

INDIANAPOLIS MPO STRATEGIC PLAN: DRAFT ACTION PAPERS

- The following Draft Action Papers were developed based on Fourth Economy research findings and input from two rounds of panels, held in October and November 2017.
- These Draft Action Papers are being shared in advance of the IRTC/Admin Committee meetings to be held in December 2017. During those panels, participants will continue to refine and prioritize actions.
- As these are working documents the statements and recommendations should not be assumed to be definitive and/or fully informed. Additional community engagement is ongoing and these actions will be refined as appropriate.
- To provide feedback please notate these documents as directed or contact the authors Rich Overmoyer and Chelsea Burket @ Rovermoyer@fourtheconomy.com and chelsea.burket@fourtheconomy.com

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Putting the Central Indiana Regional Strategic Plan in context

As the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (identified below as the *Indy MPO*, or just the *MPO*) and its partners progress through this strategic plan on broader regional coordination, it's important to keep our discussions in context. Regional planning is not a new concept, and the issues associated with getting local governments to work together are not new to Central Indiana.

"To think intelligently of the future is to think regionally."

John Gardner

Like many regions in the 1960s, the local manufacturing base was in decline and Indianapolis was struggling with rapid depopulation as residents moved to newer suburban areas just beyond city limits, mostly in northeastern and northwestern

Marion County. Unigov was proposed as a solution, a way for Indianapolis to keep its suburbanizing population and tax base, while capitalizing on the efficiencies of consolidated public services.

The 1970 passage of Unigov virtually eliminated the problem of fragmented, duplicative local government, making Central Indiana a national leader in regional consolidation. Unigov masked the precipitous urban decline that was so much more obvious in other Rust Belt cities, even as the neighborhoods within Indy's old city limits saw an exodus on par with places like Detroit and Cleveland. By stabilizing Indy's tax base, local leaders were able to reinvest in downtown, execute the famous amateur sports strategy, and maintain a viable municipal budget.

Most of northern Marion County was built out by the late 1990s, and the next, larger wave of suburban construction took place almost entirely outside of Marion County - in Hamilton and Boone Counties to the north, Hendricks County to the west, and Johnson County to the south. After Unigov was adopted in 1970, about 71% of the region's residents lived in Marion County. In 2017, that number is down to 48%, and Indianapolis-Marion County is just one of 39 local units of government within the MPO's planning area. Unigov has had its successes, but 50 years of outward growth has brought the need for interlocal cooperation full circle.

The need for better regional planning

1. We're residents of a region. A resident in Carmel may work in northern Indianapolis and shop in Carmel. And on the weekends, they may watch sports at Lucas Oil Stadium the day after watching their kids play soccer at Grand Park in Westfield. As former Mayor of Indianapolis Bill Hudnut commented: "Any effort to address the changing metropolitan form has to begin with one irreducible fact: America is no longer merely made up of cities and suburbs; it consists of regional economic units that need multijurisdictional governance."¹

¹ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 42

“Most Americans dwell and work within a metropolitan region that contains multiple governmental jurisdictions. These communities are closely intertwined, connected by transportation networks, economic interests, and a common commuter shed, where people basically read the same papers, listen to the same radio stations, and root for the same sports teams. A region has common needs, such as clean air and clean water, jobs, affordable housing, transportation choices, and a healthy economy. These issues do not stop at city limits or county lines. There can be no strong city in a weak region, no strong region with weak cities.”

“Regions represent one facet of the “death of distance” that characterizes life in this era of globalization. It would be fatuous to talk about the Washington DC Metro region in terms of a Fairfax County economy, a Bethesda economy, a Prince George’s County economy, or a District of Columbia economy. All these areas constitute one regional economy, one “city-state”, one commuter shed, one air shed, one labor market, one housing market, one media market. The region’s airports, universities, sports and cultural venues, restaurants, and public buildings belong to the region, not to a specific city or other subarea within the region.”²

2. Challenges aren’t just jurisdictional; the big ones need regional solutions. Today, most of the big challenges we are dealing with are regional and cannot be solved by one local jurisdiction acting alone.³ Water supply, for instance, affects the entire region due to the limited sources of water in Central Indiana. And mayors in Central Indiana are taking notice before there’s a real problem. Water planning is only one example: transportation, air quality, and housing are regional problems, not local ones confined to just one jurisdiction.⁴

3. The issues facing regions are incredibly interrelated. Land use and transportation, housing and economic development, impaired streams and shovel-ready sites... these issues are so interconnected that you can’t speak to leaders in one field without mentioning at least one other. Just because state and federal statutes require certain agencies or bodies to perform certain tasks, why do they have to be separate? In order to utilize resources as efficiently as possible, and to get a complete picture of the forces impacting the region, our institutions will have to consider these interrelated issues at the same time, across a broader geography than is any single jurisdiction’s responsibility.

4. The State-Local model of government doesn’t address big problems well. To plan spatially means to recognize that traditional jurisdictional boundaries have become obsolete. In our nation’s third century of development, intelligent, forward-thinking planning will understand the new realities at a scale that is appropriate to the challenges and opportunities faced by regions.⁵ In today’s global academy, businesses compete region-to-region across the world... regional cooperation is therefore essential to advance economic development.⁶ Regional economies, not local conditions, are the foundational building blocks of the national economy.

² Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 18

³ Katy Sorenson, Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, in Hudnut *Changing Metropolitan America* p 42

⁴ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 14

⁵ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 56

⁶ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 18

"America needs 21st-century governmental structures to address its 21st century problems and issues. Unfortunately, most metropolitan areas are burdened by governmental systems that were created to address the issues and problems of the 19th century. Our fragmented systems of local governments do not adequately serve the needs of a broadened metropolitan form. Regional issues such as air and water pollution, land consumption, economic development, transportation planning, and affordable housing cross jurisdictional boundaries and thus require regional responses."⁷

"A new paradigm - global, regional, and neighborhood - is needed to replace the old "federal, state, local" paradigm. Efforts to think and act regionally are being driven by three factors: a desire for greater governmental efficiency, the need to create a stronger competitive advantage, and the recognition that, in the 21st century, regions are the ideal geographical unit to respond to intensifying global forces."⁸

5. There is value in setting - and tracking progress toward - a regional vision. At its simplest level, a shared vision is the answer to the question, "What do we want to create?" Leadership for creating a shared vision—one that will capture the collective mind and will - begins with creative tension. Creative tension emerges from seeing clearly where we want to be (the vision) and describing truthfully where we are now (the current reality). The gap between the two generates creative tension.

"A shared vision creates a sense of commonality and gives coherence to diverse activities. It creates excitement and makes an extraordinary [organisation]. It allows everyone to work together. It creates a common identity and a sense of purpose. It encourages new ways of thinking and acting. It gives courage and fosters risk taking and experimentation. Basically without a shared vision, that vision you spent time creating is pointless and meaningless. And without a shared vision the learning organization cannot exist.

What is a learning organization? A learning organization is one that continually learns and improves. A learning organization is one that learns faster than its competition, one that taps the knowledge of the entire organization and does not only rely on the top person. A learning organization learns from its failures and creates a new paradigm.⁹

It is an individual's or organization's continual assessment that provides a mirror for reflection about the relationship between vision and reality. Assessment is what drives the feedback spiral and provides the creative tension between what is and the best we can imagine.¹⁰

Models of regionalism have continued to evolve, and Central Indiana has fallen a generation behind

Even if all parties agree that these types of issues have to be addressed at the regional level, the discussion of structure will be tricky. Hoosiers have locked the balance of power into our

⁷ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 16

⁸ Neal Peirce, *Getting US Regions Past Sleepwalking*

⁹ Harvard Business Review, *To Lead, Create a Shared Vision*, January 2009

¹⁰ Costa and Kallick, *Assessment in the Learning Organisation*

traditional state-local form of government, and another Unigov-style consolidation of local governments seems politically unrealistic. That leaves us with the same set of tools that other regions have utilized as they've figured out how to work together - a difficult conversation that Central Indiana has been able to avoid because of Unigov's successes.

We will study structural and financial options with the MPO's Administrative Committee in 2018, but it is useful to understand the historical context that has led to this moment in regional planning.

