1999 Overall Work Program Sets Priorities

This issue of *temPO* deals with a variety of topics likely to be in the news and on your minds in 1999. Included among these are the priorities named in the new Overall Work Program which guides the efforts of your MPO, newly proposed modifications to our regional transportation plan, the return of the program that helps us all manage our local air quality and a new educational initiative that’s turning the northeast corridor into a classroom. Plus, updates on the Vision Plan, conNECTions and the Citizens Advisory Committee. You’ll hear about them all during the coming year, but why wait? Read up on them now just by keeping pace with *temPO*!

The 1999 Overall Work Program is our map for navigating through the coming year” says Lori Miser, MPO Manager. “Through it, we address the concerns, and incorporate the efforts, of our planning partners like the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC), the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).” Often, these elements come together for the first time during the development of the OWP. “It’s all a part of our continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process,” explains Miser.

The OWP reflects the mission of The Indianapolis Regional Transportation Planning Program, which states:

"'Regional Transportation Plan Expands

"It’s a living document,” explains Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Plan, which helps guide the development of the area’s transportation system for the next twenty-plus years. “If it weren’t, we wouldn’t have been able to respond to changing conditions as we do now.”

Monitoring those changing conditions is a cooperative effort of the citizens, planners, engineers and public officials who contribute to the plan.
MPO’s Class Act

The public involvement program for the conNECtions transportation study of the northeast corridor will enrich the curriculum for area schools this coming fall. As many as ten high schools throughout the corridor, which stretches from downtown Indianapolis northeast to Noblesville, and at least twenty-five teachers have volunteered to work with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), sponsor of the study, to develop projects that involve transportation planning with a diverse range of academic subjects, including Art, Mathematics, Government, Computer-Assisted Design (CAD) Lab, Industrial Technology, Environmental Science and English. “It promises educators and students a unique opportunity to apply their interests to real-life problems,” said Mike Dearing, MPO Senior Planner and coordinator of the Distance Learning Project. “For the MPO, it’s a new way to increase public involvement in our region’s transportation planning process and to interface with area schools —two important goals for us.”

The project is a joint venture of the MPO, the Corporation for Educational Communications (CEC) and the Central Indiana Educational Service Center who will cooperatively oversee its administration. Participating educators will suggest related projects this spring which could be incorporated into their class curriculum next fall. Examples could include the design of potential transit facilities in CAD labs and Mathematics, tracking public participation opportunities in the planning process in Government, evaluating the response to the study’s media coverage and its recommendations in English, Language Arts and Social Studies, and the incorporation of Art into the design of structures and information signs. Grants, covering the cost of the educators’ time for the development and teaching of approved projects, will be underwritten by the CEC.

“It’s an exciting example of synergy between public education and the democratic process,” says John A. Harrold, Town of Cumberland Council President and Chairman of the Educational Subcommittee for the MPO’s Citizens’ Advisory Committee, who initially suggested the project. “The conNECtions study needs the public’s informed participation to build consensus and achieve its goal of recommending a locally preferred solution to the problems of congestion and lack of mobility in the northeast corridor,” Harrold explains, “and educators are looking for dynamic, real world issues upon which their students can have an impact.”

cont on page 3, see Class Act
“It’s a win-win situation,” Dearing agrees, noting that a distance learning tie-in with the transportation and land use planning initiatives is likely to continue beyond the conclusion of conNECTIONS and could benefit the eventual implementation process of the study's recommendations. “The northeast corridor study is a test case for the MPO’s participation in distance learning,” Dearing notes, “but it happens to be one in which interested teachers and students can have substantial influence.”

In addition to the distance learning initiative, conNECTIONS' Public Involvement Plan includes presentations before community groups, telephone hot lines, a web site, the Citizens Advisory Committee, public service television and radio commercials, focus groups, telephone surveys, traffic report sponsorships and direct mail programs. This is the most extensive involvement program undertaken to support a study of this kind in our region and its key objective is to encourage the public's informed participation in the transportation planning process.

conNECTIONS is scheduled for completion in November, 1999. For more information about the Distance Learning Project, call Mike Dearing at (317) 327-5139. For information about conNECTIONS, call Lori Miser at (317) 327-5136 or Mike Peoni at (317) 327-5133.

Class Act (from page 2)

Mobility Conference Promotes 2020 Vision

The quality of life in Central Indiana, as impacted by current and future traffic congestion and vehicle-based pollution, has been the subject of the recently completed Central Indiana Transportation and Land Use Vision Plan. This plan, under the direction of the Central Indiana Regional Citizen's League (CIRCL) and through its sixty-member steering committee and more than 20 months of citizen forums, has investigated cost-effective, environmentally-sound land use and transportation strategies for possible incorporation into local and region-wide planning.

The results of this effort were presented on Tuesday, April 20, 1999 at the Mobility 2020 Conference. For the admission price of $10 ($20 with lunch), attendees heard Peter Katz, author of The New Urbanism, speak on “Mobility and the Modern Metropolis”. They will also had the opportunity to participate in two break out sessions, called “Traveling Well” and “Stewarding Land” with panelists who helped shape the Vision Plan. In addition, attendees will receive a free interactive CD-ROM detailing all of the transportation and land use strategies outlined in the Vision Plan.

For more information on the Vision Plan, or to receive your own free, inter-active CD-ROM, call Jennifer (317/920-3462) or Adrienne (317/920-3460) of CIRCL or, toll-free, 877/55-CIRCL.
The city’s 1999 Ozone Awareness Campaign, commonly referred to as KNOZONE, will soon kick off another season of helping to educate area residents about local ozone issues, and their opportunity to reduce ozone pollution through a variety of voluntary measures. Ozone - a colorless pollutant formed when the emissions of vehicles, lawnmowers and industry react in the air around us — forms only in the presence of sunlight, especially during hot weather. For this reason, high concentrations of ozone pollution are more likely to develop as temperatures rise in the late spring and summer, presenting a possible health risk for individuals with respiratory problems.

“This is our fourth year of using the KNOZONE campaign to educate our area residents about ozone pollution,” says Lori Miser, MPO Manager. “Increased public awareness and the voluntary compliance of people throughout the region go a long way toward improving our air quality.”

Past research conducted by the Opinion Laboratory at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI) has proven a significant increase in 1.) the public awareness of the ozone problem, 2.) the percentage of Marion County residents familiar with Nozone Action Days — days in which special voluntary measures are recommended to reduce the formation of ozone pollution, and 3.) the percentage of the public who took at least one voluntary step to reduce ozone pollution, and 4.) the number of respondents who recognized that individual sources, such as automobiles and small engines, contribute significantly to ozone pollution.

“We want everyone to be in the KNOZONE,” says Miser. “The more people understand the issue, the more they can help.” For this reason, the use of campaign components proven successful at capturing attention and conveying information in past years will be expanded for 1999, including:

- an interactive school kit, which proved popular in all school systems in the surrounding Metro area counties last year. This year, more than 20,000 will be distributed to third graders in IPS, township school districts, and surrounding counties topping last years distribution total of 12,500.
- an interactive web site featuring opportunities to register for “Nozone Action Day” notification and to post your own questions at www.knozone.com
- a toll-free information line at 1-888-DJA-KNOW
- on-going radio and television ads, sponsored again this year by Cinergy Corporation, the parent company of PSI Energy
- educational brochures and newspaper advertising under-written by Cinergy as well as other local corporate citizens interested in ensuring the continued growth of ozone pollution awareness.

Again, nearly 200 members of the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce will join the city in participating in the KNOZONE program and spreading awareness of ozone pollution. “Helping people understand the causes of ozone pollution and the easy voluntary steps the public can take to help reduce it, is what KNOZONE is all about,” says Miser.

NOZONE Action Day Activities

As in past years, the NOZONE symbol will appear on TV and in the newspaper this spring and summer to indicate a NOZONE Action Day — days in which special voluntary measures are recommended to reduce the formation of ozone pollution. Those wishing to help reduce the possibility of ozone pollution can do so by...

- filling gas tanks after 6 pm
- mowing lawns after 6 pm
- riding the bus, and enjoying weekday Nozone Action Day discounted fares. For bus route information, call IndyGo at 635-3344.
- choosing in-store service rather than drive-thru lanes
- carpooling and/or combining errands to reduce car trips
- keeping cars tuned
- making short trips by bike or on foot
- using water-based, rather than oil-based, paints and solvents
- avoiding the use of aerosols
Here are just a few of the issues “heating up” at your MPO:

Distance Learning Connects with CAC

The same technology that will be used this fall to link area schools with the MPO as part of its public involvement program for the conNECTions transportation study of the Northeast Corridor was demonstrated at the March 23rd meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee. Meeting attendees, gathered at two locations, were able to interact using video and audio communication links. Some MPO personnel and a few private participants were gathered at the teleconferencing facility of the Corporation for Educational Communications in downtown Indianapolis, while most private citizens gathered in room H178 at North Central High School. Primary subject of the meeting was progress made in the conNECTions study which is also the focus of academic projects currently being designed by at least 25 participating educators of various disciplines for possible inclusion in the fall curricula of at least ten area schools. (see related story, page 2)

CAC ’99

If you’re interested in participating in the region’s transportation planning process, start attending meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee. As the public arm of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council, the CAC works closely with your MPO to address issues relating to the area’s current and future transportation needs. And, now, it’s easier than ever to participate!

Last year, the CAC agreed to meet on a monthly basis because of the critical nature of on-going projects and the need for timely responses. In doing so, what had been a quarterly commitment of four meetings has tripled, allowing more opportunity for the informed participation of people like you! Join us for our on-going discussion of the conNECTions Transportation Study of the Northeast Corridor, as well as other subjects integral to the region’s mobility and quality of life.

CAC meetings are scheduled for 6:30 to 8 pm in Room 107 of the City-County Building, 200 East Washington Street, downtown Indianapolis, on the following Tuesday evenings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April 27</th>
<th>May 25</th>
<th>June 22</th>
<th>July 27</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>November 16</td>
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</table>

Call Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, at 327-5133 for more information or to be placed on the CAC mailing list.

conNECTions Update

More than a dozen transportation alternatives are now under serious consideration by those leading the transportation study of the Northeast Corridor, called conNECTions. Included among these are highway expansion, bus-only and combined bus/rail alternatives. Each will be evaluated for effectiveness in mitigating the problems of congestion and lack of mobility that plague the region’s busiest corridor.

For specifics on these alternatives, as well as updates on the study’s progress, watch for new information on our web site (www.indygov.org/connections), call the conNECTions hot line at 1-877-N-E-C-LINK, or call Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, to be added to the teMPO mailing list. The newsletter’s next issue will be a Special Edition focused on the study’s progress over the last year.
O.M.M. On The (Indy)Go

The Office of Mobility Management (O.M.M.), a city government agency operated by a private company, oversees and coordinates transit services in the Marion County area. As previously reported in tɛMPO (Volume One, Issue Four), the O.M.M is now responsible for the marketing, strategic planning, customer service and contract oversight of public transportation throughout Indianapolis, which is known by the collective name “IndyGo”.

The Office of Mobility Management monitors the operations of all public transit providers to assure consistent delivery of service. “Most people recognize the big buses, because they run regularly scheduled routes throughout Marion County,” says Paul Larson, Executive Director. “But we have other providers, and programs, to meet more specialized needs.” One example is Open Door, a program which provides public transportation for citizens who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to use regularly scheduled bus service. “Customized services are part of our goal of being customer-driven,” Larson says. “As America’s 21st Century City, Indianapolis is placing more emphasis on cleaner, more energy-efficient travel alternatives. My goal is to keep public transportation at the top of the list as an alternative to more highways and parking lots.”

To make sure it stays there, the O.M.M. works closely with the Transit Advisory Council (TAC), a group comprised of citizens who ride the bus, representatives of social service agencies and business people. The TAC, which meets once a month and is open to the public, provides important feedback to the O.M.M. concerning the services it oversees. In addition, the Metro Advisory Council provides a specialized forum for the area’s disabled riders, reporting directly to the Metro Board.

“At O.M.M., we have four basic jobs — quality assurance, system planning, customer information and public relations/marketing,” Larson says. “But public transportation works best when the public gets involved. So, ride the bus and let us know what you think.”

For more information on the Office of Mobility Management or IndyGo, call the Transit Store at 635-3344 or 327-7539.

?DID YOU KNOW?

Last year, IndyGo — Indianapolis’s transit system —
carried 10,000,000 passengers 6,931,228 miles over 34 routes in 150 vehicles!

Your MPO Staff

... includes these people who would be happy to address your comments or questions on any aspect of the transportation planning process:

Steve Cunningham • Senior Planner 317/327-5403
Mike Dearing • Senior Planner 317/327-5139
Kevin Mayfield • Planner 317/327-5135
Lori Miser • Manager 317/327-5136
Michael Peoni • Principal Planner 317/327-5133
Sweson Yang, AICP • Chief Transportation Planner 317/327-5137
The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Regional Transportation Planning Program is responsible for the development of plans and programs for local and state governments in the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) for highways, transit, and other means of moving people and goods in compliance with federal transportation requirements.

To achieve this mission, the program has as its major goals:

1. The identification of future transportation needs by analyzing existing conditions and trends and making projections of future changes.
2. The provision of a factual basis for comprehensive public policies to meet the transportation needs of people and their communities.
3. The preparation of plans in which streets, public transit, highways, airports and other means of moving people and goods are properly related to plans and program for the physical, social, economic, environmental and energy needs of the Indianapolis region.
4. The maintenance of a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive planning process that meets the requirements of the transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) which will enable plans to be kept current and modified as necessary to meet changing conditions and the requirements of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA).

“That last goal makes the program’s relationship to all of our planning activities pretty clear,” Miser notes. Maintaining a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive planning process is always part of our annual work program. The OWP sets priorities for the year and keeping our planning process current and comprehensive is always among them.”

Issued on an annual basis, the OWP incorporates the current funding and priorities of five transportation-related sub-elements. The five elements that contribute to this comprehensive, contemporary perspective are:

- Transportation Monitoring and Management Systems
- Major Investment Studies and Multi-modal Plan
- Transportation Plan
- Transportation Planning Support
- Transportation Improvement Program

“The Transportation Plan is one of the five sub-elements considered during the development of the OWP,” Miser points out. “Consideration of all sub-elements results in the action plan or priorities list identified by the OWP.”

Priorities for the 1999 OWP can be summarized as the following eight major planning activities:

**Freight System Plan Airport Deployment Study**

The Indianapolis Freight System Plan (See tcmPO’98, Issues 2 & 3) has recommended further study of the Airport Freight Development Zone to explore inter-modal connections and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) potentials. This study will build on previous extensive studies and expand recommended improvements to take advantage of synergy and ITS technologies.

**Knozone Public Awareness Program**

Year four of this initiative will continue efforts begun in 1996 to educate the public about ground level ozone pollution and enlist their aid in taking voluntary steps to reduce it.

**Major Investment Study of the Northeast Corridor**

This major investment study of NorthEast Corridor Transportation, called conNECtions, will conclude in late 1999 by recommending a locally preferred, financially achievable alternative after evaluating a variety of strategies for mitigating traffic congestion along I-69, SR 37, I-465 and other major arterials. Considered strategies will include the role of transit, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), travel demand management, roadway improvements and other options in improving traffic conditions, air quality, personal mobility and quality of life.

cont on page 10, see Program
Plan (from page 1)

With their help, the plan ensures that facilities and services necessary to support the mobility needs of the community and its future growth are anticipated and available. It also provides decision-makers with information upon which to make “first things first” choices.

“Advance knowledge of the region’s mobility needs is key to the allocation of resources, preservation of rights-of-way and coordination of land use decisions,” Peoni says, “That’s why the plan always looks more than twenty years ahead and is updated every couple of years.

It’s also why the plan is regional in scope, covering the area called the “Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)” which includes Marion County and portions of Hamilton, Boone, Hendricks, Johnson and Hancock counties. Included in this area are the towns of Fishers, New Whiteland, Speedway, Westfield and Whiteland and the cities of Brownsburg, Carmel, Greenwood, Indianapolis, Plainfield and Zionsville.

This planning area consists of the area defined by the Census Bureau as urbanized in 1990 plus the contiguous area expected to be urbanized by the year 2020, the current planning horizon (see map, page 3).

When developing a plan for more than twenty years in the future, the area’s anticipated growth is a key factor. Assessing this growth potential must take into account physical growth, as well as the driving forces of population growth, increases in the number of households, and employment increases.

“By all these factors, the outlook is good for the Indianapolis region,” Peoni says. “Our strong and diversified economy should continue to grow, producing increased employment and prompting population growth and an increase in the number of households.” Our strong local transportation network will play a critical role in assuring this continued economic growth.

This network, and the region’s ample supply of land, will probably also promote the continuation of our dispersed development pattern, with nearly all new development occurring in the suburban portion of the planning area. Current development in Marion County’s Center Township represents one exception to this rule, however. Increased commercial, retail and residential activity is enhancing the attractiveness of the central area and should stimulate healthy competition through the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table #1 — Indianapolis MPA Modeling</th>
<th>Socio-Economic Forecasts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTUAL 1990</td>
<td>Forecast 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>1,056,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>409,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Employment</td>
<td>728,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Employment</td>
<td>130,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Retail Employment</td>
<td>598,854</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table #2 — Indianapolis MPA Modeling</th>
<th>Travel Demand Forecast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESTIMATED 1990</td>
<td>Forecast 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Daily Person Trips</td>
<td>3,658,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel</td>
<td>26,192,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Vehicle Hours of Travel</td>
<td>604,254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From these development scenarios, resident population, number of households and total employment are forecast (See table 1). When these socio-economic forecasts are factored through trip-making equations, substantial travel demand increases for the area are anticipated (see table 2). Based on these usage forecasts, the plan makes roadway improvement recommendations. “We are constantly re-evaluating our socio-economic projections to make sure we’re keeping pace with reality,” assu...
1998 Plan Amendment

The following changes have been adopted for the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Plan:

Add to 1998-2006 Urban Projects
- Widen to four lanes 56th St. from Lafayette Rd. to Guion Rd., at a cost of $5 million. A portion of Lafayette to Georgetown Rd. is currently in the 2020+ Urban Projects-Unfunded time period.

