

A \$2.5 billion letter of thanks to you

This is a thank you letter. You and your organization have been instrumental to the success we've seen along the U.S. 31 corridor for more than 20 years.

Today, the concept of transforming U.S. 31 into a safe, limited-access freeway between Indianapolis and South Bend is closer than it's ever been before. We still have a lot to do, but I do have good news to share with you.

INDOT has committed to finishing Hamilton County by the end of 2025. A new railroad overpass is already under construction in Tipton County. And highway interchanges in Fulton and Marshall Counties, adjacent to a planned railroad overpass, are scheduled to begin construction in 2027.

What we now need is a freeway plan for the remaining areas of U.S. 31. The full benefit for all communities along the U.S. 31 corridor is only realized when the reliability and safety of a corridor freeway are in place.

The goal of converting U.S. 31 from a highway with lots of interruptions into a limited-access freeway is vital to the long-term economic health of every company, every city and town along the highway. It's critical if we're going to retain and attract talent and investment to north central Indiana. We need a freeway if our cities and towns are going to survive and thrive.

Think about the potential. Cities and towns along the corridor have already benefitted from the patchwork of improvements along the highway.

This spring, Stellantis Corporation announced 1,400 good jobs and a \$2.5 billion battery-making plant that's coming to Kokomo. It's the type of investment that ensures the Howard County way of life for generations to come.

Yet, it simply wouldn't have happened if not for the new U.S. 31 freeway around Kokomo. Moving product is key to business success. And access to safe, efficient transportation arteries is vital to north central Indiana's future in a global economy.

The impact of a freeway is not guesswork or hyperbole. Cities and towns along U.S. 31 will be left behind – population will ebb, and entire communities will slowly dry up if it doesn't happen.

We need more stories like the Stellantis in Howard County. And we'll have them if we see this through.

A freeway is good for business. It's good for jobs. And it ensures the Hoosier way of life for every city and town between Indianapolis and South Bend for generations to come.

Right now, as INDOT prepares to begin PEL studies that will determine next steps for improving U.S. 31, we need to continue working as a united team of counties along the highway. Too much is at stake. And we must take every opportunity to express our needs as these studies are underway.

Over the next several months, you will hear about every opportunity to show up for meetings held by INDOT and the people conducting these studies. We need to be at every public meeting.

By working together, we'll get this done.

Thank you again for supporting the U.S. 31 Coalition. Your investment is an investment in good business, good jobs and our Indiana way of life.

Sincerely,

Laurie Maudlin,
U.S. 31 Coalition