- 1. *The Heliocentric Region (pre-1920s)*:** The old mopolitan form basically had two poles: city and suburb, downtown and the community in which one lived.¹¹ These places had a definitive "edge of town," where the city stopped and country began - in this sense, central cities were much larger versions of many of the county seats we see around the state today. The geographic scope of these regions was limited by the speed of available transportation - mostly walking, biking, or horseback. This was the predominant form of development prior to the widespread adoption of automobiles in the 1920s.
- 2. *The Multi-Centered Region (1880s - 1940s)*:** As older cities matured, new centers of activity naturally emerged along transit corridors and at the edges of the community, particularly where a central city had grown enough to envelop a smaller established community (areas like Broad Ripple, Meridian Hills). "Streetcar suburbs" emerged along transit routes in growing regions across the country, usually catalyzed by real estate deals with the companies that were operating the transit service. "The spiderweb configuration of the new metropolitan form replaced that of the spoked wheel,"¹² though development was still fairly compact until the widespread adoption of the automobile.
- 3. *Planned Regionalism (1890s - 1950s)*:** The turn of the 20th Century brought a revolution in city planning. Daniel Burnham's famous Plan of Chicago was published in 1909, and Britain's thought leaders like Patrick Geddes and Ebenezer Howard were making the direct connection between town planning and social issues, Howard founded the *Garden Cities Movement*, an orderly response to overcrowded and polluted industrial cities with rural, self-contained, greenbelt-surrounded communities. Frederic Osborn, and Peter Self later realized that regional planning was the only way to counter sprawl, and they demonstrated the close relationship between urban renewal, suburban expansion, green belts and new towns.
- 4. *Garden Cities, City Beautiful, & New Towns (1898-1960s)*:** At the turn of the 20th Century, industrialized cities (which planner Clarence Stein referred to as "dinosaur cities") were struggling with overcrowded, polluted, chaotic, and generally miserable conditions. Planners, architects, landscape architects, and sociologists begin considering the form of cities, producing a wave of industry advancement that still impacts city

¹¹ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 41

¹² Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 42

planning today. The City Beautiful movement emphasized monumental architecture and urban green space, resulting in many of the distinctly neo-classical American civic spaces we see in older cities today. A similar ethos was applied to the form of cities themselves, perhaps best represented by Daniel Burnham's 1909 *Plan for Chicago* and Ebenezer Howard's Garden Cities movement in Britain. As documented in Howard's 1902 book *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, Garden Cities was an idealised region of strictly planned communities, designed as a collection of cities designed as concentric rings, radial boulevards, and aggressive open space preservation. Each community had prescribed population thresholds for self-sufficiency, at which point a new Garden City would be created. Only two Garden Cities were built before WWII - Letchworth and Welwyn, both in England - dozens of cities around the world have adopted features from Howard's vision, including Reston, VA, Seaside, FL, and Columbia, MD. Howard's work inspired a remarkable group of American architects, planners, and social activists led by Lewis Mumford, Clarence Stein, and Patrick Geddes to form the New Towns movement, and in the 1920s to create Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA). New-towns-in-towns, planned communities. RPAA knew that the new technologies of their time - the automobile, electric power, the telephone, radio - meant a crisis for "dinosaur cities." Instead, cities and their citizens could expand throughout the region into the green world of farms and small towns. The "dinosaur cities" would fade away and the new "regional city" would emerge as a network of New Towns in a perpetually green landscape: the home of an advanced society in union with nature.¹³

5. **Consolidation (1950s - 1980s):** In the decades after WWII, many states were focusing on consolidation to help control costs. The Indiana School Reorganization act of 1959, for example, reduced the number of Indiana school districts from 966 to 402. The consolidation of Indianapolis with Marion County - Unigov - was another prime example, as were similar consolidations in Muncie, Jacksonville, FL, and Nashville, TN. Policymakers implemented Unigov to combine as many jurisdictions as politically possible into as few as possible to help streamline service delivery and avoid the uneven loss (and gain) of tax base, as thousands of Indianapolis residents moved to Marion County's suburbanizing outer townships. The consolidation was limited to just within Marion County limits (with the exception of "excluded cities" Lawrence, Beech Grove, Southport, and Speedway), but it still included the vast majority of the region's population. Serious regional power struggles was avoided for decades.
6. **Regulated Regionalism (1950s - 1990s):** Places that did not consolidate had to create functional working relationships between their many jurisdictions, and new federal housing, transportation, and environmental funding was often mandated regional coordination. Some states - including Indiana - passed regional planning enabling acts to create regional planning commissions, and many others formed Councils of Government (COGs) for their major metro areas. The Atlanta Regional Commission, the San Diego

¹³ Calthorpe, *The Regional City* p xvii

Association of Governments (SANDAG), and the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) are three prominent examples of still high-functioning products of this era. These organizations were generally a forum for collaboration and decision making, but they lacked the law-making or enforcement powers that would have been required to create a new level of government between state and local. This was the era that produced the Highway Trust Fund and its mandate for metropolitan planning organizations, which was the origin of the Indy MPO and MPOs for every region in the country larger than 50,000 people.

- 7. Modern Regionalism (1970s - today):** There was a stark divide in how regions addressed regionalism in the 1990s and 2000s, and some regions (like Indianapolis) never really made the leap from Consolidation or Regulatory Regionalism. The concept of Megaregions emerged in this era, and economic development theory began to recognize the region (rather than the jurisdiction) as the basic building block of the national economy. “Beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, regional planning began to evolve into more multidimensional and comprehensive area-wide plans and long-range strategies that integrated related topical areas such as land use, transportation, open space, and air quality. [More recently,] regional planning has further advanced integration of complex related issues, such as infrastructure, housing, economic development, and environmental planning.”¹⁴ As we’ve looked to benchmark communities, it’s clear that every region, particularly those who may have delayed addressing interlocal collaboration, are recognizing the value of a regional perspective, addressing the same set of issues, and creating structures to address regional problems.

Central Indiana was a leader in Consolidation and Regulated Regionalism, but never made the move to Modern Regionalism. There was a start to better collaboration with the Indiana Heartland Coordinating Commission¹⁵, which formed in the mid-1970s as a voluntary interlocal organization formed to fulfill regional requirements set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). They sponsored studies on regional stormwater, housing, and water quality issues, and they produced a newsletter and annual reports that benchmarked regional progress across several disciplines. More research needs to be done on the IHCC’s charter and how they evolved in the late-1980s into the institutions that we know today; if you had first-hand resources or experience with IHCC in the 1970s and 1980s, please reach out to staff (sean.northup@indympo.org) - we would love to hear from you!

Regional planning is not the same as regional governance

“A word of caution is in order. Many people are suspicious of big government. To them, words like *regional* and *megaregional* conjure up images of Big Brother. Consequently, the emphasis must be on collaborative *planning*, rather than on governance through some huge new megastructure.

¹⁴ Piro, Leiter, and Rooney, *Emerging Trends in Regional Planning (PAS Report 586)* 2017, page 4

¹⁵ Owen and Willbern, *Governing Metropolitan Indianapolis* p 160

Render unto localities what is local, and unto regional entities what is regional. Suggesting a wider approach to planning is not the same as advocating megaregional government. Planning should be issue and need specific.”¹⁶

“Nonetheless, cooperation across jurisdictional lines is not impossible to achieve. Throughout the country, new mechanisms have been put in place to consolidate certain local services and serve more than one municipality. A new global/regional/neighborhood paradigm could be developed supersedes the old federal/state/local one. Thinking and acting regionally does not necessarily mean “big government.” But it does imply cooperation – either mandated by higher levels of government or forged voluntarily by local communities.”¹⁷

We’ve heard similar concerns voiced from time to time in this process. There is a spectrum that ranges from “complete local autonomy” to “complete regional control.” While Central Indiana certainly leans heavily toward local autonomy (at least as much as Indiana Code allows), perhaps it is particularly important to be clear about what roles and responsibilities will be left with current seats of power at the state, county, and local levels.

Our aim is to clearly identify things that should be tracked, considered, and planned for at the regional level, to explore the fields that MPO members are asking us to help address, and to ensure that the structure of our regional organization is optimized for the vision our communities want to achieve. This has not included issues like local control of land use decisions, direct economic development efforts, council on aging services, or transit operations. The Drinking Water Collaborative is a good example - they’ve maintained that their voluntary structure is key to their great participation rate, and that could be a delicate balance that the IRTC will have to respect.

¹⁶ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 57

¹⁷ Hudnut, *Changing Metropolitan America* p 18

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Overview

During the development of the MPO Strategic Plan there have been a number of recommendations that have been discussed in relation to the need for regional planning. These recommendations have been documented during the review of previous reports, interviews with various stakeholders, and the participation by subject matter experts in panels that covered initial recommendations in the themes of transportation, economic development, water, and use and housing. The panels met twice, first to review scenarios related to the theme, and second to refine a set of recommendations that were developed in response to the scenario exercises and previous engagement.

During the course of the second panel it became clear that there was significant overlap between many of the themes and their recommendations. In the case of the housing and land use panels there was enough similarity that the co-chairs recommended an integration of the two. The results of these discussions are documented in the following set of recommended Actions that the MPO could undertake on behalf of the region.

This information is being shared to allow the IRTC Administrative committee the opportunity to provide input and decide on a direction forward. The next step in this process will occur on December 13, 2017.

Transportation Planning in Central Indiana

Action: Incorporate a Regional Vision for Freight Planning

Description

MPOs are in a unique position to articulate a regional vision that includes freight, which can then inform collaboration between local government, state government, and Indiana's major logistics industry. The MPO should become more involved in freight planning to improve communications between public and private freight stakeholders, to consolidate and improve freight data collection, and to bring new money into the region for the construction and improvement of freight facilities.