Add to 1998-2006 State Projects (Using STP and/or NHS funds)
- Widen to four lanes Brookville Rd. from Post Rd. to Marion Co.-Hancock Co. Line.
- Widen to four lanes Brookville Rd. from Marion Co./Hancock Co. Line to CR 500 W.

Add to 1998-2006 State Urban Projects with State Maintenance Funding
- Widen to six lanes Northwest I-465 from .24 km west of Kessler to .8 km north of I-465 at a cost of $45 million.
- Modify the I-465 at West 86th St. interchange and the I-465 at West 71st St., interchange.

Move from 2020+ Unfunded State Projects to 2007-2015 State Urban Projects with State Maintenance Funding
- Widen to eight lanes with interchange modifications West I-465 from US 36 to 10th St. at a cost of $36 million, and from 34th St. to I-65 at a cost of $45 million.

- Upgrade US 31 Freeway with ten new interchanges at a cost of $292.707 million (currently on plan from 106th to 216th for widening to six lanes)

Widen to eight lanes between I-465 and SR 431
Widen to twelve lanes between SR 431 and 151st St.
Widen to ten lanes between 151st St. and 161st St.
Widen to eight lanes between 161st St. and SR 32
Widen to six lanes between SR 32 and 196th St.
- Widen to six lanes US 31 from 196th St. to .5 mile north of SR38 with a new interchange at SR 38, at a cost of $15 million.
- Widen to eight lanes I-65 from I-70 to Raymond St. at a cost of $11.8 million.

Change Project Description — 1998-2006 State STP/NHS Projects
INDOT, ID#108.1, Michigan Rd (US 421) 121st St. to I-465 (project currently terminates at 96th St.) Widen to four lanes, including interchange modification (not included in current project description) at a cost of $17,860 million.

Completed Projects to be Removed from the Listing of 2016-2020 Urban Projects
- Carmel, ID #7 & 8 — Widen to three lanes 116th St. from Keystone Ave. to River Rd.

Projects under construction to be Removed from 1998-2006 State Urban Projects with Special Funding
- Fishers, ID #35.1 — Widen to four lanes 96th St. from Allisonville Rd. to Lantern Rd.
- Hamilton Co., ID #34.1 — Widen to four lanes, 96th St. from Brandt Rd. to River Rd.

Projects under construction to be Removed from 2020+ Rural Projects in the MPA (unfunded)
- Hamilton Co., ID #77 — Build new four-lane roadway to extend Hazel Dell Road from 146th St. to 96th St.

Given the positive growth forecasts for the Indianapolis MPA, particularly in suburban portions, the plan has recommended improvements to both roadway systems and transit operations. Specific projects and programs are, or will be, identified that assure the continued smooth flow of travel in the region. The 1998 expansion projects fit this criteria. However, the extent and magnitude of the projected need exceeds any reasonable estimate of available funding resources, as is reflected in the development of the “needs plan” into a “cost feasible plan.” As a result, only a portion of the projected total need recommendations is likely to be funded. “There are a lot of tough choices for policy makers as they weigh the relative merits of needed projects,” says Peoni. “Our plan, with its constant updates and amendments, provides a current, factual basis for these deliberations.”
Program (from page 7)

Continuing Refinement of the Regional Transportation Plan

Activities will include review and any needed modification to the year 2020 revenue forecasts and priority project cost estimates to ensure the Plan continues to be cost feasible; review status of I-465 in close cooperation with INDOT and its resulting impact on the Plan; and incorporating any Plan revisions into the regional travel forecast model and rerun the model and air quality conformity analysis, if needed.

Traffic Impact Study (TIS) Process

An on-going activity which reviews traffic impact studies prepared for proposed development projects in order to assess their impact on our regional transportation system. The TIS process results in recommendations for traffic improvements which will mitigate adverse impacts to the transportation system.

Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program

This process documents the federally-funded regional transportation projects proposed to be undertaken over the next three years.

Indianapolis Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan

Continue to examine special study areas identified in Phase I of the plan; collaborate with Indy Greenways to develop a comprehensive map of greenways, bike/ped plan and other bicycle/pedestrian facilities. This map is to replace the existing bicycle user map.

Community Involvement

Continue to actively involve the community in the transportation planning process via the Citizens Advisory Committee, teMPO newsletters and other MPO-related communications and outreach efforts.

“As always, it’s going to be a busy year,” says Miser. “By helping us make considered choices to set priorities, the OWP focuses our efforts and budgets where they’ll do the most good.” For more information on the 1999 Overall Work Program, call Lori Miser at 327-5136 or MPO Chief Transportation Planner Sweson Yang, AICP, at 327-5137.
SPECIAL REPORT

You may have heard about it during radio traffic reports. Or, in IHSAA finals broadcasts, on local talk shows, or as the subject of newspaper articles. Or, even through public forums or direct mail pieces. But, chances are, you still may have questions about conNECTions — the 18-month study of NorthEast Corridor Transportation. If so, you’ve come to the right place! This update of teMPO’s May/June 1998 Special Edition on the same topic (For reprints, call Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, 317/327-5133) synopsizes progress to-date, possible strategies currently under consideration to mitigate the congestion and lack of mobility that plague the area are of growing concern elsewhere in the region, though to a lesser degree. Finding regionally preferred solutions for these problems that can be first implemented in the Northeast Corridor, then employed in our other “hot spots” is what conNECTions is all about.

conNECTions is an 18-month transportation study intended to (1) address the transportation problems in the northeast corridor, (2) help maintain the integrity of our transportation system, and (3) develop solutions that are financially achievable and locally preferred. To achieve these goals, your Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the study’s administrator, along with its planning partners (See Funding Box, page 19) is actively seeking the public’s informed participation to build consensus and, eventually, arrive at a mutually agreed upon recommendation.

NECT Alternatives

At the very center of conNECTions is NorthEast Corridor Transportation,” says Lori Miser, MPO Manager. “conNECTions focuses on improving transportation system safety and efficiency in the region’s busiest corridor now and in the future.” Because it incorporates our most traveled roadways, the northeast corridor - the area stretching from downtown Indianapolis northeast to Noblesville (see map, page 3) — poses problems for our transportation system that are extreme, if not unique. The same rush hour congestion and lack of mobility that plague the area are of growing concern elsewhere in the region, though to a lesser degree. Finding regionally preferred solutions for these problems that can be first implemented in the Northeast Corridor, then employed in our other “hot spots” is what conNECTions is all about.

conNECTions is an 18-month transportation study intended to (1) address the transportation problems in the northeast corridor, (2) help maintain the integrity of our transportation system, and (3) develop solutions that are financially achievable and locally preferred. To achieve these goals, your Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the study’s administrator, along with its planning partners (See Funding Box, page 19) is actively seeking the public’s informed participation to build consensus and, eventually, arrive at a mutually agreed upon recommendation.

cont on page 6, see Study Update

Study Update

It’s amazing what we’ve learned over the last year,” says Lori Miser, MPO Manager, of the 18-month conNECTions study, now in its 13th month. “As transportation planners, we certainly had enough technical information to define the problems conNECTions is intended to help address. But, over the last year, we’ve gotten a lot of first-hand, personal input from the people who deal with these problems everyday — residents and travelers of the Northeast Corridor,” she explains. “How they handle these issues, how they cope with travel difficulties, and what they think should be done about them, has influenced both the goals and methodologies of conNECTions.”

cont on page 7, see NECT Alternatives
Have you ever wondered what it means when planners and engineers “model” something? Right now, strategies are being “modeled” as part of conNECTions (See NECT Alternatives, page 1), but what does that mean? And how is the process conducted?

“There’s really no mystery, just a lot of hard work,” laughs Bill Wiedelman, Supervising Engineer for Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, the transportation consulting firm primarily responsible for the modeling work. “Basically, we process an exhaustive amount of data in an effort to provide decision-makers with clear choices.”

The process begins with the Indianapolis Transportation Model which was developed in 1995 as part of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Plan. The model consists of data and simulation software which can be used to create a system-wide representation of travel characteristics, or a travel demand model. “The model divides the study area into small geographic units, called Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ),” explains Wiedelman. “There are 1012 of these units in the Indianapolis Metropolitan Modeling Area (see MPA map, page 3) and the model describes each by population, employment and other socio-economic factors that influence travel behavior, including median income and auto ownership.”

A “base year condition” description of the study area is created using this known information from Census data. A “future year condition” description is created using growth projections. “Our simulation model also describes our study area’s transportation system by roadway network and transit services,” notes Wiedelman. “Using mathematical equations, the number of trips produced by, and attracted to, each TAZ is determined and assigned to its transportation system.” Trip counts are done for both base and future years. To “calibrate our model,” and help assure process validity, base year traffic assignments are compared with actual traffic counts. If the model duplicates actual counts, it is considered capable of estimating future travel demand using future projections.

“Our simulation model also describes our study area’s transportation system by roadway network and transit services,” notes Wiedelman. “Once we know where deficiencies will develop, we create alternatives to correct the situations,” Wiedelman explains. “We assess the impact various alternatives will have on our transportation system’s operating level-of-service.” This information helps establish an alternative’s relative efficiency and contributes to its perceived benefits or disadvantages. “Essentially, we try to bring travel demand and system capacity back into balance,” he says.

Still, for all of its detail, the modeling process is best used as a “broad brush” system analysis tool. “For any given alternative, we’re considering ridership projections, air quality impacts, ability to serve total travel demand and a hundred other things,” Wiedelman notes. “That’s why we’re most comfortable identifying major trends with modeling, not designing intersection details.”

cont on page 19, see Modeling
The Northeast Corridor, study area of conNECTions, runs from just south of downtown Indianapolis northeast to just north of Noblesville. It includes most of the northeast quadrant of Marion County, the Town of Fishers and the Cities of Noblesville and Carmel and portions of southern Hamilton County.

Note: all roads on boundary lines are excluded except Marion County’s east and south county lines.
Elevated Transit Alignments

Like subways, elevated transit alignments provide greater overall speed by eliminating conflicts with surface vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Newer systems in Atlanta, San Francisco and Washington are elevated, as are older systems in Chicago and New York.

Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) and other monorail technologies are also typically carried on elevated track, thus having similar negative impacts (i.e. aesthetic, neighborhood, higher construction and maintenance costs).

Benefits differ, however, with PRT offering slower travel speeds and lower capacities than conventional transit. Also, because PRT is new, many systems involve proprietary technologies which limit vendor competition and future expansion options.

Estimated Cost: Elevated facilities usually cost about three times as much as surface facilities. In addition, elevated structures tend to be visually unattractive and difficult to integrate into the urban environment. For this reason, most newer systems in mid-size cities are built at-grade. PRT systems have higher initial costs than conventional light rail due to the large number of individual vehicles required.

Subways

Locating transit lines below-grade (underground) eliminates the possibility of transit/general traffic accidents, permitting higher transit speeds and improved safety. However, the benefit comes at a price. Below-grade alignments typically cost nine to ten times as much as similar surface alignments. In addition, subway stations cost about twenty times as much as similar stations above ground. This is why newer transit systems in mid-sized areas generally tend to be at-grade.

Estimated Cost: Approximately nine to ten times the cost of an at-grade alignment.

Previous Studies: National/international studies have indicated that only very large, densely populated urban centers (e.g. Chicago, New York, Washington, Atlanta) can generate the ridership necessary to justify the high cost of this type of transit.

Pros: (compared to at-grade transit alignments)
- less disruption of surface traffic
- accommodates greater overall transit speeds
- enhances safety
- less disruptive in terms of aesthetics and neighborhood impacts

Cons:• nine to ten times more expensive than surface alignments
• higher on-going maintenance costs
• longer and more disruptive construction period
• about three times the cost of elevated alignments which offer similar speed and traffic benefits when compared to at-grade alignments

Basis For Rejection:
Cost-Effectiveness
Subway alignments in the Northeast Corridor are very unlikely to compare favorably with either at-grade or elevated transit alignments when costs are measured against benefits.

Environmental Impacts
Compared to at-grade alignments, subways require lengthier construction times and cause more disruption to traffic, neighborhoods and water resources.

Obviously, the success of this plan is dependent on the involvement of the community. So, I hope you’ll continue this outreach program.

Hot Line Caller
ConNECTing with the Vision Plan

On April 21st of this year, The Indianapolis Star ran an article on the Mobility 2020 Conference held the previous day. That conference, and the article it inspired, concerned the preliminary recommendations of the Central Indiana Regional Citizens League’s (CIRCL) Vision Plan — a 20-month initiative to envision a preferred future for our area by concentrating on its land use and transportation planning policies. For many Star readers and seminar attendees participating in the conNECTions study of the Northeast Corridor, the information was both new and familiar.

“There’s a good reason for that,” says John Myers of Parsons Brinckerhoff, the engineering firm consulting on both projects. “The studies may be distinct in their goals and study areas, but they are not exclusive. Both conNECTions and the Vision Plan look beyond pure engineering factors to consider broader quality-of-life issues such as regional development, community identity and urban sprawl. In fact,” says Myers, “the Vision Plan really creates a context for looking at the results of the conNECTions study.”

Each study identifies present concerns for area residents that involve how we get around. In the Vision Plan, these concerns are directly related to development policies, acknowledging the interdependence of transportation and land use planning. conNECTions narrows its focus more to directly address identified problems with Northeast Corridor transportation, while looking at the relationship between transportation and development.

“The Vision Plan and conNECTions touch in a number of ways,” Myers says. “For example, the overall developmental impact of the transportation alternatives currently being evaluated by conNECTions is really what the Vision Plan is all about. Certain alternatives, such as bus and rail transit, encourage compact land use and higher density neighborhoods, which the Vision Plan recommends. Auto-oriented alternatives, such as highway expansion, tend to stimulate more dispersed, lower density land use.”

Still, the studies’ differences are just as important as their similarities. For instance, while the Vision Plan released its preliminary findings in April, 1999, conNECTions is still modeling possible solutions to the problems of Northeast Corridor congestion and lack of mobility (see “NECT Alternatives”, page 1). Following this three month process, option benefits and disadvantages will be evaluated and the best of each will be combined into a locally preferred, economically feasible recommendation.

Could the studies arrive at different conclusions? “That’s very possible given their differences in focus,” says Myers, “but the Vision Plan and conNECTions will probably also agree on a number of points.” And the element that allows the conclusions of each to be valid? Informed public participation. “Because the studies define problems and opportunities slightly differently, participants may arrive at different but compatible answers,” Myers notes. “These differing perspectives are a good thing; a resource we’ll rely on in the future when considering hard-to-measure, quality-of-life issues.”

**STUDY COMPARISON**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>VISION PLAN</th>
<th>conNECTions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Indiana Transportation and Land Use Vision Plan</td>
<td>The Major Investment Study and Draft Environmental Impact Statement of Northeast Corridor Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDY AREA</td>
<td>9 county central Indiana region</td>
<td>Northeast Corridor stretching from downtown Indianapolis northeast to Noblesville</td>
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<td>SPONSORING ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>Central Indiana Regional Citizens League (CIRCL)</td>
<td>Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)</td>
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<td>GOAL</td>
<td>Identify current and future transportation and land use issues, concerns and priorities that reflect the goals of area residents and that can be incorporated as policies into the decision-making process</td>
<td>Arrive at a locally preferred, economically feasible solution for improving transportation efficiency in the Northeast Corridor, and elsewhere in the Indianapolis MPA, using a review process that incorporates consistent application of evaluation criteria and extensive public involvement</td>
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<td>FUNDING</td>
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<td>Federal Transportation Administration 71%, INDOT 15%, Indy 7.5%, Hamilton County 1.6%, Carmel 1.6%, Noblesville 1.6% &amp; Fishers 1.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLANNING HORIZON</td>
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Study Update (from page 1)

(Read some of these public opinions by turning to “Web Words, Hot Line Hints” on page 16, or by looking for the quote boxes throughout this issue.)

conNECTIONS is an 18-month study of NorthEast Corridor Transportation. Its overall goal is to better “link our regional opportunities” by making it easier for us to move between the corridor’s various origins and destinations of employment, essential services, commerce and recreation (For a complete listing of conNECTIONS’ goals and objectives, see the box at right). Currently, the Northeast Corridor, which stretches from downtown Indianapolis northeast to Noblesville, is plagued with chronic traffic congestion and lack of mobility which threaten to jeopardize our transportation system’s efficiency and safety. “The northeast is our #1, most-traveled corridor, so our system has the most immediate need of improvement there,” Miser explains. “It’s also where we are most likely to develop successful transportation strategies to serve as models for other busy corridors throughout the region.” Study recommendations are likely to be implemented in the Northeast Corridor as well as other traffic “hot spots” in the region, such as from downtown Indianapolis south into Johnson County and Hendricks County west of downtown Indianapolis toward the airport.

Since it began in May, 1998, the study’s planning partners have worked with transportation engineers at Parsons Brinkerhoff Quade & Douglas, project consultants, to 1.) define its purpose and need, 2.) develop an evaluation methodology, 3.) define possible alternatives, 4.) do preliminary screening of those alternatives, 5.) refine the definition of alternatives in greater detail, and begin the 6.) alternative analysis and 7.) modeling processes which may last through July. Yet to come is the selection of a preferred strategy and the development of a final report (To review a complete study timeline, turn to page 18). Throughout the last 12 months, the above processes have been monitored in meetings of the Policy Steering Committee, Technical Working Group and various groups representing the public interest, including the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

cont on page 19, see Study Update

### conNECTIONS Goals & Objectives
The heart of conNECTIONS’ evaluation and decision-making process is the following set of goals and objectives:

#### GOAL 1: IMPROVE MOBILITY IN THE CORRIDOR
**Objectives**
- Reduce congestion on streets and highways.
- Improve roadway safety.
- Expand transit service options to new markets and attract choice riders.
- Improve transit service in existing markets.
- Improve connectivity between workers and jobs.

