71 miles) – LOS F
  - SR 39 from 18th Street to CR 400 S (3 miles) – LOS E
  - US 35 from US 20 to Severs Road (4.84 miles) – LOS E
- *Revitalization of La Porte's urban center:* The 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan identifies the need to develop central City of La Porte as a livable center which promotes walkability.

The purpose of the La Porte North-South Connector project is to:

- Reduce forecasted congestion (especially due to truck traffic) in the City of La Porte's central business district,
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian safety through crash reduction,
- Provide a truck route that avoids downtown La Porte,
- Improve development opportunities in central La Porte as a livable center through diversion of traffic outside the downtown area.

The project's purpose and need will be refined as the project advances.

### ***Proposed Project***

The proposed project involves the evaluation of alternatives intended for a new roadway between US 35 on the south side of the City of La Porte to SR 39 on the north side. The proposed project has three northern preliminary alternatives. All of the northern alternatives begin at SR 2, approximately 0.29 mile east of Boyd Boulevard and terminate at SR 39 on the north side of La Porte. A description of the northern corridors is provided below.

*Severs Road Alternative:* This alternative would involve upgrading and widening of the existing roadway facilities from the intersection of SR 39 and Severs Road, east towards CR 200 N, 0.22 mile east of Genesis Drive, and then the alternative curves southeast to connect with the southern alternatives at SR 2. The estimated length of the Severs Road Alternative is approximately 2.76 miles.

*Alternative C1:* This alternative would involve upgrading and widening of the existing roadway facilities from the intersection of SR 39 and CR 300 N, east to 0.36 mile west of CR 100 W. The alternative would then

involve new roadway construction east to CR 50 W, and then the alternative curves southeast and continues south to connect with the southern alternatives at SR 2. The estimated length of the C1 Alternative is approximately 3.68 miles.

*Alternative C2:* This alternative would involve new construction starting at SR 39, 0.22 mile south of I-90, east to CR 50 W, 0.22 mile north of CR 350 N. The alternative would then curve southeast and continue south to connect with the southern alternatives at SR 2. The estimated length of the C2 Alternative is approximately 4.45 miles.

The proposed project has five southern preliminary alternatives. All of the southern alternatives would begin at US 35 on the south side of La Porte and terminate at SR 2. The southern alternatives are as follows:

*Alternative A1:* This alternative would involve new construction starting at SR 2, 0.24 mile east of Boyd Boulevard. The new construction will extend southwest for 1 mile and connect with the existing Boyd Boulevard, 0.89 mile southeast of SR 2. This alternative would involve improvements to Boyd Boulevard until it connects with US 35. The estimated length of the A1 Alternative is 3.43 miles.

*Alternative A2:* This alternative would involve new construction starting at SR 2, 0.29 mile east of Boyd Boulevard. The new construction would extend southeast for 1.05 miles and then begin to curve southwest 0.1 mile south of Division Road. The new construction would extend southwest for 1.4 miles and connect with the existing Boyd Boulevard at the Stevens Road intersection. This alternative would involve improvements of Boyd Boulevard until it connects with US 35. The estimated length of the A2 Alternative is 3.81 miles.

*Alternative A3:* This alternative would involve new construction starting at SR 2, 0.29 mile east of Boyd Boulevard. The new construction would extend southeast for 0.9 mile and then begin to curve south, 0.3 mile north of Division Road. The new construction would extend 1.16 miles south and then begin to curve southwest, 0.25 mile southwest of SR 4. The new construction would extend southwest to connect with US 35, 0.1 mile north of Boyd Boulevard. The estimated length of the A3 Alternative is 3.65 miles.

*Alternative A2/A4:* This alternative would involve new construction starting at SR 2, 0.24 mile east of Boyd Boulevard. The new construction would extend southeast for 1.66 miles and then begin to curve southwest at Division Road. The new construction would extend southwest for 2.37 miles until it connects with US 35. The estimated length of the A2/A4 Alternative is 4.03 miles.

*Alternative A4:* This alternative would involve new construction starting at SR 2, 0.29 mile east of Boyd Boulevard. The new construction will extend southeast for 1.6 miles and then begin to curve southwest, 0.19 mile east of CR 150 E. The new construction will extend southwest for 1.7 miles and then begin to curve west, 0.06 mile south of Stevens Road. The project will then extend west until it connects to US 35, 0.37 mile south of Boyd Boulevard. The estimated length of the A4 Alternative is 4.99 miles.