Why the action should be considered

- *More freight planning by MPO can help improve communications between public units of government (federal-local-state) and private freight providers.* MPO does a phenomenal job of coordinating federal-state-local communications, but freight rail planning is like a black box. More data is needed and more insight.
- *The MPO may be able to help facilitate better data sharing.* There's a major need for better data. Roy's group at INDOT is using TransSearch data, which will be available to MPOs. Different partners may have different data at their disposal at different points in the process. The MPO could help aggregate and share that.
- *MPO can help identify other federal pots of money (INFRA, EDA funds through an Economic Development District).* "Would be great if MPO could get control of some of the other federal pots of money that could help with freight."
- *MPO can help improve modeling of freight movement.*
- *MPO can be a forum to discuss the impact of connected and autonomous vehicles, platooning, and tolling.*

Who should be involved

Local Planning Associations

INDOT

Amtrak

Connexus

Private freight rail providers

Private trucking / logistics providers

Major regional manufacturers + largest shippers (Connexus help)

Indiana Railroad Association (Connexus uses Peter Mills as a connector to all other railroad associations)

Manufacturers, researchers, and policymakers focused on connected and autonomous vehicles

Steps

Based on the presentation of national best practices and consideration of the work underway in the Central Indiana region, the discussion centered on ways that the MPO can help jurisdictions acquire additional information and data to support more integrated planning:

1. *Develop a Data Clearinghouse:* Participants recognized a lack of coordination between freight planning work being done by the private sector and that being done by the public sector. They suggested that the MPO might facilitate a discussion with Connexus and other private partners and consider developing a data clearinghouse for proprietary information that companies may be hesitant to share broadly.
 - a. Focus on improving communication and iterative collection of data.
 - b. Increase data. TransSearch coming from INDOT.
 - i. Connexus is “happy to share whatever they collect” from a thematic, aggregated standpoint. They can’t share specific information per NDAs with logistics companies (consistent volumes, peak seasons, internal changes that will distort numbers over time). Connexus is working with Chambers of Commerce to identify largest manufacturers.
 - ii. Amtrak could be helpful in understanding rail capacity, 95% of their passenger miles are on the freight network.
 - iii. Westfield gets trip generation data as part of their assessments for impact fees.
2. *Develop More Integrated Strategies:* Participants felt that the MPO may be able to work with Connexus and other private partners to build on the strategies in the Regional Freight Plan and develop a more integrated approach to identifying and prioritizing projects that support freight movement in Central Indiana. Jurisdictions want to play a role in supporting the movement of goods throughout the region, and they are ready to engage with the private sector to determine how to move forward.
 - a. Bring freight stakeholders together to make sure they’re communicating effectively.
 - i. Major shippers
 - ii. Logistics providers
 - iii. INDOT, Amtrak, Connexus, LPAs
 - B. Long-term, after the MPO has a better handle on the data and relationships, the region should evolve into more proactive (rather than current reactive) freight planning.

Risks

- Lack of participation by private freight providers, rail and truck.
- Wholesale rejection of a public freight plan by private freight providers.
- Heavy use of NDAs by logistics providers.
- So many sources and filters on the data, how do we actually QA/QC a dataset that we can’t really see?
- Concern that freight projects competing for STBG or other MPO funds could diminish an already oversubscribed pot of federal money.
- Connected and autonomous vehicles. How will they impact infrastructure needs and freight movement? How will drones impact freight delivery?

Action: Performance Measures and Target Setting

Description

The U.S. Department of Transportation recently adopted legislation supporting a transition to performance-driven planning and programming processes that provide greater transparency and accountability, improved project decision-making, and more efficient investment of federal transportation funds. As part of this approach, all recipients of federal-aid highway program funds and federal transit funds will be required to link the investment priorities included in their Transportation Improvement Programs and Metropolitan Transportation Plans to achieving specific performance targets.

Given federal requirements for performance measurement and the MPO's recent work to develop the Long-Range Transportation Plan 2045 (LRTP), the MPO already plays a significant role in establishing targets and measuring performance. While the USDOT has already established required federal performance measures, the MPO is voluntarily establishing a set of regional performance measures. The LRTP Steering Committee has developed measures related to Mobility, Safety, Sustain, and Prosper, but specific targets have yet to be set.

The MPO should establish a robust process of stakeholder engagement in both rolling out the federal targets and developing the regional targets.

Why this action should be considered

Who should be involved

Steps

The next step for the MPO will be to map out an approach to the target-setting exercises, and share that with member jurisdictions for input.

- Ensure engagement and transparency around how measures will impact scoring criteria.
- Consider if individual projects can be measured, or if the MPO will take a portfolio/outcome approach.
- Set based on review of historical projects (how they would perform), trends, and best practices.
- Make more near-term to compel action, and attainable.
- Could project sponsors get credit for local projects that contribute to the measures?
- A "road show" to communicate about what is happening, why, how it will affect people, and how they can get engaged.

- Consider when and how to bring in end users.

Risks

Action: Equity and Environmental Justice

Description

Feedback Equity and environmental justice can be incorporated throughout the planning and project delivery processes. There is a significant opportunity for the MPO to broaden its reach and the services it provides to jurisdictions in the areas of equity and environmental justice. The MPO can provide data and tools to support the inclusion of these principles throughout a plan's or project's lifecycle. The MPO should explore approaches to incorporating equity and environmental justice in project scoring and selection. This should be based on national best practices and clear definitions and data sources for any new criteria.

Why this action should be considered

Environmental Justice (EJ) refers to the process of evaluating and analyzing the planning process in reference to the most disadvantaged populations. The Indianapolis MPO identifies seven EJ populations: minority, low-income, English as a second language, no college degree, zero car households, people over 65, and those with physical limitations.

The MPO seeks to treat disenfranchised and disadvantaged populations fairly in all planning and programming efforts. Specifically, such populations deserve to receive their fair share of benefits, to shoulder not more than their fair share of burdens, and to be meaningfully and equitably involved in decision-making. Through the LRTP process, the MPO identified areas with concentrations of EJ populations to be used in planning analysis.

Who should be involved

MPO

United Way

SAVI

Steps

Specific recommendations included the following:

- The MPO could develop regional guidance on how the benefits and impacts of projects on EJ populations should be evaluated, as approaches to cost-benefit analysis vary widely.
- The MPO should continue to refine and distribute data to help jurisdictions understand where EJ populations are living and working. This information can be used to support local planning and project delivery as well as applications for regionally-significant projects.

- The MPO should consider encouraging local jurisdictions to prioritize local funding to meet specific, community-based EJ needs, freeing regional funds to focus on the types of projects that can support regional access to opportunity.
- The MPO could develop a toolbox of outreach and engagement materials and tactics to support the work of jurisdictions to engage with EJ populations. By having evidence-based tools available across the region, jurisdictions would have consistency in their approach to working with traditionally underrepresented EJ populations. Also consider the unique characteristics/ needs of EJ populations.
- The MPO should explore approaches to incorporating equity and environmental justice in project scoring and selection. This should be based on national best practices and clear definitions and data sources for any new criteria.

Land Use and Housing in the Central Indiana Region

Action: Create a Regional Land Use & Housing Think Tank

Description

The Think Tank would be a forum to address common land use and housing challenges, and challenges that are regional in nature, e.g. blight mitigation/avoidance, big box vacancy. Their scope may also include researching economic and demographic shifts or disruptions, and modeling the implications of different development scenarios. In particular, their research would focus on the housing, land use, and transportation impacts. The Think Tank would analyze relevant data, research best practices, identify and highlight local bright spots, and convene stakeholders to better understand causes and solutions. The Think Tank would be comprised of and engage cross-disciplinary stakeholders, including transportation, economic development, and water. The ultimate goal of the Think Tank would be to provide research and information to support planning and policy-making. This may also include hosting speakers and providing public education support.

Why the action should be considered

There is a need for additional resources to give elected officials and decision makers research and information to inform decisions. This is especially pertinent both for unpopular decisions, and for smaller communities - especially those who are quickly growing – to ensure that their decisions are intentional. The Think Tank could also support other actions by providing research and public education.

Precedents in other regions

Memphis, TN

The Memphis area MPO hosts a Planning and Land Use Advisory Committee (PLAC)

“In 2014, the MPO’s Transportation Policy Board (TPB) acknowledged the need for a greater analysis of the relationship between land use patterns and transportation behaviors in the region. The link between transportation and land use is firm, yet at times overlooked. The design of a region’s transportation network influences its style of development; conversely, land use and development patterns largely determine the demands placed on roads, transit routes, trails, and so on. With this in mind, the TPB approved the formation of the Planning & Land Use Advisory Committee (PLAC).