#### GOAL 2: ENHANCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CORRIDOR
**Objectives**
- Improve freight movements.
- Enhance labor access to jobs.
- Provide transportation options for residential neighborhoods.
- Enhance access to major destinations.
- Promote land-use policies that concentrate development along transit corridors.
- Explore alternative technologies to improve mobility.

#### GOAL 3: PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT
**Objectives**
- Improve air quality.
- Minimize noise impacts.
- Protect sensitive areas, including historic and cultural sites, wetlands, park lands, and other open spaces.
- Minimize community and neighborhood disruption.
- Support pedestrian and bicycle travel.

#### GOAL 4: DEVELOP A COST-EFFECTIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, MAXIMIZING THE RETURN ON PUBLIC INVESTMENT
**Objectives**
- Demonstrate that overall benefits of improvements warrant their overall costs.
- Identify a fiscally realistic alternative.
- assures that costs and benefits are shared in an equitable manner.

#### GOAL 5: REACH CONSENSUS ON A TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE CORRIDOR
**Objectives**
- Produce an alternative that is supported by the public, elected officials and agency staffs.
- Promote informed community involvement in the decision-making process.
- Explore the impacts of proposed alternatives on different socio-economic groups, including the mobility-disadvantaged.

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I, for one, would be on a commuter train in a heartbeat, if one were available. Therefore, I am delighted to see this project being undertaken.

Web Site Visitor
NECT Alternatives (from page 1)

In all likelihood, conNECTions’ final recommendation will feature a combination of complementary strategies that address diverse aspects of the issue, including two or more of the following highway, bus and rail/bus alternatives.

HIGHWAY ALTERNATIVES

All “H” alternatives describe changes that can be made to highways within the corridor to increase traffic capacities and, thereby, reduce congestion.

H-1: No-Build 2001

This alternative answers the question, “What happens if we do nothing?” H-1 assumes that no improvements will be made to Northeast Corridor roadways beyond those already committed, funded and approved for the next three years in the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (1999 - 2001 IRTIP). Although other planned roadway improvements will probably occur by the year 2020, this alternative represents the base transportation system against which other conNECTions highway expansion alternatives will be compared. Because H-1, by intention, does not take into consideration the travel demand projections upon which conNECTions is based, it fails to adequately serve this demand. As with all alternatives currently under consideration, computer modeling will establish H-1’s relative success or failure at meeting conNECTions goals (see related story, page 2)

H-1A: No Build 2020

This alternative assumes that the financial constraints of the Cost Feasible Indianapolis Regional Transportation Plan (Revised July, 1997) would limit major improvements to those that can be programmed with expected funding levels. Some projects that are identified in the “needs” based plan, but due to a lower priority rating cannot be included in the Cost Feasible Plan, are not included in this alternative. All projects that are included expand the capacity of the regional transportation system. Maintenance-type projects are not included in this alternative. Notable projects that were identified as part of the needs-based plan, but not part of the Cost Feasible Plan, include widening I-465 from 6 lanes divided to 8 lanes divided and constructing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes along S.R. 37 from 1-69 south to the NE 1-65/1-70 interchange. Again, this alternative fails to address anticipated travel demands and is most useful for comparison purposes.

H-2: TSM/TDM

The purpose of this alternative is to reduce existing and future traffic congestion by implementing strategies that do not rely solely on increasing the number of travel lanes to increase capacity and reduce delay. Proposed strategies include 1.) Transportation System Management (TSM) which increases operational efficiency of existing facilities and, 2.) Transportation Demand Management (TDM) which changes travel behavior to shift use to higher capacity modes, such as transit and carpools. Implementation of this alternative could include roadway enhancements such as

- widening to eliminate bottlenecks
- providing new connections to eliminate discontinuities in the street system
- signal-phasing modifications
- signal coordination improvements
- high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV)
- ramp metering and Intelligent Transportation Strategies (ITS), such as Variable Message Signs (VMS) and Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) that convey transportation information to motorists for travel planning purposes.

cont on page 8, see NECT Alternatives
H-3: Basic Freeway Expansion

This alternative recommends projects to increase the traffic-handling capacity of major corridor facilities, including I-465, I-69, US 31 and SR 37. I-465 would increase from its current six to eight “mainline” lanes, recognizing that total future demand will probably not be met and traffic is likely to divert to other highways. By limiting the total number of “through” lanes, these improvements could be implemented without drastically changing current right-of-way (ROW) — the “buffer zone” beside the road. Previous studies indicate that eight basic lanes may not adequately serve travel demand without significant congestion, unless a high percentage of travelers turned to transit or car-pooling.

H-4: Expanded Freeway with Special Use Lanes

In this alternative, I-465 would get eight “through” lanes, as in H-3, plus two reversible special use lanes for high occupancy vehicle (HOV), bus or high occupancy toll (HOT) traffic. These special use lanes would probably only be recommended on SR 37/69 south to 38th Street, but could extend through the abandoned rail corridor from 38th Street to 16th Street where they would connect with the existing street system. These lanes would encourage car-pooling, but could accommodate single occupant vehicle (SOV) drivers who pay an electronically collected toll. Along I-69 and I-465, additional right-of-way would be needed to separate two reversible HOV lanes from general traffic.

cont on page 9, see NECT Alternatives

The bus system doesn’t run far enough north, or on time. There’s still a lot of jobs in Carmel and Noblesville, but people can’t get to them!

Hot Line Caller

Want “real” behavior modification?
Establish a toll road!

Web Site Visitor
NECT Alternatives (from page 8)

H-5: Intermediate Highway Expansion

This alternative recommends projects that would increase the traffic capacity of major roads consistent with a maximum of 10 “through” lanes on I-465 — two more than H-3. No special use lanes are recommended. Additional lanes may be needed in interchange areas to accommodate ramp movements. Special construction techniques could help minimize right-of-way impacts at an estimated additional cost of $5 million per mile. Previous studies indicate that 10 basic lanes may not adequately meet total travel demand. As with H-3, significant congestion could result unless a high percentage of travelers are diverted to car-pooling or transit use.

H-6: Major Freeway Expansion

This alternative recommends developing traffic capacity for I-465 equal to the total travel demand forecast. This would probably require a minimum of 12 “through” lanes and the possibility of continuous collector/distributor (CD) roadways paralleling the highway to improve safety and accommodate short distance travelers. Additional lanes would be required in interchange areas for ramp movements. New right-of-way would be required along existing alignments to accommodate this expansion. Although this highway alternative best serves anticipated travel demand, it could encourage the area’s continued reliance on private, single occupant vehicles as the primary mode of transportation. In addition, because of the synergy between transportation and land use, it may contribute to future congestion by stimulating growth in outlying areas.

Transit Alternatives

All transit-related options describe strategies intended to reduce congestion and increase mobility by providing new, improved or expanded service using high occupancy bus or rail. Alternatives designated with a “B” involve bus service exclusively; those with an “RB” combine rail and bus.

B-1: Expanded Express/Local Service

This alternative involves three new express bus routes to serve downtown Indianapolis from 96th Street/Allisonville Road, 86th Street/College Avenue and Fishers/Castleton/Keystone at the Crossing while improving local bus service on four existing routes (4, 17, 18, 19). In all cases, buses would arrive every 10 - 15 minutes during peak travel times; 20-30 minutes off-peak. Facilities would include improvements to bus equipment, stops and a number of park & ride lots. Express lanes, some of which could be reversible, would serve inbound traffic in the morning and outbound traffic in the afternoon. Issues include whether to allow high occupancy vehicles on express lanes.

cont on page 10, see NECT Alternatives
**B-2: Express Service/Hamilton Co. to Downtown**

This alternative incorporates all of the recommendations from B-1, plus adds three express routes from downtown Indianapolis to the Carmel, Fishers and Noblesville areas. Buses would travel these new routes at 20-minute intervals during peak periods. A total of 13 park & ride lots would make transit service convenient for drivers from surrounding low-density neighborhoods.

**B-3: Exclusive Busways for Marion and Hamilton Co.**

This alternative includes the local service recommendations of B-1 and modifies the express service recommendations of B-2 by proposing a busway. A two-lane roadway for the exclusive use of buses would follow the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority (HHPA) right-of-way from Allisonville Road and 161st Street south to 16th Street in Indianapolis. This route, and modified Fishers and Noblesville routes from B-2, would eliminate the need for the Metropolitan Airport route described in B-1. During peak periods, buses would travel both this new express route and local service routes at 10-15 minute intervals. Facilities would include a total of 13 park & ride lots, nine busway stations and two transit centers serving six express routes. Issues yet to be determined include some intersection designs, bridge versus signal-control where the busway crosses local streets, and the closure of some cross-streets.

**RB-1: Commuter Rail/Noblesville to Downtown Indianapolis**

This alternative features commuter rail service along the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority rail corridor from 206th Street in Noblesville to 10th Street in Indianapolis. From there, it would follow the CSX right-of-way to Union Station. This alternative also includes improvements to local bus service, as in B-1, and a modified version of the express routes in B-3. Facilities would include 11 rail stations, seven park & ride lots for rail service and six for express buses, two transit centers accommodating both local and employer-sponsored bus service, and shuttle service distributing rail passengers throughout the downtown area from Union Station.

All rail alternatives would require shop facilities for both routine and major maintenance and repair. These could be at abandoned rail yards along the HHPA line at 25th Street and 38th Street, or at Amtrak’s Beech Grove facility.

**RB-2: Rapid Light Rail/Noblesville to Downtown Indianapolis**

This alternative features rail service along the same alignment as RB-1, but uses light rail — an electronically powered system which operates in mixed traffic at lower speeds and allows for more frequent service and stops. It also expands the cont on page 11, see NECT Alternatives
NECT Alternatives (from page 10)

Local bus service recommended in B-1 and includes the express bus service recommendations from RB-1. Facilities include 20 rail stations, two transit centers, 12 park & ride lots for rail and six park & ride lots for express bus.

RB-3: Express Light Rail/Noblesville to Downtown Indianapolis

The biggest difference between this alternative and RB-2 is rail alignment south of the State Fairgrounds. Instead of following the railroad corridor, it would run on 38th Street, Capitol/ Illinois and South Street. This alternative also includes the local bus service recommendations of B-1 and the express bus service of RB-1. Stations and park & ride facilities are basically the same as in RB-2, except that there are more stations south of the Fairgrounds to serve additional target destinations, such as hospitals, offices and museums, that lie along this alignment.

Trade-offs include this alternative’s higher ridership and economic development potential for Indianapolis versus RB-1’s greater speed and better service potential for riders from Hamilton and northern Marion Counties.

RB-4: Commuter Rail/Noblesville to Downtown Indianapolis & Express Light Rail/I-465 Transit Center to Downtown Indianapolis

This alternative combines the speed benefits of RB-1’s commuter rail service with the service frequency and stop proximity benefits of RB-3’s express light rail service, while minimizing service and cost duplications. It features commuter rail alignment, service, stations and park & ride lots from Noblesville to Indianapolis of RB-1 and the express light rail alignment, service and stations of RB-3 from the I-465 Transit Center to Union Station. All routes would be double tracked except for those north of I-465 and commuter routes south of the fairgrounds. These two technologies could share the same track between I-465 and the Fairgrounds. Facilities would include northside, eastside and I-465 transit centers; a Monon Bike-and-Ride Center; express bus service and improved local bus service.

“We already know a great deal about the alternatives currently under consideration,” Miser says. “The computer modeling being done now (see related story, page 2) and public reaction to these alternatives will tell us what we don’t know. Clearly, our goal is to arrive at a recommendation that combines the best strategies for addressing current and future transportation problems. To do that, we need the public’s help in recognizing alternatives that address the interests and issues most important to them.”

For more information on the conNECTions transportation alternatives currently being considered, or on how you can participate in the transportation planning process, contact Lori Miser at 327-5136 (LMISER@indygov.org) or Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, at 327-5133 (MPEONI@indygov.org).
Not all of conNEtions has been corridor-bound. Or even limited to committee meetings or computer screens! A lot of the study’s activity has been focused on communicating with the public and soliciting their input.

“Sharing information has always been a big part of what we do,” says Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, “but the conNEtions Public Involvement Program is unique, even by our standards.” As the MPO person most often responsible for interacting with the public, Peoni often chairs committees, calls meetings, draws up agendas and publishes reports intended to educate the public and encourage their participation. Still, coordinating the outreach aspects of conNEtions has been a challenge.

“Given the size of this study, the significance of the problems it addresses, and the impact its locally preferred recommendation will have on our region’s future transportation efficiency, we’ve pulled out all the stops,” says Peoni.

Following is a brief description of some of the efforts aimed at “connecting” with the public during conNEtions’ first year.

**teMPO Special Editions**
Complete background on the need for the study, plus its goals, design and implementation procedures (May/June 1998). The follow-up (May/June 1999) features a study update, description of specific alternatives, public input, a timeline, survey results and more!

**PSA Television & Radio**
:30 TV spot and :60 Radio spot defining the problem, encouraging study participation, and promoting conNEtions’ hot line and web site.

**Educational Video**
For use at public forums, group presentations, schools and as background information for elected officials, area educators, the media and all interested parties.

**Interactive Voice Response System**
A toll-free call to 1-877-NEC-LINK puts you in-touch with study background, alternative details, a personal survey and the opportunity for further contact.

**Web Site**
At www.indygov.org/connections, this site includes study area map, definition of problem, details on potential solutions under consideration, funding information, an e-mail survey, and more.

**Brochures**
Highlighting major issues, participation opportunities and specific alternative being evaluated, two brochure have been distributed through a direct mail effort to 25,000 corridor residents selected at random. Additional limited copies of these brochures have been distributed at locations and events throughout the corridor.

A third brochure will be distributed via direct mail prior to conNEtions’ final report.

**Direct Mail**
Reminder cards of upcoming meetings have been distributed to a growing list of interested parties on a regular basis.

**Media Kit**
Containing study fact sheets, goals, evaluation criteria, description of alternatives, committees, and more, this kit has been delivered to 30 media outlets throughout Central Indiana, including newspapers and radio & television stations.

**Press Conferences**
As part of a coordinated public relations program, press conferences have been held in November, 1998 and January, 1999. Additional, exclusive interviews have been held with correspondents of various media outlets, including *The Indianapolis Star/News, The Daily Ledger*, WIBC Radio and Metro Networks News — all of whom have run special features on the study.

**Hosted Groups**
Guided discussions on transportation-related issues have been held with employees of major employers in the Northeast Corridor, including Omni Hotel-North and Community Hospital-North, to learn their concerns and perspectives.

**Focus Groups**
This is a traditional research method which offers anecdotal information from demographically/psychographically representative groups who are led through a discussion outline over the course of 1.5 to 2 hours. conNEtions’ groups were held in September of 1998 and information gathered there was used to help develop a quantitative research survey.

**Telephone Survey**
An extensive survey of 450+ respondents conducted by the I. U. Opinion Lab in December, 1998, and February, 1999, provided project-able findings for the corridor population and an awareness and attitudinal “baseline” for study planners.

*cont on page 13, see Off Road*
**Citizens Advisory Committee**

To contribute more fully to conNECTions, regular members of the CAC decided to meet on a monthly basis (usually the fourth Tuesday of each month), increasing their commitment three-fold over the quarterly meetings to which they had previously agreed.

**Distance Learning Initiative**

First suggested by John Harold, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee, this program brings regional transportation planning into area classrooms. Participating educators have developed conNECTions-related projects for inclusion in their curriculum on a variety of disciplines (social studies, math, art, etc.). Distance Learning technology, including audio/video teleconferencing, is now used to simulcast select government presentations and monthly CAC meetings to/from various schools.

**Traffic Report Sponsorship**

Many radio listeners throughout the region first learned of conNECTions during the traffic reports of their favorite radio stations. NECT-sponsored reports ran on more than 20 stations during late 1998 in an effort to build usage of the study’s web site and hot line.

**Paid Media**

conNECTions has also run limited media schedules to increase web site and hot line usage and build attendance at specific meetings. Included among these was the Public Forum held in late January, 1999, and sponsorship of the IHSAA Finals on WIBC.

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**Public Presentations/Meetings**

A partial listing of events held in 1998/1999 follows:

**Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings (5/98 - 11/99)**

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<td>May 19</td>
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<td>October 27</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>July 27</td>
<td>November 16</td>
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**Radio & TV**

- October 21 - “The Mark Shaw Show” on WMYS
- November 4 - “Spotlight on Indianapolis” on WIBC
- November 11 - “The Amos Brown Show” on WAV TV

**Group Presentations**

- May 11 - Greater Allisonville Community Council
- June 17 - Castleton Business Alliance
- August 24 - Harrison Green Homeowner’s Association (in Fishers)
- August 25 - Chatham Arch Neighborhood Association
- September 14 - Old Northside, Inc.
- September 19 - Marion County Alliance of Neighborhood Associations
- September 24 - League of Women Voters
- September 24 - Hamilton Cty Coalition of Chambers Gov. Affairs Committee
- October 1 - Nora Northside Community Council
- October 5 - Herron-Morton Place Neighborhood Association
- October 15 - Keystone Business and Community Association
- October 19 - River Glen Homeowners Association (Fishers)
- October 20 - Community Alliance of the Far Eastside
- October 20 - Eastwood Neighborhood Association
- November 16 - Sargent Road Association
- December 2 - Noblesville Golden K Kiwanis Club
- January 6 - East Avalon Hills Association, Inc.
- February 9 - Lake Maxinhall Neighborhood Association
- March 17 - Fishers Chamber of Commerce
- April 22 - Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation Board
- May 5 - Castleton Business Alliance
- May 6 - Near Eastside Community Organization
- June 8 - Greater Allisonville Community Council

**Policy Steering Committee**

July 22 - November 19

**Technical Working Group**

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“It’s all been about communication,” says Peoni, of the extensive effort. “The goals of conNECTions’ Public Involvement Plan include informing the public of conNECTions and the transportation problems we’re studying, persuading them to participate, and facilitating their participation so we have a real consensus-building process that results in a locally preferred recommendation.”