The rural typical section for all of the project alternatives consists of four 12-foot lanes (two in each direction), two 10-foot outer shoulders, two 4-foot inner shoulders, and a 60-foot median. The urban typical section for all of the project alternatives consists of four 12-foot lanes (two in each direction) and one 12-foot turn lane. Underdrains and roadside drainage ditches will be constructed on either side of the roadway for both the urban and rural typical sections.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic and archaeological properties. In accordance with 36 CFR 800.2 (c), you are hereby requested to be a consulting party to participate in the Section 106 process. Entities that have been

invited to participate in the Section 106 consultation process for this project are identified in the attached list. Per 36 CFR 800.3(f), we hereby request that the Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) notify this office if the SHPO staff is aware of any other parties that may be entitled to be consulting parties or should be contacted as potential consulting parties for the project.

The Section 106 process involves efforts to identify historic properties potentially affected by the undertaking, assess its effects and seek ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties. For more information regarding the protection of historic resources, please see the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's guide: *Protecting Historic Properties: A Citizen's Guide to Section 106 Review* available online at <https://www.achp.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017-01/CitizenGuide.pdf>.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) is the area in which the proposed project may cause alterations in the character or use of historic resources. At this time, no cultural resource investigations have occurred; however, the results of cultural resource identification and evaluation efforts, both above-ground and archaeological, will be forthcoming. Consulting parties will receive notification when these reports are completed.

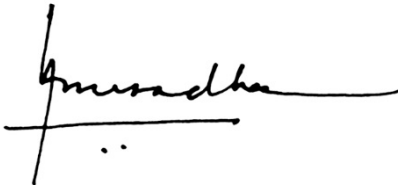
Please review the information and comment within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt. If you indicate that you do not desire to be a consulting party, or if you do not respond, you will not be included on the list of consulting parties for this project. If we do not receive your response in the time allotted, the project will proceed consistent with the proposed design and you will not receive further information about the project unless the design changes.

For questions concerning specific project details, you may contact Hannah Blad of Lochmueller Group at 317.334.6826 or [hblad@lochgroup.com](mailto:hblad@lochgroup.com). All future responses regarding the proposed project should be forwarded to Lochmueller Group at the following address:

Hannah Blad  
Historian/Section 106 Specialist  
Lochmueller Group  
3502 Woodview Trace, Suite 150  
Indianapolis, IN 46268  
[hblad@lochgroup.com](mailto:hblad@lochgroup.com)

Tribal contacts may contact Shaun Miller at [smiller@indot.in.gov](mailto:smiller@indot.in.gov) or 317-233-6795 or Michelle Allen at FHWA at [michelle.allen@dot.gov](mailto:michelle.allen@dot.gov) or 317-226-7344.