PLAC’s responsibility is to assist the MPO with its transportation-land use analysis and to help guide the update of the land use scenario model. This model will assume a critical role in the development of the Livability 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The PLAC will continue to meet on a regular basis to better coordinate land use planning and transportation investment in the greater Memphis Area.”¹⁸

Nashville, TN

The Nashville MPO convenes stakeholders around issues/ regional needs. One example is work they conducted around urban infill.¹⁹

A 2013 publication from the Nashville Civic Design Center, in partnership with the MPO, illustrates the potential for urban infill development around the expansion of transit services along the East-West Corridor. The booklet is intended to highlight best practice examples of urban infill development drawing upon academic research as well as real-world precedent - not provide policy. The publication offers concepts, case studies, and "toolboxes" that demonstrate how peer communities have achieved their visions for development around major transit investment. The booklet represents a compilation of work from private-sector urban design professionals, graduate-level design students, and public agencies. Given the evolving nature of land development along the corridor, and the preliminary nature of the design for the East-West Corridor BRT, renderings displayed throughout this document may not be representative of the final BRT vehicle, alignment, or station areas.

Who should be involved

Who should be involved depends on the issue that the Think Tank is addressing. The Think Tank should be comprised of a core body of regional stakeholders who solicit the participation of subject matter experts for time-limited engagements. What is most important is that the Think Tank be regional and non-partisan in its composition. Participants could include:

¹⁸ <http://memphismpo.org/about/boards-committess/planning-and-land-use-advisory-committee>

¹⁹ http://www.nashvillempo.org/docs/UrbanInfillConcepts/UrbanInfillConcepts_011413.pdf

- Elected officials
- AIM, CICEO
- Professional orgs: APA Indiana Chapter, ULI, AIA, ASLA
- Ball State
- People's Planning Academy
- Regional planning firms
- State representatives
- Local planners
- INDOT
- IPS/School districts
- IndyGo/transit
- Service providers tied to population
- LISC
- Chamber
- MIBOR
- Health by design

Steps

- Convene organizations already providing research to identify gaps and where the MPO could sponsor additional research on the housing, land use, and transportation implications of existing research

Risks

Action: Develop a Regional Vision and “Strategy” for Land Use and Housing

Description

Develop a regional vision for land use and housing, providing model typologies for communities who wish to develop in accordance with the vision. The basis of the vision would be a compilation of existing local comprehensive and land use plans. By combining existing plans, this would allow the region to identify opportunities to create synergies at municipal borders (where neighboring land uses are rarely coordinated) and opportunities to enhance planning of cross-border land uses (e.g. trails). Analysis conducted as part of the process would also provide insight into regional housing needs and opportunities. Think Tank research would inform the resulting strategies and recommendations, which would include:

- A vision to support land use and housing planning and policy that would not usurp local control.
- A menu of development/growth typologies with supporting strategies and model ordinances for communities to choose to use. Typologies could range from preservation areas, to developing suburbs, to developed urban core areas. Typologies would provide guidance on enhancing housing diversity, mobility, water and land conservation, and economic development opportunities.
- Recommendations for how communities’ can better align land uses at borders, to be used the next time they update local plans.
- Recommendations on how to enhance planning of regional land uses.
- Possible identification of ideal locations for future development.

Why the action should be considered

Economic Competitiveness

- Housing and land use are key to our economic development strategy and our aspirations.
- A well-planned, diverse housing market is a key component to a vibrant and sustainable regional economy.
- We must be able to attract talent from outside of Indiana. Changing consumer preferences must be reflected in Central Indiana’s communities to attract talent.
- Unplanned and inconsistent land use may have negative financial and talent recruitment issues.
- Employers are citing struggles with workers finding housing near-by (e.g. IKEA).
- A lack of a regional housing strategy exposes the community to risk during economic slowdown or a leveling off of population growth. Individuals engaged during this process have highlighted that the region would suffer more than peers if economic or population disruptions occur.

- Unplanned development has led to unintended consequences and/or conflicting neighboring land uses, that ultimately put the region’s competitiveness and ability to attract talent and investment at risk.
- There are certain regional priorities that can’t be realized without regional coordination on land use and housing.

Informed Decision-Making

- Need to be proactive in preparing communities to address economic and demographic shifts.
- The market is not quick to respond to changes (such as changing consumer preferences) without a stated strategy that encourages such development. A strategy could inform new policy and finance tools to incentivize filling gaps in the housing market.
- Would give smaller communities a leg up, especially those who are growing quickly, to ensure that development is intentional.
- Analysis and strategies could help municipalities find creative solutions to increasing revenue by increasing value per acre.
- A regional land use and housing strategy could provide the guidance and support for communities and decision-makers interested in non-traditional or unpopular approaches to planning.

Furthermore, there are certain regional priorities that can not be realized without regional coordination. For instance, consensus on the best location for industrial uses, failure to protect farmland and open space, and equity in distribution of amenities were all identified as high-priority/high-control issues during the first panel. Coordinating where different types of land use make sense throughout the region through the creation of different typologies would help mitigate unintended consequences of neighboring land use decisions.

Precedents in other regions

Denver

In the Denver Region, the Denver Region Council of Governments serves as the MPO. The Denver region has a strong land use framework that is part of the Mile High Compact.²⁰ In 2000, five counties and 25 municipalities came together to affirm their commitment to a shared regional vision by signing the Mile High Compact, a landmark intergovernmental agreement to manage growth. Today 46 communities, representing almost 90 percent of the region's population, have signed the agreement. The binding agreement commits communities to:

- Adopt a comprehensive land-use plan that includes a common set of elements;

²⁰ <https://www.drcog.org/planning-great-region/metro-vision/mile-high-compact>

- Use growth management tools such as zoning regulations, urban growth boundaries and development codes;
- Link their comprehensive plans to Metro Vision, which outlines regional growth management; and
- Work collaboratively to guide growth and ensure planning consistency.

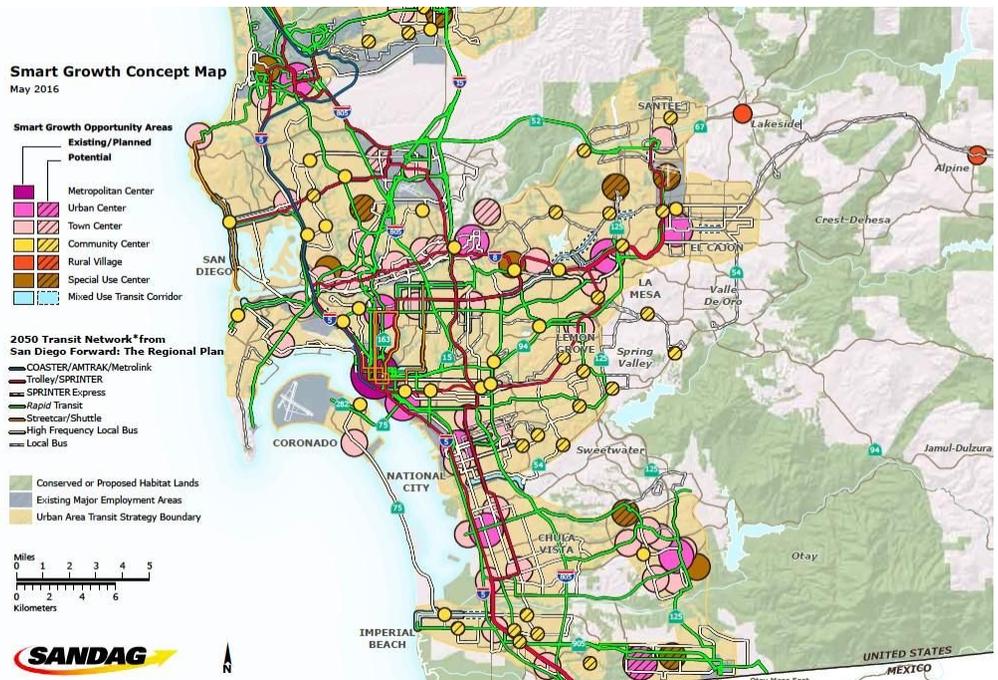
DRCOG also initiated the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS²¹). This study was to identify the region’s housing needs and utilize this information to update the activities included in the Metro Vision plan. The RHS takes a ‘balanced housing’ approach with the goal of providing a diverse set of housing choices for the many types of households who call the region home today and in the future. Strategy development focused on how to improve provision of a diverse set of housing opportunities for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities throughout the region.

Among the recommendations includes the role for DRCOG in the housing conversation:

- Convener. Provide information and bring together cities, counties, industry experts and other partners to discuss solutions to improve housing imbalances across the region.
- Incubator. Set in motion, through provision of information, administrative and/or financial support, new regional programs and initiatives to support increased housing options.
- Do-er. Implement programs and policies that support the production and preservation of housing options in location-efficient places, including urban centers, high opportunity areas, and areas well-served by transit.