For more information on how you can participate in conNECTions or our region’s on-going transportation planning process, call Mike Peoni at 327-5133.
Cuts (from page 4)

Pros:
(compared to at-grade transit alignments)
• provides greater overall speed for transit service
• less disruption of surface traffic
• enhances safety

Cons:
• three times more expensive than at-grade alignments
• negative aesthetic impacts, possible neighborhood disruption
• longer required construction time
• higher on-going maintenance costs

Basis for Rejection:
Cost-Effectiveness
Elevated transit alignments in the Northeast Corridor are unlikely to compare favorably with at-grade alignments when costs are measured against benefits.

Environmental Impact
Elevated alignments cause greater aesthetic and neighborhood disruption when compared with at-grade alignments. Also, longer construction times would cause greater community disruption.

Monon Corridor
This former railroad right-of-way extends from downtown Carmel, south past Carmel Civic Square, through Nora in northern Indianapolis, through Broad Ripple, past the State Fairgrounds, to join the Norfolk Southern right-of-way at 34th Street. It then extends to downtown Indianapolis just east of I-65/I-70 interchange (the Spaghetti Bowl).

Estimated Cost:
Depends on mode used (busway, light rail, commuter rail, new roadway)

Previous Studies:
In March, 1991, a planning process was initiated to determine the best use or uses for the corridor which culminated in a published report dated February, 1993. The study was supported by a citizens’ advisory committee composed of representatives from neighborhood organizations, special interest groups, the community at-large, and selected government agencies. Consensus was reached that the Monon Corridor should be used for recreational purposes and that the Norfolk Southern Rail Corridor should be used for transportation use. Since that time, over half of the Marion County portion of the Monon corridor has been developed as a recreational trail and plans are in place to develop the Carmel portion in a similar manner.

Pros:
• corridor is in public ownership
• corridor serves Carmel and other important origins/destinations from downtown Indianapolis

Cons:
• corridor is a popular recreational facility for pedestrians and cyclists
• there would be aesthetic and safety issues to introducing transit vehicles on the corridor
• corridor serves few high traffic generators directly
• corridor is the spine of the recently completed Indianapolis Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan

Reasons For Rejection:
Environmental Impact
Local support for the Monon Trail is strong. Indy Parks estimates that the trail receives more than one million visitors annually. Also, the corridor serves as the key north-south component of the plans for the regional bicycle and pedestrian system.

Effectiveness
There are parallel corridors, such as Keystone Avenue, that offer alternatives that would probably produce stronger ridership (by being closer to major origins and destinations). In addition, there probably would not be community support for narrowing, restricting or removing this popular recreational trail.

Elevated Highway Alignments
Elevated highways provide additional roadway lanes with much lower right-of-way requirements than at-grade freeways. Significant elevated sections can be used for new freeways or the addition of lanes to existing freeways. In the Northeast Corridor, added elevated express lanes could be added to I-69, I-465 and/or I-70 instead of widening the same facilities at-grade.

Estimated Cost:
Elevated facilities usually cost three to four times as much as surface facilities. In addition, elevated structures tend to be visually unattractive

Previous Studies:
None.

Pros:
• provides additional lanes and capacity with lower right-of-way requirements

Cons:
• costs three to four times that of at-grade facilities
• negative visual and aesthetic impacts
• promotes additional highway miles of travel instead of concentrating development in established corridors

cont on page 15, see Cuts
Cuts (from page 14)

Reasons For Rejection:

Cost-Effectiveness
Elevated highway alignments in the Northeast Corridor are unlikely to compare favorably with at-grade alignments when costs are measured against benefits.

Environmental Impact
Elevated alignments cause greater aesthetic and neighborhood disruption when compared with at-grade alignments. Also, longer construction times would cause greater community disruption.

I-165 (formerly, Northeast Freeway)
This alternative is a nine-mile freeway linking I-69 from I-465 to I-65/I-70 (Spaghetti Bowl) downtown. Minimum 6-lane freeway includes upgrade of SR 37 from I-465 to 46th Street, reconstruction of Fall Creek Parkway and elevated structures from 46th to 38th Street, and new right-of-way from 38th Street downtown (approximately 3 miles).

Estimated Cost:
Not calculated.

Previous Studies:
During 1979/1980, a preliminary draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for this project was prepared. This 550-page document became the focus of dozens of public meetings and spurred the opposition of local newspapers and community groups. At the request of then-Mayor William Hudnut, the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee reviewed the project and recommended its termination. Responding to a clear public consensus, the Mayor and then-Governor Otis Bowen suspended all development activities for the project and requested that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) remove the route from the interstate system.

Pros:
- directly serves downtown trips from Fishers and Noblesville
- utilizes existing facility (SR 37) for approximately half the route

Cons:
- right-of-way impacts include approximately 600 homes and 75 commercial structures
- traffic impacts likely to require reconstruction of the Spaghetti Bowl
- high cost of right-of-way and construction
- interstate funding unavailable
- social equity imbalances due to concentration of impacts south of 38th Street
- disruption to recreation properties (Old Northside Soccer, Fairgrounds, Monon)
- promotes current inefficient regional land use/growth patterns

Reasons for Rejection:

Environmental Impact
The significant community and environmental impacts which prompted the project's previous termination still exist.

Cost-Effectiveness
Cost would be very high since reconstruction of the interchange and connecting freeway links in all directions would almost certainly be required.

Feasibility
The feasibility of connecting with I-65-I-70 interchange is dubious with today’s traffic levels.

Funding Availability
Funding ordinarily used for interstate highway construction is unavailable for this project.

Social Equity
Since the people and neighborhoods most negatively impacted by the construction of this alternative would not enjoy a proportional share of its benefits, it fails to meet the study's goal of social equity.

cont on page 20, see Cuts

I’m glad to see (the MPO) addressing an issue like this in this fashion.
Hot Line Caller

Well, there IS a train track that runs from downtown to Fishers. Sounds like a plan!
Hot Line Caller

“Express bus service” is an oxymoron... unless it travels on dedicated lanes.
Hot Line Caller

Governments often miss ideal opportunities by over-studying situations rather than acting on them. I hope conNECTions does not turn into another missed opportunity.
Good luck.
Web Site Visitor
We need to synchronize our lights.

I live downtown and don’t drive. If I want to shop in Castleton, the bus ride takes at least an hour, which I think is ridiculous.

There are too many people out during rush hour. There should be a subway, or something.

My children’s school is near the rail corridor. I’m concerned about safety.

I think our biggest problem is the lack of alternatives to car travel.

We need a region-wide public transportation system.

I like the idea of a commuter rail service because it would help with our air pollution and make us look more like a community.

Make use of AM radio to keep us aware of traffic conditions like they do in Atlanta

(EDITOR’S NOTE: Check out the TSM/TDM alternatives on page 7)

We need a commuter rail system like BART in San Francisco.

It’s probably a long term solution, but I’d love to see a commuter rail system.

I’m all in favor of roadway expansion, especially on Allisonville.

I don’t think we need any transit system that has only a north and south node. It isn’t fair to the neighborhoods it travels through.

I realize any solution is going to be expensive. Maybe we could use tolls for fund-raising. I’d be willing to pay a reasonable amount to get to work faster.

I’m really glad you guys are working on this. I didn’t even know about (conNECTions) until my husband brought the phone number home.

I’d gladly ride a bike from 86th Street and Sargent Road to 106th Street and North Meridian, if there was a safe, I repeat SAFE, way to do so. Too bad our leaders never considered that. Yes, bikes are good for only some months of the year, but some is better than none!

(EDITOR’S NOTE: Why not look into the Bike/Ped Plan, which is in various stages of implementation throughout our region? For more information, call Mike Dearing, MPO Senior Planner, at 327-5139.)

Light Rail and Express Buses sound good in theory, but people practically live in their cars today. Anything that requires a change of social habit will probably not be beneficial, or have enough interest.

What happens (to property values) when you live on the rail corridor? Will you (the city) be purchasing those properties? Especially those properties that border the rail passage on Kessler Boulevard and Allisonville Road areas?

Schedule your meetings at locations and times that are more convenient for people who work. For example, 7 PM in Fishers or Noblesville.

(EDITOR’S NOTE: Recent Citizens Advisory Committee meetings, which usually take place at 6:30 - 8 PM on the fourth Tuesday of each month, have linked multiple locations using audio/video teleconferencing technology, including Noblesville High School in April and May. For more CAC information, call Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, at 327-5133.)

How do you expect working mothers with child care needs to use transit?

My problem with carpooling is that I am not always able to leave work at the same time each day and seldom have advance notice when I’ll need to work late. Any public transportation solution I could use would need to accommodate a flexible schedule.

I commute daily from Anderson to downtown Indianapolis, and have often wondered why Indianapolis (which is trying and, in some cases, succeeding to be recognized as an innovative, contemporary “major” city) is so woefully behind the times in providing alternative ways to move its population from point “a” to point “b”. We should have investigated and implemented more mass transportation solutions to (solve) our growing traffic problems long ago.

...It is more than just a matter of feasibility studies, financing, and infrastructure re-alignment. The public’s attitudes and expectations must be re-aligned, as well. We independent midwesterners are very
“wed” to the freedom of movement that driving our own cars allows us! Never the less, I believe this re-education can be accomplished by applying some basic psychological principles of learning and behavior modification.

It could be years before a commuter rail system, for example, becomes a “paying concern.” But this is a transition that absolutely must be faced at some point in our community’s development. The sooner, the better!

Please consider alternatives to travel. For example, if the proper infrastructure for high-speed Internet connections were available, not only would more people tele-commute, but those who tele-commute would be more likely to move into the area.

Adding travel lanes defeats the real purpose of this initiative: to reduce the volume of traffic in the NE corridor. Adding lanes only encourages people to drive more. Mass transit, if made adequately available is the best solution—no more land wasted by roads, fewer cars on those roads, and less air pollution (which our area is struggling with).

I mistrust the city’s commitment to mass transit. In the mid-70’s, I could go where and when I wanted, but the curtailing of routes and runs since that time make it nearly impossible for me to do so now.

Having come from New York to live along the Northeast Corridor, I have experienced the benefits of rail and bus travel and major road reconstruction. All are viable options, if properly implemented. I applaud the road improvement efforts I have witnessed currently in progress or recently completed. The people who live here and complain about traffic congestion should spend a week traveling I-95 in New York during rush hour. That would quiet them down.

If you wait another ten or twenty years to attempt improvements, it will be nearly impossible due to the growth currently expected along the corridor. Now is the perfect time to consider implementing improvements.

I think Indianapolis should develop a system like MARTA in Atlanta. MARTA is a fast, clean, incredible system that I would take to work daily to avoid the hassles of driving.

I would not use public transportation of any kind if it added more than 15 minutes to my half-hour commute. That probably means running a bus or train every ten to fifteen minutes in morning and afternoon peak drive times.

I feel that improvements in NE corridor transportation would enable many more people to consider jobs in a wider range of locations, especially downtown.

We should be making commuting from outside of the city a less attractive option for people. Maybe if it wasn’t so easy to get downtown from outside the city, people would be more willing to live closer to the downtown area and help revitalize our schools and neighborhoods.

I recently traveled to Tokyo, where the rail system is quite impressive. This (rail service) would be a huge paradigm shift for local residents, but is quite effective in the Japanese culture. A lot of education will be required to sell this method. I would be interested in helping more with this study.

This (traffic congestion, lack of mobility) is a huge problem which must be solved in a first class way. Every dollar spent will pay back many-fold. The planners and leaders of the communities need to be very forward thinking and take risks.

I think a lot of Indianapolis residents are somewhat sheltered and close-minded when it comes to new ideas. Hopefully, you guys can help broaden their horizons and pull off a great plan. Good luck and I look forward to going to a public meeting or following things on your web site.

I live along the rail corridor and I don’t want transit in my backyard.

If you would like to be heard on subjects relating to Northeast Corridor transportation, visit the conNECTions web site (www.indygov.org/connections), or hot Line (1-877-NEC-LINK), plan on attending the conNECTions’ public forum (dates to be announced soon) and/or the monthly Citizens Advisory Committee meetings, or call Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, at 327-5133.
Survey Results

“This research serves as our base line,” explains Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, referring to the findings of the recently completed quantitative telephone survey conducted by the I. U. Opinion Lab. “It was unique among the various elements of our Public Involvement Plan because, through it, we didn’t intend to share information,” he explained. Instead, our goal here was to just listen. We wanted to find out what people thought — if they felt there was a traffic problem in the Northeast Corridor; how serious the problem was; how the problem might be solved, and so on.”

The telephone survey was conducted during December, 1998 and February, 1999, by the Indiana University Public Opinion Laboratory which interviewed 454 residents of the Northeast Corridor. The primary goal of the research was to find out residents’ opinions on various transportation issues facing the area. The main findings, presented here, are considered projectable or proportionately representative of the corridor’s population.

• Sixty-two percent of survey respondents said that they have noticed traffic, congestion or transportation problems in the area in which they live. One-third of these respondents said the problem was simply congestion and/or “too many people on the road”. Other respondents mentioned specific locations that are problematic — mostly areas in the Castleton region.

• To solve the problems, 21.4% of the respondents suggested widening the roads/adding more lanes, while 5.4% suggested more public transportation. Five suggested synchronizing lights. Twenty percent of survey respondents said they didn’t know what could be done to help.

• Respondents say they are concerned about forecasts that predict an increase in traffic congestion in the region. Seventy-five percent report being concerned. They support several proposals to help fight traffic congestion. Seventy-six percent were in favor of “widening existing highways and roads”, while 68% supported “creating a new system of mass transit”. Very few people (18.7%) supported “adding tolls on highways”.

• Ninety-three percent of the “commuting” respondents do so by personal automobile. If their cars were not available for a day, they would most likely ask a friend/relative to drive them.

• Just 10% of survey respondents had ever used the bus. There was a large number (38%) who said “nothing” could be done to encourage them to take the bus. Some respondents did mention that improved reliability, improved safety and “having it go where I wanted” would help.

• Eighty percent say they have a favorable opinion of passenger train service. Sixty-five percent said they would be “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to use the service to “downtown Indianapolis, or to Castleton, Fishers or the Noblesville area.” Forty-five percent say they would use the service at least once a week. Most (79.8%) are willing to pay $1 or $2 for one-way service.

• Respondents were split on whether they would be willing to pay taxes for “roadway expansion projects intended to reduce traffic congestion” or to improve/add bus/rail service. About 48% said “yes”, while about 44% said “no’ to these taxes.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

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<th>Project Management</th>
<th>Public Involvement: Meetings, Presentations and Hearings</th>
<th>Purpose &amp; Need Definition</th>
<th>Evaluation Methodology</th>
<th>Definition of Alternatives</th>
<th>Preliminary Screening of Alternatives</th>
<th>Detailed Definition of Alternatives</th>
<th>Alternative Analysis (NEPA)</th>
<th>Model Updating and Travel Forecasting</th>
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1998

1999
**Study Update (from page 6)**

“Much of what we do is required by the Federal Government, our primary funder,” says Ken Kinney of Parsons Brinckerhoff. (See funding pie chart, this page.) “But every step serves a purpose and needs to come in a certain order. People may get impatient, hoping to see faster progress, but it’s the deliberate checks & balances of the procedures that guarantee due diligence and comprehensive oversight,” he explains. “We’re looking to help solve problems, not create new, unexpected ones.”

When a final, locally preferred strategy is identified with the help of public participation, it will be recommended in conNECTions’ Final Report. Then, the implementation phase, including formal development of funding strategies, will commence. “We still have a while to go before we see any real relief on our current traffic situation, because of conNECTions,” Miser acknowledges. “But we’re looking at both short term, low cost, easier-to-implement options, and long term, more expensive and intensive measures. Clearly, we’re checking out all the routes to get where we want to be.”

For more information on conNECTions, call Lori Miser, MPO Manager at 327-5136 (LMISER@indygov.org) or Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner at 327-5133 (MPEONI@indygov.org).

**Modeling (from page 2)**

In some cases, the “thing” that needs considering can’t be projected from our current model. For example, Indianapolis’ “mode split” — the percentage of population using various means of travel — is traditionally low for transit, because of the area’s limited past options. To model a future transit-related alternative, travel parameters must be “borrowed” from other cities that are similar to what Indianapolis could be like in the year 2020. The potential for subjectivity in such instances requires a consensus among planners. “We are transportation professionals with only one goal: to identify the real benefits and disadvantages of each alternative,” Wiedelman explains. “To do that, we use the best data available and the comprehensive oversight of our planning partners.”

For more information on conNECTions modeling process, call Bill Wiedelman of Parsons Brinckerhoff at 972-1706 or Mike Peoni, MPO Principal Planner, at 327-5133.

**conNECTions’ Costs=$1.7 Million**

<table>
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<th>FUNDING ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>AMOUNT IN DOLLARS</th>
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<td>City of Noblesville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Town of Fishers</td>
<td>31,250</td>
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All percentages approximate

**Rush hour lasts all day (in the Northeast Corridor).**

Hot Line Caller

**Do you really think you’re going to get people out of their car? Nothing would get me out of mine!**

Forum Attendee

**Your MPO Staff**

... includes these people who would be happy to address your comments or questions on any aspect of the transportation planning process:

- **Steve Cunningham • Senior Planner** 317/327-5403
- **Mike Dearing • Senior Planner** 317/327-5139
- **Kevin Mayfield • Planner** 317/327-5135
- **Lori Miser • Manager** 317/327-5136
- **Michael Peoni • Principal Planner** 317/327-5133
- **Sweson Yang, AICP • Chief Transportation Planner** 317/327-5137
CUTS (from page 15)

MERIDIAN STREET

Meridian Street is a major north/south highway corridor serving downtown Indianapolis from Carmel. It is a segment of US 31 which extends from Indianapolis to Kokomo, South Bend and Niles, Michigan. The section of potential interest to conNECTions is the four-lane section of Meridian Street between 38th and 86th Streets in Marion County, where it may be physically feasible to provide added travel lanes to increase traffic capacity.

