

I-30 Deck Park Planning Study

Little Rock, Arkansas

Pulaski County

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) What is the “Deck Park”?

A deck park is a landscaped public space built on a structure over a highway that reconnects streets and neighborhoods separated by the roadway. You might also hear “highway cap” or “lid” as those are common synonyms.

2) What’s a “Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study”?

A PEL Study is a planning process recognized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that evaluates ideas early and documents decisions so they can be carried into the later federal environmental review. Using PEL helps streamline and inform the NEPA process and involves agencies and the public up front.

3) What is “NEPA”?

NEPA stands for the National Environmental Policy Act. It’s the federal process that studies environmental, community, and economic impacts before any federally funded projects can move forward. Work done during the PEL Study is intended to set up and accelerate the future NEPA phase.

4) What is a “Feasibility Study”?

It’s an early-stage analysis that asks: Can a deck park be built here, how might it be built, what would it cost (order-of-magnitude), and what benefits or challenges are expected? For this project, the team will develop and compare multiple alternatives (including a “no-build” option) and recommend one to advance.

5) What does “No-Build Alternative” mean?

The “no-build” option keeps things as they are. It’s included in comparisons so the public can see the costs and benefits of building the deck park versus making no change.

6) What is a “Conceptual Design” (or “Conceptual Engineering”)?

Conceptual design turns the recommended alternative into conceptual plans and drawings (layouts, structural concepts, safety systems, access, lighting, drainage) with enough detail to estimate cost and carry the project into NEPA and later design phases.

7) What is a “Cost Estimate,” and what does “planning-level” mean?

A planning-level cost estimate is a high-level, early estimate that covers design, construction, and operations & maintenance (O&M). It includes contingencies and is refined later as the design becomes more detailed.

8) Who develops the “Funding Strategy”?

The study will outline options for funding the design, construction, and long-term maintenance and operations of the project, and will include recommendations for funding sources, sequencing, and risk management.

9) What is the “Traffic & Mobility Study”?

This study looks at how people move today and in the future, by car, bus, bike, or on foot, how safe those movements are, and how the deck park alternatives could affect intersections and travel patterns. Findings inform the alternatives and design.