San Diego

In the San Diego Region, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) serves as the MPO. San Diego’s approach to land use planning is directed by Smart Growth Guidelines and corresponding principles. The map contains more than 200 locations in seven smart growth categories identified in



²¹ <https://drcog.org/sites/drcoc>

the RCP. The seven smart growth “place types” include: the Metropolitan Center, Urban Centers, Town Centers, Community Centers, Rural Villages, Mixed Use Transit Corridors, and Special Use Centers, reflecting the notion that smart growth is not a “one-size-fits-all” endeavor.

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These designations ensure the benefits of compact development at important nodes, especially where land use policy and transportation investment critically come together:

1. Walkable, mixed-use development ensures convenience, vitality, and safety.
2. Transportation options within close proximity promote a critical mass of visitors to an area to support business, resiliency, and savings to residents' daily life
3. New development is directed to areas with expensive infrastructure already in place, relieving pressure on the distant fringe to build less-efficient housing. Denver officials noted that the concentrated urban growth that they were seeing was providing an enhanced ROI on previous investments.

Atlanta

In the Atlanta Region, Atlanta Regional Commission serves as the MPO. The Atlanta Region Plan provides guidance for land use under a framework that focuses on: World-class infrastructure, Healthy Livable Communities and Economic Competitiveness. In addition they have created a Unified Growth Policy Map (UGPM).²³ The UGPM provides direction for future growth based on the Areas and Places within the region. The UGPM represents local plans as well as The Region’s Plan policies and forecasts. Each category on the map has specific policy and development recommendations. Development Area categories include:

- Region Core and Employment Corridors - Strategies focus on supporting transit, infill, diverse housing options, and pedestrian scale retail and amenities.
- Maturing Neighborhoods - Strategies focus on improving safety, quality of transit options, food access, mixed-use development, and design standards.
- Developing and Developed Suburbs - Strategies focus on connecting developments and creating town centers, enhancing recreational facilities, re-using under-utilized parking, and capturing stormwater run-off.
- Rural and Developing Rural Areas - Strategies focus on maintaining rural character, implementing conservation design and development, developing tourism initiatives, creating conservation areas, and developing broadband technology.

Within Development Areas are a variety of Centers and Places (e.g. Regional Centers, Community Activity Centers, and Village Centers). Each of these Centers and Places also have their own land use strategies.

The final typology within the Plan is Regional Policy Districts. These districts are unique in the Atlanta region for their land use challenges. Each district has plans at ARC to assist in the

²² http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?classid=12&projectid=296&fuseaction=projects_detail

²³ <https://atlantaregionsplan.org/regional-development-guide-unified-growth-policy-map/>

implementation of policy within these districts. They include Regionally Important Resources (Areas of Conservation or Recreational Value; Historic and Cultural Resources; and Areas of Agricultural and Scenic Value); Airport Investment Area; Regional Industrial & Logistics Areas; and Transit Station Areas.

Who should be involved

- Need a strong, cross-sector Steering Committee
- Planning Directors and related staff from throughout the region
- IU Public Policy Institute
- CICEO
- MIBOR
- BAGI
- Historic Preservation Representatives
- Agriculture Representatives
- Real estate developers
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local Economic Development Officials (LEDOs)
- Public Officials
- Banking and financial institutions
- CDFI and non profit developers
- CDCs
- State Housing Finance Agency
- LISC
- ULI
- Indy Partnership

Steps

- Public education/engagement and communications
 - Create common communications strategy
 - Build the case
 - Why would different communities agree to common typologies?
 - How would the MPO go about building buy in with the regional leaders - argument to compel buy-in absent a crisis
 - Host field trips to show how different development and housing types look
 - Develop educational tool-kits
 - Seminar with council-people, planners, etc. at roll-out
 - Influential cheerleaders to promote
 - Share success stories after launch
- Conduct a study
 - Establish baselines
 - Regional study of supply and demand for different land uses
 - Update consumer housing preference survey

- Define where urbanized areas already exist and where growth is anticipated
- Identify barriers to regionalism
- Provide additional analysis to support regional approach - e.g. yield per acre analysis, cost of infrastructure, relationship to education, etc.
- Identify regional land uses and develop basic typologies
 - Identify land use elements that transcend local municipalities, e.g. trails, water, etc.
 - Start with basic typologies that are fairly high-level
 - Must allow for flexibility - one new development/project could shift the nature of a place
- Develop a playbook
 - Generic - not specific to certain communities
 - Spell out defining characteristics of typologies
 - What happens at border between different typologies/land uses?
 - Create a clearinghouse of resources and best practices.
- Regional agreement
 - Think Tank could help communicate about the typologies
 - Need some sort of MOU that binds communities to using
- Implement incentives
 - Identify regional revenue streams
 - Create a funding pot to support
 - Scoring on transportation grants - more points if following typologies
- Feedback loop
 - Regular evaluation and updates
 - Performance metrics
 - How are things happening in comparison to the strategy?

Risks

- Current fiscal system rewards local jurisdictions (property taxes, etc)
- Cannot be a mandate.
- Don't want it to sit on a shelf. Will require technical assistance and incentives to help implement.
- Future unknowns - must be flexible
- Especially with funding - must be seen as fair across the region.
- Homogenization - don't want everything to look the same.
- If buy-in isn't there and it doesn't work, risk that we won't try it again
- Communications - backlash if this is perceived as us telling communities what to do

Action: Provide Technical Assistance to Implement Regional Vision

Description

Many communities throughout the region have limited planning capacity to implement best practices identified by the Think Tank or new strategies and recommendations from the Regional Vision and Strategy. Even where capacity exists, the support of a “neutral third party” would be valuable in implementing cross-border solutions. The Think Tank findings and strategies and model ordinances included as part of the development typologies are all designed to be resources to support local planners and decision-makers. However, beyond that, the MPO could offer:

- Augmented staff capacity
- Training for planning officials and stakeholders
- Planning and implementation grants

The MPO could also help identify and coordinate existing capacity to promote sharing. It is likely that through the other actions, specific types of capacity, training, or funding will be identified. For instance, during the second panel it was noted that training for appraisers and assessors will be critical to the success of more dense, mixed-use communities.

Describe why the action should be considered

Leaving land use decisions and visioning exercises exclusively to individual communities creates regional challenges. Communities are “trying to figure out how to build things in the right spots. And once things get in place, they will grow.” Being able to integrate or plan zoning decisions between communities was identified as a potentially valuable type of collaboration. To that end, greater collaboration among planners in the region around zoning was cited as an opportunity area. Elected officials tend to weigh the input of engineers more heavily than the input of planners, because planning recommendations may seem nebulous (compared to data-driven engineering recommendations) and because planning has a longer time horizon.

Precedents in other regions

Central Florida

The Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) provides Local Government Assistance through its Planning Advisory Program (PAS)²⁴. Among the variety of services offered, the CFRPC provides professional GIS Mapping Services which assist local governments with an assortment of mapping needs including:

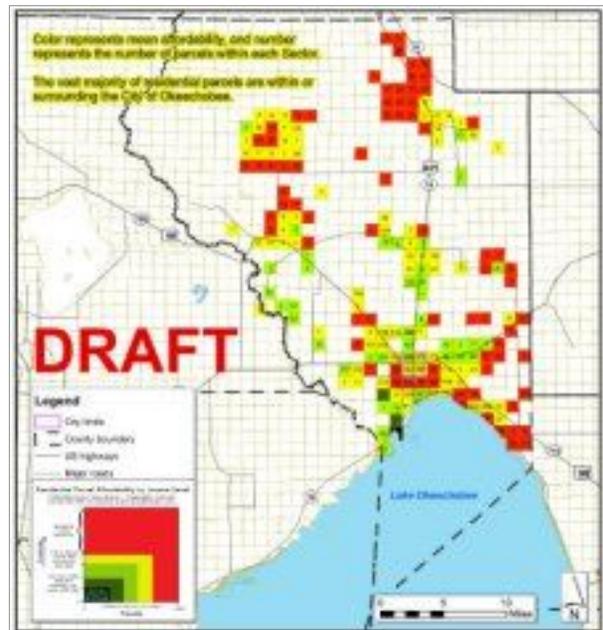
²⁴ <http://www.cfrpc.org/programs/planning-advisory-services/>

- Map Series for Comprehensive Plans – The CFRPC prepares and provides updates to the Map Series for the Comprehensive Plans, including but not limited to Future Land Use maps.
- Official Zoning Maps – The CFRPC prepares and provides updates to official zoning maps. These maps are made necessary by annexations, requests for re-zonings, and Comprehensive Plan Amendments.
- Special Project Maps – The CFRPC assists local governments with a variety of special projects needs. Special Projects maps might include Overlay District maps, Downtown Visioning maps, 3-Dimensional maps, and other specialty maps.