Sincerely,



Anuradha V. Kumar, Manager  
Cultural Resources Office  
Environmental Services



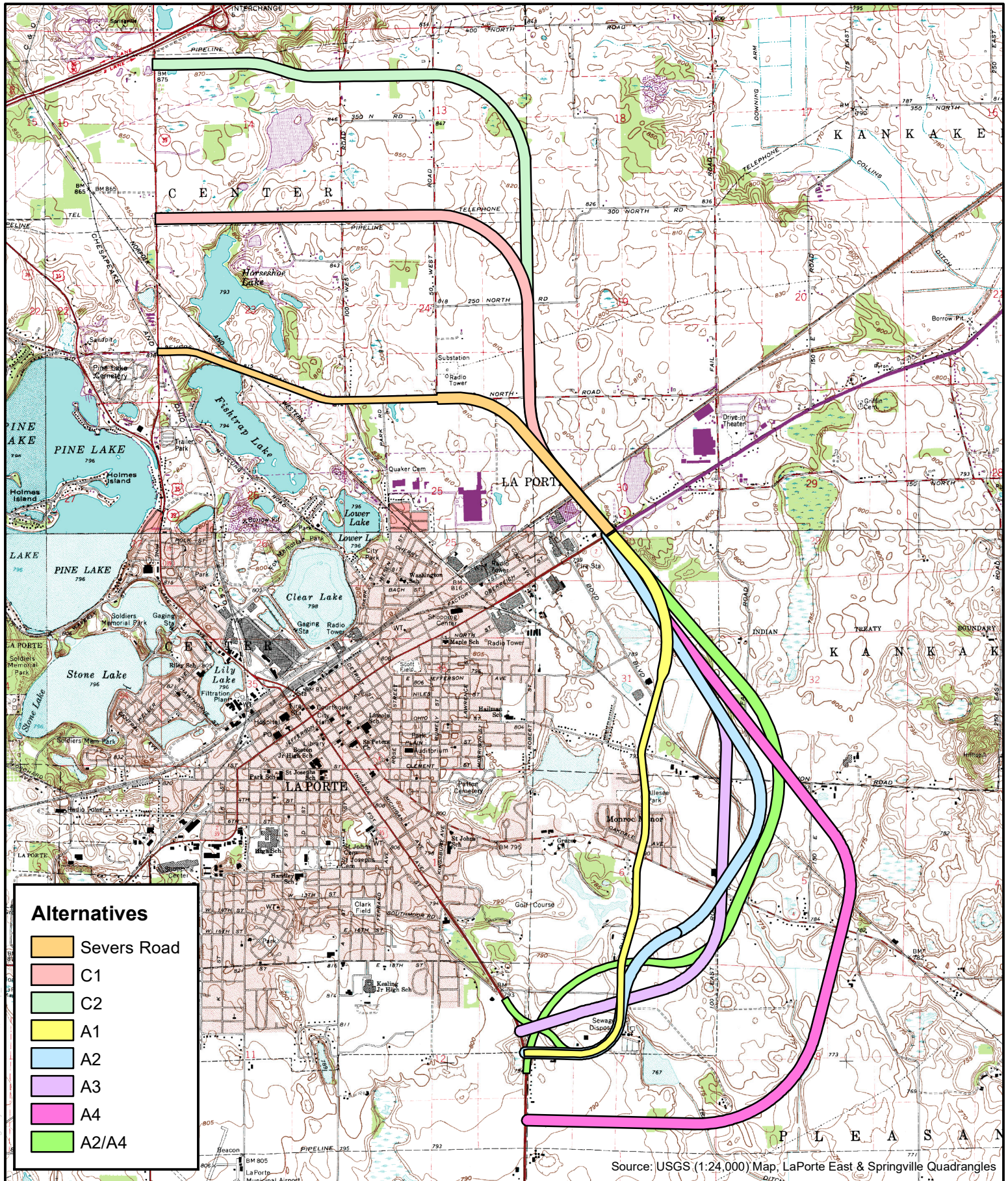
Enclosures:

- USGS Topographic Map
- Aerial Maps

Distribution List:

- State Historic Preservation Officer
- Indiana Landmarks, Northern Regional Office
- Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)
- LaPorte County Commissioners
- LaPorte County Highway Superintendent
- LaPorte Historic Review Board
- People Engaged in Preservation
- Indiana Lincoln Highway Association, Inc.
- LaPorte County Historian
- LaPorte County Historical Society
- Wynkoop-Taylor-Swanson-Sharp Farmstead Owner
- Logan-Taylor House Owner
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Forest County Potawatomi Community
- Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
- Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians





**Alternatives**

- Severs Road
- C1
- C2
- A1
- A2
- A3
- A4
- A2/A4

Source: USGS (1:24,000) Map, LaPorte East & Springville Quadrangles




**LOCHMUELLER GROUP**

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**USGS Topographic Map**  
 Des. No. 1592338  
 Early Coordination

