**A Region-wide Rapid Transit System**

That's the focus of DIRECTIONS, a study currently being conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization, and of this Special Edition of teMPO! Now in Phase II of its three-phase, 24-month schedule, DIRECTIONS is developing specific route alignment and transit technology options for our region's six busiest commuter corridors. Here you'll find details on those options as well as study background, goals & objectives, a list of individual and organizations participating in the study, both study area and commuter corridor maps, an activity timeline, frequently asked questions, and more! Everything you need to be up-to-date and in-the-know about "the rapid transit study to improve regional mobility. What a great way to start asking, and giving, DIRECTIONS!

**DIRECTIONS: What it is, How it Began**

DIRECTIONS is name of a transportation study currently being conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the region's primary transportation planner. The purpose of this 18-24 month study is to evaluate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of developing a region-wide rapid transit system. If implemented, such a system could help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and increase mobility options throughout the area. DIRECTIONS is currently nearing the end of the second of its three phases, during which transit planners will present specific route alignment options and transit technology recommendations to the public for review and comment.

The MPO initiated preliminary work on "The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility" in May, 2002, when it issued a Request For Proposal (RFP) to...

**Study Goals & Objectives**

The overall purpose of DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study to Improve Regional Mobility, is to evaluate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of developing a region-wide rapid transit system. If implemented, such a system could help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and increase mobility options throughout the area. By necessity, identifying locally preferred system design and operating characteristics is an integral part of the evaluation process.

The following set of goals and objectives have been used to evaluate the various system alignment and transit technology options considered by DIRECTIONS. They were developed during Phase I of the study and were presented for review and comment at a series of public meetings in April and May of last year. They are shown here in the...

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RTS Management Team

The rapid transit study DIRECTIONS is being conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the region’s primary transportation planner, with the oversight and cooperation of a variety of federal, state, and local organizations, as well as private transportation-related firms. Study participants include:

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**ACRONYME**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AAA</th>
<th>Alternatives Analysis</th>
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<tr>
<td>AGT</td>
<td>Automated Guideway Transit</td>
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<td>AICP</td>
<td>American Institute of Certified Planners</td>
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<td>ATMS</td>
<td>Advanced Traffic Management System</td>
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<td>APM</td>
<td>Automated People Mover</td>
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<td>BRT</td>
<td>Bus Rapid Transit</td>
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<td>CAC</td>
<td>Citizens Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>CBD</td>
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<td>CIRCL</td>
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<td>CMAQ</td>
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<td>DBE</td>
<td>Disadvantaged Business Enterprise</td>
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<td>DEIS</td>
<td>Draft Environmental Impact Statement</td>
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<td>MBE</td>
<td>Minority-owned Business Enterprise</td>
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<td>MPO</td>
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<td>Policy Steering Committee</td>
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<td>Rail/Bus, Fourth Alternative from conNECTions</td>
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<td>RFP</td>
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<td>RTS</td>
<td>Rapid Transit Study</td>
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<td>TDM</td>
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<td>Transportation Systems Management</td>
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<td>WBE</td>
<td>Woman-owned Business Enterprise</td>
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The shaded area shown here incorporates all of Marion County and most of the surrounding eight counties. It is home to 1.5 million people and nearly 700,000 households (in all nine counties), ranking the Greater Indianapolis region 29th among America’s largest metropolitan areas. And, like other metropolitan areas overly dependent on single-occupant vehicle use, our region is suffering the effects of traffic congestion, including chronic rush hour delays and diminished air quality.

**INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA**

This map reflects the expanded MPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) as determined by Census 2000 data. This new MPA was recommended for approval by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council-Policy Committee in late 2002, and recommended for implementation by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in 2003. Final approval was given by Governor Joseph Kernan in fourth quarter, 2003.
Phase I Findings

The first of DIRECTIONS’ three phases began in December, 2002. It focused on the development of a region-wide rapid transit system concept, including the identification of potential travel corridors and preferred transit technologies for further evaluation. This phase also examined a possible transit link between downtown and the Indianapolis International Airport.

Commuter Corridors

To develop a comprehensive list of potential transit corridors for further evaluation, DIRECTIONS’ planners first considered established traffic analysis zone (TAZ) travel capacity totals, which identify the region’s busiest travel routes. The highest capacity routes were analyzed for frequency and duration of peak hour congestion to yield a travel demand/capacity supply ratio. The routes with the highest ratios were then examined for characteristics that might recommend or discourage their inclusion in a region-wide rapid transit system. Such characteristics might include the presence of existing rail infrastructure (recommend) or delicate environmental or historically significant elements (discourage).

Through this preliminary evaluation process, a set of potential rapid transit corridors was identified for further evaluation. The list of potential corridors from downtown Indianapolis included North/Northeast to Fishers, Noblesville and Cicero; Northeast to Pendleton and Anderson; East to Cumberland; Southeast to Shelbyville; South/Southeast to Greenwood and Franklin; South/Southwest to Mooresville and Martinsville; West/Southwest to Plainfield; West to Avon and Danville; West/Northwest to Lebanon, and North/Northwest to Zionsville. Other potential corridors completely outside of Marion County included from Anderson south to Shelbyville; from Shelbyville west to Franklin; from Plainfield north to Brownsburg; and, from Anderson west to Noblesville.

Transit Technologies

As a first step toward recommending a set of transit technologies to include in a regional rapid transit system, Phase I planners assessed the strengths and weaknesses of all those listed here. By studying existing installations, each was evaluated for technological constraints, alignment feasibility, affordability, attractiveness and user-convenience. Important questions concerned accessibility (Is the technology easy to use in the Indianapolis environment?), adaptability (Can the technology operate in the Indianapolis environment, integrate with other systems, and be upgraded in the future?), environmental impact (How does the technology change the natural and human environments?) and capacity responsiveness (Is the technology capable of meeting the range of projected ridership demands?).

In general, Phase I planners recommended a combination of transit technologies within an easy-to-use network. In order to maintain maximum system design discretion, all transit technologies continued to be considered while commuter corridor options were being evaluated. Though the final selection of recommended transit technologies would be made during DIRECTIONS’ second phase following a competitive evaluation process and extensive public involvement, Phase I technology “front runners” included light and commuter rail transit (LRT, CRT), bus rapid transit (BRT) and automated guideway transit (AGT).

Phase I of DIRECTIONS ended on September 17, 2003 when the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) reviewed and approved the study’s findings to-date and authorized the Metropolitan Planning Organization to initiate Phase II activity.
Phase II Options

The rapid transit study, DIRECTIONS entered its second, and current, phase in autumn, 2003. In Phase II, the MPO and its consultants are concentrating on the preliminary study of specific route alignments within six selected corridors located throughout the Indianapolis metropolitan area. In Phase I of the study these corridors, which currently experience the region’s highest levels of commuter activity, were identified as the most suitable for the placement of a rapid transit system. They include:

The East Corridor, which runs from the Center Business District (CBD), an approximately one mile square area of downtown Indianapolis, east to the Cumberland area.

The South Corridor, which runs from the CBD south to the Greenwood area.

The Airport Corridor, which runs from the CBD to Indianapolis International Airport (IIA).

The West Corridor, which runs from the CBD west to Avon.

The Northwest Corridor, which runs from the CBD northwest to Zionsville.

The Northeast Corridor, which runs from the CBD northeast to the Fishers.

The definition of each of the above corridors begins in the Indianapolis CBD at a proposed bus/rapid transit multi-modal Transit Center. The proposed location of this Transit Center is the vicinity south of South Street, north of Interstate 70, west of the Lilly Corporate Center, and east of West Street. A downtown Indianapolis bus circulator system would provide easy access between the rapid transit system at the Transit Center and downtown points beyond.

The six corridors have been reviewed for potential route alignment options that provide for a rapid transit system utilizing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT), or Automated Guideway Transit (AGT). All of the route alignment options could accommodate AGT or BRT. However, some of them will not accommodate LRT, due to geometric constraints. Though still in draft form at the time of publication, the following potential route alignment descriptions should substantially reflect the multiple options offered for public review and comment in February, 2004.

The East Corridor

The East Corridor alignment option begins at the Downtown Transit Center, runs north-by-northeast until it intersects the Norfolk Southern railroad corridor, then runs east within the Norfolk Southern corridor until it intersects the CSX rail corridor just east of the downtown heliport. Two proposed alignment options diverge at this point. The southernmost of the two alignments follows the CSX rail corridor east until it intersects the B&O rail corridor east of Brookville Road. This alignment then runs southeast along the B&O rail corridor to the Marion County line, where it terminates. This alignment has the potential for BRT, LRT, and AGT.

The point where the southernmost of two alignments intersects the B&O rail corridor, and turns to the southeast, is also the starting point of the proposed Pennsy Trail Greenway – a continuation of the CSX rail corridor east towards cont on page 20, see Options
order of importance established by both participating private citizens and members of the study's planning team.

**GOAL 1: MAXIMIZE MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS**

**Objectives**
- Congestion Relief
- Minimal Right-of-Way Requirements
- Speed/Comfort/Safety of Commute
- Connectivity of Demand/Activity Centers
- Cost-Effectiveness
- Stimulus for Improved Local Bus System
- Appropriateness of Technology for Region

**GOAL 2: MAXIMIZE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

**Objectives**
- Mobile Workforce
- Reduced Traffic Distributions to Communities
- Stimulate Economic Development

**GOAL 3: MAXIMIZE LAND-USE BENEFITS**

**Objectives**
- Land-Use Enhancements
- Smart Growth Initiatives
- Transit Compatibility
- Regional Attractiveness & Destinations

**GOAL 4: MAXIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

**Objectives**
- Improved Air Quality
- Preservation of Historic Sites
- Protection of Threatened & Endangered Species
- Minimal Noise Pollution

**GOAL 5: MAXIMIZE INTERMODAL COMPATIBILITY & BENEFITS**

**Objectives**
- Minimizes Conflicts With Existing Freight Rail Lines
- Supports New Midfield Terminal At Airport
- Supports New Downtown Indianapolis Transit Center
- Support/Connect with Other Transit/Transportation Systems

To comment on these study goals and objectives, or to suggest new evaluation criteria for *Directions*, visit the MPO website at indygov.org/indympo/directions, or call the MPO 24-Hour Comment Line at 317/327-8601.
**Commuter Survey Results**

As part of its effort to encourage and accommodate public input in both the regional transportation planning process and in *DIRECTIONS*, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) conducted a telephone survey in July, 2003. One of the goals of this survey, which was intended to inform the study’s first and second phase activity, was to determine the relative importance of transportation selection criteria among area residents. Respondents, chosen at random, were asked to rank Travel Time, Reliability, Personal Costs, Personal Comfort/Convenience and Personal Safety to determine which transportation characteristics are most important to them while commuting. They were also asked to rate personal and public types of transportation using these criteria. In addition, the MPO questioned participants about their commuting habits, including whether they routinely make multiple stops while traveling to/from work (trip-chaining) and, if so, how many.

“This survey is an important public involvement tool for this study and other MPO planning initiatives,” says Amy Inman, M.S., MPO Senior Planner and co-planner in charge of the *DIRECTIONS* study. “We’re using three different types of criteria to help us achieve our study goals (see related article, page 1) while evaluating various system options,” Inman says. The first type, *Community Criteria*, concerns things like congestion mitigation, economic development and environmental impacts. The second, *System Criteria*, deals with aspects of operation, cost and efficiency. The third type, *User Criteria*, is more personal information, having to do with subjective preferences and what’s important to people when they commute. “For that,” Inman notes, “we had to go to the source.”

The survey, conducted by The Kensington Group in association with Whitman Communications, Inc, was designed specifically to identify the public’s commuting habits and preferences in travel mode characteristics. The MPO, and *DIRECTIONS*’ primary consultant, Schimpeler-American, contributed to the survey’s content development. The survey’s findings helped, and are continuing to help, transit planners and study participants evaluate different transit modes being considered for use in a region-wide rapid transit system.

For example, locally preferred travel characteristics are being matched to the transit technology types that best exemplify them.

“What we learned from this survey is not only helping to guide Phase I and II activity, but has already helped guide our transportation planning efforts in other areas,” says Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “The survey findings are projectable within the study area, and also within each of four counties — Hamilton, Hendricks, Johnson and Marion. These counties experience the most intense commuter activity of the nine included in the *DIRECTIONS* study area.” To achieve this level of accuracy, the survey conducted about 900 telephone interviews lasting more than 10-minutes each.

Findings from the survey include:

- People throughout the study area consistently rank Personal Safety as their
The most important aspect of commuter travel, followed by Reliability, Travel Time, Personal Cost and Personal Comfort/Convenience. Only Hamilton County residents put comfort before cost.

- The average commute within the study area is reported to be 15 miles (one-way), with Johnson County residents driving an average of five miles further. (Actual travel demand estimates differ.)

- The average study area commute reportedly takes 23 minutes one-way.

- Eighty percent of all respondents say they usually travel directly to and from work without making stops along the way. Of those who trip-chain, however, one-and-a-half stops per one-way commute is the average.

- The average number of stops among those who report trip-chaining has a bimodal distribution, meaning that those who travel less than 15 minutes or more than 30 minutes tend to make more stops.

- Using these statistics, the calculated travel speed for the average commuter is 35 mph. In Marion County, however, speed is reduced to 31 mph.

The Commuter Telephone Survey is only part of the MPO’s on-going Public Involvement Program. Through televised public meetings, group presentations, free publications, direct mail, advertising, media and public relations, a participation hotline (327-IMPO), a 24-hour Comment Line (327-8601) and the internet, the MPO attempts to interest, inform and involve area residents in DIRECTIONS and other elements of the regional transportation planning process. For more information on public participation opportunities, visit the MPO web site at www.indygov.org/indympo.

Commuter Survey Definitions

For the purpose of the MPO’s Commuter Telephone Survey, conducted in July, 2003, travel characteristics were defined for respondents in the manner below. Their order of presentation here reflects the relative importance placed on them by area commuters, with Personal Safety ranking first (Most Important) and Personal Comfort/Convenience ranking last (Least Important).

**Personal Safety**
- this refers to protecting you or your belongings while waiting for transportation or while traveling in a vehicle.

**Reliability**
- this refers to the dependability of a particular mode of travel to get you to and from your destinations in the time and manner expected.

**Travel Time**
- this refers to the amount of time it usually takes you to get to work or to get you home from work.

**Personal Cost**
- this refers to the amount you pay for transportation including daily fares for public transportation or the total cost of using a personal vehicle such as fuel, insurance, parking and maintenance.

**Personal Comfort/Convenience**
- this refers to the physical amenities like adjustable seats and climate control, as well as weather-related aspects of travel including the impact of inclement weather and having the flexibility to change your route or schedule as needed.
Public Involvement Efforts

Because of DIRECTIONS' importance to regional transportation planning, and because the MPO views the public as its most important planning partner, a lot of effort has gone into inviting public input and encouraging public participation throughout the study process. Not all of the Rapid Transit Study has been "corridor-bound," limited to committee meetings, computer screens or car trips. A lot of the study's activity has been focused on communicating with area residents and soliciting public input.

“We view the public as a member of our planning team” says Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “That's why we put so much time and effort behind trying to keep the public informed of, and involved in, all aspects of our regional transportation planning process.” The rapid transit study DIRECTIONS is no exception. News coverage began months before study activity actually got underway and has continued for the last year and a half with, on average, two stories a month appearing in The Indianapolis Star, the regional newspaper of records. But outreach efforts don't stop with the print media. TV, radio, direct mail, a telephone survey, a telephone hotline and comment line, the internet, group presentations, and more, have been employed to offer interested citizens the opportunity to ask, and give, DIRECTIONS.

Following is a brief summary of outreach strategies and techniques aimed at gathering informed public input for the rapid transit study since December, 2002.

Free Publications

The MPO publishes two publications on a regular basis to keep its many partners current on transportation planning process activity. Both have carried extensive coverage on DIRECTIONS and are sent gratis to the MPO's mailing list of nearly 2,500 recipients. Included on this list are elected officials, Neighborhood Association officers and members, engineering and planning personnel, local news and community affairs directors and reporters, and anyone else who expresses an interest. Private citizens make up the bulk of the MPO's mail contacts.

CAC Minutes reports on the Citizens Advisory Committee meetings hosted by the MPO for all interested parties on a quarterly basis (special meetings often increase frequency). teMPO is the official newsletter of the regional transportation planning process. It's available at all Marion County public libraries, or through the mail.

Both publications provide phone numbers and e-mail addresses to help readers ask questions or express opinions directly to MPO personnel.

Phone Contacts

In 2003, the MPO introduced its 24-hour general Comment Line at 317/327-8601. Questions or comments regarding DIRECTIONS, or any transportation-related matter are routinely directed to the appropriate planner for follow-up.

In addition, the MPO Hotline at 317/327-IMPO features up-to-the-minute information on participation opportunities. DIRECTIONS' public meetings, eleven in as many months spread throughout the study area, have been heavily promoted, as has its telephone survey.

Web Site

At indygov.org/indympo/directions, you'll find study area and commuter corridor maps, tech reports from the study's consulting engineers, details on transit system options under consideration, a study timeline, telephone survey findings and analysis, and much more.

Brochures

Highlighting study goals, major issues, participation opportunities and potential findings, two brochures have been developed to share Phase I and Phase II thinking with the public. These brochures have been distributed at locations and events throughout the study area, as well as at MPO public meetings and, upon request, via the mail.

cont on page 10, see Involvement Efforts
**Involvement Efforts**
(from page 9)

**Direct Mail**

Two direct mail campaigns have sent nearly 50,000 study area residents information on *DIRECTIONS*, its intent, and its public meetings. The goal of these mailings has been to increase awareness, build the MPO's mailing list of interested stakeholders (via reply), and promote meeting attendance throughout the region. These post cards, measuring 5.5” x 8.5” and featuring study area and commuter corridor maps, were sent throughout the study area in the same proportion as the population density. That means, about 54% of the mailers were received within Marion County because about 54% of the total number of households in the study area are located within Marion County.

**Media Advisories**

Through its Communications/Public Involvement Program, the MPO issues, on average, one media advisory per month to nearly 60 regional print, radio and TV news providers. These stories have inspired print articles, television news segments, radio drive-time interviews, and Community Calendar entries on all local television network affiliates. These advisories, issued in both English and Spanish, are available for review on the MPO web site.

**Display Advertising**

To promote attendance at its *DIRECTIONS* public meetings, the MPO places display ads in nearly 40 papers throughout the study area, including:

- The Danville Republican
- Franklin Daily Journal
- Greenfield Daily Reporter
- Greenwood and Southside Challengers
- Hendricks County Flyer
- Image Suburban Tabloid
- The Indiana Herald
- The Indianapolis Business Journal
- The Indianapolis Recorder
- The Indianapolis Star & its StarNorth, StarSouth, StarWest and Hamilton County AM sections
- La Ola Latino Americana
- La Vos de Indiana
- Lawrence Community Journal
- The Noblesville Times
- The Noblesville Ledger
- The Northwest Press
- Nuvo
- Prime Times
- The Southside Times
- Speedway Town Press Spotlight
- Topics Newspaper – North Central, Northeast & Northwest editions
- Westside Messenger
- Zionsville Times-Sentinel

**Telephone Survey**

In Phase I of *DIRECTIONS*, an extensively survey of approximately 900 respondents conducted provided projectable findings for the regional population in both the study area and in each of the four counties experiencing the highest level of commuter activity – Marion, Hamilton, Johnson and Hendricks. Through this tool, study planners identified regional commuting practices and preferences in travel mode characteristics.

A second telephone survey is planned for spring/summer, 2004.

**School Involvement Program**

First suggested by John Harold, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee, during the conNECTions study of Northeast Corridor Transportation, this program brings regional transportation planning into area classrooms. Participating educators are currently developing *DIRECTIONS*-related projects for inclusion in their curriculum using a variety of disciplines (social studies, math, art, etc.). Distance Learning technology, including audio/video telecon-
Involvement Efforts
(from page 10)

ferencing, may be used to simulcast select study presentations and monthly CAC meetings to/from various schools.

Paid Media
DIRECTIONS is running a limited media schedule to increase web site and Hotline traffic and to build attendance at public meetings. Spots air primarily during morning and evening drive-time on WFYI.

Public Presentations/Meetings
The following meetings were used, in whole or part, to present information on DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study to Improve Regional Mobility.

Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings
August 20, 2003 (re-broadcast on government access channel WCTY)

Group Presentations (in chronological order)
Warren Township Development Association
OASIS Senior Educational and Activity Programs
Keystone Business Association
Maple Road Neighborhood Association
Maywood Manor Neighborhood Association
Avon Chamber of Commerce
Liberty Creek North Neighborhood Association
Georgetown Road Neighborhood Association
Greenwood Chamber of Commerce
Hamilton County Chamber
Mooresville Kiwanis
Hoosier Environmental Council
Warren Township Comprehensive Plan Committee
Stratford Glen Neighborhood Council
West Wayne Neighborhood Association
Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce
Madison County Council of Governments
38th and Shadeland Neighborhood Association
Greater Allisonville Community Council
Pike Township Residents Association
Washington Township Comprehensive Plan Meeting

Can we give you DIRECTIONS…or ask you for some?
To succeed in recommending a locally preferred rapid transit system design for reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality and enhancing mobility throughout the area, DIRECTIONS needs the informed participation of people throughout the region. So, give us DIRECTIONS! If you’d like to schedule a special presentation on the region-wide Rapid Transit Study and its role in our transportation planning process, please contact Mike Dearing at 317/327-5139.

“it’s all about keeping our partners informed and involved,” says Dearing, of the extensive effort. “The goals of DIRECTIONS’ Public Involvement Program include informing the public about the study, and the transportation problems we’re trying to solve, persuading them to participate, and accommodating/facilitating their participation so we can build consensus and arrive at a locally preferred recommendation.”

For more information on how you can participate in DIRECTIONS or the region’s on-going transportation planning process, contact Mike Dearing at 327-5139 (mdearing@indygov.org), call the MPO Hotline at 317/327-IMPO, or visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo.
more than 70 transportation and engineering firms. In early July, 2002, a Selection Committee recommended one respondent to the Director of the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) as the study’s preferred primary consultant. On Monday, July 8, an article about the study appeared on the front page of *The Indianapolis Star*, the region’s newspaper of record, kicking off the *Directions*’ extensive and on-going public information and involvement efforts (see related article, page 9).

The consultant recommendation was approved at the end of July, with the study officially beginning in September, 2002. The interim period was used to review, and revise, the proposed scope of services and list of deliverables prior to signing a contract. During this period, for instance, environmental impact activities were reduced in the scope of work, when it was agreed that there was insufficient time or funds to accomplish a full-scale environmental impact statement (EIS). Should *Directions* complete its three scheduled phases, environmental impacts will be studied prior to implementation of its findings.

The Rapid Transit Study Selection Committee was comprised of representatives from the Indianapolis MPO, the Indiana Department of Transportation, Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation, the Indianapolis Mayor’s Office, Indianapolis International Airport, the Central Indiana Regional Transit Alliance (CIRTA), and other appropriate stakeholders. The chosen primary study consultant is Indianapolis Transit Consultants (ITC) -- a joint co-venture of more than ten transportation engineering and design support firms, headed up by Schimpeler/American of Louisville, a division of American Consulting Engineers, PLC.

The primary study area for the *Directions* is all of Marion County and portions of the surrounding eight counties, including Hendricks, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson and Morgan Counties. A map of *Directions*’ study area appears on page 3.

This study is a follow-up to the 3-year *conNeCTions* study of Northeast Corridor Transportation, which ended in January, 2002. *conNeCTions* recommended a list of alternatives for alleviating traffic congestion and increasing mobility in the region’s busiest travel corridor, which stretches from downtown Indianapolis northeast to Noblesville. These included highway and transit options. While the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is moving ahead with the preferred highway expansion option (see map, page 16) *conNeCTions*’ Policy Steering Committee (PSC), comprised of Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, State Senator Luke Kenley and INDOT Commissioner J. Bryan Nicol, felt that more study was needed before the transit recommendation, which included light rail, could be adopted.

Providing that additional study is part of the purpose of *Directions*. As described in the original RFP, the study consists of the following three phases:

**Phase I**, which concluded last September, identified a regional, conceptual transit system building on the rail concept plans developed in the *Regional Mass Transit Service Plan* and The Initial Response to Key Issues Report. This phase responded to the *conNeCTions* PSC’s request for a broader understanding of the feasibility for rail transit in the

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### DIRECTIONS TIMELINE

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<tr>
<th>Task Name</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Dec ’02</th>
<th>Jan ’03</th>
<th>Feb ’03</th>
<th>Mar ’03</th>
<th>Apr ’03</th>
<th>May ’03</th>
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<th>Aug ’03</th>
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<td>ITC Technical Work</td>
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Indianapolis region and more fully addressed transit issues raised during the conNECtions study.

**Phase II**, which is currently in progress, is analyzing the feasibility of the high priority segments identified in the conceptual plan (Phase I) with special emphasis placed on a link to the Indianapolis International Airport (IIA). This phase responds to the PSC’s request to determine the feasibility of a rail transit link to the airport.

**Phase III**, as directed by the study’s PSC, will conduct an Alternatives Analysis (AA) consistent with the Federal Transit Administration’s “New Starts” requirements. This third phase would depend on the outcome of the first and second phases and the direction of the RTS Management Team (see roster, page 2). It will only be pursued if the results of the first and second phases warrant an AA.

In addition to these phase descriptions, the RFP explicitly emphasized that the purpose of this new study is to find the best transit solution for the Indianapolis region. “Even though Phases I and II deal with rail transit, in response to requests from conNECtions’ PSC, all transit modes and low-cost Transportation System Management (TSM) options shall be considered,” it says. “The MPO is NOT seeking to justify rail transit. If the results of Phases I and II warrant embarking on a full AA, the slate will be wiped clean and the link to the airport will be looked at in the context of the purpose and need of that particular corridor. All rapid transit modes and low cost alternatives shall be given equal consideration.”

Elsewhere in the RFP, the purpose of the Rapid Transit Study is described more succinctly: “The purpose of this study is two-fold. First, it is intended to provide the conNECtions’ PSC with additional information regarding the feasibility of rail transit in the Indianapolis region. This information will directly impact their decision relative to the future of rail transit in the Northeast Corridor and throughout the Indianapolis region. Secondly, the study, depending on the outcome of the Phases I and II, could result in a

(cont on page 14, see DIRECTIONS)
full Alternative Analysis for the link from downtown Indianapolis to the Indianapolis International Airport (IIA).”

“conNEctions was a ground-breaking study that recommended a lot of interesting transportation strategies for the Northeast Corridor,” says Philip Roth, AICP, MPO Senior Planner and project co-manager for DIReCTIONS. “Yet questions remain concerning the use of rail transit throughout the region.” MPO Senior Planner and project co-manager Amy Inman, M. S. agrees. “To build light rail in the Northeast Corridor, we would have had to effectively commit to the idea of a region-wide light rail system. It would have been premature to do so without conducting the sort of potential alignment and comparative transit technology study that is the heart of DIReCTIONS.”

What could a region-wide rapid transit system consist of? And, where could it operate? These questions currently are being answered by DIReCTIONS’ Phase II activity. The primary issues to be addressed include an analysis of the best route configuration for a regional rapid transit system and a study of most suitable transit technologies — light rail transit (LRT), automated guideway transit (AGT) and bus rapid transit (BRT). The outcome of this phase will be the identification of potential route alignments in our region’s six busiest commuter corridors, the rapid transit technology recommendations for each, and the preferred corridors for initial system implementation. Following the completion of DIReCTIONS’, conNEctions’ transit recommendation will be re-evaluated. (A description of this recommendation, known as RB4, can be found on page 16)

“Everything is up for grabs,” emphasizes MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing. “The study may result in a feasible recommendation for a regional light rail system. However, it could just as easily conclude that a bus-based rapid transit system would be best for most of the region. In all likelihood, any system recommendation will be a combination of transit technologies.”

Roth agrees. “We don’t know what our findings will be, because we’re still gathering data, including public input from our various outreach meetings.” he says. “Once we arrive at a recommendation, though, we’ll set a timetable for design, environmental review, and implementation.”

DIReCTIONS has been featured in teMPO, the MPO’s official newsletter of the regional transportation planning process, since its inception with articles focusing on study methodology, findings, and public participation opportunities, including various public meetings. A web site with discussion board (see related story, page 17), informational literature, direct mailings, media advisories and display advertising also being used to help keep area residents informed and involved.

For more information on the DIReCTIONS, contact MPO Senior Planners Philip Roth at 317/327-5149 (proth@indygov.org), or Amy Inman at 317/327-5646 (ainman@indygov.org), or visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo.

cont on page 16, see DIReCTIONS

A lot of firms are helping us with the Rapid Transit Study,” says MPO Senior Planner and project co-manager Philip Roth, AICP Of those working under the Indianapolis Transit Consultants (ITC) umbrella name, he describes the following eight as:

**Schimpeler-American:** Transit planning. Experience includes rail transit system planning and “New Starts” applications in Louisville, San Antonio, Miami, and Los Angeles.

**Jacobs Engineering:** Transit engineering. Experience includes rail transit engineering, environmental documentation, and “New Starts” applications for St. Louis (considered nationally as the model for a light rail system) and Dallas.

**Jakes Associates:** Rail systems planning with various rail technologies. Experience includes international projects on light rail, diesel multiple units (DMUs), and monorail. Jakes Associates was an integral part of the in the design and engineering team for the Clarian People Mover (see related story, page 1).

**Paul I. Cripe, Inc.:** Additional engineering and design support.

**Shrewsberry & Associates:** A regional Disadvantaged Business Enterprise/Minority-Owned Enterprise (DBE/MBE) environmental and real estate services firm.

**Infinite:** A Woman- and Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE/MBE) specializing in marketing and communications services.

**Manuel Padron Associates:** A Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) specializing in transit systems and operations planning.

**Barnes and Thornburg:** Financial consulting.
FAQ’s

Here are a few of the frequently asked questions DIRECTIONS transit planners have addressed during the study first year:

Why study a regional transit system now?
Because rush hour congestion, and the air pollution that accompanies it, is intensifying throughout our area. Rush hour conditions now last nearly 7.5 hours a day, almost double what it was in 1990. And, Indianapolis now ranks 30th in congestion among major U.S. cities – a jump of 10 places in just four years!

If I don’t travel in a congested commuter corridor, why should I care about DIRECTIONS?
Because the transportation problems being experienced by people who do are just around the corner for all of us. Consider the recent sustained growth, and building traffic congestion, of Hamilton County to the north, Johnson County to the south, and Hendricks County to the west. The region’s busiest commuter corridors got that way because of population shifts and the presence of large employment centers. Travel capacity simply can’t keep up with demand during certain day parts. Sooner or later, we’ll all be dealing with congestion. That’s why the need to increase our mobility options is a region-wide priority.

What makes DIRECTIONS different from other transportation studies?
It’s the first study to concentrate on developing a region-wide rapid transit system as a way to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and increase mobility options throughout our area. It deals with many of the strategies and transit modes endorsed in CIRCl’s Regional Vision Plan (2000).

What’s a mode?
In transportation planning, the word “mode” refers to a method of travel, such as bike, car, bus, rail, even pedestrian travel. DIRECTIONS is evaluating types or modes of mass transportation exclusively, including commuter or light rail transit (CRT, LRT), bus rapid transit (BRT) and automated guideway transit (AGT).

Do I have any say over what DIRECTIONS recommends?
Absolutely! Over the course of its 18-24 month duration, DIRECTIONS is incorporating an extensive public participation program. Interested parties have the opportunity to voice their opinions at various public meetings, in special interest group presentations, during the quarterly meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee, via telephone surveys, by calling the MPO’s 24-hour Comment Line (317/327-8601) or by visiting the MPO’s web site at indygov.org/indympo, which includes a DIRECTIONS Discussion Board. Significant public input gathered through these sources will be incorporated into the study’s findings. The MPO promotes public participation through its free publications, display advertising, direct mail, media/public relations and the MPO Hotline (317/327-IMPO) which features upcoming public participation opportunities.

Will DIRECTIONS’ recommendations be implemented?
It is imperative that the region’s congestion problems and mobility concerns be addressed as quickly and efficiently as possible. DIRECTIONS, thanks in part to its public involvement program, will recommend a locally preferred rapid transit system plan and implementation strategy. Our intention is to have this recommendation implemented as quickly as possible. However, the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council is responsible for the final decision.

What happens if we do nothing? Is that an option?
Doing nothing remains “on the table” as an option. However, this “option” presents more problems than solutions for a study that is intended to address current and future mobility issues. Doing nothing means we would have to learn to live with the problems of congestion and lack of mobility even as the consequences of not improving/enhancing our regional transportation system worsen. Increasing traffic congestion means that we all would spend more of our day in gridlock, “rush hour” or peak travel periods would grow, and that secondary and residential streets would take on more and more traffic as travelers seek alternatives to using our busiest com-

cont on page 24, see FAQ’s
conNECTions’ Recommendations

H5: Moderate Freeway Expansion
This is an intermediate I-465 expansion option that would increase the number of “through” lanes to 10. I-69, US 31, State Road 37 and, possibly, I-70 would also receive additional travel lanes. Additional lanes may be included at some interchange areas to reduce bottlenecks. This option would also include Transportation Systems Management/Travel Demand Management (TSM/TDM) improvement strategies. Capacity expansion improvements (added lanes) will also be considered for I-70 as part of this highway expansion option.

H5 would reduce H3’s estimated 1 to 2 hours per day of severe congestion to a maximum of 1 hour per day. The level of traffic congestion on the highway system would be similar to existing conditions or, marginally, worse. Very little diversion of travel demand to the arterial street system or altered travel times would occur.

This alternative represents the maximum freeway improvement possible without significant right-of-way impacts.

Estimated Capital Cost: $2.12 billion.

RB4: Commuter Rail Service from Noblesville and Fishers to Union Station in Indianapolis plus Light Rail Transit (LRT) from I-465 to Downtown Indianapolis, plus Express Bus Service to Carmel

Rail/Bus Option 4 (RB4) combines the speed benefits of commuter rail service from Noblesville to downtown along the HHPA/CSX route, with light rail service from I-465 to downtown Indianapolis. Light rail transit (LRT) service, offering slower travel speeds and more frequent stops, would branch off of the rail corridor at 38th Street and travel Capitol Avenue and Illinois Street to Union Station along the road surface.

RB4 represents greater benefits, and costs, than any other transit alternative considered by conNECTions. Its commuter rail component is identical to that of RB1, but its light-rail component would add commuter rail ridership by increasing the number of destinations served, especially from Methodist Hospital into downtown along Capitol and Illinois Streets. The light-rail segment would also provide the most attractive service for the intra-Marion County markets, which is largely why RB4’s projected ridership is so much greater than that of RB1 (19,000 vs. 4,000).

Other than cost and ridership, the greatest difference between the two rail options is their impact on development. With more stations along the 465 to 38th Street LRT segment, and better service levels, more commercial and residential development opportunity would be created near stations. However, the greatest development impact could occur along 38th Street and the Capitol/Illinois corridor. With appropriate supporting policies, these areas could see significant revitalization.

Because of its street running segments, RB4 poses more environmental challenges (noise, aesthetics) than RB1 but also more environmental benefits, including economic and neighborhood opportunities. Since it is the only transit option projected to remove 5,000+ cars from area roads, it is the only one that could have a noticeable, though still minimal, impact on traffic volumes.

Estimated Capital Cost: $498 million.
The following comments are just a sample of those gathered from DIRECTIONS’ Discussion Board (indygov.org/indympo/directions). The sometimes contradictory perspectives excerpted here reflect the diversity of both our resident population and the region-wide rapid transit system elements being considered. This input plays an important role in our transportation planning process and DIRECTIONS’ goal of developing a locally preferred system recommendation which relies on informed public participation.

**Posted 3/11/2003**
I have lived in other cities: Minneapolis, Chicago and New York. Their transportation systems were designed to bring suburbanites into the cities. My impression of IndyGo is to take the less fortunate to even less fortunate paying jobs. It would be great to see light rail running down I-69 and I-65 as done in Chicago with future lines down other significant motor routes into the city. The projects would create jobs as well as help the environment. Thank you for the opportunity to post my opinion.

**Posted 3/12/2003**
The public transportation system in Chicago is great. Too bad the “greens” ruined the Monon Trail—it would be a great light rail corridor. I would envision rail coming from all four points of the compass and ending at Union Station. This would mean service to the airport, a train up from Greenwood, a train from New Palestine, and a train along the old Fair Train route into downtown from Fishers. Comments?

**Posted 4/26/2003**
When considering a mass transit system for the metro area, an elevated monorail system would be the best solution. It would be built using existing interstate routes and railroad lines. The lines would be built on elevated supports alongside interstate right-of-way and railroad lines. Utilizing electric-powered monorail cars, the system would be non-polluting and quiet. Terminals in outlying counties would be of the Park & Ride variety. The system would be cheaper to construct than a subway system, or light-rail commuter lines, and would beat the pants off the current IndyGo bus system that basically goes nowhere. Routes would funnel into the downtown area, with ending points spread out to make it convenient for downtown workers, commuters, and shoppers. The systems could tie in with IndyGo shuttles that could shuttle people to high traffic areas. Monorails can operate at relatively high speeds, and being elevated, would not interfere with vehicular traffic or railroad traffic. Think of it: fast, efficient, quiet, non-polluting, and economical.

If Indy wants to be a big league city, it needs a big league mass transit system. A system that is available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. An example of this system is the system being constructed to connect Methodist Hospital with the IUPUI area. MetroRail, if planned the correct way, would be a huge plus for the metro area, and could eventually be expanded further out to cities such as Bloomington, Anderson-Muncie, Lafayette, Terre Haute, New Castle, Richmond, etc.

**Posted 4/30/2003**
I have really enjoyed reading these posts! On one side, I can completely agree with the post from “roadwork”. You are right; Indianapolis, by no means, can currently compare itself with the likes of Chicago. However, there were those in Chicago at one time who believed there was no need for a better public transit system when comparing themselves with a New York City.

Bottom Line: Indianapolis is growing and, as a business owner, I hope this trend will continue. Let’s plan ahead, not 5 years or even 10 years. Any comments around this topic should be made with at least a 30 - 50 year timeframe in mind.

I work in IT (information technology) and deal with issues of capacity and scalability on a daily basis. Unfortunately, it is often expensive and difficult to create and implement plans that compensate for growth, but solutions MUST be found.

I believe that, in many cases, the purpose of certain modes of public transportation is to deliver a service to those without private transportation. I believe this to be just one half of the problem, however. The other half of the issue is to maximize efficiency. The Indianapolis area (although largely used for agriculture) is restrained to a maximum amount of automotive infrastructure. I agree with the majority which understand the city’s need for a system that will reduce congestion.

There is no doubt that appropriate planning can seem difficult and expensive, but in contrast, the alternative (inappropriate planning and inappropriate solutions) yield far greater long-term negative results.

My commute time is currently 40 minutes each way, daily, 5 - 6 days a week. This makes a total of 8 hours/week driving to and from work. 8 hours!!! I would certainly be willing to drive 10-15 minutes and pay $20-$30/week for a light rail system. I consider this to be a small price to pay to reduce the headaches from traffic and the fear I have (only too often) of semis and other oversized vehicles forcing me off the
road. Most importantly, I could spend more time at home with my family. I have a hard time believing that I am the only person in the city with these thoughts. At least, I hope not...

**Posted 7/26/2003**

. . . why doesn’t Indy adopt a carpooling rule? I’ve lived in Seattle and visited other cities where there are special lanes for buses and vehicles with more than two passengers. This could not only cut down on the number of cars on the road, but also the commute time for those people who live outside of the downtown area.

**Posted 9/19/2003**

Restoration of the former Nickel Plate line from Fishers (or even Noblesville) to Union Station would allow professionals living in those areas to commute downtown and reduce congestion. Passenger rail using diesel locomotives would appear to be the simplest alternative requiring the least capital investment. From my own research and surveillance of those lines, it looks like at least the following (and probably very much more) needs to be done:

- Repair tracks and improve track quality from Fishers Fairgrounds. Replace tracks south of Fairgrounds (there are still tracks from the fairgrounds all the way to tenth street but they are so overgrown they are hard to see).
- Improve safety, gates and warning lights at graded crossings.
- Create a 10th Street bridge or switch to CSX’s Indianapolis line.
- Resolve legal issues related to right-of-way and ownership of the corridor from the end of the HHPA’s ownership to Union Station.
- Lay track from 10th Street to Union Station. This would obviously be a costly project but also be a long-term fix to congestion in the Northeast corridor. I agree with other postings on this site that Indianapolis will not be a world class city until commuter rail is an option.

**Posted 11/11/2003**

We need to be as aggressive as possible with mass transit in Indianapolis. Let's have Indy be the best at something for a change. Because people here are so addicted to their cars, we must make it insanely convenient for people to use it (transit). It will improve our quality-of-life, our mobility, reduce pollution, reduce road construction, reduce traffic congestion and help make life more affordable for more people.