Affordable Parcel Inventory

The CFRPC has developed a methodology for and conducted an Affordable Parcel Inventory for residential parcels in seven local counties, including Okeechobee County (shown). The purpose was to estimate the affordability of residential parcels to households of median annual income. In this project, “affordability” is defined as a parcel’s total housing and transportation costs being less than 45% of median annual household income. Parcels that cost more than that are deemed “unaffordable”.

To estimate housing and transportation costs for each residential parcel, costs were estimated for both housing (such as potential mortgage payment or rent, utility costs, housing insurance, etc.) and transportation (based on distance from employment centers and household-support land uses such as shopping, groceries, schools, etc.). These costs combined represented the housing and transportation costs for each parcel. Data for the Affordable Parcel Inventory came from U.S. Census (2010), local property appraiser data, and original transportation cost estimates that were created by the University of Florida, specifically for this project.



In the map, color represents mean affordability, and number represents the number of parcels within each sector. Parcels are grouped by sector for clarity in viewing the information. Most residential parcels are in or surrounding the City of Okeechobee, where there is higher population density than in the remainder of the county.”²⁵

Atlanta

- Community Choices

²⁵ <http://www.cfrpc.org/services/regional-planning/technical-assistance/>

- Free technical assistance and other resources to help cities and counties in the Atlanta region implement their visions for economic growth, long-term sustainability and public health.
- Livable Centers Initiative
 - Grants using federal transportation dollars, requiring 20% local match, to fund both studies and project implementation.
 - Incentivizes local jurisdictions to re-envision their communities as vibrant, walkable places that offer increased mobility options, encourage healthy lifestyles and provide improved access to jobs and services.

Denver

The Denver Region COG’s Housing Strategy and resulting actions are seeking to address the region’s housing issues through a technical support process. Thus, allowing municipalities to engage at their own pace. One of the outcomes of the housing research was the creation in 2010 of the Transit Oriented Development loan fund to support mixed use developments near station areas as the region’s light rail expansion (FasTracks) advances.

San Diego

In the San Diego Region, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) serves as the MPO. San Diego’s approach to land use planning is directed by Smart Growth Guidelines and corresponding principles. TransNet provides \$5M annually for communities pursuing smart growth enhancements. Funding is available to support communities. Funding is used for a range of investments including: “improve streetscapes, provide for bicycle and pedestrian access, improve access to public transit, and make other related improvements that will support mixed use, transit oriented development in the smart growth opportunity areas identified on SANDAG’s Smart Growth Concept Map.”

Who should be involved

- Planning Directors and related staff from throughout the region
- IU Public Policy Institute
- MIBOR
- Historic Preservation Representatives
- Agriculture Representatives
- People’s Planning Academy

Steps

-

Risks

- Creating something that people don't want - need to engage end-users in design of assistance
- Has to be quality - create a feedback loop - otherwise, could further alienate people

Water Resources in the Central Indiana Region

Action: Convene Water-related Organizations to Develop a Platform for Collaboration

Description

The Indianapolis MPO has been tasked by members of its board with assessing the need for water-related planning as part of its future portfolio of regional services. This is the first year that the Indianapolis MPO has considered regional water planning as part of the strategic planning process. Discussions on this topic have focussed on two specific areas: a) Drinking water supply; and b) Water quality/stormwater management. The resulting recommendation has been developed through discussion with key stakeholders representing each area.

Focus on Regional Drinking Water Priorities

The MPO can serve as a partner to the Drinking Water Collaborative and work with them to recruit additional drinking water system representatives (goal is 100% representation). In 2015, the Central Indiana Drinking Water Collaborative (Collaborative) was formed by the drinking water utilities in the 9 county region to coordinate long-term supply planning and identify critical water supply issues.

This partnership can also explore models from other regions regarding how to organize a regional drinking water focus through a voluntary participation model. This approach would build on the existing formation of the Drinking Water Collaborative and allow for an open access model for participation.

Through the panel discussions the following efforts would be considered:

- Support additional investment and deployment of well monitoring
- Development of an approach to identifying and pursuing funding when water supply projects are of 'regional significance.
- Coordination of transportation projects that will spur growth and assessment of water availability with the adjacent jurisdictions.

Focus on Regional Water Quality and Stormwater Priorities

There are currently several groups working in the area of water quality and stormwater. This recommendation focuses on a role that the MPO can play in the convening of these groups, providing support aligned with the MPO's core competencies and goals, and opportunities to advance work at the regional level. One concern about the ability of the MPO to support regional stormwater and water quality efforts is that the MPO region is not the full jurisdiction that should be engaged when considering upstream contributors and downstream water users.

However, it does represent a core and through other partnerships with neighboring MPO and planning organizations this could be scaled.

The groups that could be engaged to begin this convening role include both Central Indiana-based and multi-region organizations:

- White River Watershed Alliance
- Great Lakes Water Quality Initiative
- ORSANCO
- The City of Indianapolis
- Hoosier Environmental Council
- Indiana Water Monitoring Council
- American Council of Engineering Companies of Indiana
- American Society of Civil Engineers - Metropolitan Indianapolis Chapter

To begin with these groups could convene to share information about existing efforts and identify areas for collaboration.

Stormwater and water quality organizations identified the following areas for the MPO to consider supporting:

- Data: Lack of monitoring wells and gauges to inform priorities
- Funding: For monitoring equipment, cross-border water projects, etc.; via EDD, transportation funding, advocating to keep Title 8 stormwater fee
- Transportation Projects: Opportunity to incorporate water quality in planning for transportation projects; Complete Streets model
- Policy: Use influence with policymakers to advocate for policies that enhance water quality; Provide BPs, education, model ordinances on floodplain and wetland protection; Need a process to inform policy priorities
- Surveyors: Control 70% of streams and aren't aligned with conservation best practices; Carrots & sticks to enforce best practices, advocate for policy changes, education & training

Why the action should be considered

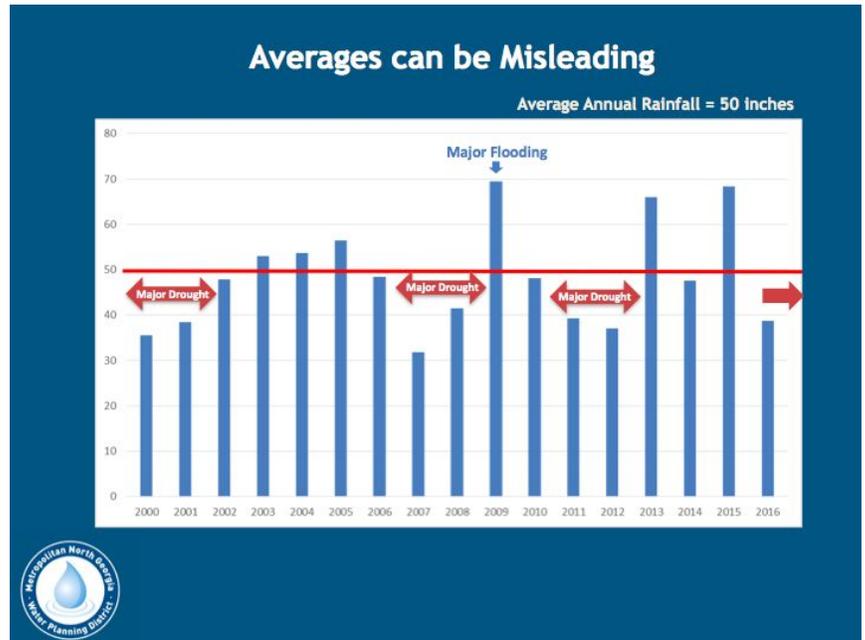
- There is an economic competitiveness need to tell a regional story and the current drinking water availability in some locations is a weakness.
 - Continued growth in communities is outstripping available water supply.
 - The region should focus on becoming drought resistant.
- While per capita water use is declining, peak water use continues to increase. Reduction measures are needed to support growth and economic development.
- Water supply infrastructure investment is borne by individual utilities and ratepayers, which restricts multi-jurisdictional focus on projects that can support broader growth.
- Impaired streams limit development opportunities.
- Detention basins limit developable space.

- Poor water quality limits potential of riverfront redevelopment.

Precedents in other regions

The Atlanta Regional Council leads the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District which covers 15 counties, 95 cities and 5.7million residents.²⁶ The water that the region has available comes from what falls from the sky as there is very little groundwater available due to elevation and rock formation.

The average annual rainfall in the region is 50” but in 2007 it was only 30”. As the image to the right illustrates reliance on averages for planning purposes smoothes out what can be disastrous occurrences. Indianapolis has experienced drought condition in 1988, 2008 and 2012.



The Water Planning District’s plan considers all water-related sectors including demand and supply, treatment, wastewater management, stormwater management conveyance and distribution.