Previous Studies:

There are no known previous studies for recommending added travel lanes to this section of Meridian Street, nor has the proposal been included in any Thoroughfare Plan for Marion County. However, a project was proposed by INDOT in the late 1970’s to widen the roadway 18 to 24 inches on each side to provide eleven foot lanes between 38th Street and 57th Street. Due to the unique historical character and location of this roadway, resistance to this proposal was strong and widespread.

Pros:

• corridor is well placed to serve regional travel demands
• extended setback of most homes would minimize structural relocations

Cons:

• the historic character of Meridian Street is significant and unique to the area
• area residents have consistently resisted any physical changes
• any lane widening would threaten existing trees and landscaping

Reasons for Rejection:

Environmental Impact

Negative impact to historical character of area, potential worsening of safety and air quality due to increased traffic.

Effectiveness

Negatively impacting this street’s historical and aesthetic character may make it difficult to meet conNECTions’ community support objectives.

I want rapid transit lanes for buses with severe penalties for cars that get caught using them.

Hot Line Caller
Autumn Agenda

To coin an old expression, "Ride goeth before the Fall." That's certainly true this time of year at your Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). As summer comes to a close, most of us climb out of our cars and back into our work routines, class rooms and pre-holiday preparations. But, as Autumn days grow cooler, there's no shortage of transportation-related projects and issues to keep us busy and interested. Just witness the list of still hot topics heating up this issue of teMPO. Here you'll find out what federal funding means to our local Job Access Program, why a recent air quality analysis green lights future transportation system plans, where Census 2000 data will impact our regional planning process, how INDOT's new Commissioner has selected her top priorities, and more! Seeking the cold facts on Fall planning projects? Relax, you're getting warmer with teMPO!

New INDOT Commissioner Sets Focus, Cites Priorities

She is an eleven year veteran of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). She is also a big proponent of performance-based budgeting, and one of the few woman ever to hold her current office. She is Cristine Klika, the newly appointed Commissioner of INDOT who took office on July 2 of this year. Prior to her appointment by Governor O'Bannon, Klika was Deputy Commissioner of Planning & Intermodal Transportation for INDOT, the most recent position in which she proved both her effectiveness and philosophy -- two strong factors that lead to her current post.

“When I was interviewing with Governor O’Bannon, he asked me, ‘If you get this job, what are you going to do with it?’

cont on page 10, see Priorities

IndyGo Rolls Out Access-To-Jobs Transit

On September 12, IndyGo initiated a new transit program transporting passengers between the city’s Enterprise Community and employers in and around the Indianapolis International Airport (IAA) and the Park 100 area. "Access to Jobs Transit is totally new for us," says Shannon Joseph, IndyGo Marketing Manager. “We don’t know how big a constituency we can ultimately serve, but it’s great to know we’re making a difference in people’s lives from day one.”

The Access to Jobs program was authorized under the Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA-21) and funded on a national basis for $75 million during the current fiscal year. The City of Indianapolis submitted its proposal to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on December 31, 1998 to fund a local Access To Jobs program with the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IPTC) in partnership with the Office of Mobility Management, now officially called IndyGo, as applicant. The City

cont on page 3, see Transit
Air Quality Conformity Analysis Clears Plan Path

There’s more to transportation planning than laying out roads, timing lights or, even, counting traffic. One of the hardest, yet most crucial, transportation planning activities is attempting to assess the environmental impacts of projected transportation system use and the proposed improvements meant to accommodate it.

“Transportation plans and programs impact air quality,” explains Sweson Yang, AICP, and Chief Transportation Planner with your MPO. “Federal laws mandate that projects funded with Federal funds should not contribute to violations of the Clear Air Standards. So, we perform air quality conformity analysis to insure that our plans and programs don’t.”

Required under section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act, as amended in 1990, the transportation conformity rule established the criteria and procedures by which the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) determine the conformity of federally funded or approved highway and transit plans, programs and projects to State Improvement Plans (SIPs). Conformity ensures that transportation planning does not produce new air quality violations, worsen existing violations or delay timely attainment of national ambient air quality standards. According to the Clean Air Act, federally supported activities must conform to the implementation plan’s purpose of attaining and maintaining these standards.

Though governing all urban areas of similar size, these procedural guidelines have particular resonance for Indianapolis and the surrounding area. In (year), Marion County was classified as a maintenance area for ground-level Ozone (O3), which is formed by the reaction of Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) in the presence of sunlight (For more information on the impact of ozone on our area and what you can do about it, see Knozone Enters 4th Year in the Spring issue of temPO, Volume Three, Issue One). As a result, the traffic capacity expansion projects proposed in the Transportation Plan must be analyzed using an approved methodology and computer-model developed by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

This model measures the amount of transportation-related pollutants, including ground-level ozone and Carbon Monoxide (CO), that will be emitted as a result of implementing the projects proposed by the Plan. The emissions cannot exceed the emissions “budget” specified by the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and the Indianapolis/Marion County Re-designation Maintenance Plan developed by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) in conjunction with the Indianapolis Environmental Management Division and the Metropolitan Planning Organization staff.

Analysis Required
Since the approval of the Regional Transportation Plan in 1995, the 2000-2002 Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP) has been developed and minor changes to the Cost Feasible Regional

cont on page 12, see Path
received notice in May of this year that its application had been approved subject to the filing of supporting documentation normally associated with federal funding.

The city’s proposal requested and received $500,000 in federal funding, the average for areas with population over 200,000, which will be matched dollar for dollar with local funds. Matching local funds will be provided by the City of Indianapolis ($125,000), IPTC ($100,000), The Indianapolis Private Industry Council ($200,000), The Indianapolis Housing Agency ($25,000) and the Marion County Office of Family and Social Services ($50,000).

“This is very much a collaborative effort,” says Joseph. The Access to Jobs proposal was developed in collaboration with state and local agencies and organizations who focus is welfare-to-work initiatives. “Job training and placement agencies, neighborhood organizations, employers, public, private and human service transportation providers, economic development agencies and housing alliances all participated in the program development.” Joseph explains. “May of these same organizations now direct potential passengers to us for transit service.”

The Access to Jobs Program intended to serve welfare recipients as well as low income and under-employed persons. The target area for drawing these constituents is the city’s Enterprise Community, roughly aligned with Center Township. The Route 9 Airport Zone Service Route, which started September 12, operates from 5:30 AM to 11 PM seven days a week, arriving at 30 minute intervals during peak travel times, 60 minute intervals off-peak. Additional late night service, available on-call, is scheduled to start later this year.

“We’re very proud to be offering this much needed service for the benefit of passengers and area businesses alike.” says Joseph. “Prior to Access to Jobs, many Airport Zone employers, including hotels, warehouse facilities and manufacturers, had trouble finding suitable applicants because of lack of transportation. Now, that problem has been minimized.” Federal funding for the Indianapolis Access To Jobs Program has a five year appropriation, subject to annual review. For more information on the Access To Jobs Program, call Shannon Joseph, IndyGo Marketing Manager at 635-2100.
**Why Census 2000 Really Counts**

Arriving just after the new millennium is the U.S. Census -- the Federal government’s best effort to count its population and gather other significant demographic information for use in planning. It happens once every decade and, each time, public opinion splits over its need, its accuracy and the real motive behind it. “Why do they need to know that anyway?,” some wonder. Well, here’s why.

“The Census is about fair representation” says Andrew Swenson, the City’s Liaison to the Census Bureau. “By getting as accurate a count as possible of our resident population, we can insure that we’re receiving our fair share of consideration in Washington. Detailed data, requested on the Census long form questionnaire, can impact allocations our area receives from specific federal programs,” he explains.

**How It Works**

On or before March 31st, 2000, a Census form requesting a variety of information will be mailed to every household. Five-sixths of all households will receive the short form, consisting of seven basic questions. The remaining one-sixth of households, selected at random, will receive the 53-question long form, which deals with a greater variety of requested information, including transportation-related topics. Everyone is supposed to respond by April 17th. Those who don’t, receive an in-person visit from a Census Enumerator whose job it is to fill in the blanks. “It’s the best way we have of making our counts accurate,” says Swenson. “And, it benefits our entire region to have 100% cooperation.”

One specific area of benefit directly concerns your MPO. “We use a lot of Census-gathered data in transportation planning,” explains Sweson Yang, AICP, MPO Chief Transportation Planner. “The Census Transportation Planning Package of questions contained on the long form provides us with information we need to do forecasting and modeling, in addition to the basic population count why rely on,” Yang says. “If people don’t participate in the Census, the MPO can’t do its job as well because we’re not starting with accurate information. As a result, our regional transportation system would suffer.”

For example, without accurate Census data that results only from full participation, your MPO can’t:

- develop accurate travel forecasts
- correctly calibrate its transportation model, as is currently being used in the conNECTions Study of Northeast Corridor Transportation (see related item, Irons in the Fire, Page 11)
- wisely allocate transportation budget investments to where they’re needed most, and
- secure the full federal appropriations to which our region is entitled.

Because of the fiscal importance of full census participation, Complete Count Committees have sprung up in jurisdictions throughout the Chicago Region in which Indianapolis is located. The two-fold purpose of these committees is to 1.) raise public aware of, and participation in, Census 2000, and 2.) help create awareness of Census-related employment. The Complete Count Committee for Marion County, IndyCounts, is comprised of 45 community and business leaders, government officials and media professionals dedicated to getting the word out. “When it comes to the Census, it’s in everyone’s best interest to participate anyway he or she can,” says Swenson.

For more information on Census 2000, call Andrew Swenson, City Liaison to the Census Bureau at (317) 327-5132. For more information on a Complete Count Committee within the jurisdiction where you live, call Dr. George Juretic, Partnership Coordinator for Central Indiana, at (317) 226-0422.
Meet John A. Harrold, an award-winning teacher and academic consultant who has taken his love for education on the road in more ways than one!

For nearly 40 years, John has dedicated himself to the benefit of Indiana’s young people in junior high, high school and university classrooms; IUPUI lecture halls; Indiana State Board of Education and Department of Education conference rooms; and private corporate offices. Along the way, he has helped guide the development of performance-based accreditation programs, served as Chief Administrative Officer for the Indiana School Curriculum Improvement Program (ISCIP), chaired the Indiana Advisory Committee on Textbook Adoption, taught Social Studies at the junior high and high school level, and even served as an instructor at the United States Army Quartermaster School in Fort Lee, Virginia, during his military service.

Today, John is Senior Associate and Chief Administrative Officer of 21st Century Learning Communities, a consulting group that helps public agencies, special interest groups, cultural institutions and private sector business design and market learning systems geared toward the employment and community life demands of the 21st Century. "It's only natural to take education beyond the class room," says Harrold. "I’ve always believed real life issues involve students in a way books alone just can't." As proof, he points to a working relationship he established with the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development back in the late ’60s while a Social Studies teacher for the Lawrence Township MSD to assist his students in using all of Marion County as their own real-life classroom--an initiative still in practice today.

Given this background, is it any wonder Harrold saw educational potential in the conNECTions study of Northeast Corridor transportation? "The northeast corridor is a microcosm of growth, land use, urban and transportation planning, government and social study issues," he says. "It’s a perfect laboratory for students to exercise diverse interests, investigate different hypotheses and share complementary and, sometimes, conflicting findings. In short, the corridor is a classroom."

In the fall of 1998, shortly after he started attending the MPO’s Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings, John Harrold suggested an educational tie-in for conNECTions public involvement program. At that time, regular CAC attendees had just volunteered to meet on a monthly, rather than quarterly, basis to focus more time and attention on conNECTions-related issues. Harrold’s suggestion struck a chord with transportation planners eager to find new ways to build study awareness and encourage public participation in the transportation planning process.

Though initially at the meetings to represent the transportation-related interests of Cumberland for which he serves as Town Council President, Harrold accepted the Chairmanship of the CAC Educational Sub-committee. He now helps the MPO, Corporation for Educational Communication (CEC) and Central Indiana Educational Service Center oversee the distance learning project he inspired (see related story, page 8). "I know the MPO is going to benefit from a lot of fresh ideas and student enthusiasm while the kids get to learn from the experts," Harrold laughs. “Take a from a life-long learner, education is a two-way street.”
Corridor, Commitment and the CAC

The August 24 meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was both routine and unique. Like all of the CAC's monthly meetings, it was held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, started at 6:30 PM, exceeded its intended hour and-a-half duration (by general acclaim), and embraced input from city planners, paid consultants and private citizens alike. However, unlike most CAC meetings, this one was a little more contentious than usual and ultimately raised a question that's never been asked before by attendees: How do you get on the Citizens Advisory Committee?

“I wish I got asked that more often,” says Mike Peoni, AICP, MPO Principal Planner/Acting Manager, “because we're always trying to encourage public input and participation in our transportation planning process.” Peoni has been the MPO Chairman of the CAC since 1994 when the committee was formed to advise the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) on a variety of transportation-related issues of public interest.

“I think the question came up this time because we were meeting at Epworth United Methodist Church on Allisonville Road and many of the 75+ attendees were there specifically to hear about, and be heard on, the issue of possible usage of the nearby rail corridor,” Peoni explains. Commuter or light rail service is now being considered as part of the conNECTions Study of Northeast Corridor Transportation, along with improved, expanded and expressway expansion/improvement; traffic light synchronization systems (ITS), including travelers of up to 10 miles.

Area residents who live along the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority rail line, which stretches from Noblesville to the State Fairgrounds, have strong feelings about using it to help mitigate the problems of congestion and lack of mobility that plague our region’s busiest travel corridor. “Some of the people clearly fear the impact a nearby rail line might have on their property values or quality-of-life. Others, advocate new transit options as progressive and convenient. Most, I think, are open-minded and just want assurance that the study will be thorough and objective,” Peoni says. “That's certainly true at the city. We're faced with all options and the same evaluation criteria to each. Unfortunately,” Peoni notes, “I think I was asked about CAC membership this time because some people presumed it would give them greater voice in conNECTions eventual recommendations. That's not the case.”

Most people who attend CAC meetings on a regular basis have a big picture view of the regional transportation planning process rather than simply focusing on one issue or geographic area. “We encourage representation from all neighborhood associations and special interest groups throughout our nine-county region,” says Peoni, “but it takes a real commitment to volunteer a couple of evening hours a month. It’s actually a form of public service.” No distinction is made between CAC regulars and first-time attendees during meetings. Everyone is welcome to ask questions and voice their opinions. “In this way, really diverse perspectives become a part of our public record, both in the meeting minutes and in re-broadcast of CAC meetings on the government access channel,” Peoni explains.

“So, everyone is welcome to participate in our regional planning process to whatever level they’re comfortable,” says Peoni. People primarily interested right now in conNECTions may visit our toll-free hot-line (1-877-NEC-LINK) or web site (www.indygov.org/connections) to express their opinion, or attend as many CAC meetings as possible, where conNECTions and other transportation-related issues are covered. Most CAC meetings are held in Room 107 of the City-County Building as well as at high school locations where meeting participants are linked through video-conferencing technology. “Or, if someone has an interest in making a longer commitment, we'd welcome their application below.

CAC Membership Application
Serving on the Citizens Advisory Committee requires active participation by those interested in transportation-related issues, dedicated to community service and committed to making a difference. Attendance at monthly evening meetings throughout the year is required. In addition, committee members will be given the opportunity to volunteer for additional responsibilities as the need arises. They also serve as liaisons to their constituents, facilitating communication and coordination between all interested parties.

cont on page 7, see Corridor
Remember, you don’t need to serve on the CAC to attend its monthly meetings. For details on the next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee, call Mike Peoni at 327-5133. Or, to submit this application, mail it to:

Mike Peoni, AICP
Metropolitan Planning Organization
City-County Building,
200 East Washington, Suite 1841
Indianapolis, IN, 46204

NAME ____________________________________________________________________________________________
ADDRESS _________________________________________________________________________________________
CITY _________________________________________________ST _______________ZIP ______________________
HOME PHONE ___________________________________WORK PHONE ___________________________________
OCCUPATION _____________________________________________________________________________________
TRANSPORTATION AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST ______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________
OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ON WHICH YOU SERVE: _________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________
COUNTY IN WHICH YOU LIVE ______________________________________________________________________
As previously reported ("MPO's Class Act", teMPO - Spring 1999), the public involvement program of the conNECTions study of Northeast corridor transportation is enriching the curricula of area high schools this fall. Ten high schools and 25 educators worked with the MPO, sponsor of the study, to develop projects that involve transportation planning with diverse academic disciplines, including Science, Biology, Fine Arts, Work Force Development and Technology. “For the MPO, it’s a new way to increase public involvement in our regional transportation planning process and to interface with area schools,” said Mike Dearing, MPO Senior Planner and coordinator of the Distance Learning Project, as the initiative is known. The project is a joint venture of the MPO, the Corporation for Educational Communications (CEC) and the Central Indiana Educational Service Center (CIESC) who cooperatively oversee its administration.

Project goals were developed by the MPO, CEC and Indiana Citizens represented by the education committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) (see related story, page 6). The three main goals identified were:

- Promote citizen awareness and participation in the conNECTions transportation Study
- Design, implement and evaluate curriculum applications utilizing actual data sources shared among a cadre of schools via state-of-the-art distance learning technologies
- Demonstrate learning communities which connect home, school, community leaders, neighborhood organizations, students and teachers in a study relevant to all

The project then developed into three phases for participating teachers from Arlington High School, Arsenal Tech High School, Broad Ripple High School, Carmel High School, Cathedral High School, Hamilton Southeastern High School, Indiana School for the Deaf, Lawrence Central High School, Noblesville High School and North Central High School: Socialization, Training and Curriculum Development/Implementation.

The Socialization Phase took place last Spring and included orientation, a train ride along the corridor, MPO presentations to the teachers and CAC meetings held at participating high school locations and utilizing video-conferencing technology to link participants.

The Training and Curriculum Phase ran from June through August and included a number of curriculum planning opportunities for teachers to collaborate on their project development. These opportunities included developing curriculum planning framework, lessons plans and distance learning opportunities for students; the definition of support needs and resources for teachers; and, the presentation of final project ideas. The CEC gave final approval to the plan and budget on August 30 when school grants were due.