Here’s my situation, and I’d like the group to address it. Right now, I could take a bus directly to and from work from pretty close to my house. It’s very do-able, but I still drive my car. The problem is that once I get to work, I am often sent to pick up and deliver things throughout the day (I’m pretty low on the totem pole right now). Also, we have to go to meetings throughout the day that currently require us to use our cars. This is pretty common for professionals, so we must make it easier to get around downtown during the day. Any suggestions?

Another concern I have is for shopping. Right now, I am able to fill my car with lots of groceries or supplies or whatever for my home. If I gave up my car, how would I compensate? What can we do about that?

**Posted 1/17/2004**

As a bus rider by choice for more than 2 years now, . . . my gas costs are down, my parking costs are going, my car insurance is much lower, my stress is down — UNTIL TODAY! Perhaps those on the IndyGo board need to talk with those who are interested in rapid transit. . . .

**Posted 1/17/2004**

If other “smaller” cities like Salt Lake City can create a rapid transit system that can pay for itself, there is no excuse for us not to have one. Roads don’t make that kind of money and (they) will cost us the longer we procrastinate. We need to educate this city about mass rapid transit. An effective spoke and wheel rapid transit system in this city will help keep thousands of people off the roads. This will cut down on the cost of highway expansion and commuter times. This will also cut down on the amount of abandoned suburban strip malls that are growing up throughout the city due to outer sprawl. A rail to trails (connecting both) campaign is the key to fixing our current failing system. Promote the “rail to trails” idea to the public and you will get more support.

During bad weather, people can use the trains and, in good weather, they can use the Monon-style trails. The amount of people using the Monon Trail is enough to justify the use of a transit line to connect them to other trails in the city. They could have the option of taking their bikes in a designated car of the train. What a concept! After all, we won’t be ranked the 12th fattest city anymore. People will begin to feel better about themselves and more in touch with the city they live in. Automobiles can’t give you that. A city becomes what it creates. Should we create a city around cars, or people? What’s more important?

If you’d like to be heard on subjects relating to DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, call the MPO 24-Hours Comment Line at 317/3278601, keep track of upcoming public meetings and other participation opportunities with the MPO Hotline at 317/327-IMPO, or visit the MPO web site at www.indygov.org/indympo
Taking DIRECTIONS “On The Road”

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has arranged for its many planning partners to observe first-hand the route alignment and transit technology options being considered by Phase II of DIRECTIONS in early 2004. In recent weeks, members of the study’s management team, which includes the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Central Indiana Transit Alliance (CIRTA), have reviewed possible route alignments by bus in regional corridors.

These corridors, which lead from downtown Indianapolis toward Avon, Cumberland, Fishers/Noblesville, Greenwood, Zionsville and the Indianapolis International Airport, experience the region’s highest commuter activity. At least two route alignment options per corridor were presented for review and comment during a series of six public meetings in the third and fourth week of February. At these meetings, the public was also asked to consider specific transit technologies, including Light Rail Transit (LRT), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Automated Guideway Transit (AGT).

Prior to these meetings, study participants traveled to locations where the most promising technologies are currently in operation. On February 4 and 5, a contingent of 30, including elected officials, visited Vancouver, British Columbia, where an AGT system, known as the Sky Train, helps meet the commuting needs of the region’s population of 2.1 million. On February 12, another group visited St. Louis to examine the city’s popular LRT system, considered the most successful of its kind in the country. A third, as yet unscheduled, trip is planned to Pittsburgh to investigate the BRT system in-use there.

“We’re interested in learning everything we can about the real-word implementation and day-to-day operations of these systems,” says Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “These fact-finding trips are part of our efforts to insure that we offer the public the best transit options available.”

By the end of Phase Two of DIRECTIONS in March, 2004, planners hope to arrive at a locally preferred system design and to have consensus on an implementation strategy that will prioritize system construction within the six identified commuter corridors. For more information on DIRECTIONS, visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo, or contact MPO Senior Planners Philip Roth, AICP, at 317/327-5149 (proth@indygov.org) or Amy Inman, M.S. at 317/327-5646 (ainman@indygov.org).
Cumberland. Here, there is potential for second alignment option suitable for AGT only, which would travel within the greenway on an elevated guideway. Elevating the guideway would permit sharing the space, and would provide enough room for bike and walking trails below. This second alignment option would follow the Pennsy Trail east to County Line Road in Cumberland.

A third alignment option follows the Norfolk Southern rail corridor until it reaches Washington Street until reaching County Line Road in Cumberland.

**SOUTH CORRIDOR**
The South Corridor alignment options begin at the Downtown Transit Center and follow the CSX rail corridor south until they reach the Madison Avenue overpass. Two potential alignments diverge at this point. The first follows Madison Avenue until intersecting Highway 31 and then turns south toward Greenwood Park Mall. This alignment is suitable for BRT and AGT only.

Washington Street until reaching County Line Road in Cumberland and run south (parallel to the South Corridor options) until they reach the Belt Line rail corridor. Here they diverge. The first option runs west along the Belt Line until it reaches the CSX rail corridor running parallel with Kentucky Avenue. At this point, the alignment turns and follows the CSX rail corridor, parallel to Kentucky Avenue, until it reaches Hanna Avenue. At Hanna, it heads west until reaching Interstate 70. The alignment then turns southwest and travels along I-70 and the airport’s perimeter. When this route option reaches the vicinity of Bridgeport Road, it turns onto airport property, providing access to the new Midfield Terminal currently under construction. This alignment has the potential for BRT, LRT, and AGT.

The second route alignment option continues south along the CSX rail corridor until it reaches the Greenwood Park Mall vicinity. There, it turns west, terminating at Madison Avenue. This alignment provides for BRT, LRT, and AGT.

**AIRPORT CORRIDOR**
The Airport Corridor alignment options begin at the Downtown Transit Center and run south (parallel to the South Corridor options) until they reach the Belt Line rail corridor. Here they diverge. The first option runs west along the Belt Line until it reaches the CSX rail corridor running parallel with Kentucky Avenue. At this point, the alignment turns and follows the CSX rail corridor, parallel to Kentucky Avenue, until it reaches Hanna Avenue. At Hanna, it heads west until reaching Interstate 70. The alignment then turns southwest and travels along I-70 and the airport’s perimeter. When this route option reaches the vicinity of Bridgeport Road, it turns onto airport property, providing access to the new Midfield Terminal currently under construction. This alignment has the potential for BRT, LRT, and AGT.

The second alignment option within the Airport Corridor continues along the CSX rail corridor from the

cont on page 21, see Options
Downtown Transit Center until reaching Raymond Street. Here, it turns west and follows Raymond Street until reaching I-70. The alignment follows the highway southwest to the point where the airport alignment intersects Hanna Avenue, where it follows the first route option to the Midfield Terminal. This second alignment could also continue along Raymond Street and terminate in front of the existing airport terminal. It is not known at this time whether new transportation security measures (enacted post 9/11) will allow direct access to the airport terminal. Such issues are under investigation. This variation would provide for BRT and AGT only.

**WEST CORRIDOR**

The West Corridor contains three possible alignment options, all starting at the Downtown Transit Center. They run south along Delaware Street until they reach Interstate 70. The alignments then turn west along I-70 until they reach the Belt Line rail corridor.

The first alignment option runs north, along the Belt Line rail corridor, until reaching the CSX rail corridor south of Washington Street. It then runs west along the CSX rail corridor to its terminus in the vicinity of SR 267 in Avon.

At the point along the first alignment option where it turns west onto the CSX rail corridor, a second route option begins. It follows the Belt Line corridor until reaching Washington Street, where it turns and travels to Rockville Road (SR 36). It follows Rockville Road until reaching SR 267 in Avon.

A third alignment option continues on the Belt Line corridor until reaching the B&O rail corridor, where it turns west toward Vermont Street. On Vermont, it travels west past Max Bahr Park, then into and through the interior of the Central State Hospital complex to the intersection of Cossell Road and Tibbs Avenue. It travels west on Cossell until intersecting Holt Road. Here it turns north, traveling through the Speedway Industrial Park to a point just south of 16th Street near the entrance of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway museum. The alignment then turns and travels south on Main Street until reaching 10th Street, where it heads west to Interstate 465. On I-465, it travels south to Rockville Road, where it follows the second option to its terminus at SR 267 in Avon. All three of the West Corridor route alignment options can accommodate BRT and AGT systems. However, only the first option, which runs along the CSX rail corridor, can accommodate an LRT system.

**NORTHWEST CORRIDOR**

The Northwest Corridor alignment options begin at the Downtown Transit Center and run west along South Street.

**Why a transit study now?**

Because in 2003, regional rush hour conditions lasted 7.4 hours a day, compared to 4.2 hours in 1990 and 2.7 hours in 1982.

*(SOURCE: Texas Transportation Institute 2003 Urban Mobility Study)*
Options
(from page 21)
The first option continues to the B&O Railroad rail corridor, where it turns and travels to the northwest until intersecting the CSX rail corridor just south-east of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Here, it follows the CSX rail corridor north until terminating at Oak Street in Zionsville. This alignment could accommodate BRT, LRT, and AGT.

The second alignment follows South Street to West Street, where it heads north until intersecting Michigan Street. Here, the alignment turns west and runs through the IUPUI campus until reaching the vicinity of the VA Hospital. Between the VA and Carter (?) Hospitals, it turns and runs north crossing 10th Street and Fall Creek just west of the old water company complex. At the CSX rail corridor, the alignment heads north until intersecting with the White River Greenway just north of 30th Street. It travels along the greenway, across 38th Street near the Indianapolis Museum of Art, and heads west on 38th Street to I-65. The alignment follows I-65 northwest to Georgetown Road, where it turns and travels north until the CSX rail corridor just south of 79th Street. It follows this rail corridor to its terminus at Oak Street in Zionsville. This alignment provides for BRT and AGT only.

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR
The Northeast Corridor offers three potential alignment options that begin at the Downtown Transit Center. The first follows the Norfolk Southern Corridor until reaching the Monon Trail just north of Massachusetts Avenue. It follows the Monon Trail northeast until intersecting with the Hoosier Heritage Rail Authority’s Nickel Plate rail line just south of the State Fairgrounds. This alignment then follows the Nickel Plate line until it terminates at the Fishers train station.

The second alignment option departs from the Nickel Plate rail line at its intersection with State Road 37 (Binford Boulevard). From there, it follows Binford Boulevard northeast to just south of I-465 where it turns north and begins following the Nickel Plate line again to the Fishers train station.

A third alignment option departs the Nickel Plate rail corridor where it intersects with Keystone Avenue. This alignment follows Keystone Avenue to just north of 86th Street, then turns east through the Keystone Crossing office complex. It follows I-465 to just west of Allisonville Road, where it crosses I-465 and follows 86th Street until intersecting the Nickel Plate rail corridor. From here, the option follows the Nickel Plate rail corridor to the Fishers train station.

All of the region-wide rapid transit system alignment options presented for public review and comment assume transit stations will be located at half-mile to one-mile intervals. These as-yet-undetermined station locations will be placed to provide maximum accessibility to employment and activity centers within each of the six corridors.
Why a transit study now?
Because Indianapolis now ranks 30th in congestion among major U.S. cities, a jump of 10 places in just four years!
(SOURCE: Texas Transportation Institute 2003 Urban Mobility Study)
FAQ’s
(from page 15)

If we do nothing, our mobility options actually decrease from what they are now, since no rapid transit system would be introduced to help alleviate congestion and the use of single occupant vehicle would continue to grow.

As part of the growing gridlock, air pollution would increase, almost certainly condemning our region to continue as a federal air quality “maintenance area”. This status would affect Central Indiana’s economic development as current and potential employers in both the service and manufacturing sectors abandon the region to avoid increased federal oversight.

For all of the above reasons, the “Do Nothing” option would ultimately reduce the freedom of choice we now enjoy in selecting where we live, work and seek services.

Why isn’t the MPO able to answer every question being asked?
Because DIRECTIONS is a planning study. It is intended to identify major transportation system improvements worthy of entering into the preliminary engineering and design phase. It is during this phase, in which the public will continue to be involved, that more detailed issues will be addressed and specific questions will be answered. If the process can’t resolve critical issues, the project will not proceed into the construction phase.

If you have a question concerning DIRECTIONS, contact MPO Senior Planners Philip Roth, AICP, (317/327-5149, proth@indygov.org) or Amy Inman (317/327-5646, ainman@indygov.org), call the MPO Comment Line (317/327-8601), or visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo.
It’s a Spring Thing

Who says you have to wait for the end of a long, cold winter before things begin to grow? At the MPO, regional transportation planning projects that took root in 2003 started blooming with the new year. For instance, DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, took to the road in January and added international travel and extensive public outreach to its itinerary in February – all leading to its eventual destination, Phase III. There is also progress to report on CISTMS (pronounced “Systems”), the suburban mobility study being jointly conducted by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and your MPO; changes afoot on INDOT’s I-465 cont on page 3, see Spring Thing

Accelerate 465 Update

The I-465 West Leg Corridor Reconstruction Project now has a new name, Accelerate 465. This name reflects the commitment of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to move the project forward and complete its work on schedule. Accelerate 465 will reconstruct I-465 and its associated interchanges from just south of 56th Street to just south of SR 67 (Kentucky Avenue). Recognizing that there will be multiple transportation projects on the west side, and that the public may have trouble keeping them straight, the project map is included on page 12 with affected interchanges identified.

As one of the first interstates constructed in Marion County, the corridor’s current design capacity is not sufficient to support existing and projected usage. In response, INDOT has selected Corridor Project Management Consultants (CPMC), led by HNTB Corporation, to:
• Upgrade interchange ramp and mainline capabilities cont on page 12, see Accelerate I-465

Section 5310 Program

There is no down side to this program,” says MPO Senior Planner Kevin Mayfield, of the federally funded initiative he helps oversee in the Indianapolis region. “It offers transportation help to the people who need it most – the elderly and the disabled — and it provides it through the organizations these people turn to for aid,” he says. Section 5310 of the Federal Transit Act (formerly known as Section 16) states as national policy that “elderly persons and persons with disabilities have the same right to access transportation services as other persons.” The 5310 Program authorizes federal capital assistance grants to meet the special needs of these people where public mass transit services are unavailable or cont on page 8, see Section 5310 Program
In Q & A, members of your MPO staff answer questions posed to them via voice mail, e-mail, regular mail or in-person. In this issue, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing discusses the MPO’s role in addressing the region’s air quality issues.

“I moved to Indianapolis from Colorado more than ten years ago. Ever since I’ve been here, I feel like the area’s air quality has been a hot topic. Every summer I see ads about ozone awareness and things I can do to reduce pollution. During the same period, the MPO has conducted studies to cut traffic congestion during peak hours and increase alternative transportation options. So, why are we now being designated a “non attainment area for ozone”? Did our past efforts do us any good?”

— Asked during a one-on-one conversation in late Match, 2004

I know where you’re coming from on this issue. I joined the Indianapolis MPO in 1994 (from INDOT) and can attest to the fact that air quality has been a significant aspect of our regional transportation planning efforts for the last 10 years (and long before). In fact, during much of that time, I headed up many of the MPO’s alternative transportation initiatives, including the Marion County Bike Route Plan and Pedestrian Route Plan, and also coordinated amendments to the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP), where many of the proposed projects were intended to, among other things, help improve the region’s air quality. These included synchronizing the region’s traffic signals, reducing engine idle and start/stop driving, and increasing roadway capacities to alleviate peak-hour congestion.

But, to your point, it doesn’t appear to have been enough. Despite the broad support of MPO-led transit-based planning initiatives like conNECTIONS (1998-2001) and DIRECTIONS (2002-2004), Marion County (and surrounding counties) were among the 24 Indiana Counties announced in mid-April by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to have “violated or contributed to violations of new, stricter standards for ground-level ozone, a leading cause of summertime smog that can trigger asthma attacks and other respiratory problems, as well as lung cancer, heart disease and early death.” (More than 470 counties were cited nation-wide).

Failure to meet these standards affects, and reflects on, all of us who live, work or travel in the non-attainment area. It also involves state and municipal planners who

cont on page 4, see Q & A
This map reflects the expanded MPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) as determined by Census 2000 data. This new MPA was recommended for approval by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council-Policy Committee in late 2002, and subsequently recommended for implementation by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). Final approval was given by Governor Joseph Kernan in fourth quarter, 2003.

**Spring Thing**
(from page 1)

West Leg project which has undergone a name change; and, too much to talk about concerning auto emissions and their link to our region’s non-attainment status for the pollutant ozone. Read all about these topics, here in teMPO.

Plus, you can find out what’s happening with the MPO’s major review of the Regional Transportation Plan, meet one of the private citizens who traveled with the MPO to Vancouver, B.C. and learn how a little known federal transportation program changed the lives of seniors in New Palestine. It’s all here, as teMPO springs into action!
Questions & Answers
(from page 2)

work in the areas of land use, environmental protection, economic development and elsewhere. But it is significant to note that automobile emissions are the leading cause of bad air, contributing an estimated 60% of the ozone-causing pollution in our region. That’s where the MPO comes in.

I was recently quoted in The Indianapolis Star (City & State, 4/18/04) as saying that the key to improving regional air quality is getting people out of their cars. That’s not all we can do, of course. Observing other Knozone action strategies, such as waiting to cut your grass or pump gas until after 6 PM, also helps (See related story, page 11). But drastically cutting auto emissions is the key to success. That’s why the rapid transit Starter System being considered by Phase III of DIRECTIONS (see related story, page 5) has received the broad support of the elected officials who make up the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC). They know that in areas that don’t meet minimum clean air standards, the EPA requires industries to reduce pollution before expanding or building new factories, which has a chilling affect on economic development and job growth. Also, failing to keep auto emissions within set limits could mean the loss of federal road funding.

According to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), more than 200,000 residents of the nine county metropolitan area, about a sixth of our total population, commute to work outside of their home counties. That’s a lot of rush hour miles. Clearly, any car we can get off our roadways, especially during peak hours, will go a long way toward reducing our pollution problem.

So, now is not the time to give up, or to doubt the effectiveness of our pollution-reducing transportation planning strategies. A better question may be, “Where would our region be if we hadn’t started an ozone awareness program nine years ago?” Or, “Would DIRECTIONS’ Phase II recommendation for a rapid transit starter system have received such wide spread support had the conNections study of northeast corridor transportation not raised the issue of region-wide rapid transit years ago?” Or, “Would the topic of a Regional Transit Authority be under consideration now by the City-County Council if the MPO, and its planning partners, had not cultivated awareness of the need for such a body, since the last vote on the subject failed just three years ago?”

That’s what our past efforts have added up to: a Marion County street and greenways bike route system that’s now connecting to growing systems in surrounding communities, a pedestrian route plan that will be completed this year, more vocal support of regional transit among the public and elected officials than ever before, a regional roadway system that’s safer and more efficient than its ever been, and an MPO-sponsored bicycle “Pedal & Park” program that has set participation records for each of the last four years.

Do we wish that we had achieved more, perhaps even avoiding the region’s “non-attainment for ozone” designation? Of course. But it’s taken years to build public awareness and participation in the ozone awareness program (now administered by the Indianapolis Department of Public Works) and to encourage and accommodate informed public participation in the regional transportation planning process through the MPO’s public involvement program. Those years of work will help us accomplish what we have to do now.

The MPO needs you as a partner in improving our region’s air quality. Visit our web site (www.indygov.org/indympo) for information on any of our planning initiatives including DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility; call our Hotline for upcoming public participation opportunities (317/327-IMPO); attend the next Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting (Tuesday, June 22 between 6:30 - 8 PM in Room 118 of the City-County Building), or leave questions or comments on the 24-hour MPO Comment Line (317/327-8601) and we’ll get back to you. But think about doing something. And, while you’re at it, think about this:

Findings from the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, based in part on highway capacity figures from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and vehicle emissions data from the Environmental Protection Agency (1999 data unless otherwise noted) suggests:

• that the Indianapolis region ranks fifth nation-wide in per capita air-pollution from vehicles. Only Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; Greensboro, NC; and Raleigh, NC ranks ahead of us
• that the Indianapolis region ranks seventh nation-wide in per capita daily vehicles miles traveled at 34 miles/day (2002 data)
• that the Indianapolis Region ranks 14th nation-wide in per capita lane miles
• that, even when ranked by total auto emissions (instead of a per capita comparison), the Indianapolis region still ranks 21st in the nation
• the American Lung Association has given Marion County an “F” for its air quality since 1996

Clearly, we’ve come a long way, but have a long way to go before we “clear the air.” And, it’s going to take all of us to get the job done.
On Tuesday, April 13, the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRT) helped DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, reach an important milestone. The IRTC, to which the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) makes its recommendations, serves as the decision-making body for the regional transportation planning process. As such, the elected officials who make up the IRTCs Policy Planning Organization (MPO) makes its recommendations, serves as the decision-making body for the regional transportation planning process. As such, the elected officials who make up the IRTCs Policy Committee have been overseeing the DIRECTIONS study since its inception in December, 2002. Now, nearly sixteen months later, they voted to endorse DIRECTIONS’ Phase II findings and to authorize the start of its third and final phase. In so doing, the IRTC endorsed the travel corridors recommended by the MPO to become a rapid transit “Starter System”.