0      0.4      0.8  
 Miles

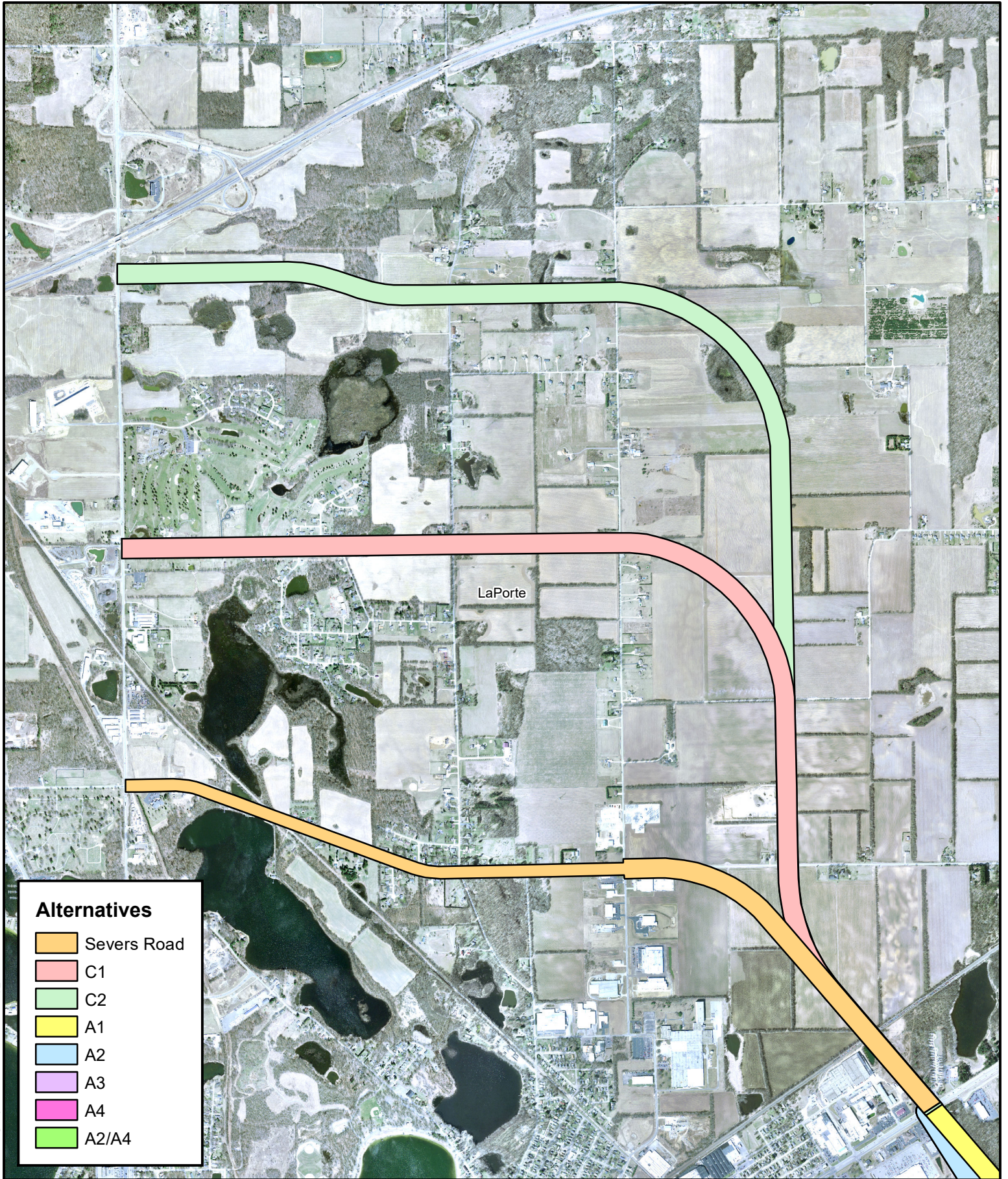


County: LaPorte  
 Township: Center, Kankakee, Scipio & Pleasant  
 State: Indiana