The Implementation Phase began with the school year when teachers started to introduce their students to the transportation problems of congestion and lack of mobility faced by the Indianapolis region. As the school year progresses, students and teachers will evaluate the projects in which they participate and prepare to disseminate their findings via recommendations for city transportation planners to consider. A web site developed and managed by the CEC will aid in this effort.

Priorities and Projects

Distance Learning educators developed their conNECTions-related projects with the following curriculum goals in mind:

- Mastery of Basic Skills and Fundamental Processes - Students should pursue the abilities to sense, listen, observe, speak, read, write, apply mathematical operations, utilize mathematical concepts and communicate ideas.
- Development of Intellect - Students should pursue the abilities to think rationally, as well as make judgments based on appropriate information.
- Citizenship Participation - Students should pursue perspectives and skills in exercising democratic privileges and responsibilities of social, political, economic and environmental memberships.

cont on page 9, see Distance
• Career/Vocational Preparation -
Students should pursue attitudes and abilities to produce socially and personally needed products and services.

The following distance learning projects meet the above goals and are currently being implemented in the curricula of participating corridor high schools.

Fine Arts
Students are studying the lost art of glass casting which brought many early artisans to the area. Working with the Indianapolis Art Center, participating students will cast three dimensional glass tiles designed to illustrate conNECTions' focus on mobility. Students will also produce clay tiles, using clay soil native to Indiana. Both types of tile will be incorporated into student designs for transit-related structures, such as bus stops and train stations, overseen by Broad Ripple Alumnus and world-renown architect, Michael Graves. Landscape architects will also consult with students to identify appropriate, native plantings to surround these structures.

Mathematics
Students at two schools will participate in a variety of projects involving design and applied mathematical concepts. Their conNECTions orientation will include the use of charts, graphs and tables which illustrate transportation-related issues and topics covered in ISTEP testing. These projects include traffic counts from several northside intersections in which students will gather data of interest to transportation planners, such as the number of single passenger vehicles, cars turning left and rush hour volume counts. Once gathered, the students will illustrate this data by applying mathematical skills. An educational link with a school in Muncie may also allow students to compare the difference in area growth impacts.

Science
Investigative use of scientific principles will be used to evaluate the environmental impact of the various transportation alternatives currently being evaluated by conNECTions. Students at three corridor schools will analyze air, soil and water samples to determine which alternatives have the least intrusive impact of the corridor’s environment. One school will also be investigating what types of flowers, plants, shrubs and trees are most appropriate for planting along the transportation corridor travel facilities. Findings will be utilized to develop landscape design recommendations.

Social Studies
Six schools are involved in a variety of social study projects investigating issues that include the causes and effects of urban sprawl, transportation’s impact on neighborhoods, the social and political implications of conNECTions transportation alternatives, and possible urban transit designs. Expert opinions will be shared in interactive discussions with city planners, legislators, city/neighborhood designers, research analysts and others via distance learning technology.

Language Arts
Two participating teachers and their students are publishing a distance learning newspaper to facilitate communications among participating schools. As part of their language arts program, students will design, gather and report current activities, a calendar of upcoming events, transportation-related career opportunities, and progress on short and long-term school projects.

For more information on the conNECTions Distance Learning Project, or on any of the transportation-related curricula currently being taught, call Mike Dearing, MPO Senior Planner at 327-5139.
Priorities (from page 1)

What came out of my mouth was a combination of what I personally believe and what I learned in more than a decade with INDOT,” Klika explains. What she told the Governor was that her focus would be internal, an untraditional answer for the potential head of transportation department, but one that made absolute sense given the INDOT’s recent growth and the public’s increasing involvement in the transportation planning process.

Personnel, Process

Over the last few years, INDOT’s annual construction budget has doubled from $350 million to $700 million (out of a total agency budget of $1.1 billion). With that growth comes the added responsibility of making sure that the state continues to get “maximum bang for every buck” invested in our transportation system. To Klika, that meant “Good decisions made by Good People.” So, she set as her priorities 1) keeping INDOT’s best people -- no small feat given the disparity between public and private sector salaries -- and, 2) improving the planning process.

“Our people are what keep INDOT in tip-top condition,” Klika notes. “They are our delivery system, working directly with the outside firms who perform 90% of our engineering.” To help insure that INDOT continues to benefit from good decisions made by good people, Klika now has the INDOT Personnel Director report directly to her and helped develop a strategic plan to keep INDOT’s best in place. “We may not always be able to compete on salary, but offering extreme job satisfaction is a personal goal of mine,” Klika explains. “Our people can serve the public and influence policy. And, right now, we’re reviewing work week issues and benefits to exceed expectation.” However, despite project budget growth, no staff increase is planned. “We just want to attract and keep the best of the best,” says Klika.

To achieve her second priority, that of improving and streamlining the planning process, the new Commissioner is relying on “performance measure budgeting” to guide the way. “It’s a broad concept applied to specific areas,” she says. “For instance, INDOT has always had a performance measure for itself of “Total Confidence,” meaning our customers don’t have to worry whether the bridges they drove over this morning are safe enough to use. In budgetary terms, we know that total “bridge” confidence costs $40 million a year to maintain the state’s bridge infrastructure.”

Another example Klika cites is the state’s pavement management system, which assigns a numeric value to road conditions which affect travel. INDOT strives to maintain an interstate pavement condition index of 80. To do so, costs $120 million a year in repaving fees. “Generally speaking, I want to relate our budget investments back to the performance of our transportation system, because that’s what the public cares about and comments on,” Klika explains.

A New Paradigm

The importance placed on public satisfaction with, and participation in, the transportation planning process wasn’t always a priority. “Back in the 60’s, there was no question what INDOT and every other state’s DOT was about,” says Klika. “At that time, there was a mandate to build the interstate system. Nobody questioned it,” Things are different now, the new commissioner acknowledges. “I use a model to demonstrate our working relationship. It links INDOT with the Transportation System and the System’s Users, the public, all in a continuous circle,” Klika explains. “INDOT puts its efforts into improving our transportation system, which serves the public, who gives us feedback on how we’re doing, so we can make more improvements.”

Klika points out that public feedback has changed over the time she’s spent at INDOT, and she’s set her priorities to keep pace. “Transportation is no longer exclusively about travel capacities,” she notes. “Now INDOT is involved with building trails, traffic-calming techniques and quality-of-life issues, all in response to the diverse interests and perspectives of the public we serve.” Remaining responsive to Indiana travelers and anticipating future state transportation needs is the ultimate goal served by Klika’s internal focus. “Good people and an improved process will keep us in touch with our public well into the next millennium.”
**Irons in the Fire**

**teMPO On-line II**

As reported in our Summer '99 issue, teMPO information is now available via the internet. A subject directory has been added to the MPO web site (www.indygov.org/indympo) which identifies past articles by name, subject matter and issue. In addition, four of teMPO's most popular Special Reports are available in their entirety on-line, focusing on subjects as diverse as the Regional Bike/Ped Plan; Land Use Planning; past, present and future regional rail activity; and, the conNECTions study of Northeast Corridor Transportation. Those wishing back issues of teMPO may request them by calling Mike Peoni, AICP, MPO Principal Planner/Acting Manager at 327-5133.

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**conNECTions Computer-modelling**

As previously reported (teMPO Special Issue #1, 1999), the transportation consulting firm of Parson Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas is currently involved with computer modeling 14 alternatives under consideration in the conNECTions Study of Northeast Corridor Transportation. “It’s an incredibly complex process,” says Bill Wiedelman, the Parsons Brinckerhoff Supervising Engineer primarily responsible for the modeling process. “We’re running behind on it, but for all the right reasons.”

Computer modeling processes an exhaustive amount of data in an effort to identify alternative benefits and disadvantages for decision-makers. To do so, the model divides the entire Indianapolis planning area into more than 1100 Travel Analysis Zones (TAZ). “It assigns current or future travel characteristics to each zone of our transportation system,” explains Wiedelman. These zone travel characteristics are actually an estimate of total “trip ends” – trips beginning or ending in each zone. To “calibrate our model”, and help assure process validity, current travel estimates are compared with actual traffic counts. Future travel estimates are made using growth projections for each zone. Because conNECTions’ planning horizon is the year 2020, growth projections for that year are used.

“Calibrating the model as it relates to alternatives involving rail has been part of our delay,” notes Wiedelman. “We’re attempting to be as accurate as possible in projecting both growth and usage figures. In our area, there’s no historic precedent upon which we can build this projection.” In such cases, transportation planners seek established examples with similar geographic and demographic characteristics. “It’s been very difficult to find an appropriate parallel,” says Wiedelman. “But we feel we’ve succeeded and are now nearing completion of the modeling phase.

“Armed with our findings, we can assess the impact various alternatives may have on the travel characteristics within each zone,” Wiedelman says. “As specific routes are impacted to greater or lesser degrees by each alternative, our simulation software changes their travel times and/or speeds.” This information is part of what establishes an alternative’s relative efficiency and contributes to its perceived benefits or disadvantages.

Modeling findings and subsequent analysis will be shared with the public and used to make subsequent study recommendations within the next few months. For more information on conNECTions or its study modeling phase, call Mike Peoni at 327-5133.
Transportation Plan are necessary. To monitor these changes and assess the Plan’s impact on the continuing attainment of the National Air Quality Standards, the MPO staff performs this analysis to meet the requirements of Conformity Rules as they are in-effect to-date.

Revisions of the Year 2020 Transportation Plan are necessary due to project changes in the 2000 - 2002 IRTIP. This, in turn, triggers the need for an Air Quality Conformity Analysis. For conformity analysis purposes, completed projects in 1997 - 1998, as well as projects under construction in 1999, have been incorporated into the revised Cost Feasible Transportation Plan.

**Analysis Results “Clear The Air”**

The Federal regulations governing air quality conformity require that certain time periods be analyzed. The following charts present the emissions data for each time period along with the Indianapolis/ Marion County 2000 and 2006 re designation emissions budget. As documented by the chart, none of the “budgeted” emissions levels are exceeded by the Plan’s proposed projects for any of the designated time periods. For this reason the Plan, including the 2000 - 2002 IRTIP, can proceed as proposed.

For more information on Air Quality Conformation Analysis in our area, call Sweson Yang of your MPO at 327-5137.
As we begin a new century, this double issue of temPO turns its attention to the role public transportation will play in our region’s future. How can IndyGo re-invent itself to meet the growing demand for alternative transportation throughout our area? Previously known as “Metro”, the recently re-named “IndyGo” wrestles with this question while continuing to meet the current travel needs of an already increasing clientele. Reason for the turn-around? “A re-dedication to customer-service,” says new IndyGo Public Affairs Director Mary Lynn Ricks, “along with many operational improvements.” Find out what’s new and what’s being considered to assure that IndyGo continues to play an integral role in helping the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) address regional transportation issues in a truly comprehensive manner. It’s all here, along with fun features and fascinating facts, as temPO hops on the bus and gets “in the know” with IndyGo.

IndyGo’s Five-Year Plan

The concept is simple, but the execution is tricky,” explains Roland Mross, IndyGo Marketing and Service Development Director. “We are currently identifying ways to improve our service to better meet the transportation needs of existing customers, while investigating strategies for addressing the concerns and priorities of potential customers -- those who might ride the bus if our service was more convenient, more responsive, faster, better.”

The more things change, the more they remain the same. While undergoing the most comprehensive re-organization in its 25-year history, IndyGo finds itself re-dedicated to the original mission of the region’s mass transit provider: meeting the needs of its customers, the transit-reliant. “That’s what it’s always been about,” agrees...

Transit and the New Mayor

Like many city-related corporations, the IPTC watched the recent mayoral race with great interest. IndyGo was pleased to see Mayor Peterson’s commitment to improving public transportation in Indianapolis. In The Peterson Plan, Mayor Peterson set out a detailed strategy to increase the role public transportation will play in the city’s future.

“We were very pleased to see the importance our new Mayor places on mass transit,” says Barry S. Bland, IndyGo President/CEO. “Clearly, he has a good understanding of both the operational challenges inherent in traditional fixed route service and the opportunities and benefits offered by thinking “outside the box.”

Following is a brief overview of transit-related ideas and perspectives found in The Peterson Plan and planned or existing IndyGo initiatives that support them...

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Currently, only about 2% of Marion County residents are regular IndyGo riders. If you are not among them, or even if you are, you may not be aware of some of these basic facts on our public transportation provider.

**Types of Service**

IndyGo provides two basic types of transit service. The one most people associate with the bus company is fixed route service, in which large (30’ - 40’) buses travel the same route at regular intervals, picking up passengers along the way at designated bus stops. This traditional type of transit service is the “back bone” of most public transportation systems, representing the most people served for the lowest operating cost.

IndyGo currently operates 35 fixed routes, utilizing a maximum of 123 buses or 63% of its fleet, 7 days a week from 5 AM to 1 AM. Each day, IndyGo provides approximately 30,000 fixed route rides, about 22 per hour, per bus on average.

The second type of bus transit provided by IndyGo is called flexible service. Flexible, or on-demand service, complements IndyGo’s fixed route service by responding to expressed transit needs with greater service efficiency and economy. Paratransit programs such as Open Door (for persons with disabilities), the 86th Street Route, Dial-a-Ride and FlexRide are examples of flexible service programs, and the list is growing.

For example, the Open Door Program offers paratransit service to persons with disabilities on an “on-demand” basis. Those in need of transportation call ahead to schedule pick up at a designated address and time. Cost for this service is $1 per ride, the same as for fixed route service.

“Access-to-Jobs” is another example of IndyGo flexible service. As described in the Autumn issue of teMPO, the Access-to-Jobs program service was developed in collaboration with state and local agencies and organizations whose focus is welfare-to-work initiatives. The program is intended to serve both low income and underemployed persons as well as the companies in and around the Airport/Park 100 Zone who would hire them if dependable transportation were not an issue. The target area for employees is the city’s Enterprise Community, roughly aligned with Center Township. The Route 9 Airport Zone Service, which started September 12, operates from 5:30 AM to 11 PM seven days a week, arriving at 30 minute intervals during

**IndyGo At-A-Glance**

ACRO-NYMABLE

Here’s a list of the agency and program acronyms mentioned in this issue. Refer to it to keep your understanding letter-perfect.

CIRCL - Central Indiana Regional Citizens League
CIRTA - Central Indiana Regional Transit Alliance
DCAM - Department of Capital Asset Management
DMD - Department of Metropolitan Development
FTA - Federal Transit Administration
IAA - Indianapolis International Airport
IDEM - Indiana Department of Environmental Management
INDOT - Indiana Department of Transportation
IPTC - Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation
IRTC - Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council
ITS - Indianapolis Transit Systems (defunct)
IUPUI - Indiana University/Purdue University in Indianapolis
MAC - Metro Advisory Committee
MPA - Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization
OMM - Office of Mobility Management
TAC - Transit Advisory Council
TEA-21 - Transportation Equity Act (for the 21st Century)

IndyGo employs about 427 people.

? DID YOU KNOW ?

IndyGo, located at 1501 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, is headquartered in the city’s old Deusenberg factory.
IndyGo provides about 30,000 fixed route, "big bus" rides per day.

IndyGo uses small buses and vans to provide about 800 "on-demand" rides per day to persons with disabilities through its paratransit "Open Door" Program.
Transit is in the Air

It may be hard to believe when you’re behind the exhaust pipe of a bus, but transit is good for the environment. And, that’s great news for areas like the Indianapolis region where air quality has been a touchy subject for some time.

“The reason is simple,” says Mike Peoni, AICP, Principal Planner/Acting Manager of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). “The average bus can carry 60 passengers efficiently and cost-effectively. And, even though it may look like it’s putting out more exhaust than it should, a bus produces a lot less pollutants than 60 cars would. That’s important in an area like ours where people traditionally rely on single occupant vehicle usage.”

For this reason, the city’s Knozone Campaign has encouraged the use of public transportation since it began in 1997, especially during NoZone Action Days when conditions favor ozone formation. “On these days, the Indianapolis Public Transit Corporation (IPTC) works with us to increase ridership, and reduce the ozone pollution associated with single occupant vehicle usage, by reducing fares,” explains Peoni. “A ride that would normally cost you a dollar is just 50 cents – a real bargain.”

But that’s only the beginning of transit’s pro-environment partnership. In 2000, the National Earth Day Organization plans a year-long celebration to endorse public transportation as the wave of the future. “With all of the other alternative travel modes they could have chosen, we’re proud that transit has attracted their attention and favor,” said Mary Lynn Ricks, IndyGo Public Affairs Director. “I think their choice reflects the reality of modern life. People enjoy walking and biking but, day in and day out, people need a dependable way of getting where they have to go – to work, school, the grocery store,” she explains. “While we’re working hard to improve our service, the National Earth Day Organization is already implying that transit is the best, pro-environment choice for most people.”

That’s an endorsement worth noting in an area that’s flirted with air quality non-attainment status over the last few years. So, does anything stand in the way of growing transit demand, and usage, in the Indianapolis region? “Just two things that I can think of,” says Roland Mross, IndyGo Marketing and Service Development Director. “The first would be poor transit service. But I think we’ve turned the tide on that, because our ridership has increased 5% overall and 7% per month over the last year. And, we’re planning more flexible service programs to be even more responsive to our customers’ changing transit needs.” And, the second impediment to local transit usage? “Lack of sidewalks,” Mross says. “While it may not seem like a big issue, lack of sidewalks in many areas of the city, along or leading to major thoroughfares, makes accessibility to bus stops difficult.”

The Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) spends approximately $1 million annually in discretionary funds to repair existing sidewalks. Another $1 million is spent each year on road paving. Because of the tightness of funding, and other competing priorities, the money just isn’t available to create sidewalks in all the areas people would like them. “People need sidewalks to get to and from bus stops safely,” Mross points out. “With more sidewalks, Indianapolis becomes a more transit-friendly city. This is why my office will continue to work with the City to develop the most effective sidewalk plan and to encourage usage of greenway and bike/ped paths near public transportation routes. Because what’s good for transit is good for the environment.”