Connections to the past

To appreciate the significance of this milestone, you have to understand DIRECTIONS’ relationship to an earlier study,” says Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “conNECTIONS was the study of northeast corridor transportation. It was concerned exclusively with congestion and mobility issues in the northeast corridor, the region’s busiest,” Dearing explains. “Yet, its findings have had region-wide impacts.”

In January, 2001, the conNECTIONS study proposed a light rail connection from downtown Indianapolis to downtown Noblesville, as well as highway expansion around the northeast quadrant of I-465, to increase the corridor’s mobility options while reducing peak hour congestion. The Study Committee overseeing conNECTIONS, including Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, State Senator Luke Kenley and Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) Commissioner J. Bryan Nicol, wondered what type of regional implications might result from the implementation of rapid transit in the northeast corridor. Was light rail really the most suitable rapid transit technology from a regional perspective? What would the financial impacts be of implementing a rapid transit system? And, most importantly, how might the entire region benefit if rapid transit were considered on a region-wide basis?

“DIRECTIONS was intended to answer these questions,” Dearing notes.

The primary purpose of the three-phase, 24-month study is to evaluate the feasibility of a region-wide rapid transit system. If implemented, such a system could help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and increase mobility options throughout the area. Phase I of DIRECTIONS focused on developing a concept for a region-wide system, including the identification of potential travel corridors and preferred transit technologies. On September 17th, 2003, the IRTC approved the study’s Phase I findings and authorized the MPO to begin Phase II activity with the help of Indianapolis Transit Consultants (ITC), a co-venture of several transportation planning, engineering and design firms.

During Phase II, the study management team developed feasible route alignment options for six travel corridors located throughout the Indianapolis metropolitan planning area and leading from downtown Indianapolis toward Zionsville, Fishers/Noblesville, Cumberland, Greenwood, Indianapolis International Airport (IIA) and Avon. Phase II activity also involved soliciting public input on potential route and technology options at a series of evening meetings.

Prior to the meetings, members of the study management team traveled to locations where the most promising technologies are currently in operation. On February 4 and 5, a contingent of 30, including elected officials, visited Vancouver, British Columbia where an Automated Guideway Transit (AGT) system, called the Sky Train, helps meet the commuting needs of the region’s nearly two million residents. On February 12, another group visited St. Louis to examine the city’s popular MetroLink system, considered the most successful in the country.

Third trip, scheduled for Ottawa this summer, will investigate the Bus Rapid Transit system in use there. “These fact-finding trips are just part of our efforts to offer the public the most complete information available,” Dearing says. “People came to our meetings to learn, and give us their opinions. That’s exactly why we scheduled a meeting in each travel corridor – to hear about transit from the residents and commuters most likely to use it.”

At six public meetings held in mid-to-late February, participants reviewed and commented on the study’s findings to-date and indicated which system routes they thought best for each corridor. In addition, the attendees were invited to consider the pros and cons of Light Rail Transit (LRT), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and AGT. (To review the route/technology options in each corridor, see teMPO Special Edition, February 2004, or visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo/directions). To ensure that the study meets its goal of arriving at a locally preferred region-wide rapid transit system plan, the MPO promoted its Phase II public meetings via direct mail throughout the region, display advertising in nearly 40 newspapers, media advisories sent to 50 print, radio and television news providers, radio adver-
**DIRECTIONS Phase III**

(from page 5)

Advertising, Public Service Announcements, free publications, informational literature and its MPO Hotline (317/327-IMPO) and 24-hour Comment Line (317/327-8601).

In addition to encouraging the attendance of hundreds of meeting participants, such activity resulted in widespread public awareness among viewers of 25 television news stories (reaching an estimated audience of 1.5 million), readers of dozens of newspaper articles and talk-radio listeners. This input helped the MPO develop its Starter System recommendations.

The Present Milestone

“A Starter System is the minimum that can be considered for federal funding,” explains MPO Senior Planner and DIRECTIONS co-manager Philip Roth, AICP. “It usually involves one or more corridors and 15–20 miles of transit service,” he says. “The “New Starts” program, which is anticipated to be the primary source of capital funds for implementing such a system, is administered by the Federal Government. For this reason, we work closely with the Federal Transit Administration and other transportation-related agencies while conducting our study and developing our recommendations.” It is assumed that federal funding will pay for at least 60% of the system’s eventual price tag.

Other important terms to keep in mind when discussing region-wide rapid transit is 20-Year System, which represents the extent of construction likely to occur using the financial guidelines of similar communities (i.e. a total construction budget of $2.25-$2.5 billion over 20 years); and, Build-Out System, which refers to a mature, fully constructed system.

**DIRECTIONS** Phase II findings recommend that the Northeast Corridor, plus the Airport Corridor or a portion of the Northwest Corridor, be studied in Phase III for potential Starter System implementation. It is likely that two of these corridors will be included in the Starter System proposal — the Northeast Corridor and one of the other two corridors. The Northeast Corridor showed the strongest ridership potential, accesses both downtown and suburban employment centers, offers sufficient park-and-ride facility locations, and encompasses inner-city areas with large transit-dependent populations.

The Airport Corridor appears to offer moderately strong ridership potential. “There have been some issues with how our ridership model treats the airport,” says MPO Senior Planner and DIRECTIONS co-manager Amy Inman, M.S. “Ridership levels can vary depending on how airport passenger service and employment area service are prioritized, but we’re currently working through this with the FTA,” she notes. “Symbolically, the airport is a very important connector/destination.”

The portion of the Northwest Corridor recommended for further Starter System study promises higher than expected ridership estimates. One strength of this corridor, particularly with the AGT/BRT technology option, is its ability to meet the need for transit circulation between the Central Business District (CBD) and IUPUI, thereby helping to alleviate the growing on-campus parking shortage. The Life Sciences initiative at 11th Street and the Canal, the Speedway, and the potential revitalization of Lafayette Square Mall would also benefit by the implementation of rapid transit in this corridor.

Early in Phase III, the MPO and its consultants will study a full set of alternative routes within these Starter System corridors and determine whether the Airport Corridor or the identified portion of the Northwest Corridor offers the greatest regional commuter benefits.

cont on page 20, see *DIRECTIONS* Phase III
As previously reported in teMPO (Special Edition, October, 2002), the acronym CISTMS stands for the Central Indiana Suburban Transportation and Mobility Study which is being cooperatively conducted by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Members of the Policy and Technical Committees of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRT) are serving as key advisors on the study. The IRTC’s Policy Committee, which is comprised of elected official from throughout the area, serves as the primary decision-maker on the regional transportation planning process.

The purpose of CISTMS (pronounced, “Systems”) is to examine transportation and mobility needs among and between the communities surrounding Indianapolis in order to identify suburban travel needs and to develop recommendations for improvements. The CISTMS study area is 3,522 square miles and encompasses the nine counties of Central Indiana, including Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hendricks, Marion, Hancock, Morgan, Johnson and Shelby. Residents of this area are generally more affluent than those elsewhere in the state. Although many studies have focussed on radial routes leading to and from Marion County, few have addressed the need for “cross-travel” between surrounding communities.

“The study’s basic goal is to improve suburban mobility throughout Central Indiana,” explains Steve Smith, Manager of INDOT’s Long Range Transportation Section. “The CISTMS Study is a key element of the statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) completed in 2002,” he notes. “The plan is being updated this year.”

Thanks to three years of effort from INDOT and its various planning partners, including twelve MPOs, Indiana was among the first states in the nation to have a project-specific statewide LRTP (NOTE: Since the plan’s completion, a thirteenth MPO has been formed in the Columbus area, where the population reached 50,000 – the federally mandated threshold requiring an urban area to have its own regional transportation plan.) “At that time, very few states had a plan that identified cost-feasible highway projects,” says Smith, who oversaw the LRTP’s development. “Most states had only a policy statement in place, or identified cost-feasible projects for only the next five to ten years,” he explains. “But there are a lot of advantages to looking further down the road.”

The INDOT 2000-2025 Long Range Plan lays out a strategy for the future of the state highway system, which is intended to provide Hoosiers with the highest level of mobility and safety possible, and to meet the needs of economic development and quality-of-life for the next quarter century. Clearly, a study like CISTMS is intended to help achieve this goal.

CISTMS is focusing on broad corridor areas in Central Indiana, including State Route (SR) 32 and SR 38 on the north, SR 9 on the east, SR 44/144 on the south, and SR 267/39 on the west. Currently, these suburban corridors are experiencing rapid growth and increasing traffic volumes. The amount of development in these areas limits the transportation improvement options. CISTMS will provide a blueprint of the future for these corridors and parallel roadways.

Enhancing roadway capacity within one or more of these broad corridors could relieve congestion on a portion of I-465 and the “outer beltway” (the circumferential roadway outside of I-465 people have talked about for years). If constructed, such a facility would most likely follow the corridors included in the study area.

“We’re considering the potential for congestion relief on I-465,” says Lori Miser, Project Manager for HNTB Corporation, the transportation engineering firm serving as consultants on the study, “but our primary goal is to recommend transportation system improvements to and through Central Indiana’s communities.” Other parallel routes that are under the jurisdiction of the state, county or local municipalities may also be considered, if appropriate. Major problems and deficiencies are being identified and solutions investigated for key areas along those corridors.

To accomplish its goal, the study is examining the interrelationship of land use and transportation by modeling various road cont on page 14, see Suburban Mobility Study Area

Did you Know? . . .
One of the primary reasons for the CISTMS study is the expectation that population and employment will continue to grow in the suburban counties surrounding Indianapolis. As such, growing demands on the transportation system need to be addressed to maintain or improve system efficiency and safety.
inadequate. Eligible grant applicants include private non-profit organizations and organizations that coordinate specialized transportation services.

“I can’t believe we’re not flooded with grants requests,” says Harry Fox, Director of CICOA Senior Transportation Services, who serves with Mayfield on the local Transportation Advisory Committee that reviews grant applications. “We need to get the word out about this program, because I see a lot of need that’s going unmet.”

In 2002, Indiana received $1.8 million in federal funds to distribute on an 80% federal/20% local match basis. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is the designated agency responsible for administering Indiana’s Section 5310 allocation — seeking projects, executing grant awards, buying equipment and monitoring vehicle operation. Equipment eligible for purchase includes vans and buses, which INDOT buys through the Indiana Department of Administration. Delivery time varies by equipment type, but generally following these lead times:

- Mini and Standard Vans ........... 2 to 3 months
- Modified Vans ................... 5 to 7 months
- Buses .............................. 6 to 8 months

To apply for a 5310 grant, a non-profit organization must demonstrate through its application that it:

- has a working relationship with local public and private transportation providers.
- coordinates existing transportation resources within its service area
- has the administrative and financial resources to operate the service on an on-going basis
- addresses an urgent, demonstrable need for the equipment requested and the service it would help provide

Local Transportation Advisory Committees (TAC) help INDOT coordinate the grant application process, serving as an information and advisory resource to applicants. In the Indianapolis region, the TAC is facilitated by Committee Chair Kevin Mayfield. INDOT charges each TAC with:

1. Assisting applicants in assessing and identifying transit needs and resources within their service areas
2. Establishing goals and objectives for coordinated transportation service delivery.
3. Assessing the relevance of each application to established goals and objectives for coordinated transportation service, which includes prioritizing applications submitted by TAC members.
4. Conducting meetings on a quarterly basis, at a minimum
5. Establishing procedures for complaint resolution of private sector proposals for providing transportation service
6. Serving as a coordinator/host for technical assistance efforts, including training, workshops and seminars.

All of these activities are conducted on an on-going basis, with INDOT reviewing the minutes of local TAC meetings.

Indianapolis TAC membership represents all sectors interested in the delivery of transportation services to elderly and disabled persons, including private, for-profit transportation providers; public non-profit transportation operators; public transit providers; social service agencies; local elected officials; consumers of elderly/disabled transportation services; and, local/regional planners. Individuals serving on the committee include:

INDOT requires each applicant to submit their grant request to their MPO for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MPO reviews these applications in relation to
Among the many projects recommended by the MPO in its 2004 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is one called “Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).” This, like all projects in the UPWP, is described in adequate detail for professional planners who need to review and evaluate the program before approving its implementation. However, the casual browser, including most of teMPO’s readers, may need more detail to truly understand what’s being funded and why. For this reason, we offer another installment in our on-going series of articles focusing on UPWP projects and what they entail.

Background

The Regional Transportation Plan is a “living” document that helps guide the development of the area’s transportation system for the next 20+ years, by responding to changing conditions. Monitoring those changing conditions is a cooperative effort of citizens, planners, engineers and elected officials who contribute to the plan. With their help, the plan ensures that facilities and services necessary to support the region’s mobility needs and future growth are anticipated and available. It also provides decision-makers with information upon which to make “first things first” choices.

“Advance knowledge of our region’s mobility needs is key to the allocation of resources, preservation of rights-of-way and coordination of land-use decisions,” explains MPO Senior Planner Steve Cunningham who is helping to coordinate the RTP review process. “That’s why the plan must look more than 20 years ahead, using the most accurate forecasting tools available.”

Through this major review, the MPO will advance the forecast year of the adopted 2025 Regional Transportation Plan to 2030 while responding to changing conditions and its expanded Metropolitan Planning Area, or MPA. (NOTE: The MPO’s planning area was expanded by 77 square miles in 2003, as recommended by Census 2000 data. See map on page 3.)

Project activity is divided into three work phases. Phase 1, which is currently in progress, was initiated in the 2003 Unified Planning Work Program and is scheduled to conclude in August of this year. It involves the evaluation of existing transportation conditions and the current travel model, including assessment of:

- Past Accomplishments and Background – expanded MPA, regional transportation planning process partners, public involvement program, and consideration of planning factors.
- Assessment of Existing Conditions – historical population and employment trends, land-use patterns, growth opportunities and constraints, and state of existing transportation facilities.
- Travel Model Update – data collection, model development, model area, traffic analysis zone system, external stations, 2000 zonal data

The scope of work for Phase 2, also included in the 2004 UPWP and scheduled to begin in autumn of this year, can be described more succinctly as activities related to evaluating alternatives.

This includes:

- Developing existing and committed transportation networks (NOTE: This refers to the existing transportation network plus improvement projects that have been committed to or programmed for the region.)
- Assessing alternative growth scenarios
- Selecting a policy growth scenario
- Developing transportation alternatives
- Evaluating alternatives

Phase 3 involves study recommendations and the final report. This phase is anticipated to be programmed in the 2005 UPWP. It involves:

- A recommended Regional Transportation Plan, including plan components, performance and cost effectiveness
- A Cost-Feasible Plan with revenue forecasts, project priorities and phasing, system performance, air quality conformance, air & rail transportation and freight system.
Transportation Review
(from page 9)

Community analysis, identification of major corridors for integrated environmental and transportation solutions, integration with management operations and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) initiatives

- Implementation Strategies
- A Final Report

Phase 3 activities resulting in the Recommended Regional Transportation Plan must involve all plan components, including the Regional Mass Transit Service Plan, the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan, and all Major Roadway Expansion Projects identified in the Executive Summary of the current plan.

“We have to take it step-by-step to stay in-budget and on-schedule,” says Cunningham. “For this reason, we’re leaving the detailed scoping of the next phase’s work until after the current phase has been completed. In this way, we can remain open and responsive to issues we discover along the way.”

Phase 1 Tasks

The Phase 1 Scope of Services was finalized in February of this year between the MPO and its project consultants, Parson Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas and HNTB Corporation. Phase 1 establishes the framework for the three-phase Regional Transportation Plan Review process. The PB/HNTB Consulting Team has formed a project management team with MPO staff to work collaboratively during this initial phase and throughout the study.

Phase 1 is focusing on documenting current conditions, transportation planning efforts currently underway on specific issues and/or corridors, deficiencies which need to be addressed, and the adequacy of the regional model to forecast anticipated travel demand through the year 2030. At the conclusion of Phase 1, the project management team will have enough information on potential alternative approaches to develop the work plans for Phases 2 and 3.

To accomplish these goals, the consultant team divided Phase 1 activities into the following eight tasks:

Task 1: Project Management and Coordination, including the final scope of services and project schedule, early coordination with governmental agencies, monthly project management team meetings with MPO staff, three Study Review Committee meetings, meeting agendas and minutes, and monthly invoices with progress reports.

Task 2: Public Involvement, including the public involvement mission statement, public involvement plan for the RTP review process, fact sheets summarizing pertinent regional transportation studies and issues, maintenance of stakeholder mailing lists, organization of public meeting(s), design of public meeting invitations, creation of public meeting agendas, recording and final report of public meeting minutes, creation of a stakeholder survey form, and a summary of public comments expressed with an emphasis on those involving

Did you Know? . . .

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 6.4 million people in the US ride public transportation to get to work. Of cities with populations of 250,000 or more, these six have the highest percentage of transit commuters:

- New York 55%
- Washington, D.C. 37%
- Boston 31%
- San Francisco 31%
- Chicago 27%
- Philadelphia 27%

Committee meetings, meeting agendas and minutes, and monthly invoices with progress reports.

Task 3: Past Accomplishments and Regional Planning Background, including technical memoranda summarizing past accomplishments and background.

Task 4: Assessment and Documentation of Existing Conditions, including technical memoranda documenting existing conditions and recent planning efforts, recommended RTP goals and objectives, and a recommendation on how to address the RTP evaluation and prioritization process in Phases 2 and 3.

Task 5: Travel Model Review and Recommendations, including a memorandum that summarizes the results of the model review and presents conclusions regarding potential model enhancements.

Task 6: Needs Analysis: Identification and Documentation of Deficiencies in Existing Transportation System, including the second Study Review Committee meeting, first public meeting with presentation and handouts, needs analysis technical memorandum documenting multi-modal deficiencies in existing transportation network, and meeting agendas and minutes.

Task 7: Expert Panel Workshop, including Expert Panel Workshop discussion, presentation and meeting notes.

Task 8: Document Phase 1 Findings and Develop Scope For Phase 2 Alternative Development Process, including the Phase 1 Report incorporating findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the preceding tasks, and Phase 2 work scope identifying alternative approaches to be evaluated.

For more information on the Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan, or progress on these Phase 1 activities, contact Steve Cunningham at 317/327-5403 (scunning@indygov.org)
Living In The Knozone

Chances are you’ve heard about the region’s ozone awareness program that is currently starting its ninth year. In its early stages, the program was a joint collaboration between your MPO and the city’s air monitoring agency—the Office of Environmental Services—because of the strong link between auto emissions and the ground-level pollutant ozone (see related story, page 2). However, in recent years, the program has been administered by the Indianapolis Department of Public Works to better reflect that department’s status as an implementing agency, and the MPOs as a planning agency.

“That move made sense, because our primary job is really to make transportation-related recommendations that enhance the region’s transportation system,” says MPO Senior Planner Kevin Mayfield, who serves as MPO program liaison to DPW. “Having someone else implement those recommendations frees us up to continue planning and DPW has done a great job with Knozone.”

A big part of that job has been getting the word out to area residents on what ground-level ozone is, why it’s important to reduce it, and how that can be accomplished—information that’s more important to share information now that the Central Indiana region, including Indianapolis, has been designated a non-attainment area by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Toward that goal, the MPO is happy to share the following information with temPO readers.

Background

There are two types of ozone, good ozone and bad ozone. Good ozone is found in the ozone layer, high above the Earth’s surface. At this great distance, ozone is literally life-preserving because it screens out harmful ultraviolet radiation before it can reach the Earth’s surface. If not for good ozone, plants and crops could not grow, and both animals and humans could eventually perish from the full effects of the sun’s ultraviolet rays.

But, ozone formed near the Earth’s surface greatly decreases air quality, resulting in smog and damage to the environment. Ozone can reduce crop and forest yields; damage the appearance of trees and plants; and limit plants’ ability to withstand disease, insects, harsh weather and other pollutants. At high levels, bad ozone can even cause paint to fade and rubber to crack.

Ground-level ozone, or bad ozone, is a colorless and odorless air pollutant that is formed when the sun’s ultraviolet radiation combines with emissions from automobiles, small engines and industrial sources. Each molecule of this type of ozone is composed of three atoms of oxygen, one more than the oxygen molecule we normally breathe in order to sustain life. This additional oxygen atom makes ozone extremely reactive.