The image to the right shows how the Metro Water District has been able to reduce water consumption despite a steady growth in population. 15 years ago the region began pursuing a rare approach tiered water conservation pricing, where “the more you use, the more you pay per gallon”. Today, all of the Metro Water District’s water systems have implemented tiered water conservation rates.

²⁶ <http://northgeorgiawater.org/>

The Metro Water District plan is developed through broad stakeholder participation and includes ongoing basin level advisory councils that identify and advocate for more localized needs.

The Metropolitan Washington (DC) Council of Governments serves in a variety of regional planning and technical assistance capacities including: transportation, water resources, air quality, economic competitiveness and a host of health and safety areas²⁷. They began in 1957 and have evolved and taken on additional responsibilities over the years.

The Water Resources Program assists local government members, and affiliated wastewater treatment and drinking water utilities, with protecting, restoring, and conserving these resources. The program also helps them address the policy and technical implications of various state and federal initiatives that have water quality and water resource implications for the region. The roles include staffing for:

- Water Resource Technical Committee
- Regional Water Quality Monitoring Subcommittee
- Drought Coordination Committee
- Anacostia Watershed Steering Committee

The Metropolitan Washington COG published a series of resources for their members and the general public including a Drought Monitoring report²⁸, Regional Water Supply Fact Sheet²⁹, Source Water Protection Briefings and more. They serve their members through the committee structure which defines issues and opportunities and items requiring further planning.

Who should be involved

- Utilities - Drinking Water Collaborative
- Local governments
- Local Economic Development Organizations (LEDOs)
- Public health
- Public/ consumers
- Emergency management agencies - local/ state/ federal
- Purdue Extension
- Agricultural Sector Reps
- State Regulators
- Indiana DNR
- Storm sewer districts

²⁷ <https://www.mwcog.org/about-us/committees-and-members/>

²⁸ <https://www.mwcog.org/documents/2017/10/03/regional-drought-and-water-supply-status-outlook-drinking-water-drought-wise-water-use-campaign/>

²⁹ <https://www.mwcog.org/documents/2017/03/08/regional-water-supply-status-fact-sheet/>

Steps

- The MPO will need to identify additional capacity to engage as a convener of both the Regional Water Drinking Water and Water Quality/ Stormwater management groups.
- There is a Water Summit being planned for August 2018 that can serve as a milestone for these planning efforts
- Develop education materials for elected official and decision-makers to understand what these efforts are looking to accomplish
- Investigate opportunities to incentivize stormwater best practices through transportation project fundings

Economic Development in the Central Indiana Region

Action: Develop a Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy

Description

Throughout this strategic planning process we have identified plans and initiatives that are working to enhance and catalyze economic growth and quality of life in the region. The Central Indiana region has a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS), which was developed in 2015 by the Indy Chamber. It also has a Regional Development Plan, which was developed by the same year by the Regional Development Authority. However, these plans, if better aligned and more robust, could serve as a long-term roadmap for the region to grow and diversify its economy, and grow its population through planning for quality of place investments.

The MPO is best suited to play this long-range planning role and like many peers could author a combined CEDS and Regional Development Plan under a common brand used in other regions, “Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy”. The current CEDS covers some of the ground that the benchmark communities do, and includes several investments that have been identified through this process as regional priorities. Talent attraction was the primary focus of the Regional Development Plan. It included a \$5 million request to fund a Regional Trails and Bikeways Development Plan. It also included a \$15 million request to fund Phase 1 of the Red Line BRT Corridor in an effort to attract residents and improve connectivity.

Similarly, the CEDS addresses the issue regarding the lack of identity with the city of Indianapolis and how this impacts the ability to recruit/retain talent in the region. The CEDS also calls out how the public cites the lack of public transportation as a major complaint, and a section of the strategic plan addresses encouraging and supporting the growth of public transportation. However, a more thorough Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy (that would serve as both the CEDS and the Regional Development Plan) may be needed to identify the full regional portfolio of needs and opportunities.

Furthermore, in order to take advantage of federal implementation funds, the MPO should become an official Economic Development District, which is required to qualify for Economic Development Administration assistance under its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs.

Why the action should be considered

Based on the interactions with various stakeholders during the planning process we note the following:

- **Economic Competitiveness.** Businesses and investors consider a location for expansion or relocation first by analyzing regions and then by digging into specific sites. Clear regional priorities and plans to address known issues are key to economic competitiveness.
- **Talent Attraction.** The Indianapolis region's growth has been fueled by migration of people from throughout the state rather than net migration from other states. There is a concern that, as time goes on, due to changing demographics and statewide population loss, there won't be enough people to draw from other parts of the state. This underlines the urgency of a regional approach to talent attraction from domestic and global markets. Employers in the region cite the inability to attract skilled workers as a major obstacle for growth and success.
- **Quality of Life.** This same sense of competition extends to quality of life investments. Communities feel like they are addressing quality of life concerns differently—and view them as a differentiator (for example, sports complexes, a focus on the arts, a historic downtown, trails). Trails were identified as an important enabler of a regional feeling — but local governments vary in their attitudes towards these types of investments, so they would likely not be the driver or the funder for multi jurisdiction trail connectivity improvements. Addressing regional quality of place needs was a high impact/ high control issue prioritized during the first panel.

Precedents in other regions

Atlanta

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is designated as the Economic Development District. ARC helped facilitate the creation of the Atlanta Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy³⁰. The goal of this effort is to provide a roadmap for navigating economic challenges while building on strengths to remain competitive for jobs and workers. Four Committees were then tasked with ongoing implementation and oversight including: Educated Workforce, Innovative Economy, Prosperous Businesses, Livable Communities.

The results of this strategy have been tracked in an annual report that documents progress made and further challenges. ARC is currently going through an update to the Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy now under the brand Catalyst.

Minneapolis/ St. Paul

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<https://atlantaregional.org/workforce-economy/economic-development/regional-economic-competitiveness-strategy/>

The Metro Council published an integrated regional strategy called Thrive 2040³¹ that brings together transportation, economic competitiveness, quality of life and other regional elements. The Economic Competitiveness³² portion of their plan includes:

- Key Industries/ Centers of Employment
- Redevelopment
- Education and Workforce
- Business Development
- Economic information, Monitoring and Strategic Initiatives

In addition the Metro Council published a set of Economic Competitiveness Resources for local communities to use the framework to assess local needs and opportunities. This supports a regional consistency and ability to leverage information and data resources.

Who should be involved

- Central Indiana Council of Elected Official (CICEO)
- Indy Chamber
- Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- INDYGO
- Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA)
- Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development
- MIBOR
- Public Policy Institute
- Central Indiana Corporate Partnership
- Indiana Business Research Center
- LEDOs

Steps

- Convene regional partners in the development a Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy scope of work. This scope would look at the existing research being undertaken, identify knowledge or defined activity gaps.
- The scope of work would contemplate that inputs from the other groups that are being proposed for regional input. These include the Water groups as well as Land Use and Housing think tank.
- Begin the process of applying for a federal Economic Development District as well as requesting planning funds from the Economic Development Administration for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy work.

³¹ <https://metro council.org/Planning/Projects/Thrive-2040/Thrive-MSP-2040-Plan.aspx?source=child>

³² <https://metro council.org/Handbook/Plan-Elements/Economic-Competitiveness.aspx>

Action: Serve as a Convener and Think Tank on Economic Development & Disruptions

Description

Many of the opportunities documented through this process related to economic development have a natural home at the Indy Chamber/ Accelerate Indy. The Chamber/ Accelerate Indy continue to have conversations and take steps towards: a regional revenue-sharing model, implementation of a marketing/branding campaign to support talent retention and attraction goals, and a regional MOU/Code of Ethics on business attraction.

The MPO could create a regional collaborative structure to convene research capacity and regionalize data availability to serve real-time decision making, development scenario modeling, and economic disruption modeling.

This can include supporting these initiatives by providing a data warehouse and the research necessary to inform development and ongoing execution. This role would be further enhanced if the MPO could provide mapping capabilities to support the Indy Partnership and Accelerate Indy as they work with business retention and expansion prospects.

Why the action should be considered

As many of the participants in the Indy MPO strategy development process have cited there are several areas where regional collaboration makes sense - regional collaboration on economic development, and in particular business attraction, and funding strategies were two of the high impact/ high control areas prioritized during the first panel discussion. Data collection and analysis is one area where there is support and a need for additional capacity that the MPO could provide. The capacity of each community to acquire and develop data varies and in some cases limits a community's ability to plan effectively.

The current development and use of data in the region has been described as 'ad hoc', which limits the region's ability to be more strategic and does not allow for ongoing business intelligence and benchmarking. Common areas of data that have been cited include:

- Demographic analysis
- Labor force and workforce information
- Economic information (wages, firm performance indicators, etc.)
- Housing inventory and characteristics e.g. building activity
- Infrastructure inventory
- School capacity
- Hospital capacity
- Quality of Life Indicators

A data warehouse/ research capacity can be developed to assemble core regional indicators and report on them at some common interval (e.g. annual). In addition, a data portal can be developed to allow for all regional partners to access core data on their individual community.