Did you know?

It costs IndyGo an average of $2.64 per passenger trip to provide service (1997 figures).

Did you know?

A person commuting via transit saves about 200 gallons of gasoline a year!
**IndyGo Partners with Business**

Getting down to business has been high on IndyGo’s list of priorities for quite a while. Serving the unique and changing needs of local employers is completely consistent with the transit company’s mission of offering customer-oriented service to area residents.

As proof, consider two flexible service transit programs started in the fourth quarter of 1999. Access-To-Jobs serves welfare recipients, low income and under-employed residents of the city’s Enterprise Zone in Center Township by providing transportation to employers in and around the Indianapolis International Airport (IIA) and the Park 100 area. “We’re making a big difference in the lives of people for whom transportation had represented a barrier to employment,” says IndyGo Marketing Manager Shannon Joseph “but we’re also helping companies interview, hire and retain a more stable workforce among individuals they may not have previously considered. That’s good for all concerned.”

Late Night flexible service, also transporting passengers from Center Township to the Airport/Park 100 zone, benefits both residents and businesses, too. “A lot of employers in that area have had trouble filling their second and third shifts,” explains Roscoe Brown, IndyFlex Transportation Coordinator. “Our new, late night service is in direct response to their employment needs and the needs of the people who want to work there.” Similar flexible transit service programs are now being considered for development to meet the unique needs of employers throughout the IndyGo service area.

But partnering with business is not a new idea. Consider IndyGo’s program of selling monthly transit passes at a discount to area business who provide them to their employees. “What is new is our interest in identifying and expanding partnership opportunities,” says Brown. “Every week, I meet with more local businesses who have expressed an interest in putting mass transportation to work for them. We discuss their specific employment needs, IndyGo’s ability to address those needs with transit innovations, like zone-to-zone service, even data base and van pool coordination partnerships,” says Brown. “There seems to be a growing awareness that IndyGo is serious about serving area businesses and that mass transit can help improve the bottom line.”

For more information on how business can put mass transit to work, or how IndyGo can partner with your company, call Roscoe Brown at 614-9318.

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**Even though IndyGo adopted a flat, $1 per ride fare structure in 1998, the revenue generated by the average passenger is still only 70 cents, due to transit pass discount programs.**
Mary Lynn Ricks, IndyGo Public Affairs Director. “Marion County residents are at the top of our organizational chart and our five-year plan to re-invent ourselves really just deals with service improvements that will help us serve them better.”

Are we talking about drastic changes? “We don’t like to use that word,” admits Mross, “because it has a tendency to scare the people who depend on us most. The transit-dependent are afraid that “change” means dropping routes they use or services they rely on. Nothing could be further from our intention,” he explains. “That’s why we’ve committed ourselves to comprehensive study and oversight: to insure that ‘improvements’ translate to new benefits for our customers.”

Two recent examples prove that the right “change” can mean mutual benefit to both company and customer alike.

From 1985 to 1992, IndyGo, then known as Metro, lost 40 percent of its ridership, dropping from 15 million rides annually to 9.2 million. “I believe that loss of customers reflected a number of factors, including the unresponsiveness of our service,” says Barry S. Bland, IndyGo President/CEO. “Back then, we were still running a “hub and spoke” system, in which all buses came directly downtown (the hub) from suburban routes that radiated out from it (the spokes). That meant that people trying to get cross town, say from Nora to Castleton, would have to travel south and transfer before traveling east.” Once the system was changed to incorporate more customer-oriented responsive transportation strategies, including flexible service and smaller buses running to zone-to-zone routes, the riders started to come back, reaching 10.5 million annual rides in 1999.

Another example of service improvement or “beneficial change” concerns fare rates. “People used to pay a variety of rates and transfer fees,” says Bland. “As a result, many customers weren’t really sure how much it would cost to ride someplace new.” In 1998, IndyGo instituted a flat rate system, charging $1 a ride with free transfers. “That’s a pretty basic change” Bland points out, “but offers the ultimate customer benefit. People should know how much a ride is going to cost before they get on the bus. How else can they budget?” Reaction to the new rate plan has been overwhelmingly positive.

Still, identifying service improvements that offer increased customer satisfaction and operating efficiency is not easy. Here, as always, the challenge is in the details. “The ultimate purpose of our 5-year plan is to expand our service area and clientele while improving on the quality of our service. That’s a tall order and requires both public input and independent study,” says Bland.

In January, 2000, IndyGo will begin a six-month study with direct bearing on its 5-year Plan. The purpose of the study is to identify dominant customer travel origins and destinations and to recognize dominant traffic patterns. In this way, IndyGo can consider operational improvements to anticipate growing trends and meet existing travel demand.

Other studies from which the IndyGo 5-Year Plan will benefit include research for the Regional Mass Transit Service Plan prepared by The Corradino Group for the Central Indiana Regional Transit Alliance (CIRTA) and IndyGo’s own Park & Ride study which was conducted by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade.
and Douglas. “This information, along with our upcoming six-month study forms the three-legged stool I’m resting on,” says Mross. “Together, this research helps quantify the demand for mass transit in our region, suggests general strategies for implementation, and even identifies possible facility sites and standards.”

But consultant studies aren’t IndyGo’s sole source of input. “Our best ideas come from the people we serve,” says Mary Lynn Ricks. “From a public forum held at Nora Library, we learned there are a lot of people having trouble traveling along 86th Street. These include seniors, apartment dwellers, and North Central High School students trying to get to jobs in Castleton. As a result of this input, a Dial-a-Ride Service along 86th Street was implemented.

Now, with a little notice, people can be picked up at their doors and taken to their destinations -- all for a buck!” The success of the program could inspire similar service for the South Side in the 5-Year Plan.

But, no guarantees.

“It’s too premature to suggest specifics of the plan at this point,” Mross says. “Our choices need to be well evaluated. But I want people to know that everything that is being considered – new routes, services, even vehicle characteristics – relates to serving them better. We aren’t looking at down-sizing or economizing, but rather at increasing efficiency and providing superior transit service on a regional basis in the future.”

It’s a goal shared by IndyGo planning partner, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). “We have a mutual interest in supporting mass transit in our community,” says Mike Peoni, AICP, MPO Principal Planner/Acting Manager. “For us, the planners responsible for anticipating and meeting the region’s travel needs through our transportation system, transit represents an underutilized tool that can help solve problems like traffic congestion and lack-of-mobility. That’s why IndyGo is represented on both the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council’s Policy and Technical Committees, and why we often collaborate with them on research. The bigger the role IndyGo can play in meeting local travel demand, the better it will be for a region like ours that can no longer build its way out of traffic congestion or rely so exclusively on the single occupant vehicle. Transit must play a more important part in our future.”

IndyGo’s 5-year Plan is scheduled for completion July of 2000. Throughout the development process, the public will have opportunity for comment and input. The time, date and location of the next Public Forum will be announced. For more information on the development of the 5-Year Plan, call Roland Mross at 317/614-9310.

**Five-Year Plan (from page 6)**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

About 67% of IndyGo’s operating expenses are covered by local sources, such as the fare box and property taxes. The remaining 33% is covered by state and federal subsidies.

**About 67% of IndyGo’s operating expenses are covered by local sources, such as the fare box and property taxes. The remaining 33% is covered by state and federal subsidies.**

**In 2000, IndyGo’s annual operating budget will be nearly $34,000,000.**

**For the 5-year Plan, call Roland Mross at 317/614-9310.**

**P A G E S E V E N**
The Peterson Plan

Fact: The existing public transportation system does not adequately serve Indianapolis's commuters or businesses.

Fact: Traditional bus service is an expensive, ineffective option for many areas outside the old city limits.

Fact: Van pool programs offer advantages over fixed-route buses, particularly in low-density suburban areas. There are usually not enough riders in such areas to support a fixed route bus.

Fact: Van pools are less expensive to purchase and operate than buses... Van pools can be routed more directly— from home to workplace, and back. That makes them attractive for people who typically would choose to drive their cars — and that’s an advantage for the environment.

As Mayor, Bart Peterson will work with our regional partners to shift the focus beyond traditional fixed-route bus service toward more innovative, cost-effective services that meet the needs of the population and its employers.

IndyGo

IndyGo is excited to get to work implementing the new transportation initiatives found in The Peterson Plan, including new initiatives focused on flexible and alternative services that use smaller buses and vans to meet the specific transportation needs of identified customers.

IndyGo currently plans to add 40,000 hours of service to its schedule in the year 2000 — all of it flex service! Flex service, unlike traditional fixed-route service, directly responds to recognized travel needs of riders to reach identified destinations. As Mayor Peterson explained in The Peterson Plan, vans are less expensive to operate than large buses (about $35/hr compared to $65/hour) and can be routed more directly.

The Peterson Plan

Bart Peterson will make Indianapolis's public transportation user-friendly and accessible. Based on where people live and work, the City will identify routes that will best serve the population in order to create an effective and useful public transportation system.

IndyGo

IndyGo is already working on Mayor Peterson's pledge to identify routes that will best serve the people of Indianapolis. In January, 2000, a six-month study will begin to identify common passenger origins and destinations and dominant traffic patterns. Findings will contribute to the development of the effective and useful transportation system outlined in The Peterson Plan.

The Peterson Plan

To increase ridership and, ultimately, the efficiency of the bus system, riders who have transportation alternatives will be encouraged to use the bus system. One way to increase use is to accommodate convenient access to bus stops by expanding the number of strategically located Park-N-Ride facilities across the City.

IndyGo

In spring, 1999, IndyGo commissioned a Park & Ride Study to identify potential Park & Ride facilities, focusing on suburb-to-downtown routes with some locations outside of Marion County being identified. IndyGo plans to concentrate on ways to provide Park & Ride convenience to all segments of the city. Study findings will be incorporated into the development of IndyGo's 5-Year Plan.

In addition, the development of this plan will benefit from Park & Ride research commissioned by the Central Indiana Regional Transit Alliance (CIRTA) for its Regional Mass Transit Service Plan and by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization for its conNECTions study of NorthEast Corridor Transportation.

cont on page 10, see New Mayor
As IndyGo surveys where its been, and the road ahead, certain milestones stick out. Here’s a brief synopsis of recent achievements and upcoming goals:

**1999 Corporate Achievements**

- Increased general ridership 5% and rides per hour 7%.
- Increased on-time performance for Open Door paratransit service to 93%, from 88% in 1998.
- Converted the 86th Street route from a fixed route to Dial-a-Ride service which cut operating expenses in half while protecting transportation for more than 50 daily passengers.
- Received a $500,000 federal grant to begin an "Access-To-Jobs" program.
- Merged the operations of the Office of Mobility Management and the IPTC to establish a single promotional image for regional public transit, and to reduce overhead costs.
- Centralized IndyGo’s Dispatch Operations to improve service responsiveness.
- Instituted an electronic fare system using card readers.
- Completed a computer upgrade for the corporation’s system, including Y2K compliance.
- Increased number of miles between road calls for Open Door Vehicles by 70% from 1998.
- Successfully completed the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTAs) Transit and Financial Management Oversight Audits during 1999.
- Completed negotiations on a four-year labor contract with the Amalgamated Transit Union.

**2000 Corporate Goals**

- Complete comprehensive customer service and cultural diversity training for all IPTC employees.
- Increase ridership 5% over 1999 figures.
- Increase Open Door rides per hour to 1.90 from 1999’s 1.85.
- Increase on-time performance for Open Door to 95% from 1999 - 2000.
- Implement "Access-To-Jobs" flexible transportation services.
- Complete the comprehensive evaluation of six business units in the Operations, Maintenance and Administrative Service Departments to determine service/cost efficiencies.
- Reduce accident rate by 20% from 1998-1999, or 40 per million miles traveled.
- Increase number of miles between road calls to 7,000 for 1999-2000.
- Execute an internal/external marketing campaign promoting a customer-oriented single image for public transportation program for Marion County and surrounding areas.
- Complete comprehensive regional public transportation plan for the county and surrounding area which includes an implementation strategy.
- Reduce customer complaints to 2.2 per 100,000 rides provided.
**The Peterson Plan**
Bart Peterson will work with the business community to create incentives for employees to use public transportation.

**IndyGo**
IndyGo is excited to launch Mayor Peterson’s Business Alliance as a way to bring together transportation officials and local businesses. Through this effort, IndyGo will develop policies that benefit employers and employees alike.

“We are delighted by the obvious importance the new Mayor places on innovative public transportation and look forward to working with his administration to deliver it to the entire region.” said IndyGo President/CEO Bland.


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**IndyGo Year 2000 Changes**

- The incorporation of the Corporation’s goals for the Year 2000 promoting customer service, operating efficiencies, stable and effective staff, and progress toward a regional transportation system.
- Merging of all Office of Mobility Management and IPTC operations under the direction of the Corporation’s Board of Directors and CEO/President.
- Restructuring of the Corporation into 7 departments including Executive, Administrative Services, Marketing and Service Development, Operations, Open Door, Maintenance and Facility Management, and Flexible Services.
- Establishment of a single, comprehensive training office promoting customer service, diversity, safety and conflict management with all employees of IndyGo.
- Increase Open Door service by adding 12,000 revenue hours.
- Outsourcing of flexible Services, transit Store and Section 15/Quality Control functions as well as continuation of outsourcing of select transportation services.
- Implementation of Access-to-Jobs program involving special Federal Transit Administration grant funds ($500K) and Corporate Route Guarantees ($400K) including Park 100 guaranteed ride home & hotel employee service.
- Use of $5.3 million in Federal Transit Administration funding for preventative maintenance ($4M), Open Door ($800K) and Planning ($500K).
- Inclusion of $8.7 million of state Public Mass Transit Funds (PMTF) as contracted with the City of Indianapolis.
- The marketing of a single image -- IndyGo -- for public transportation in the Indianapolis regional area.
- Increased frequency of service to Routes 29 (E. 38th) and 31 (Greenwood).
- Adding an additional 7,800 revenue hours to commuter and fixed routes.
- Added service in Route 49 to Ameriplex Complex.
- Increase Flexible Service by 10,250 revenue hours during late night and weekends.
- Development of comprehensive “partnership” program with local businesses to promote flexible transit service to enhance employment opportunities and mobility within industrial and high employment centers.

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**In summer of 2000, IndyGo will receive 75 new buses funded with a $5 million grant from the Federal Transit Authority (FTA).**

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

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**New Mayor (from page 8)**

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In summer of 2000, IndyGo will receive 75 new buses funded with a $5 million grant from the Federal Transit Authority (FTA).
The “painted” buses in IndyGo’s fleet, promoting everything from home builders to collegiate sports teams, aren’t painted at all! They are wrapped in vinyl-film by Eller Media, a firm known for providing unique billboard display advertising opportunities.

“It’s very similar to billboard technology,” says Shannon Joseph, IndyGo Marketing Director, “and for a very similar purpose.” We’re partnering with business for mutual benefit. Because of bus transit advertising, IndyGo is able to generate revenue to cover expenses not met by the fare box,” he explains. “And, advertisers are able to take advantage of a unique promotional opportunity at very competitive rates.”

Consider that the average bus makes 6,500 trips into downtown a week and that roughly 100,000 people work downtown, where traditional billboard signage is at a premium. And that’s not even considering all of the people the bus passes along the way.

The typical contract period for an illustrated bus is 12 months, with 6 months representing a minimum. Production costs run high, from a quarter to a third of total costs, but are folded into the total monthly charge in the $2,000 to and $3,000 range for a 12-month contract.

“They’re a real promotional bargain,” says Joseph. “And for special events, there’s no more dramatic or cost-effective way to put your message on the move.

For more information on IndyGo’s illustrated buses, contact Brent Bolick of Eller Media at 317/634-1900.

? DID YOU KNOW ?

The average van used for paratransit service lasts 4 - 7 years.

Y ou r  M P O  s t a f f

... includes these people who would be happy to address your comments or questions on any aspect of the transportation planning process:

Steve Cunningham • Senior Planner 317/327-5403
Mike Dearing • Senior Planner 317/327-5139
Kevin Mayfield • Planner 317/327-5135
Michael Peoni, AICP • Principal Planner/Acting Manager 317/327-5133
Sweson Yang, AICP • Chief Transportation Planner 317/327-5137

You may also contact the MPO via its website at www.indygov.org/indympo

? DID YOU KNOW ?

The average big bus costs about $260,000 and lasts 10 - 12 years.
peak travel times, 60 minute intervals off-peak. Late Night Service transports shift workers to and from the Airport and Park 100, serving both rider and employer goals.

Open Door Service is available seven days a week, 22 hours a day, from 4 AM to 2 AM, by scheduling a reservation. Flexible Service includes the 86th Street route with service available Monday through Friday from 6 AM to 8 PM. IndyFlex Service, like the Access-to-Jobs Program, is available from 5 AM to 11 PM.

**The Name Change**

Readers of teMPO have heard local bus service referred to by a variety of names, including Metro, The Office of Mobility Management, the Indianapolis Public Transit Corporation (IPTC) and IndyGo. So, what’s the scoop?

Metro was established as the operating name for local transit in 1975, and has been a part of the city scene for the last 25 years. It is now being replaced by the name “IndyGo”.

The Office of Mobility Management (O.M.M.) was created by Mayor Goldsmith in 1996 to provide overall coordination of transit service throughout Marion County. This year, the O.M.M. was incorporated into the Indianapolis Public Transit Corporation to provide more effective, responsive and efficient customer service.

Currently, there are only two names you should be hearing when regional mass transit is discussed. They are the Indianapolis Public Transit Corporation (IPTC), which is responsible for providing mass transportation throughout Marion County and some surrounding areas, and IndyGo – the new “street”, marketing or operating name for all city buses.

**Service Mission**

The mission for the IPTC has been the same since 1975: to develop, coordinate and provide a customer-oriented and diversified public transportation program that is safe, clean and convenient to citizens of Marion County and surrounding jurisdictions.