Bad ozone is not only bad for the environment—it is bad for your health. In high concentrations, ozone can be a health hazard, affecting the throat, respiratory tract and lungs. Ozone irritates your respiratory system and can inflame, or even permanently damage the cells that line your lungs! People who are active outdoors or have lung diseases, like asthma or emphysema, are most susceptible to ozone.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established federal limits on the ground-level ozone concentration permitted in outdoor air in 1970 with the creation of the Clean Air Act. These limits were health-based and were designed to make sure residents throughout the United States were breathing clean, healthy and safe air.

For several years, Indianapolis’ ozone levels did not meet federal air quality standards, and the city was designated as a non-attainment area for the ozone pollutant. Thanks to years of hard work from the city and the business and industrial community, Indianapolis reduced ozone levels below the federal standards and returned to attainment status in November, 1994.

However, due to new stricter ozone standards Central Indiana, like many major metropolitan areas across the country, is again in violation of the federal standards. This year, the EPA implemented a new, more restrictive air quality standard for ground-level ozone concentrations. Area air quality monitoring data indicates that all nine counties in Central Indiana will remain in violation of the new federal standard, if current air pollution levels are maintained.

That’s why the work done by Knozone, the city’s voluntary ozone-reduction program, is so important. For the past several years, Knozone has worked to educate area residents about man-made ozone pollution and to encourage voluntary actions they can take to battle bad air at home, at work and at play. With the support and participation of Central Indiana residents and businesses, Indianapolis maintained attainment status for many years.

“Indianapolis’ return to non-attainment status is an interesting challenge to explain to area residents, especially those who have followed our Knozone Action Day tips,” says Kelly Duncan, Assistant Public Information Officer for DPW. “Indianapolis air

cont on page 18, see Knozone
• Improve deteriorating mainline, ramp pavement and bridges
• Upgrade geometric conditions to current standards

Given the complexity of its design and reconstruction scope-of-work, Accelerate 465 will be a multi-year project. Its design phase is in-progress; major construction will begin in 2007. Construction is expected to be completed in 2010.

Since last covered by teMPO (Late Autumn, 2003), the Project Team has been actively engaged in multiple activities from early stage design to public outreach. The Project Team has been assembled and a project office established at 111 Monument Circle, Suite 1200. Corridor soil sampling and physical surveys have been initiated and preliminary interchange geometrics and structure prototypes have been prepared.

It is currently planned, that:
• The reconstructed corridor will be an urban interstate with 12-foot lanes, minimum 216-foot right-of-way, and 26-foot paved median, with concrete barrier. Inside and outside shoulders will be 12 feet. Right-of-way needs may expand in areas of cut and fill and will be larger at interchange areas. Allowable mainline grades will still be no greater than three percent (3%). Full control of access will continue to be exercised.
• Interchanges will also be reconfigured to improve both safety and capacity for travelers entering and exiting I-465, as well as those traveling across the I-465 corridor.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining traffic flow during construction, the Project Team has committed to keeping three lanes open during construction, as well as maintaining access during special events, such as the Indianapolis 500. To keep the public informed, updates on alternative traffic routes will be provided on the project web site.

In support of the project’s continuing public outreach efforts, the Project Team has established a public outreach office, developed a web site and telephone information line, and established a Community Advisory Group to channel public input to the team. In addition, the public outreach office has begun scheduling neighborhood meeting presentations upon request.

For more information on Accelerate 465, please visit the project web site at www.accelerate465.in.gov, call the project information line at 1-866/214-1778, send e-mail inquiries or comments to accelerate465@hntb.com, or contact Public Outreach Lead Matti McCormick at 317/917-5315 (fax:317/917-5215).
Meet Bob Lehnen, an IUPUI professor whose big picture thinking is now helping friends and neighbors see the links between transportation, economic development, local health concerns, the environment and the area’s quality-of-life.

“It’s all connected,” says Bob, who has served as Professor of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI) for 26 years. “I think deep down most people know that, but sometimes they don’t want to think about these connections,” he notes.

“When it comes to transportation issues, a lot of people don’t want the facts to get in their way of their opinions.”

Bob’s foray into transportation planning began about five years ago when a friend in the area, the late Doug Trolson (A Tribute, Spring 2002 temPO) and he got involved in the Glendale Neighborhood Study. “Doug and I were both active in the Greater Allisonville Community Council,” he explains. (NOTE: GACC is an umbrella organization of about 20 neighborhood associations located in the northeast corridor along Allisonville Road. It has approximately 300-400 registered members. Lehnen lives in the Fairfield-Sylvan neighborhood and has been active in GACC since 1999.

“Doug was always committing his time to address some issue or implement a project to improve the area. When we lost him, I just kept on,” Lehnen says. “The things we were talking about were too important to let drop – all were small neighborhood issues, but they formed part of the bigger picture.”

The Glendale Special Neighborhood Study, which now has a final report on the MPO web site (indygov.org/indympo), developed strategies to improve mobility in the residential and commercial areas found in the mile-square surrounding Glendale mall. Special emphasis was given to accommodating alternative modes of transportation such as pedestrian and bicycle travel, especially on residential streets.

“That was a hot button with me,” says Bob who’s lived in the area for 26 years. “I couldn’t take my kids out on their bikes when they were small because it wasn’t safe. Too much traffic and no bike lanes. And, I still can’t walk to the bakery or the dry cleaners, because there are no sidewalks along 62nd Street. So, rather than take my life in my hands, I have to get in my car for a short neighborhood errand. That’s crazy behavior to encourage in a community with air quality issues.”

As an active GACC member, Board member and newly elected Vice President, Bob has found ways to share this perspective on, and contribute ideas to, the regional transportation planning’s process. He formed the 12-15 member GACC Transportation Committee which weighs in on issues affecting the Allisonville corridor, including the oft-proposed widening of that thoroughfare and the chronic difficulty of traveling east-west in an area vivisected by Keystone Avenue, Allisonville Road and Binford Boulevard.

Now, as a member of the DIRECTIONS study team, Bob has also traveled with the MPO to review transit systems in use in Vancouver B.C. and St. Louis and shared his insights on the local need for rapid transit through neighborhood group presentations. (NOTE: An Ottawa trip is also planned.)

“There are strong links between a region’s transportation planning process and its quality-of-life,” Lehnen says, “especially the condition of its environment and the success of its economic development program. Now that we’re a non-attainment area for ozone, industries will look elsewhere to expand, affecting local job availability and tax-base. And, continues the man who volunteers regularly with the Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition (InJAC), “poor air quality affects health, just as the lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure promotes obesity. These are the best reasons I know to provide alternative transportation.”

Lehnen is encouraged by the recent unanimous IRTC vote to endorse DIRECTIONS Phase II findings and authorize Phase III activities, including the identification of a public agency to implement and manage the system and its funding sources. “These have been stumbling blocks in the past, but we can’t afford to let them be this time,” he says. “When you look at the big picture, not having sufficient alternative transportation sources has cost us too much already.”

A native of Danville, IL, and graduate of DePauw University, Bob Lehnen moved to Indianapolis in 1978 from the Washington, D.C. area where he worked on special assignment for the U.S. Department of Justice. He began his teaching career at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where met Sandra, his wife of 35 years. They currently reside on Chester Avenue, where they raised their two children: Laura Lehnen Paul, a public defender in Putnam County, an attorney in private practice in Terre Haute, and John, an executive with Intel Corporation in Portland, OR.

Bob can be reached at rlehnen@comcast.net.
way expansion alternatives using a state-of-the-art land use simulation model to assess the potential effects of development. An expert panel has been engaged to provide localized insights in the process. Study activity throughout the Spring will include refinement of the alternatives to be analyzed by the travel forecast and land-use models, travel and land-use model analyses, and documentation of future transportation system needs.

Other study activities include playing a companion role in the detailed studies currently being conducted by others on the future connections and routes for I-69. CISTMS will consider the effect of proposed plans or alternatives on the routes being evaluated in the study. CISTMS will also consider the role of public transit, using the transit analysis being done in conjunction with directions being conducted by the MPO. Because other communities have dealt with similar issues related to suburban travel, a “peer city” review is also included as part of the CISTMS study.

The following five key areas are being used to focus the study and to ensure that the appropriate criteria is being emphasized while evaluating transportation system alternatives:

**Functionality**
- Improve mobility between suburban communities
- Improve movement of freight and other through-region trips
- Provide a more balanced transportation system

**CISTMS Works Within LRTP View**

The 2002 Long Range Transportation Plan updated the 1995 Statewide Multi-modal Transportation Plan, which provided a starting point for developing more detailed plans for specific transportation modes. The new LRTP extended the planning horizon to 2025 and provided INDOT and its planning partners with a long range view of how the state jurisdictional highway system will develop in the future.

Among other things, the 2000-2025 Long Range Plan created a new and simplified highway hierarchy comprised of these three tiers:

**Statewide Mobility Corridors** which connect urban areas of 25,000 persons or more in Indiana and neighboring states, provide macro-level accessibility to cities and regions around the state, and play a vital role in economic development. Characteristics of Statewide Mobility Corridors include:
- Upper level design standards
- High speed travel
- Free-flowing traffic conditions
- Serves long distance trips
- Large “through traffic” volumes
- Heavy commercial vehicle flows
- Carry longer distance commuter traffic
- Generally multi-lane, divided
- Full access control desirable, no less than partial access control
- Railroad and highway grade separations desirable
- Desirable to bypass congested areas

**Regional Corridors** connect smaller cities and regions, feed traffic to Statewide Mobility Corridors, and provide for regional accessibility. Characteristics of Regional Corridors include:
- Mid-level design standards
- High to moderate speed
- Free-flow to the extent practicable in rural areas
- Serve medium distance trips
- Carry medium distance commuter traffic
- Moderate through traffic volumes
- Moderate commercial vehicle flow
- Potential for heavy local traffic volumes
- Typically, at grade intersections with highways and railroads, with consideration for railroad separation
- High-level, two-lane or multi-lane
- Partial access control desirable
- Conventionally routed through cities and towns

**Local Access Corridors** serve intra- and inter-county short distance trips, provide access to local residences and businesses, and provide access to rural areas and small towns. Characteristics of Local Access Corridors include:
- Lower-level design standards
- Moderate to low speed
- At-grade intersections with highways and railroads
- Minimal access control
- Short distance trips
- Moderate local traffic volumes
- Typically two-lane with multi-lane exceptions
- Frequent interaction with non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians
- Routed through cities and towns

To achieve its overall goal of increasing suburban mobility throughout Central Indiana, CISTMS will be working with all three of these corridor tiers.

The INDOT Long Range Plan is currently being updated to extend its time horizon to 2025 to 2030. INDOT is working with the state MPOs, Regional Planning Organizations (RPO) and the six INDOT districts in this effort. Public information meetings will be held in August in each of the districts to solicit public comment on the plan update. For more information on INDOT’s Long Range Transportation Plan update, visit http://www.in.gov/dot/pubs/longrange/index.html.
**Suburban Mobility**
(from page 14)

- Reduce congestion
- Provide a travel alternative to I-465 during peak congestion hours
- Coordinate with the MPO's rapid transit study DIRECTIONS

**Safety**
- Provide safer operations for existing and future travelers
- Improve safety in areas with inadequate design standards and at other hazardous locations

**Quality-of-Life**
- Promote positive development patterns in the region
- Minimize negative impacts on social, economic and environmental resources
- Increase economic opportunity by improving connectivity between residential, employment, shopping and recreational uses

**Cost-Effectiveness**
- Identify fiscally realistic alternatives
- Demonstrate that overall benefits of the alternative(s) warrant their overall costs

**Equity**
- Ensure that proposed alternatives meet Presidential Executive Order 12898 for Environmental Justice, which requires that disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations be identified and addressed for all federally-funded projects.

**Did you Know? . . .**

Persons per square mile, a measurement of population density, increased 10% statewide between 1990 and 2000, ranking Indiana 17th in the nation in population density. For the counties within CISTMS’ study area, person per square mile increased an average of 17%, with Hamilton County increasing a whopping 68%!

**Existing Conditions, Future Needs**

To minimize impacts and better serve future transportation needs, it is likely that roadway improvements eventually recommended by CISTMS will occur within existing corridors. If major investment is not warranted, these improvements may take the form of access management or facility upgrades. To identify current needs and to provide the basis for alternatives development, existing roadway characteristics, attributes, deficiencies and needs have been identified through extensive data collection efforts. “Our findings are currently being documented in a Technical Memorandum and will soon be available on our website,” notes Miser.

Future travel needs are being simulated via the use of a travel forecast model linked with probable land-use scenarios. Transportation improvement alternatives will be evaluated based on their ability to address existing and future transportation needs in the study area. The alternatives under consideration fall into these four, broad categories:

**No-Build Alternative**
This category does not include any roadway improvements beyond those already programmed for construction. This alternative will be the base condition to which other alternatives will be compared.

**Minimum Change Alternative**
This category will include additional improvements to existing facilities (the previously mentioned primary study routes or parallel facilities) to improve safety and traffic operation. Changes could include improving intersections, adding lanes, improving roadside safety features and removing parking.

**Medium Change Alternative**
This category is similar to the Minimum Change Alternative, but with the addition of routes around urban areas or other locations where right-of-way, land-use, access points, or environmental conditions might make improving existing roadways difficult or undesirable.

**Maximum Change Alternative**
This category includes the development of limited access roadways (including freeways) on new alignment or in combination with portions of existing roadways.

The type of improvement alternative recommended for each of the four corridor areas (north, south, east, and west) could be different. For example, in less developed areas where traffic is or could become an issue, a limited access roadway could be a viable solution. Other areas may be limited to, or only need, improvements to existing facilities. Some segments may serve as viable alternatives for trucks and other through traffic that currently use I-465, warranting improvements beyond those required to serve local needs. “Local and regional benefits and potential impacts will be evaluated for each study segment and for the system as a whole,” Smith says.

For more information on CISTMS, which is scheduled for completion by the end of the year, contact Steve Smith of the Indiana Department of Transportation (ssmith@indot.gov.org) or Lori Miser of HNTB Corporation (lmiser@hntb.com). Or, visit the INDOT website at ind.gov/dot/projects (CISTMS is listed under “Planning”) or the MPO website at indy.gov/indympo.
TIP goals and objectives and prioritizes them. The MPO also facilitates the TAC quarterly meetings.

In addition to local TAC support, a Statewide Transportation Advisory Group has been established to 1) advise INDOT in the review and selection of Section 5310 grant applications, and 2) provide a forum for discussing strategies and policies that may assist in the coordination of specialized transportation programs at both the state and local levels.

The Federal Transit Authority (FTA) is the federal agency responsible for the Section 5310 Program. The FTA reviews the statewide applications before releasing the State’s allocation of Section 5310 funding. The FTA regional office requires annual program and financial reports to insure that each state is meeting program objectives.

“Just hearing about the policies and procedures of the Section 5310 Program doesn’t give you a sense of its importance,” notes Mayfield. “For that, you have to read the applications and see the difference a vehicle can make to a non-profit and the people it services. (See side bar, this page.)

Remaining 2004 meetings of the Indianapolis regional Transportation Advisory Committee are scheduled for 10 AM on Tuesday, August 10 and Tuesday, November 9 at the Crossroads Rehabilitation Center, 4755 Kingsway Drive (just north of 46th Street off of Keystone Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46225. For more information on the Section 5310 Specialized Transportation Program, or the Indianapolis regional Transportation Advisory Committee, contact Kevin Mayfield at 317/327-5135 (kmayfiel@indygov.org).
Peddlin’ Environmental Awareness

The Pedal & Park Program which offers area cyclists free, secured bike parking at greenways-adjacent events kicked off its spring/summer season on Saturday, April 24th, at the 2004 Earth Day Indiana Festival, the state’s largest one-day environmental event and the area’s first, free outdoor festival of the year. The event was held between 11 AM and 5 PM at the American Legion Mall and Veterans’ Memorial Plaza in downtown Indianapolis (N. Meridian Street and North Street). Its purpose is to serve as a forum for the exchange of environmental information, but will also include music, food, special events and children’s craft activities.

Organized by The Greenways Foundation, the Pedal & Park Program is a joint venture with The Central Indiana Bicycling Association (CIBA), Indy Parks Greenways and the Indiana Bicycle Coalition (IBC) whose representatives continuously monitor its ‘bike corral.’ For a fourth year, the program is being sponsored by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which pays a $1 parking fee for each bike checked at the fenced and supervised corral. Parking fee proceeds are shared among the participating volunteer organizations that provide supervision. In addition, the MPO supplies volunteer and literature display shelters and communications/public relations support as part of its sponsorship.

“We were delighted to have Pedal & Park back as a festival participant,” says Deb Ellman, Executive Director of Earth Day Indiana, Inc. (EDII), the not-for-profit, tax-exempt, grassroots organization that hosts the annual event as a culmination of its month-long environmental awareness effort. “This year’s theme was ‘Planet Carefully, Use It Wisely’ and Pedal & Park helps illustrate that concept,” she says. “With Bike-To-Work Week just around the corner, we’re hoping more people will leave their cars at home and try pedaling downtown, easing both traffic congestion and the ozone pollution that seriously affects our air quality during the warm spring and summer months.”

The purpose of the Pedal & Park Program is to encourage use of non-motorized transportation alternatives, promote activity on Indy Greenways, dispense relevant recreational literature, and raise funds for the partnering not-for-profit organizations. Other scheduled 2004 Pedal & Park events include Bike-To-Work Day (May 21), the Broad Ripple Art Fair (May 22-23), the Talbot Street Art Fair (June 12-13), the Indiana State Fair (August 11-22), and Penrod (September 4). To volunteer to help at a Pedal & Park corral, call 317/255-0559. For more information on the Pedal & Park Program, including times and directions, call 317/297-1283 or 317/710-0739 or visit www.indygreenways.org/pedalpark.

CAC Meets

The MPO’s first Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting of 2004 took place at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, March 9, in the Public Assembly Room of the City-County Building, 200 East Washington, downtown Indianapolis. The agenda featured proposed 1st Quarter amendments to the 2004-2006 Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTP), an update on the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS, a report on INDOT’s Central Indiana Suburban Transportation and Mobility Study (see related story, page 7.), and a presentation on the MPO’s School Involvement Program, now in its fifth year.

Because public participation plays a crucial role in the regional transportation planning process, the MPO encourages participation in CAC meetings via MPO publications and mailings, in MPO meetings, through display advertising in The Indianapolis Star and The Indianapolis Recorder, on the MPO hotline (317/327-IMPO), via Media Advisories shared with more than 40 regional print and broadcast news sources, and on the MPO website (indygov.org/indympo). Those unable to attend can watch a re-broadcast of the event on government access channel WCTY (Cable Channel 16).

The next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee is scheduled for 6:30 – 8:00 PM on Tuesday, June 22 in Room 118 of the City-County Building, 200 East Washington Street, downtown Indianapolis. The meeting’s agenda will be announced at www.indygov.org/indympo.
Knozone
(from page 11)

quality has actually improved over the past several years, but the EPA has lowered the bar and made the determination that there is still more work to be done in terms of improving air quality.”

In response to existing air quality data and the threat of new air quality restrictions, Knozone is continuing to aggressively work to get citizens and businesses actively involved in this summer’s program and to help improve the quality of air we all breathe.

Although the actions promoted by Knozone are voluntary, they can be highly effective when taken by many individuals and businesses and may impact the type of federal regulations that are imposed on the Central Indiana region in the future.

What We Can Do NOW

Ground-level ozone, or bad ozone, is a problem in Central Indiana. Ground-level ozone is formed when oxygen, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or nitrogen oxides (NOx) chemically react in the presence of sunlight, especially during hot weather. The more intense and direct the sun’s rays are and the warmer the temperature is, the more ground-level ozone is formed.

Since we cannot control the weather, the only way to lower ozone levels is to reduce the amount of emissions released into the air from activities like driving a car or truck, filling a gas tank and mowing the grass.

There are numerous sources of ground-level ozone. Automobile, truck and bus exhaust, as well as large industry and fuel combustion sources, like utilities, all help create ozone. Small industries, like gas stations and print shops, contribute to ground-level ozone, too. Even emissions from aircraft, locomotives, construction equipment, and lawn and garden equipment contribute. However, at 60%, the overwhelming source of ozone-producing emissions are personal vehicles.

How can you help fight ozone, and be sure to “be in the kno” when ozone levels are high? Listen to the team of meteorologists, chemists and physicists who are monitoring the region’s weather conditions and have the authority to call a “Knozone Action Day.”

By listening to the radio or television, visiting the Knozone Web site (www.knozone.com), reading the newspaper or calling the 24-hour Air Quality Phoneline at (317) 327-4AIR, you can find out when a Knozone Action Day has been declared.