LaPorte North-South Connector  
 US 35 to SR 39  
 Created: 3/21/2019, SBeaupre

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### Alternatives

- Severs Road
- C1
- C2
- A1
- A2
- A3
- A4
- A2/A4

### Northern Alternatives Map

Des. No. 1592338  
Early Coordination

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Miles



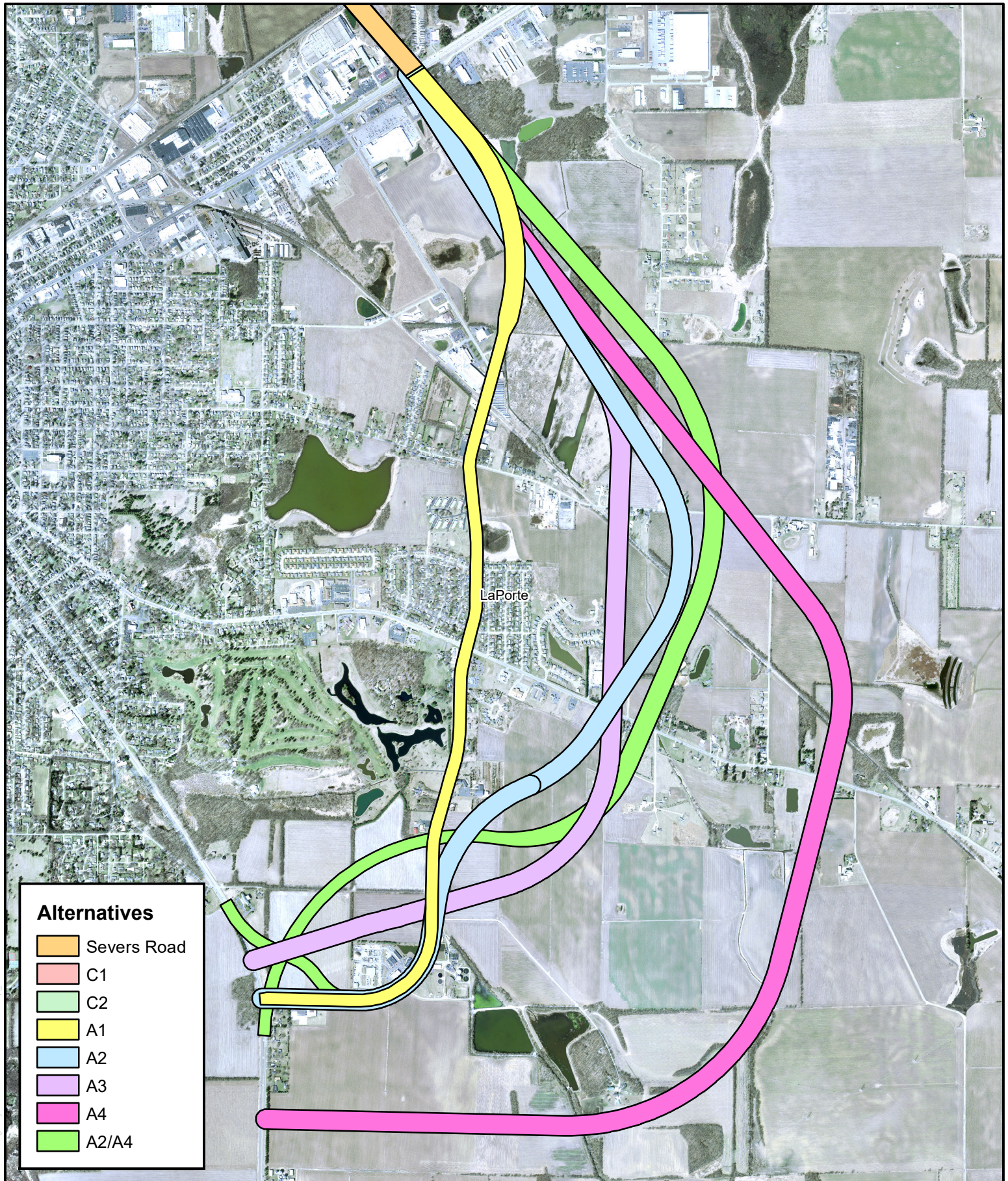
County: LaPorte  
Township: Center, Kankakee, Scipio & Pleasant  
State: Indiana

LaPorte North-South Connector  
US 35 to SR 39  
Created: 1/25/2019, SBeaure



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**Alternatives**

- Severs Road
- C1
- C2
- A1
- A2
- A3
- A4
- A2/A4

**LOCHMUELLER GROUP**

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**Southern Alternatives Map**  
 Des. No. 1592338  
 Early Coordination

0      0.3      0.6  
 Miles

N

County: LaPorte  
 Township: Center, Kankakee, Scipio & Pleasant  
 State: Indiana

LaPorte North-South Connector  
 US 35 to SR 39  
 Created: 1/25/2019, SBeaupre

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