Recent and proposed changes at the IPTC are intended to help better achieve the corporation’s mission.

**New Management**

One of the recent changes has been in management at the IPTC. Below is a brief roster of the people responsible for delivering customer-oriented transit service in addition to those you’re likely to see driving the buses or working at the Transit Store.
IndyGo currently operates a fleet of 220 vehicles: 145 large (35’ - 40’) fixed route buses, 55 paratransit vans which carry 15 - 20 passengers, and 20 support vehicles.

It costs an average of $65 per hour to run a big, fixed route bus.

It costs about $35 per hour to operate a paratransit van.

Big buses last between ten to twelve years on average.

Vans last four to seven years.

Depending on size, the typical fixed route bus costs $260,000 to replace.

It costs IndyGo a total of $2.64 per passenger trip to provide transit service.

The average fare collected from an IndyGo rider per trip is just 70 cents, despite the flat rate fare system of $1 that was begun in 1998. Senior and Metro Works discounts account for the difference.

IndyGo’s total operating budget for the year 2000 is nearly $34,000,000.

Approximately 67% of IndyGo operating expenses are paid from local sources, including the fare box and property taxes. (1997 figures)

About 33% of IndyGo’s operating expenses are covered by state and federal subsidies. (1997 figures)

Every dollar invested in transit results in an economic return of $1.38 to the region. (Source: Indiana Transportation Association)
No special issue on IndyGo would be complete without talking to some transit riders. We’ve chosen two as a sample of the diverse people, needs, backgrounds and perspectives that drive our local bus service and the more than 10,000,000 passenger trips it provides each year.

Ben Hill

Meet Ben Hill, transit activist and life-long rider who takes the bus . . . seriously. “I’ve probably been catching the bus for 35 or 36 years,” he says, “and some of my very early memories are of riding the bus at age five or six.”

Ben still prefers using transit to driving for many reasons and shows it in many ways. In addition to riding IndyGo six or seven days a week, this former Riders Advisory Council member also serves on the Transit Advisory Council (TAC) and as a pro-transit voice on the Citizens Advisory Committee. In addition, Ben frequently attends meetings of the Central Indiana Regional Transit Alliance (CIRTA) which is currently developing a Regional Mass Transit Service Plan (see the Summer 1999 issue of teMPO), and the Metro Advisory Committee which focuses on paratransit and the Open Door Program serving people with disabilities. “Whether they’re riding the bus out of choice or need, people rely on transit service as a part of their lives,” Ben says. “Indianapolis is certainly a big enough city to provide this basic service. Especially when it’s in everyone’s best interest to reduce the number of cars clogging our streets.”

For his part, 41-year old Ben takes the bus just about everywhere. His most frequent trip is from home to work, and back. Traveling from his Speedway address, just off of High School Road, to his Conseco job downtown takes between 45 to 50 minutes on average. “The time of day I travel varies, but I find the service pretty consistent and convenient,” Ben explains. “Lately, I’ve been working from mid-afternoon to late night, catching the 2 or 2:30 PM bus from home and the 10:30 back. Usually I’m on the #10 bus which travels 10th Street and passes right in front of my home. But if I miss it, I can always walk four or five blocks to catch the #25 on west 16th.”

Paratransit vehicles used to provide transportation to persons with disabilities average about 1.85 rides per hour.

? DID YOU KNOW ?
Then, is IndyGo service perfect in Ben’s opinion? “There’s always room for improvement,” he laughs. “Because I’m a good customer of local transit’s, and one of its biggest supporters, I’ve already noticed the recent improvements they’ve made in flexible service, like Dial-A-Ride on 86th Street. And I’ve seen improvements in fixed route service too, which has always been reliable. They seem to be making progress in the areas of bus cleanliness, driver courtesy and rider conveniences, such as the new $2 Day Pass. Still, they need to work on big issues, like expanding their service area and improving under-served city segments, and on little things, like having the drivers call out all stops. That’s required by law and, yet, I seldom hear it when I’m on board.”

How about the future? What’s on this frequent rider’s wish list for local transit in the new millennium? “More of what IndyGo has already started to provide,” Ben says. “More cross-town service, like a 36th Street or west side cross-town bus; improved southside service, like a southside cross-town or circulator bus, and nicer rider facilities, like streetlights, shelters and benches at more stops. And, of course,” he notes, “more sidewalks would make those stops more accessible, but that’s really more of a City issue than an IndyGo problem.”

Though he’s out to improve the bus service he uses, it’s clear more than self-interest motivates this advocate’s transit suggestions. “The better public transportation meets the basic needs of people like me, the better it is for the city as a whole,” Ben states. “As service improves, more and more people are likely to use it. Not as a pro-environmental sacrifice, but just as a smarter, cheaper and easier way to travel. Just think of the impact that could have on our future traffic congestion,” he says. Clearly, it’s a future benefit this lifelong rider is helping IndyGo deliver today.

Kevin Mayfield

Meet Kevin Mayfield, a Planner with your Metropolitan Planning Organization. Unlike Ben Hill, who relies on transit as his primary mode of transportation, Kevin views IndyGo’s service as his preferred alternative to single occupant vehicle usage. “When someone needs my car, or it’s in the shop, or if I just don’t feel like driving, I’ve always found our local bus service to be a pretty convenient, reliable fallback,” he says.

This Indianapolis native has been a transit rider for more than 20 years, catching the bus at least one or two times a week, and frequently much more often. “Lately, I’ve been leaving the driving to IndyGo five days a week. It really doesn’t take that much longer to get to work and I’m able to read the paper, people watch, or just get lost in my thoughts along the way. It can be a good way to begin or end the work day,” he explains. On average, it takes Kevin 25 - 30 minutes to get to his downtown office at the City-County Building from his northwest side home, a distance he estimates at 4 miles or so. He catches the Route 37/Park 100 Bus at the corner of Lafayette and Kessler or the Route 15 Riverside at 30th & Kessler. “At the end of the day, I just walk a block or so to the corner of Ohio & Pennsylvania to head home.”

When asked if he’s noticed any changes in service since the IndyGo reorganization started, he answers that the service has always been pretty good and remains so. “I know they’ve got big plans to expand service but, for me, they’ve always done a good job. I really have no complaints and have never thought the service was as bad as some people said it was.”

How about the future then, Kevin? How would you improve an already good thing? “Well,” he says, “winter is here again and, for me, the worst part of using transit has always been waiting for the bus in cold or wet weather. Future improvements he’d like to see include more shelters and benches at bus stops to make the wait a little easier out of the wind and rain. “Of the three bus stops I most often use, none of them have a shelter,” he says. [Editor’s Note: IndyGo is currently working to develop business and community partnerships that will lead to the installation of more shelters.]

On the whole, this casual user gives transit high marks for the role it can play in both the city’s future and his own. “At a dollar a ride, I can save money by riding the bus, when you consider the cost of car operation, maintenance, gasoline and insurance. Plus, I can avoid having to park downtown which can sometimes be a challenge.” For the city, Kevin mentions transit benefits like reduced traffic congestion and the opportunity to improve our regional air quality. “Cars traveling at low speeds, as they do when the roads are congested, put out higher levels of pollutants. Buses give us the opportunity to reduce those pollution levels and the congestion that causes them,” he explains. “So, buses are a good choice for me and the city.”
What would an issue on IndyGo be if we didn’t focus at least a little attention on the people who get you from here to there – the bus drivers. Known as Operators within IPTC, these men and women are the face and voice of IndyGo to most of those who ride public transportation on a regular basis.

As such, how each does his or her job receives a lot of attention from both inside and outside the company. No wonder IndyGo values and promotes its smooth operators for the safety, courtesy and professionalism they bring “behind the wheel” with them everyday.

There are currently 275 IndyGo operators. To operate an IndyGo bus, each must receive 5-7 weeks of training, hold a Commercial Drivers License, and pass a series of tests to be certified. Re-certification exams are given annually.

“It’s all part of ensuring a professional force of operators,” says IndyGo Operations Director Kyle Lomax. “Our best operators use their past experience to keep their driving and people skills at their peak.”

Keeping Operators at peak performance is also why drivers are assigned to different routes every 8 to 12 months. “If you or I drove the same route day after day, we’d start going on automatic pilot,” explains Lomax. “To avoid this, we move our Operators around on a regular basis.”

Following are just four examples of the very best Operators IndyGo has to offer, as selected by the Operators themselves. “Each proves what a safe, convenient and pleasant experience public transportation can be everyday,” says Public Affairs Director Mary Lynn Ricks, who believes IndyGo drivers belong in the Convention and Visitors Bureau’s Good Will Ambassadors Program. “These people are driving more than a bus. They’re driving the city’s future of mass transit.”

West Hardy
Years of Service: 16

Mr. Hardy is married and has four sons. He is IndyGo’s Lead Training Driver, and enjoys bowling in his off hours.

“Being a Coach Operator has given me the opportunity to advance, while doing what I love and am good at. It’s also been personally rewarding for me to be able to share my knowledge with other operators as part of IndyGo’s Training Program. I have a very positive attitude about this company.”

Rhuperdia L. Crowe
Years of Service: 16

Mrs. Crowe is married with nine children – six daughters and three sons. She is a Training Instructor and drives IndyGo routes 15 and 19. Off hours, she enjoys sewing.

“The best thing about working for IndyGo and being an Operator is the passengers. I am a professional which entails having an instinctive ability to deal with people. I love people and enjoy taking them from point A to point B safely. Being an Operator is a great career with progression.”
Jose Manuel Gonzalez

Years of Service: 11 years

Mr. Gonzalez is the father of four boys and a girl. He is a musician and serves as coach-player of the IndyGo basketball team. Though an Operator for eleven years, Mr. Gonzalez has worked in various company jobs for nearly three decades.

“IndyGo is working to become the best bus company in Indiana. I like being a part of that. As an Operator, I get the chance to give good service to our riders.”

Nancy McAfee

Years of Service: 10 months

Ms. McAfee is the mother of seven -- five boys and two girls. She enjoys bowling in her free time.

“I like working with, and helping, people. And I really enjoy the driving.”

“Public” Transit

In its current effort to improve both the scope and caliber of its services, IndyGo benefits from the interaction and participation of several community-based organizations as planning partners. These not-for-profit groups serve as informal sounding boards, oversight committees and public forums, insuring that the people who use mass transit in Central Indiana have a say in how it is run. Their ideas, concerns and suggestions provide a wealth of information and insight to a public transportation provider who puts the citizenry it serves at the top of its organizational chart.

The Transit Advisory Council (TAC) is a 21-member advisory group created to provide citizen input on proposals to improve the local transit system. TAC’s planning and operations sub-committees review suggestions and considerations on issues concerning everything from bus routes to shelter locations. Their recommendations are then presented to IPTC’s full board meetings for discussion. TAC meetings are held monthly and are open to the public. To find out the time, date and location of the next TAC meeting, call IndyGo Public Affairs Director Mary Lynn Ricks at 635-2100.

The Metro Advisory Committee (MAC) focuses on the unique concerns and challenges faced by people with disabilities when riding public transportation. MAC provides a forum for their ideas and suggestions and offers procedural and policy recommendations to IndyGo as ridership among this group increases. MAC recommendations also aid IndyGo in addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations. The public is also welcome to attend monthly MAC meetings which are usually held at (location). Call 635-2100 for more information.

The Central Indiana Regional Citizens League (CIRCL) is a not-for-profit group that encourages active participation in, and discussion of, a variety

cont on page 20, see “Public Transit”
Ever think you could run a better bus company than IndyGo? Each month, a couple of hundred people do. They are riders who call The Transit Store at 635-3344 to vent their frustration over some aspect of IndyGo’s service and IndyGo takes their comments very seriously. But consider this: IndyGo receives between 220 and 250 complaint calls a month, or a total of 2,440 to 2,500 complaints per year. But, in that same year, IndyGo provides more than ten million passenger trips. That means their service complaint rate is actually an enviable three one-hundredths of one percent!

“I’m not surprised,” says Mike Peoni, MPO Acting Manager and occasional IndyGo rider. “I think the people who criticize IndyGo the most have never ridden a bus.”

True, the vast majority of riders -- a whopping 99.7% -- are happy with IndyGo service, but what about those who aren’t. What do they complain about most often and what does IndyGo do about it?

Here are the top three complaints IndyGo receives most frequently, along with the company’s response.

**#1: On-time Performance or Schedule Adherence**

A bus can be made late in a variety of ways, just as drivers in single occupant vehicles can. Road construction, accidents, railroad crossings and rush hour traffic can impact transit scheduling even though consideration of these factors is built into route timings. For this reason, when these elements are absent, buses can run ahead of schedule unless layovers are taken. During a layover, the operator stretches or gets some fresh air as a safety precaution while restoring his bus’s on-time performance.

Others reasons for running off-schedule have to do with accommodating special needs passengers. Riders in wheelchairs, elderly people, families with small children, those who don’t have their fares in-hand, and those arriving at the bus stop just as the coach is about to pull away all take a little extra time to serve. “Our drivers are constantly balancing individual passenger needs with the need to stay on-schedule,” explains Mary Lynn Ricks. “If a bus is habitually late, definitely call 635-3344 to report it. Otherwise, please remember that the Operator wants to be on-time more than anyone. His or her life is a lot easier when the schedule is maintained, so we appreciate your understanding and patience.”

**#2: Pass-bys**

Is there anything more frustrating than running to catch a bus only to have it pass you up? Well, yes, actually. You could be a bus operator who must keep focused on the road to insure passenger and surrounding vehicle safety. He or she may not see someone running or, if they do, may not be sure the sprinter is headed for the bus stop. If no one is waiting at a bus stop, the operator may pass it by to stay on-schedule (see Complaint #1). “This is kind of the trade-off I mentioned before,” says Ricks. “We recommend passengers arrive at the stop 5 minutes before scheduled arrival time to eliminate the possibility of a pass-by.”

**#3: Stress Reactions**

Let’s face it. There may be the occasional crabby driver out there but, more often than not, you’re probably just seeing a human reaction to stress. Operating a 40’ bus and dealing with the public/traffic all day long can be extremely stressful. Stress can also come from passengers who vent their own day’s frustration at the driver in ways that would shock the average person. Knowing this happens, IndyGo provides its drivers with the training and support they need to remain courteous, safe, friendly and professional. If you happen to witness an instance of discourteous behavior, report it by calling 635-3344. IndyGo will investigate.

To make sure that there is as little reason as possible for complaint, Road Supervisors are constantly traveling bus routes to check the timing and performance of IndyGo drivers. Still, IndyGo needs your help to constantly improve its service. Please report any incident of negative driver behavior or erratic bus operation to 635-334 so the problem can be solved. Also, feel free to use that number to report superior service and driver hospitality. “We always try to learn from our mistakes,” says Ricks, “but we learn just as much from our successes.”

**DID YOU KNOW?**

By the summer of 2000, all IndyGo buses will be wheelchair accessible. Most of them are already!

IndyGo receives 2,440–2,500 comments a year out of 10,000,000 passenger trips -- an enviable comment-to-service ratio of 3/100ths of one percent!
Transit Store Tidbits

IndyGo’s newly remodeled Transit Store at 139 East Ohio Street (phone number: 635-3344) is kind of an amazing place. Here are a few of the more fantastic facts as Transit Store Manager Jeanie Chrisman sees them:

• The Transit Store serves two primary functions: as an information center and a ticket outlet.

• The Transit Store gets between 900 and 1,200 calls a day, 99% of which are requesting route information.

• The Transit Store serves a minimum of 500 walk-in customers a day.

• Only 8 people work at The Transit Store, including Jeanie herself.

• Of all tickets types sold by The Transit Store, including full- and half-fare versions of 31- and 7-Day Passes, 10-Trip Tickets, Single Trip Tickets and Open Door Passes, the 7-Day Pass which was introduced just last summer, is by far the fastest growing segment of the business.

• You need an IndyGo photo I.D. to enjoy a Youth, Senior or Person with Disabilities reduced fare rate.

• In October alone, The Transit Store issued 178 new photo I.D.s.

• In October alone, The Transit Store sold 623 full-fare and 641 half-fare 31-Day Passes, 1,238 full-fare and 160 half-fare 7-Day Passes, 378 10-Trip Tickets, 1,946 Single Trip Tickets and 190 Open Door Passes.

• A new $2 Day Pass will be introduced in December and will be available at The Transit Store and on IndyGo buses.

• The Transit Store also serves as IndyGo’s Lost & Found. Items left on buses end up there the next day, where Transit Store staff attempt to locate their owners.

• There has been a Transit Store at least 20 years and about 5 years at its present address.

• The Transit Store is located at 139 E. Ohio Street because of the “Ohio Loop”, meaning that most downtown buses stop right across the street, promoting store usage as well as customer access and convenience.

• Last July, The Transit Store installed a 24-hour/7 day a week automated voice mail system which can record complaints, questions or application requests anytime, day or night. Route brochures and discount fare application forms can be mailed to you from these requests.

• The Transit Store is open for call-in business 7 AM to 7 PM weekdays and 9 AM to 4 PM Saturdays. Walk-in hours are 8 AM to 6 PM weekdays and 9 AM to 4 PM Saturdays.
of issues that affect the quality of life in central Indiana, including transportation and land use policies. In Spring, 1999, CIRCL published its Central Indiana Transportation and Land Use Vision Plan after 20-months of development, research and public forums. The plan investigates cost-effective, environmentally-sound land use and transportation strategies, such as denser urban development and increased reliance on transit, for possible incorporation into local and region-wide planning. As such, CIRCL has offered strong support for a more flexible, expanded and responsive transit system throughout the region. For meeting and membership information, call CIRCL at 317/920-3460.

“Public Transit is a community resource in the same way roadways are,” says Mike Peoni, AICP, Acting Manager of the Metropolitan Planning Organization which conducts its own extensive public outreach and participation program. “As such, it is completely appropriate and necessary for IndyGo to talk with, and listen to, the people it serves.”

The average IndyGo fixed route bus provides 22 rides per hour.