Then, try to follow these voluntary guidelines:
- Carpool with friends or coworkers.
- Wait until after 6 p.m. to fill up your gas tank.
- Keep your car tuned-up and your tires properly inflated.
- Mow your lawn after 6 p.m.
- Use water-based rather than oil-based paints and solvents.
- Walk or ride your bike short distances.
- Stay away from busy roads and other sources of air pollution during outdoor activities.
- Ride the bus for half-price. Call IndyGo at (317) 635-3344 for route information.
- Combine errands to reduce the number of car trips you have to make.
- Limit engine idling.
- If you must do things outdoors, plan activities for early morning or evening when ozone levels are lower.
- Be careful not to spill fuel when filling gas tanks for your car or lawn equipment.
- Reduce the amount of time spent waiting in drive-thru lanes. Park and go inside, instead.

Be “In The Kno”

In addition to the previously mentioned ways to stay informed, DPW upgraded the Knozone E-mail Alert program in 2003.

The Knozone E-mail Alert program is intended to provide area residents and businesses with the most up-to-date Knozone information by using e-mail to alert them that the following day is expected to be a Knozone Action Day.

Knozone Action Day alerts are sent directly to your e-mail account to make you aware of upcoming Knozone Action Days and to provide you with easy tips you can follow to help reduce ground-level ozone while still conducting your daily activities.

As an added feature this summer, Knozone and its partners, the American Lung Association of Indiana and the Marion County Health Department, will issue air quality health advisories on those days when ground-level ozone readings reach levels that are considered harmful for the general population. On such days, you will receive a special e-mail alert with tips for how you can protect your health on high-ozone days.

And, if that isn’t enough, Knozone will notify you of upcoming Knozone programs and special events, like Knozone car care clinics.

To register, visit www.knozone.com. You will be added to the Knozone list server to receive future Knozone alerts and announcements.

For more information on DPW’s ozone awareness program, including upcoming events and 2004 goals, contact DPW Assistant Public Information Officer Kelly Duncan at 317/327-2053 (kduncan@indygov.org).
Indianapolis Transit Task Force

On Friday, March 19th, IndyGo, the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee (GIPC) announced the names of 36 people to serve on the Indianapolis Transit Task Force. The Task Force was formed after Mayor Bart Peterson asked these organizations to convene a group that would recommend ways to meet existing, and plan for future, public transit needs.

The mission of the task force is to find long-term solutions to IndyGo’s money problems by recommending operational strategies that can be implemented over the next five years. Among those attempting to meet this charge are Duane Etienne of CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions; City-County Council members Vernon Brown, Bob Cockrum, Ron Gibson and Scott Keller; Joanne Hamilton and Cathy Burton of the Marion County Alliance of Neighborhood Associations (MCANA); Steve Van Soelen of Eli Lilly & Co.; IndyGo Board members Greg Fehribach and Skip Rink; Bill Tracy of Citizens Gas; former MPO Manager Lori Miser, now with HNTB Corporation; and, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing. Members also include regular riders of both IndyGo’s route-based bus and paratransit van service. Task Force co-chairs are Joseph Slash of the Indianapolis Urban League, Myra Borshoff Cook of Borshoff Johnson Matthews and Curt Wiley of the Fannie Mae Partnership. Gil Holmes, President & CEO of IndyGo, Ellen Quigley, Executive Director of Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee and Jesse Moore, business advocacy manager of the Chamber will serve as lead staff members for the task force.

The task force holds monthly meetings to which the public is welcome. It is anticipated that its work will be completed by mid-September, 2004. For more information on the Indianapolis Transit Task Force, visit www.indygov.org.

Year of The Bike

Bike travel has been gaining in popularity over the last few years and we have some regional milestones to prove it. The Greenways Foundation’s Pedal & Park program has posted three record-breaking years in a row with the MPO as its sponsor. IndyGo buses now sport bike racks for the casual commuter and encourage riders throughout Marion County to “Bike n’ Bus.” The MPO’s Multi-modal Task Force has also been successful in promoting the installation of new bike racks at a number of popular downtown destinations. And, perhaps most importantly, 2004 will see the distribution of a revised and expanded bike route map.

“A lot of people are eager for the new map,” says MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman, M.S. who is heading up the revision process. “We’re working hard to get it out this spring, but we have to be careful not to rush the process. Because this edition of the map will include the bike route systems of some areas outside of Marion County, we need to carefully coordinate information with these planning entities,” she explains. “When we’re comfortable that all of the details have been checked, we’ll release it both in print and on the web, probably within the next month.”

Did you Know? . . .

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration, the number of private airports in the United States is on the rise while the number of public airports is steadily declining.

In 1985, there were 10,461 private airports in the U.S. Ten years later, there were 12,809. And in 2001, the last year for which there are figures, the number was 13,990. During the same period, the number of public airports declined from 5,858 (1985), to 5,415 (1995), to 5,315 (2001).
A Consensus Finding

Though the study's scope only requires the identification of a locally preferred Starter System, the MPO has evaluated alignment and technology options for all six corridors previously identified in Phase I. "We had to study everything before we could make a considered choice with our Phase II recommendation," Roth explained.

"And public input had a lot to do with that," says Inman. "Route alignment and technology options were presented to the public at our meetings and, in every case, planners and the public agreed on each corridor's preferred route alignment." Using this input and other criteria, the MPO developed its Starter System recommendation.

“Our findings are still only conceptual,” says Mike Dearing MPO Manager/Master Planner. “Still, it’s significant that the public and planners agreed on all preferred alignments and on the Starter System recommendation. That’s a pretty good case for a locally-preferred system,” he says. "The corridors recommended for Starter System evaluation were selected from the 70 we started with in Phase I more than a year ago. They have the greatest commuter activity and promise the highest transit usage,” explains Dearing, “Now, with the IRTC’s authorization, Phase III will identify locally preferred alignment and technology options for the Starter System as well as implementation funding sources.”

How soon can you expect improved, region-wide rapid transit? At least seven to ten years. That's how long it takes to build a Starter System, if everything goes well. Most of that time is taken up by applying and competing for federal funds. Then, there's the design, engineering and construction phases. “That’s the bad news,” Dearing notes, knowing that fast, convenient transit is wanted now. “The good news is we’re closer than we’ve ever been and have more support than ever before for a regionwide rapid transit system.”

For more information on DIRECTIONS’ Phase III activity, contact Philip Roth (317/327-5139, proth@indygov.org) or Amy Inman (317/327-5646, ainmna@indygov.org), or visit the MPO web site at www.indygov.org/indympo/directions.
Hot Off the Presses

As the mercury rises, so does our interest in transportation-related topics including sizzling studies, in-progress projects and multiple maneuvering modes that involve the MPO’s entire Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). Topics like Phase II findings of the Regional Pedestrian Plan study, the latest milestone in the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS, a progress report on the new Indianapolis International Airport project, details from a bus rapid transit review hosted by our neighbors to the north, and the release of the newly revised and expanded bike route map. And no wonder! Summer is traditionally the season when we spend more time traveling. So, whether pumping the pedals, boarding the bus or... 

Pedestrian Plan Next Steps

Phase II in the development of the Regional Pedestrian Plan, which focused on Center Township in Marion County, ended early this summer when the MPO and its project consultant, Storrow Kinsella Associates presented findings to both the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC). Since that time, planners have begun Phase III of the study during which they will extend the pedestrian route system developed for Center Township to surrounding “donut” or perimeter townships using the same methodology as was employed in Phase II.

“We’re keeping up a good pace,” says Amy Inman, M.S., the MPO Senior Planner managing the project.

“And, step by step, we’re moving closer to our goal: To make walking an integral part of the Greater Indianapolis region’s urban transportation system,”

cont on page 22, see Pedestrian Plan Next Steps

DIRECTIONS’ Milestone

At the July 21st meeting of the Policy Committee of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC), elected officials from throughout the eight-county area selected the travel corridor where a possible region-wide rapid transit system could begin service. In making its selection, the IRTC used technical findings and analysis provided by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the region’s primary transportation planner, to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of three possible starter system corridor options.

The selected corridor stretches from the Indianapolis Central Business District (CBD), a one-mile square of downtown Indianapolis, northeast toward Fishers and Noblesville in Hamilton County. The exact length and specific route and transit technology of the starter system proposal will be the sub-...
In Q & A, members of your MPO staff answer questions posed to them via voice mail, e-mail, regular mail or in-person. In this issue, Chief Transportation Planner Sweson Yang discusses Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies and the impact they could have on our regional transportation system.

I recently saw a copy of the MPO’s “Spring 2004 Annual Briefing,” where Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) were mentioned. What are these? Are we using them? Can they help improve our region’s rush hour congestion and related air pollution?

- Asked via the MPO’s new 24-Hour Comment Line (317/327-8601)

Coping with traffic congestion and reducing related air pollution are definitely two benefits of deploying ITS strategies, but that’s only a small part of the story. Realizing the partial fulfillment of expanding transportation infrastructure to meet growing demand, ITS calls for smarter management of the existing transportation system.

In this year’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the MPO includes a project called “Coordination of Intelligent Transportation System Strategies with Management & Operation” to tackle this element of comprehensive transportation planning. This project is described in the following way:

The MPO staff will continue to coordinate regional ITS deployment activities with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). INDOT activities have already included the construction of a Traffic Management Center at 21st Street and Post Road as part of its Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) and various Incident Management strategies, such as Hoosier Helper vans. Indianapolis is responsible for ITS activities on the non-interstate highways inside of I-465. These include coordinating signal systems, Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) for transit vehicles and other emergency traffic management systems.

Basically, Intelligent Transportation Systems refers to a variety of evolving technologies that INDOT started deploying along Indiana’s highways in the late ’90s to help ease congestion and increase traveler safety. Under the system name TrafficWise, INDOT uses these technologies to detect congestion, determine its cause, and minimize its impact. The system speeds information to travelers, dispatchers and emergency professionals, such as State Police and medical personnel, enabling roadside assistance to arrive more quickly and clearing congestion-causing incidents faster than ever before.
This map reflects the expanded MPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) as determined by Census 2000 data. This new MPA was recommended for approval by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council-Policy Committee in late 2002, and subsequently recommended for implementation by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). Final approval was given by Governor Joseph Kernan in fourth quarter, 2003.

**Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Area**

**Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)**
*(Projected Urbanization By The Year 2020)*

**Hot Off the Presses**
*(from page 1)*

honking the horn, our attention is grabbed by anything that can help us get around the region faster, easier and...cooler! That's where teMPO comes in. Read this issue in the comfort of your own home or office. Because when it comes to the top transportation-related topics, we are hot off the presses and we've got the facts down cold.
As a massive interstate relocation and construction project near the Indianapolis International Airport (IIA) approaches completion this summer, local officials are preparing for major construction work to begin on the Airport’s new passenger terminal complex.

Project designers and architects are sharpening details of building and site plans, construction contracts are being signed and excavation work is continuing on the approximately $1 billion new Indianapolis International Airport project. Groundbreaking for the new terminal building is expected in 2005.

“During this planning and design process, our goal remains the same: To create a new Indianapolis International Airport that is modern, efficient and uniquely representative of both the history and future of our state,” said Project Director John J. Kish.

Meanwhile, work is more than 75 percent complete on the relocation and reconstruction of Interstate 70, south of the Airport. The $160 million project, which started in 2002, should be wrapped up by December, 2004.

“For this project to be completed in less than three years from start to finish, really shows the talent, dedication and hard work of the design and construction team,” said J. Bryan Nicol, Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), which is overseeing the project. “This project is being completed on time and on budget, which is incredible when you consider the design and engineering challenges involved.”

Eastbound I-70 traffic already has been moved over to the new lanes; westbound traffic will be shifted over to the new lanes by the end of August. The old I-70 lanes will be crushed and removed after the new lanes are opened.

This work involves moving about four miles of interstate highway about 1,200 feet south of its current location, as well as widening and lowering the highway near the airport’s south runway. The project will allow for future taxiway construction over the highway to link the existing runway and taxiway system with airport land south of the interstate and will provide space for additional economic development along the south runway.

The work will furnish travelers with a smoother, safer roadway and increased highway capacity by adding additional collector and distributor lanes. It also will provide direct access from I-70 and the airport to Six Points Road and nearby commercial areas.

In addition, the project involves construction of two new highway interchanges — one to serve the new airport terminal, and a second to provide access to a relocated Six Points Road. Construction of both interchanges will be completed in December as well. The new airport exchange will remain closed to public traffic until the new terminal building opens while the new Six Points Road interchange will open immediately.

When the I-70 construction work is completed, contractors will have poured more than 500,000 square feet of concrete and moved about 2.8 million cubic yards of earth.

This year, designers have been laboring on the new Indianapolis Airport project to turn the architect’s vision into plans for a stunning concrete, steel and glass structure.

The new terminal building is designed as a dynamic, changing form that reveals its purpose as destination, gateway and powerful symbol of the city. It will be the centerpiece of the overall airport project. The new terminal will be built in the “midfield” area of the airport property, between the two existing runways. The project includes the new terminal, concourses and parking garage, as well as site preparation, utility and roadwork, and airfield improvements.

As the gateway to Indianapolis and the State of Indiana, the terminal building will play a key role in defining the modern character of both the city and the state.

The heart of the building is a civic plaza — a central gathering place with a circular shape that recalls the shape of Monument Circle. Although the plaza will serve necessary functions, it is designed to incorporate artwork, provide public event space and enable visitors to sample the character of the Indianapolis region.

The terminal roof is shaped to create a symbolic threshold to the city and state, emanating from this civic plaza. The form is generated by joining the sheltering, centralized shape of an

**cont on page 16, see Airport Project Progress**
Even if you get there by plane, you may still be on a ‘bus trip.’ Just ask the delegation of 22 MPO staff members and transit planning partners who departed Indianapolis International Airport on Tuesday, July 27 via a 6 AM American Airlines flight. After a lay-over and plane switch at O’Hare/Chicago, they were on their way to Ottawa, Ontario for a two- day assessment of that city’s bus rapid transit (BRT) system – North America’s premier example of the transit mode in action.

This fact-finding trip was part of DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility. As reported elsewhere in this issue (DIRECTIONS Milestone, page 1), elected officials from throughout the Greater Indianapolis area selected the Northeast corridor, which stretches from downtown Indianapolis into Hamilton County, as the travel corridor where a possible region-wide rapid transit system could begin service. The exact length and specific route and transit technology of such a starter system proposal is the subject of the study’s current and final phase. BRT is being considered for use in the system, as are Automated Guideway Transit (AGT) and Light Rail Transit (LRT). Studying these other modes was the focus of previous trips to Vancouver, B.C. and St. Louis, MO, respectively.

“We’ve learned a lot about these technologies over the year and a half since DIRECTIONS began,” says Philip Roth, AICP, who co-manages the study with fellow MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman, M.S. “On-site visits like this one to Ottawa show us real world operational costs and benefits,” he explains. “This information will help us assess the suitability of applying the mode to our situation.”

With a metro area population of 1.2 million, Ottawa is similar in size to the Greater Indianapolis region metropolitan statistical area (population:1.5 million). Like our region, it is also fast growing. In fact, according to the Conference Board of Canada, it is the fastest growing major city in that country. And, like Indianapolis with its combined City-County UniGov system, Ottawa is an amalgamated’ city, with 12 municipalities having become one in 2001.

Like Indianapolis, Canada’s capital is also home to government facilities, including the Canadian Parliament, Senate and Supreme Court, and is a travel destination for more than 7,000,000 visitors a year. (Indianapolis averages about 18,000,000 visitors annually, according to the Convention & Visitors Association.) Ottawa is also home to advanced technology and financial based companies, including Nortel Networks and Cisco, and MBNA (Canada) and ING Direct. No wonder the city enjoys Canada’s most educated workforce and highest median household income and has been ranked sixth in the world for quality-of-life by Corporate Resources Group, an independent Swiss management firm.

But Canada’s fourth largest city also has some characteristics to which Central Indiana Hoosiers might have trouble relating. For example, Ottawa is the second coldest capital city in the world with an annual average temperature of 6º Celsius (42.8º Fahrenheit.) The Ottawa region covers 4,662 square kilometers, or 1,800 square miles (compared with 1,330 square miles for the MPO’s transportation planning area), with more than 4/5ths of the city being rural. Yet 80% of Ottawa’s population lives in an urban setting, which means large areas of sparsely populated, undeveloped land surround a more densely populated urban core. Ottawa’s most important distinction for the purposes of this trip, however, is the fact that area residents decided to rely on bus rapid transit to meet their mobility needs decades ago.

The plan for the Ottawa Transitway, or bus-only roadways, was approved for implementation in 1978. The first sections of the exclusive busway opened five years later (1983) incorporating the use of GM articulated buses which are hinged in the middle to allow tighter turning radii.

\[cont on page 6, see Ottawa Bus Trip\]
and exceptional maneuverability. In 1993, ten years of Transitway operation and the 500 millionth system rider were celebrated. In 1996, the originally approved, 31-kilometer Transitway system was completed.

Public transit services in the City of Ottawa are provided by OC Transpo. OC stands for Ottawa & Carleton, a neighboring community. Prior to becoming an agency of the City of Ottawa (the amalgamation of the various cities and townships which now make up the City of Ottawa took place just three years ago), OC Transpo was an entity which reported to the then regional level of government (Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton) and was called the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Transit Commission. Hence, the remaining ‘trademark’ name of ‘OC Transpo’.

The City Council sets transit policies and guides the implementation of transit service. A Director of Transit Services is responsible for operating the transit system within set policies and budgets, and reports to the Deputy City Manager – Public Works & Services who, in turn, reports to the Transportation Committee and City Council. As a public enterprise operating on behalf of the citizens of Ottawa, all transit system decisions receive public scrutiny. Council and Transportation Committee meetings at City Hall are always open to the public.

The Transitway was implemented with an ‘outside-in’ strategy, making early use of the undeveloped outer greenbelt for transit route corridors and leaving the more expensive implementation in the Central Business District (CBD) for later. Major design elements of the system include the exclusive bus Transitway, connections to the road system, bus-priority lanes, bus lanes on the highway, mixed-traffic sections, park & ride lots and bike & ride facilities.

The Transitway provides an exclusive rapid transit link across much of the City’s urbanized area. The transit service area is 397 sq. km and serves a population of 737,000. Passenger rides total 87.9 million annually with the average weekday ridership being 340,000. There are currently approximately 930 buses in the fleet, including 360 low-floor buses, featuring exceptional accessibility for the physically challenged. About a quarter of the fleet has on-bus bike racks.

Ottawa Bus Trip (from page 5) Transit service is provided 22 hours a day. Headways vary by route and daypart, from three to thirty minutes.

OC Transpo’s Transitway routes operate like rail corridors using the extra long, high capacity articulated buses. Local feeder routes ‘feed’ passengers who were gathered from residential areas on to the Transitway. Mainline routes use the Transitway for some portion of their route. And, Express routes operate only during peak periods, picking up passengers in residential areas and providing transfer-free trips into the CBD via the Transitway.

Transitway stations are convenient transfer points located next to major shopping centers, employment destinations, schools and high density housing developments. Seven Park & Ride lots, catering to downtown commuters, are served by high frequency Transitway routes. The Transitway provides rapid transit connections to Ottawa International Airport, the train station, inter-city (mixed traffic) bus service, and the O-Train.

Complementary LRT

On October 15, 2001, OC Transpo began operation of the O-Train, a short distance light rail transit system. The train operates along a north-south oriented eight kilometer track using three Bombardier Talent diesel multiple units (DMUs) and carrying 6,500 passengers daily. The system features five rail stations and two interchange stations with the Transitway. The O-Train is fully integrated with bus rapid transit service for seamless travel between systems and increased commuting options. Future expansion plans for the O-Train include service to downtown Ottawa, the airport and an east-west connection.

cont on page 18, see Ottawa Bus Trip
MPO’s Transit Taskforce Testimony

On Thursday, July 1, the Indianapolis Transit Task Force held a public meeting in the Burt Servaas Public Assembly Room of the City-County Building, downtown Indianapolis. The purpose of the meeting, which began at 5:30 and lasted more than two hours, was to gather public input on how best to improve transit service throughout the area.

The Task Force was formed by the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee (GIPC) after Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson asked these organizations to convene a group that would recommend ways to meet existing, and plan for future, public transit needs. The mission of the task force is to find long-term solutions to IndyGo’s money problems by recommending operational strategies that can be implemented over the next five years.