This approach can support a stronger regional message regarding assets and the economic health of the region as leaders interact with potential investors and residents.

Precedents in Other Regions

Denver Regional Council Of Governments

The Denver Regional Council Of Governments (DRCOG) has enhanced its ability to become the “go to” source for demographic and economic data analysis and forecasting, including more detailed data on commuting patterns.

Regional Data Catalogue and Portal

DRCOG maintains a large amount of spatial and tabular data that is crucial to regional planning and policy decisions³³. This data can be searched by keyword or browsed by subject. Spatial datasets can be previewed with OpenLayers (map viewer) and are available in a variety of formats. The Data Portal is an online application for data exchange between DRCOG and its members that promotes the creation of regional datasets for the purposes of planning, spatial analysis, and forecasting.

Data Visualization

DRCOG’s Denver Regional Visual Resources³⁴ (DRVR) takes some of their most interesting data and presents it in an interactive visual format, in the hope that it will give people a better understanding of the region, and perhaps even help drive informed decisions. Each section presents visualizations that tell a story about regional travel, population and employment forecasts, aging, etc. A related tool is their Regional Equity Atlas, which is a tool to help raise awareness among a wide range of stakeholders about the benefits and opportunities that a robust public transportation network can create. This interactive tool provides users with the ability to create maps that depict the region’s major origins and destinations in relation to the current and future transit network, and also generate reports on demographic, economic and other data of the region or particular communities.

Atlanta Regional Commission

Population and Employment Forecasts

³³ <http://gis.drcog.org/datacatalog/>

³⁴ <https://drcog.org/services-and-resources/denver-regional-visual-resources>

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) develops population and employment forecasts³⁵ for the 20-county region, currently forecasted through the year 2040. The forecasts help inform the development of the Atlanta Region's Plan, a long-range blueprint that details the investments that will be made in the next 25 years to improve the Atlanta region's quality of life.

Furthermore, ARC is the Census Data Affiliate, so they have legal authority to do the annual estimates and they are required by state law to assess the members based on population. This is done by the Research and Analytics Group under the Center for Livable Communities³⁶; whose purpose is to support the agency and surrounding counties. This data supports the planning for the long range transportation, water efforts, and land use. A strong data foundation helps a region understand what is happening in the region, and helps identify trends for policy makers to pivot around.

Neighborhood Nexus

The Research and Analytics Group within ARC is also heavily engaged with Neighborhood Nexus³⁷, a program that they manage which is a partnership between ARC and the community foundation. Neighborhood Nexus offers state-of-the-art visualization tools help users to understand and analyze thousands of data variables. The goal is to provide information community leaders need to make data-driven decisions.

ARC's data is made available to the public via <http://opendata.atlantaregional.com/>. The public can access this to find out more about their community, and even make apps.

Who should be involved

- Accelerate Indy (Dir. of Research)
- Public Policy Institute
- MIBOR
- Central Indiana Corporate Partnership
- Indiana Economic Development Commission
- LEDOs
- Indiana Business Research Council

Steps

- Convene organizations who collect data and conduct research related to economic development, land use, housing and transportation.

³⁵

<https://atlantaregional.org/atlanta-region/population-forecasts-estimates/population-employment-forecasts/>

³⁶ <https://atlantaregional.org/about-arc/>

³⁷ <http://neighborhoodnexus.org/>

- Identify what is currently being spent/ invested by stakeholder on data and research to better understand the existing regional capacity
- Define how these organizations work together to share data and research, identify gaps and develop research agenda topics
- The MPO could convene, solicit calls for additional research and conduct research related to transportation, land use and housing implications of development and economic disruption related issues.
- Continue to define what areas of research provide regional benefit with local autonomy.
- Build on recent large scale site selection response experiences to better understand what data and other information should be available real-time.
- Develop a process for research interpretation and actions development
- Serve as a convener for a conversations focussed on economic development incentives

Risks

Develop a Data Warehouse and Dashboard

Description

Throughout the interviews and panel discussion there were several references for the need for a resource to aggregate data from the various disciplines. Housing data relates to land use, land use to economic development, and all of it to transportation planning. The MPO is in the process of developing a Data Panel similar to those commissioned for the other strategic planning thematic area.

Housing

MPO form a partnership with MIBOR to access housing market data to be included in a dashboard to inform planning and policy-making. This dashboard would aggregate existing data on both the supply of and demand for housing. It would analyze the data to show comparisons, trends, and forecasts. Snapshots of the region, counties, and municipalities would be available, as well as access to more detailed data. If goals related to creating a healthy housing market are established, corresponding indicators could be established and tracked through the dashboard. Ideally, the dashboard would also pull in related data on transportation assets, population, and land use (e.g. zoning, planned developments, etc.) would also be compiled through the dashboard. This dashboard could build off of existing tools such as SAVI and IndyVitals.

Water

The Drinking Water Collaborative has begun to assemble report on supply and demand in order to identify regional issues. This data can be made available to key stakeholders to better understand water availability and issues around land use and economic development. There is a need for increased attention around reduction of peak water demand

Economic Development

The Indy Chamber and various LEDO partners access and publish data on a variety of topics. Opportunities exist to align this data on a regional scale and view the integration of economic metrics with other variables including housing, land use, transportation and water. In addition several communities utilize impact modeling and are paying for the same service over and over. There may be an opportunity to centralize this role.

Why the action should be considered

Policy-makers, investors, developers, economic development practitioners, and others lack access to a holistic understanding of current market trends. Smaller municipalities in particular are at a disadvantage when it comes to having the resources to gather and analyze this data.

On the Housing front this lack of data could be contributing to a mismatch identified by the

Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of REALTORS® (MIBOR) and Indianapolis MPO's survey of Central Indiana residents' views on housing, conducted in 2012. While general satisfaction with quality of life was high compared to national statistics, many residents are not living in their preferred home and/or neighborhood type, indicating a potential mismatch between supply and demand.¹

Precedents from other regions

The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) which serves the Greater-Boston region provides a range of housing³⁸ related services that aimed at creating housing choices that meet local needs including

affordable choices, family-friendly options, places for seniors. They do this through a range of services including:

- Production of residential market analysis
- Creation of mixed-income neighborhood and TOD plans
- Gathering, interpreting and sharing housing data
- Drafting zoning bylaws and ordinances
- Lobbying for statutory change at the state level
- Assisting with community outreach and engagement

MAPC has developed several open access tools for planning and data analysis. The following information has been copied from their website in order to illustrate the approach and materials available.

MassBuilds³⁹

A definitive inventory of past, present, and projected real estate development in Metro Boston and across Massachusetts. This fully-interactive website allows users to search, filter, summarize, and download information about over 3,500 residential and commercial development projects in the region. Available attributes about each project include housing units and commercial square footage, status, year of completion, parking availability, proximity to transit, WalkScore™, and other information.

Demographics and Housing Demand Projections⁴⁰

To help the region and its communities plan for the future, **MAPC prepares and updates projections of population change, household growth, and housing demand for Metro Boston.** Projections are available for individual municipalities and the region as a whole.

MA Land Parcel Database⁴¹

The Massachusetts Land Parcel Database is **a statewide atlas of more than 2.1 million land parcel boundaries and associated tax assessor data.** The database includes statistics about

³⁸ <https://www.mapc.org/our-work/expertise/housing/#foo>

³⁹ <http://www.massbuilds.com/>

⁴⁰ <http://www.mapc.org/learn/projections/>

⁴¹ <http://www.mapc.org/learn/data/>

each parcel, including floor area ratio, assessed value per area, impervious surface, and other indicators.

The Massachusetts Housing Data Portal provides comprehensive demographic and housing data on every municipality in the Commonwealth. The site's Basic Needs Assessment generates the full suite of required content for this portion of a state-approved Housing Production Plan. Additionally, the Housing Data Profiles show hundreds of comparable housing related indicators for each municipality. These digital tools provide municipal staff and local stakeholders with relevant and actionable data on local housing need and demand. Housing.MA eases the burden and significantly reduces the cost of data collection, processing, and analysis required to develop a Housing Production Plan.

KnowPlace⁴²

KnowPlace is a tool for creating neighborhood-level statistics for any community in Metro Boston. Unlike other sites that provide tract-by-tract data points or municipal snapshots, KnowPlace allows the user to draw their own neighborhood boundaries and access reports that aggregate information from multiple sources and data tables.

Who should be involved

- MIBOR
- Indy MPO
- Real estate developers
- Public Officials
- Banking industry
- CDFI and non profit developers
- State Housing Finance Agency

Steps

- Develop a scope for what data the dashboard would collect, who runs/maintains it, etc.
 - Would subscription services play?
- Identify a funding source
- Work with MIBOR to understand current plans relative to data

⁴² <http://data.mapc.org/tools/1>