Serving as Task Force members are Duane Etienne of CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions; City-County Council members Vernon Brown, Bob Cockrum, Ron Gibson and Scott Keller; Joanne Hamilton and Cathy Burton of the Marion County Alliance of Neighborhood Associations (MCANA); Steve Van Soelen of Eli Lilly & Co.; IndyGo Board members Greg Fehribach and Skip Rink; Bill Tracy of Citizens Gas; former MPO Manager Lori Miser, now with HNTB Corporation; and, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing. Members also include regular riders of both IndyGo’s route-based bus and para-transit van service. Task Force co-chairs are Joseph Slash of the Indianapolis Urban League, Myra Borshoff Cook of Borshoff Johnson Matthews and Curt Wiley of the Fannie Mae Partnership. Gil Holmes, President & CEO of IndyGo, Ellen Quigley, Executive Director of Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee and Jesse Moore, business advocacy manager of the Chamber serve as lead staff members for the task force.

About twenty Task Force members were present to hear the thoughts of more than fifty speakers who signed up to address the gathering. Most spoke passionately about the need for improved service and shifting budgetary priorities to better fund IndyGo as the current public transportation provider. Each speaker was limited to a maximum of three minutes in order to hear from as many people as possible.

Some Task Force members also signed up to address the group of more than 150 attendees assembled there. MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing did so, delivering the following statement on which he and MPO Senior Planner Philip Roth collaborated to define the MPO’s perspective as the federally mandated comprehensive transportation planning organization for the Indianapolis region.

Good evening. My name is Mike Dearing, and I am the Manager of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization, the region’s primary transportation planner. Among other things, we have responsibilities over the planning and programming of federal transportation funds within the region, including both transit and roadway projects.

Our responsibility is to envision the long-term transportation future of our region. By “long-term,” I mean 30 to 50 years in the future. The challenges of planning for this timeframe primarily revolve around envisioning what the world and this region will be like half a century from now. Most experts believe that our supply of crude petroleum will be largely, if not completely, depleted by then. Information technology will probably be the most critical component of our transportation system, with intelligent vehicles communicating with each other and with a central, regional scheduling computer providing system coordination. Land use trends indicate a near-uniform geographic dispersal of households and jobs.

With regard to our region in particular, the trends are not encouraging. Our roadway congestion is getting worse, not only compared with 20 years ago, but also relative to other regions. No new major financial resources are expected to help us with our overall transportation investment. It is hoped that the air quality of our region, which has worsened, will improve. But this won’t happen unless we are spurred to large-scale action.

Given the uncertainty over where these trends are taking us, the best planning strategy seems to be to implement multiple modes, or types, of transportation. Just as an investment advisor encourages his clients to diversify their financial assets, we transportation planners are encouraging a diversification of our transportation assets. Only by improving all transportation modes – roadway, bicycle, pedestrian and transit - can we hope to give future generations the

Our responsibility is to envision the long term transportation future of our region.
Among the service strategies employed by INDOT's ATMS are the Hoosier Helpers whose vans continuously travel a prescribed circuit from 5 AM – 8PM and who are dispatched through TrafficWise to minimize the impact of traffic-delaying incidents, such as flat-tires. TrafficWise also uses overpass sensors and speed sensors embedded in the pavement to collect average traffic speed, volume and lane occupancy information; Dynamic Message Signs (DMS, also called Variable Message Signs - VMS) to alert drivers to upcoming conditions; and closed circuit cameras to visually monitor highways. Highway Advisory Radio (HAR - generally using AM 530/1610 frequency), alphanumeric pagers and, live web video are also used.

The purpose of the MPO project is to build on the benefits of INDOT’s system by coordinating our ITS efforts with it within our planning area. Edwards & Kelcey (EK), a transportation engineering firm, has been chosen as lead consultants and, with their help, the project’s scope and schedule have been finalized. The scope includes:

“Developing a Regional ITS Architecture for the Indianapolis area, expanding upon the ITS architecture requirements outlined in the FHWA Rule and FTA Policy . . . (providing) a tangible road map for ITS deployment and integration throughout the Indianapolis region that supports the vision developed by the MPO and regional stakeholders.”

To achieve this goal, the project has been divided into these five tasks:

**Task 1 – Technical Review of Existing Documentation**
Includes assembling and reviewing information developed by the MPO and regional stakeholders regarding existing, programmed and planned traffic, transportation and communications facilities, and management systems within and adjacent to the Indianapolis metropolitan area.

**Task 2 – Outreach and Stakeholder Participation**
Planning and development recommendations are most successful when rooted in the preferences of those directly affected by the outcomes of the planning process. This task includes helping to ensure broad awareness of, and establishing a spirit of cooperation in, the project.

**Task 3 – Development of Regional Architecture**
National ITS Architecture will be used as a guide for the development of regional architecture, helping to establish ITS interoperability and the appropriateness of potential strategies.

**Task 4 – Architecture Maintenance and Operating Plan**
When developing a plan for maintaining a locally-preferred ITS plan/ architecture, the following issues will be addressed: 1) Maximizing the value of current regional ITS capabilities, 2) Planning future, compatible ITS expansion, 3) Integrating ITS planning with the regional transportation planning process, 4) Improving interagency communications, 5) Planning implementation and operational strategies, and 6) Organizing regional operations and management.

**Task 5 – Project Management, Administration, and Coordination**
This task includes performing project management, administration and internal coordination activities (e.g., invoices, and monthly progress reports) required for a successful project.

The project schedule anticipates all of the above tasks to be completed by April, 2005. For more information on the ITS project, contact me (327/327-5137, syang@indygov.org) or watch for future coverage in teMPO.

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**Questions & Answers**
(from page 2)

Did you Know? . . .

Americans think rail transit is out of this world. According the American Public Transportation Association, people made 2.6 billion trips on American city rail systems including subways and elevated trains in 2003, adding up to 13.6 billion passenger miles traveled. NASA says that’s enough to make 22 round trips to Mars, and they ought to know. Their ship Spirit traveled just 303 million miles to Mars this spring . . . and won’t be coming back anytime soon.
New Bike Route Map

The much anticipated Marion County and Surrounding Area Bike Route Map was officially introduced on Friday, July 23, at a joint press conference held by representatives of the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development, Indy Parks & Recreation, and your MPO.

The map is the first update of the 4-color original which was introduced by Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson and MPO Manager, then Principal Planner, Mike Dearing in October, 2001. Though the newly revised map adheres to the same format (4-color, two sided) and size (39" x 36.5", folding down to 4-3/8" x 9"), a lot of new information has been added, reflecting three years of progress toward making the Greater Indianapolis region a more bicycle-friendly place.

“Our 2001 map showed primary and secondary bike routes in Marion County alone, which totaled 327 miles,” Dearing says. “The new map shows more than 380 miles of

cont on page 19, see New Bike Route Map

The new map identifies existing Marion County Bike Routes with the same route numbers found on roadside signage.
Meet Phil Pettit, a planning partner of the MPO in the truest sense of the word. He has been instrumental in keeping the regional planning process moving and on-track for decades — first as a draftsman, more recently as the ‘dollar guy.’

The MPO regularly profiles people from both the public and private sectors who have made significant contributions to the planning process, and Phil certainly fits that description. He came to work as a draftsman for what was then known as the Metropolitan Planning Department on March 1, 1958. For most of his career, he has played an important role in the creation of zoning maps and has helped lay the groundwork for base maps still in use today.

Originally, these maps were drafted with pen and ink. Streets and subdivisions were added to these maps one at a time. Besides the zoning and base maps, Phil helped to create the City boundary map, apartment development map and many elements of the Division’s master file of documents.

In the late 60s, Phil became Superintendent of the Drafting and Reproduction Section responsible for the preparation and reproduction of maps, working materials and reports. At its peak, this section employed nine, including five draftsmen, three printers and a graphic artist. More recently, he helped usher in the age of electronic zoning and base maps ensuring that they had the same level of accuracy as the pen and ink versions they replaced.

Now, as the ‘financial guy’ for DMD-Planning, Phil interacts with the City’s Accounting Department and processes the invoices of the many service providers who assist planners on the 18th floor, including design, engineering and research firms. The majority of these work with the MPO owing to the agency’s small staff (currently seven) and recently expanded planning area (see map, page 3).

“I help the MPO make sure that the billed services are within the identified scope of work and project budget, and that all deliverables have been met,” Phil explains. “My goal is to confirm that the process is running smoothly and stays on-course.

In this way, Phil Pettit’s work has continued to benefit both transportation and land use planners, Metropolitan Development Commission members, City agencies, community organizations and, of course, the public.

“Phil has been around as long as I can remember and has never lost his enthusiasm for his work or his pleasant disposition,” says Mike Peoni, DMD Administrator and former MPO Manager/Master Planner. “In all these years I have only heard people say good things about him and his willingness to be helpful. We will all miss Phil and wish him the best in retirement.”

On Friday, September 10, 2004, Phil Pettit will retire after 46 years of service. He and Nell, his wife of 48 years, plan to do some traveling after she retires next March as a Mutual Savings Bank Branch Manager. Until then, Phil plans to spend a little more time with Stacy and Kelly, his grown daughters, and their families including four grandchildren.

“I’ll miss a lot of the people,” he says, “but not the 23 mile commute each morning.”

Congratulations and best wishes can be sent to Phil at ppettit@indygov.org.
Regional Transportation Plan Open House

As previously reported in teMPO (Volume Eight, Issue One), the MPO has begun a Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as one of the project in its 2004 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). As part of Phase I of this review, the MPO and its project consultants hosted a Public Open House on Thursday, July 22 at Glendale Mall, 6101 N. Keystone, Indianapolis. The purpose of the meeting was to gather public input on issues that could impact the region’s transportation future through the year 2030.

As the region’s primary transportation planner, the MPO regularly updates the RTP to maintain its federally mandated 20+ year planning horizon. With this major review, the MPO is pushing its planning considerations five years past the adopted 2025 Regional Transportation Plan and thoroughly assessing the needs of its recently expanded Metropolitan Planning Area. Last year, the area was enlarged by 77 square miles based on Census 2000 urbanization data.

“Advance knowledge of our region’s mobility needs is key to the allocation of resources, preservation of rights-of-way, and coordination of land-use decisions,” explains MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing. “That’s why we need the most accurate forecasting tools available and the participation of our most important planning partner – an informed public.”

Unfortunately, turn out was light at the Open House for a number of reasons. “The late afternoon/early evening timeframe coincided with the threat of severe weather,” notes MPO Senior Planner Philip Roth, AICP, who is managing the review. “More than that, though, is the sheer volume of projects that the MPO is working on,” he explains. “Simultaneous planning initiatives are competing for top-of-mind awareness right now, with the more immediate stories getting most of the media coverage.”

MPO Communications and Public Involvement Consultant Joe Whitman agrees. “Often, the media will carry only one transportation-related story at a time,” he says. “The day before the Open House, the IRTC selected the Northeast Corridor as the first leg of a possible region-wide rapid transit system. That was important news and the media was full of it – 35 stories on the network affiliates alone. Also, that same

MPO Senior Planner Philip Roth discusses Phase I findings with Parson Brinckerhoff Project Manager Stephanie Eiler.

John Myers of HNTB Corporation reviews regional traffic growth trends with a member of the public.
ject of Phase III of DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Increase Regional Mobility, which began with the IRTC decision.

Less than a hundred days earlier, on Tuesday, April 13th, the IRTC accepted a recommendation from the MPO to further study three travel corridors that could serve as the start of a region-wide rapid transit system. At that time, the IRTC asked the MPO to consider starter system alternatives that might pass through the CBD to serve portions of more than one corridor. Since most starter systems receiving federal funding from the New Starts program are 15-20 miles long, the MPO developed three possible concepts of this length. These were the concepts the IRTC considered before making their selection.

“The corridors we recommended for further study at the end of DIRECTIONS’ second phase totaled about 35 miles — too much for a true starter system,” said Mike Dearing, MPO Manage/Master Planner. “So, we added three months of transitional analysis to respond to the IRTC’s request and to identify the 15-20 mile portion of these corridors that would offer the best start to a possible region-wide transit system.

Starter System Concept 1 stretched from the airport in the Southwest Corridor through the CBD into the Northeast Corridor, at least as far as the fairgrounds. Concept 2 started at Lafayette Square in the Northwest Corridor and traveled through the IUPUI campus to the CBD, boomeranging up into the Northeast Corridor to 71st St. or beyond. Concept 3 started in the CBD and traveled exclusively within the Northeast Corridor into Hamilton County.

cont on page 13, see DIRECTIONS’ Milestone
“We evaluated three possible starter system options which combined all or part of the northeast corridor with the southwest corridor to the airport or the northwest corridor through the IUPUI campus,” Dearing explained. “Ultimately, the IRTC felt that bringing the benefits of rapid transit to the northeast corridor, our region’s most congested, would have the greatest impact on improving area mobility and air quality.”

In conducting its evaluation of the starter system concepts, the MPO used the same assessment criteria favored by the federal New Starts transit funding program, including projected ridership, availability of local financial support, and observance of established land use trends.

In Phase III of the study, the northeast corridor will undergo a full Alternatives Analysis by the MPO and its primary project consultant, Indianapolis Transit Consultants (ITC). During this period, planners will also develop a phased, implementation plan for a possible region-wide rapid transit system.

“It’s important to remember that we’re planning for possible regional transit, and that the access provided by any starter system would likely be augmented by express bus service into other areas,” Dearing noted.

In Phase I of the study (December, 2002 – September, 2003), planners assessed possible transit corridors and technology options. In Phase II (October, 2003 – April, 2004), feasible route alignments and technology options were developed for the region’s six busiest commuter corridors. From these, one was selected for a possible starter system (Transitional Analysis, April – July, 2004). Phase III (August, 2004 – March, 2005) will identify locally preferred alignment and technology options for the starter system, as well as implementation funding strategies.

“Selecting the travel corridor for a possible starter system is a big milestone for DIRECTIONS, but there’s still a lot of work to be done,” notes Philip Roth, AICP, who co-manages the project with fellow MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman, M.S. “Immediately after the IRTC’s vote, some of the local media was reporting specific route alignments and funding options as fact,” he says. “Since those are the things that Phase III will determine, we thought that was a little premature.”

Inman attributes the confusion to a positive cause. “The possibility of rapid transit gets a lot of people wound up,” she laughs. “I think their excitement just got the better of them. That’s understandable, but we can’t let it get in the way of our process.” The MPO’s job is to conduct a cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process. It reports to the IRTC Policy Committee, which is the only body authorized to make decisions concerning regional transportation. “Until we bring our findings before the IRTC, and they vote, nothing has been decided,” Inman says.

Throughout Phase III, the MPO will be issuing regular advisories to all regional media. These advisories will also be posted on the MPO web site. Public meetings are planned for this fall. Those wishing to express an opinion on the rapid transit planning process are encouraged to do so on the DIRECTIONS Discussion Forum at indygov.org/indympo or on the MPO 24-hour Comment Line at 317/327-8601.

The purpose of DIRECTIONS is to evaluate the feasibility of a region-wide rapid transit system. If implemented, such a system could help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and increase mobility options throughout the area. The Policy Committee of the IRTC will oversee the study through its scheduled completion in March, 2005.
means to effectively respond to their transportation issues. The role of transit in our transportation future is critical. Our supply of roadways is increasingly unable to keep up with travel demand. The aging of the population will accelerate the growth and geographic spread of transit dependency. And yet, since the decline of our interurban system — that shining jewel of regional transit that we allowed to fade into oblivion — we have systematically under-valued, and under-invested in, our transit resources.

In cooperation with IndyGo and other regional stakeholders, we are currently envisioning the future of transit for the next 30 to 50 years. This future may involve rapid transit. It may involve expanded bus service. Or, it may involve something else entirely. Whatever the result from this long-term planning process, to quote an old Chinese proverb, “Even the longest journey begins with a single step.” The recommendations of this task force will set the stage for how our region responds to transit in the long-term.

In short, we need transit. We need to resolve our short-term issues, while keeping an eye on the long-term picture. We need to re-build our transit system into something that we can be proud of for decades to come.

The success of this endeavor will further define the Indianapolis region as a “21st Century Livable Community.” Thank you.

The Indianapolis Transit Task force holds monthly meetings to which the public is welcome. It is anticipated that its work will be completed by mid-September, 2004. For more information on the Indianapolis Transit Task Force, visit www.indygo.net

Corrections & Clarifications

A stute readers of the Spring, 2004 issue of teMPO brought two problems to our attention recently: one a production snafu, the other a basic proofer’s error.

Page 13 of our last issue was dedicated to an MPO Profile of Bob Lehnen (shown here), an active participant in the regional transportation planning process, advocate of mass transit in our area, and founder of the Greater Allisonville Community Council (GACC) Transportation Committee. The MPO regularly profiles both public officials and private citizens who make significant contributions toward improving our regional transportation system as planning partners, and Bob definitely fits that description.

Unfortunately, the first paragraph of his page 13 tribute was marred by a production problem that dropped some letters from the text, rendering a few sentences un-readable. According to our printer, the problem occurred after we had signed off on our proof, which looked fine, and authorized production. They had a technical glitch with the page 13 photographic film used for printing and had to re-create it. In the interest of saving time, they decided not to have us proof the new film again unaware that it now contained an error caused by software incompatibility. They, and we, regret the decision and its impact on our story.

Reprinted here is the complete opening paragraph of Bob’s MPO Profile.

Meet Bob Lehnen, an IUPUI professor whose big picture thinking is now helping friends and neighbors see the links between transportation, economic development, local health concerns, the environment and the area’s quality-of-life.

The Spring, 2004 issue of teMPO also contained a factual error on Page 9 that was overlooked by our proofers. There, in a story concerning the MPO’s Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan (see related story in this issue, page 11), Steve Cunningham was identified as a Senior Planner for the MPO. Steve is actually the MPO’s Principal Planner, having been promoted to the post in January, 2003. We regret the error.

If you find something in teMPO that needs correction or clarification, please bring it to our attention by using the “Contact Us” form on the MPO web site (indygov.org/indympo), contacting MPO Planner Catherine Kostyn (317/327-5142, ckostyn@indygov.org), or leaving a message on the 24-hr MPO Comment Line at 317/327-8601. In each instance, the first one to do so will receive an “MPO, Our work is getting around.” tee shirt, courtesy of Whitman Communications, Inc.
To encourage awareness of, and informed participation in, its regional transportation planning process, the MPO includes display advertising among the many communications strategies utilized in its Public Involvement Program. Featuring consistent use of the “iMPOrtant” format to build awareness and heighten recall, these ads appear in publications throughout the region, including the City & State section of The Indianapolis Star and The Indianapolis Recorder.

The ads shown here ran during the first eight months of this year. From the top, the first ad, or size/format variations of it, ran in nearly 40 regional newspapers throughout the DIRECTIONS study area (see partial media list on page 18 of teMPO, Volume Seven, Issue Two). It encouraged attendance and participation in a series of Public Meetings concerning the rapid transit study’s Phase II activity. In Phase II, the DIRECTIONS study team developed feasible route alignment and technology options for our region’s six busiest commuter corridors. The ads ran in late January and early February of this year.

The second and third ads, promoting attendance at the March and June Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings respectively, invited all interested parties to the year’s first and second such gatherings. The ads mention planned agenda items, including presentations on the MPO’s School Involvement Program, amendments to the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP), DIRECTIONS updates, and findings from Phase II of the Regional Pedestrian Plan study. The second ad ran in the February 27th Recorder and the March 3rd Star. The third ad appeared in the June 16th Star and June 18th Recorder.

The fourth ad appeared in the Star’s July 16th issue of City & State and the Star’s July 20th issues of StarNorth A & B, Hamilton County AM, Star West and StarSouth. It encourages attendance and participation in a Public Open House concerning Phase I of the MPO’s Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan. The purpose of the meeting was to share information and gather public input regarding existing conditions and identified deficiencies found on our regional transportation system. The ad was unable to run in The Indianapolis Recorder, a weekly publication, due to the late confirmation of meeting details.

The fifth ad invites those interested in keeping abreast of major transportation planning process activity to attend the August 17th meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee, the year’s third. Planned agenda items included IRTIP amendments, a DIRECTIONS status report, and the Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan. The ad ran in the August 13th issue of The Indianapolis Star, but could not appear in The Indianapolis Recorder because of late confirmation of the planned agenda.

Through its various Public Involvement Program outreach strategies, including display ads like these, the MPO will continue to inform its primary planning partner, the public, of upcoming participation opportunities.
arch with the rise and fall of the building from check-in to departure. Encompassing high glass walls, the building form will rise over the plaza to reveal a view of the aircraft apron and the city skyline beyond.

Construction of the new passenger terminal building is scheduled to be completed in 2008.

Airport officials have been lining up designers, engineers, contractors and construction companies to perform site preparation and utility work and help kick off terminal construction work next year. So far, more than $75 million in contracts have been approved, with more than 16 percent of this work assigned to minority business firms. Another four or five bidding packages should be awarded yet this year, and another dozen may be awarded in 2005 for civil engineering work.

Site preparation and excavation is under way on the construction site of the new terminal building and adjoining airplane aprons. Preliminary apron grading excavation work includes stripping the topsoil, building an embankment, milling and removing a portion of an old closed runway, and controlling water flow and soil erosion. This work involves

cont on page 28, see Airport Project Progress
**Pedal & Park Progress**

According to Pedal & Park Program Coordinator Andy O’Donnell, the number of participating area cyclists has more than doubled since last year. “Our first four events of the season (Earth Day Indiana, Bike-To-Work Day, the Broad Ripple Art Fair, and the Talbot Street Art Fair) have been the strongest ever,” he says. “And, the Indiana State Fair and Penrod which represent two-thirds of our season have yet to be tallied. So, it looks like another record-breaking year.”

Pedal & Park provides area cyclists with free, secured bike parking at greenways-adjacent spring and summer events. Organized by The Greenways Foundation, the program is a joint venture with The Central Indiana Bicycling Association (CIBA), Indy Parks Greenways and the Indiana Bicycle Coalition (IBC) whose representatives continuously monitor its ‘bike corral.’ For a fourth year, the program is being sponsored by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which pays a $1 parking fee for each bike checked at the fenced and supervised corral. Parking fee proceeds are shared among participating volunteer organizations. In addition, the MPO provides volunteer and literature display shelters and communications/public relations support as part of its sponsorship.

The purpose of the Pedal & Park Program is to encourage use of non-motorized transportation alternatives, promote activity on Indy Greenways, dispense relevant recreational literature, and raise funds for the partnering not-for-profit organizations. To volunteer to help at the bike corral, call 317/255-0559. For more information on the Pedal & Park program, including times and directions, or visit www.indygreenways.org/pedalpark.

**CICS Serves Commuters**

In March of this year, a new program began gearing up that offers hope to those long frustrated by the stress, cost and duration of their daily commutes. Billed as a new IndyGo service, Central Indiana Commuter Services (CICS) will provide mobility solutions for those who live and work in Central Indiana, including carpool ride matching, a vanpool program, emergency ride home services, commuter choice benefits and employer outreach efforts.

“We’re busy building our commuter data base right now,” says Ruth Reiman, CICS Project Manager. “So we’re eager to hear from commuters interested in participating in the program and from employers willing to consider this low cost benefit for themselves and their work forces,” she explains. “The only employer cost would be to have an employee serve as an on-site program coordinator part-time.”

CICS will serve the nine county area, including Marion, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, Hendricks and Boone Counties. Being funded with federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) dollars, CICS also has as its mission to help reduce regional traffic congestion and related air pollution.

For more information on CICS, call Ruth Reiman at 317/327-RIDE (7433), visit the CICS web site at www.centralincommuter.net, or look for an in-depth article in the next issue of teMPO (Autumn, 2004).

**MPO Adds Staff**

At press time, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing had just hired a new Planner, bringing the agency’s staff total to eight. For background information on the MPO’s newest employee, catch the Autumn issue of teMPO, available November 1st.
Ottawa has done an amazing job of turning geographic problems into opportunities and of incorporating complementary transit modes into one cohesive system,” says Amy Inman. “Their sparsely populated outer regions are well served by bus rapid transit, which has the lowest capital costs of the three rapid transit modes we’re considering in DIRECTIONS. Yet they plan to extend LRT (the O-Train) into the more densely populated CBD where the investment may be justified,” she explains. “Their nearly 30-year history of managing urban growth while addressing mobility needs really shows.”

Roth agrees. “In its literature, OC Transpo says increased transit use contributes to the city’s quality of life by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion and the need for more roads,” he notes. “These are all considerations we can relate to, living as we do in a non-attainment area for the pollutant ozone where available right-of-way for continued road construction is at a premium. That’s why DIRECTIONS is addressing these issues, and why Ottawa was a worthwhile destination for this study.”

For more information on DIRECTIONS, or to see more photos from the Ottawa ‘bus trip,’ visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo, or contact MPO Senior Planners Philip Roth, AICP, at 317/327-5149 (proth@indygov.org) or Amy Inman, M.S. at 317/327-5646 (ainman@indygov.org).

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, the percentages of American ages 8 and older who regularly wear their seat belts has increased. In 2002, approximately 72% of males used them; a year later, it jumped five percentage points to 77%! But the ladies have always been a little safer... and smarter. They claim 79% were seatbelt users in 2002, and a whopping 84% last year. No wonder they live longer!

The BRT fleet of 930 buses provides 87.9 million passenger rides a year, with an average weekday ridership of 340,000.

Currently, Ottawa’s model public transportation system consists of bus rapid transit service complemented by light rail service on a single, 8-kilometer stretch of track.

The O-Train’s smooth, quiet ride is due, in part, to its continuously welded track, here inspected by project consultant Tony Catalina of Schimpeler American.

More than a third of OC Transpo’s BRT fleet, or 360 buses, feature a low-floor design for easy accessibility.
New Bike Route Map
(from page 9)

on-street and greenway bike routes in Marion County and the surrounding communities of Zionsville, Carmel, Fishers and Greenwood,” he explains. “In addition, proposed bike routes are also indicated so cycling enthusiasts can see where current development plans will be adding to the route network.”

As before, the MPO headed up the development of the new bike route map. MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman managed the project, working with planners at the Indianapolis Department of Public Works (DPW) and in appropriate jurisdictions outside of Marion County. “We needed everyone’s electronic map files as a starting point,” Inman explains. “Even the best information needs to be reconciled so that diverse sources of input can be pieced together into one continuous map with a consistent presentation of features. Thanks to the quality of the input, and the cooperation of everyone involved, the actual development process took less than eight weeks.”

The MPO again relied on its communications and public involvement consultant, Whitman Communications, Inc., for project contact, coordination, design and creative supervision. “We could see how much the software technologies have come together since 2001,” says Joe Whitman. “The software programs used by transportation and land-use planners are now more compatible with those used by graphic design firms. So, we didn’t need to build as many layers from scratch this time.”

The new map features more than ten layers of information, including existing and proposed routes and greenways, city streets, highways, rail corridors, parks and golf courses, universities and water features.

Nearly 20,000 copies of the map were produced by Fineline Printing Group, a minority-owned vendor certified with the City of Indianapolis. Portions of the map’s production costs were underwritten by WISH-TV, the MPO, the Marion County Health Department, the Greenways Foundation, two bike stores.

cont on page 20, see New Bike Route Map

Greenwood is one of four communities outside of Marion County whose bike route system is featured on the new Marion County and Surrounding Area Bike Route Map.

PAGE NINETEEN
New Bike Route Map
(from page 19)
(Circle City Bicycle & Fitness – 317/786-9244 and Valley Bikes – 317/582-5539) and Indy Parks Greenways, which contributed nearly half of the total.

“I can’t think of a better use of our discretionary budget,” says Indy Greenways Administrator Ray Irvin. “Our goal is to get as many area residents enjoying our growing greenways system as possible, and this handsome new map, showing both on-street and greenways routes, will help us do that. So, I’m delighted we could help out.”

A welcomed new map addition, requested by Irvin and Indy Greenways, is the placement of bike route numbers over all Marion County on-street routes. These numbers match those seen on signage along each route; even numbers for east-west routes, odd numbers for north-south routes. “They help you get your bearings when you’re on a new route, and help acknowledge that cycling isn’t just for fun anymore,” says Irvin. “Around here, it’s also for transportation.”

Department of Metropolitan Development Director Maury Plambeck made a similar point in the July 23rd Press Release accompanying the map’s introduction. “Cycling is a wonderful way to stay in shape, but it also can be an efficient mode of transportation in the Indianapolis area,” he said. “We are fortunate to have a well-planned, well-maintained bike route system, and this new map highlights that fact. I hope it encourages residents to get out of their cars on and onto their bikes.”

For your free copy of the new Marion County and Surrounding Area Bike Route Map, visit your nearest bike shop, library, community park, Greenways office, or (outside of Marion County) City or Township offices. Or, request your map directly from the MPO, by calling Amy Inman (317/327-5646) or MPO Planner Catherine Kostyn (317/327-5142). The map is also available for review and download from the MPO web site (indygov.org/indympo) or the Indy Greenways web site (www.indygreenways.org).

Zionsville’s bike route system has grown steadily over the three years since the previous map was published.
Carmel boasts an extensive bike route network with a contiguous connection into Marion County via the Monon Trail.

When implemented, Fishers' proposed bike routes (shown here in light gray) will more than double its already impressive existing network.
she explains. “In a nutshell, that’s what the pedestrian plan is all about.”

To accomplish this goal, the plan must also achieve a list of identified objectives, including:

• Provide access to all public transit stops
• Improve the mobility and independence for those who do not drive
• Provide safe routes to school
• Reduce vehicular trips and related congestion and improve air quality by providing alternative transportation
• Remove environmental barriers to improve walkability and promote active lifestyles

Each phase of activity has supported these objectives, and the study’s overall goal. In Phase 1 (Year 2002-2003), planners focused on developing the study’s planning methodology and on determining the feasibility of the Cultural Trail – a proposed pedestrian and bicycle path that would thread through downtown, connect the five Indianapolis Cultural Districts, engage the many cultural resources of the regional center and provide a central hub for the nationally acclaimed Indianapolis Greenways trail system.

The concept of the Cultural Trail has been described as 1) a connection between neighborhoods and downtown, 2) a recreation destination that promotes community health, 3) a unique urban amenity that bigger cities can’t duplicate, 4) a major tourist attraction, 5) an economic development initiative, 6) an asset that will earn the city national recognition, 7) another tool for continuing downtown revitalization, and 8) the linchpin in the city’s efforts to become a unique cultural destination. A web report of the study’s feasibility findings for the Cultural Trail is available at www.indyculturaltrail.info.

“It’s an exciting concept, and SKA has been proud to work on the proposed route alignments and design guidelines,” says Meg Storrow, co-founder and principal of the landscape architecture, land-planning, and urban design studio. “But of greater impact to the Pedestrian Plan’s overall goal is the study methodology we developed with the MPO.” It includes:

Every trip begins and ends as a pedestrian trip – even those involving public transportation.

Public transit, bicycling, and walking can help reduce the region’s traffic congestion and related air quality problems.
Pedestrian Plan Next Steps
(from page 22)

• Analyze existing conditions
• Receive input from stakeholders
• Develop an inter-connected pedestrian plan based on demand, pedestrian potential and need
• Identify social needs and the principles of environmental justice
• Improve ordinances and regulations
• Identify new thoroughfare classifications
• Identify existing and innovative funding strategies

This methodology was employed during Phase II of the study which inventoried overall land-use patterns, dense residential patterns, retail/commercial patterns and employment patterns to identify Center Township’s existing and potential pedestrian generators and destinations. School walking zones and Parks/Open Space Zones were also inventoried for the same reason.

In addition, study planners analyzed existing systems that affect walkability as potential pedestrian networks. These included the consideration of Existing Sidewalks; Existing Transit Routes; the Greenway, Parks and Open Space Network; Existing and Proposed Bikeway Systems; and, the Thoroughfare System. At the same time, they identified areas that require “context sensitivity,” such as historic neighborhoods, like Herron-Morton Place and Chatham Arch, and cultural districts like Massachusetts Avenue.

“To meet our second objective of improving the mobility and independence of those who do not drive, we needed to look beyond geographic and topographic conditions," notes Inman. "Using the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) guidelines for the principles of environmental justice, we were able to recognize plan priorities based on social need.”

Identified population segments who need to be served by the Pedestrian Plan include:
• Minority population
• Hispanic population
• Individuals in poverty
• The unemployed
• Individuals over the age of 5 with a physical disability
• Individuals over the age of 5 with a sensory disability
• Individuals who walk to work, and
• Individuals who take public transit to work

The next step in methodology called for study team members to establish a plan for implementing the improvements they recommended. They recognized that making the Regional Pedestrian Plan work will require multi-jurisdictional cooperation and implementation. So, they developed the following implementation strategies or “toolbox”s to create a doable plan that can result in real improvements.

Toolbox 1: Identify plan priorities . . .
• to maximize the return on investment
• based on social need
• based on generators and destinations

Toolbox 2: Establish pedestrian corridors and districts to serve multiple needs, including . . .
• Economic Development
• Pedestrian/transit system integration

Toolbox 3: Improve Ordinances/Regulations by educating the public and the citizen-volunteers who serve on zoning review commissions, and by . . .

Over 1-million user visits a year have proven greenways as safe, off-street recreation/transportation alternatives.

Only 32% of IPS students (13,000) walk to school. More would, if safer routes to all schools existed.

• Neighborhood revitalization
• Walk to School Initiatives
• Healthy Lifestyles
• Alternative Transportation to reduce exhaust emissions

cont on page 24, see Pedestrian Plan Next Steps
Pedestrian Plan Next Steps
(from page 23)

- Requiring sidewalks in all zoning categories
- Improving enforcement of Subdivision Control Ordinance
- Utilizing best practices for permitting standards
- Developing design guidelines for historic, cultural and park districts to encourage context sensitive design and maintenance
- Adopting new local thoroughfare system classifications that include pedestrian systems

Toolbox 4: Seek funding for improvements that incorporate pedestrian connectivity, such as . . .
- Walk-to-school improvements
- Special Districts, like the new Children's Museum Entry Corridor, Cultural Districts, Historic Districts
- Transit-oriented Districts
- Neighborhood development, like Fall Creek Place

Toolbox 5: Implementation Strategies & Funding
- Leverage public/private partnerships for pedestrian system development in districts
- Leverage Community Development Building Grant (CDBG) funds as match for federal transportation dollars
- Utilize Historic Preservation or Historic Transportation Grant funds for historic districts and the historic park/boulevard system
- Encourage regional decision-makers to use the full flexibility of federal transportation funding
- Promote Business District Partnerships
- Initiate discussion of state funding mechanisms for pedestrian improvements
- Give priority to filling in the gaps of the pedestrian network
- Consider funding a program to assist property owners in constructing sidewalks adjacent to their properties

“Many renovated sidewalks place street furnishings out of the way of travel and provide ramps for easy accessibility.

“We are now well into Phase III and our methodology for extending Center Township’s pedestrian route system from Phase II to the perimeter townships seems to be holding up,” says Storrow. “So is the validity of our toolbox strategies, but we continue to learn and tweak our recommendations when and where it’s appropriate. After all, our goal is a truly comprehensive plan.”

As of press time, Phase III focus groups had already been held with residents of Pike, Wayne, Decatur, Washington and Lawrence Townships. Perry, Warren and Franklin Township groups will be conducted by late September, as will groups for Speedway and the Cities of Beech Grove and Southport. In addition, study planners have scheduled a region-wide Public Open House on the Pedestrian Plan for October 20 — time and place as yet to be announced.
week, the MPO had already hosted two public meetings concerning the Pedestrian Plan study,” Whitman notes. “A television crew showed up at the Glendale Open House in response to our Media Advisory, but they still wanted to talk about rapid transit.”

In addition to all of this, it is traditionally difficult to successfully elicit public participation in the early stages of a multi-phased planning initiative, especially one that is looking more than 20 years down the road. “People have trouble understanding how giving up an evening now could influence transportation improvements in 2025,” Roth says. “But early in a study, before any decisions have been made, is actually the best time for people to get involved. That’s when planners are prepared to share background information and are looking for significant public input to consider and address during subsequent study phases.”

Toward this end, consultants presented Phase I findings at the August 17th meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee. Here, teMPO also presents background information and a public survey opportunity originally prepared for the Glendale Open House (pages 25 - 27). Because Phase I of the RTP Review is focused on the current state of our regional transportation system, Open House presentation boards, prepared by HNTB Corporation, documented the system’s existing conditions and deficiencies. Roth and project consultants were available to discuss the photos, tables and statistics shown here. In addition, attendees were encouraged to fill out the survey to express their own transportation concerns and improvement suggestions.

“This is great background for anyone interested in participating in the MPO’s transportation planning process,” Roth notes. “It offers a snapshot of where we’ve been, where we are, and where we’re going, relative to the primary travel modes.”

For more information on the Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan, including upcoming Phase II activity, visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo or contact MPO Senior Planner Philip Roth at 317/327-5149 (proth@indygov.org).
Display boards like these, prepared by HNTB Corporation, provide the public with background information on Where We’ve Been, Where We Are, and Where We’re Going in the areas of Land Use, Transit, Traffic and Pedestrian/Bike development.
Survey Questionnaire

The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is interested in your comments about the Regional Transportation Plan. Please complete the following questionnaire and return.

Respondent Profile: □ Male □ Female

Age: □ Below 18 □ 18-30 □ 30-45 □ 45-Above

Type of Occupation: ________________________________

Number of persons in your household: ________________

Household Income Range:
□ Below $20,000 □ $20,000 - $45,000
□ $45,000 - $70,000 □ $70,000 – Above

How many vehicles are in your household? ________________

Do you currently use public transportation? □ Yes □ No

If so, what routes do you/have you used? ________________

________________________________________________

1) I believe the MPO should plan for the following transportation improvements next: _______________________________

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

2) I am interested in more information on these MPO transportation planning issues:

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

3) Please describe your level of involvement or interest in transportation advocacy efforts in Indiana or other states.

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

4) Have you previously participated in the regional transportation planning process with the MPO? □ Yes □ No

5) Have you visited the MPO Web site at http://www.indygov.org/indympo? □ Yes □ No

6) What are your thoughts on the RTP planning process?

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

7) Are you a member of any neighborhood association or group that would like to partner with the MPO in the regional transportation planning process?

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

8) Would you use car-pooling or mass transportation, if it were available to you? □ Yes □ No

9) What connections in Central Indiana are you most interested in seeing established?

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

10) What other cities have transportation systems or facilities that you think could be a model for Central Indiana?

________________________________________________

11) What types of transportation safety precautions would make you feel more comfortable?

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

Please add my name to the MPO’s Regional Transportation Plan mailing list.

Name: ___________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ____________________________________

Telephone Number: (_____)_______________________

Email Address: ____________________________________

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please mail or fax to: Blalock and Brown, 445 N Pennsylvania, Suite 811, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 phone: 317/453-2026 fax: 317/453-2028
moving more than one million cubic yards of soil from existing stockpiles and on-site excavation.

Cost of the new Indianapolis Airport will be financed through a combination of federal grants, passenger facility charges, airline facility rents and aircraft landing fees. No state or local tax money will be used to finance construction of the new airport or to repay construction bonds.

Just southwest of the airport terminal site, construction is continuing on the new Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Air Traffic Control Tower and base building. Officials in May marked the capping off of the tower, which soars more than 300 feet above the airport and nearby I-70. (See sidebar, page 16).

The new ATCT complex is composed of two units: a control tower and an adjoining base building, which includes the Terminal Radar Approach Control. The $32 million complex is located between the airport runways to support construction of the new passenger terminal and future air traffic operations.

The roof of the tower cab is supported by a single column, which eliminates all perimeter columns and provides air traffic controllers with an unobstructed 360-degree view of the airfield.

The Base Building totals 41,000 square feet of offices, equipment space, and the Radar Approach Control and is more than four times larger than the existing building. When completed, the state-of-the-art structure will include the latest in radar displays, automation and communications equipment.

The tower and Radar Approach Control are slated to become operational in 2005. Because of FAA visibility and safety requirements, the complex must be completed and occupied before construction can proceed on the new terminal building.

The new tower will replace a 140-foot tower that opened in 1972.

For more information on the new Indianapolis International Airport, visit www.newindairport.com, or contact James Grass of Executive Media Consultants (317/231-7000, jgrass@executivemedia.com). More information about the I-70 project is available at www.in.gov/dot/div/specialprojects/70airport/.

Want to be heard on the regional transportation planning process in general, or on region-wide rapid transit in specific. Here’s three ways:

• Attend the quarterly Citizens Advisory Committee meetings
• Call the 24-hour MPO Comment Line at 317/327-8601
• Contribute to the DIRECTIONS Discussion Board at www.indygov.org/indympo/rapid_transit/rts.htm
Falling Into Place

As the days grow shorter, there's no sign of your MPO staff going into hibernation or of the regional transportation planning process heading south for the winter. In fact, a number of ongoing initiatives are just now falling into place. For instance, the Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan now has Phase I findings to talk about, the Greenway Foundation's Pedal & Park program can boast a 72% jump in 2004 participation, the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS is presenting findings from its Phase III activities for public review, and the MPO can report the successful hosting of a major joint conference that brought transportation planners from 11 states to our region. You'll find the

cont on page 3, see Falling Into Place

Central Indiana Commuter Services

Think of all the reasons you have for finding another way to get to and from work each day other than driving by yourself. Commuting alone in an automobile can be expensive, time-consuming, stressful and as hard on your car and wallet as it is on your nerves. Yet, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2002 American Community Survey Profile, that's still how 83% of all Hoosiers who work outside of the home get to their jobs each day.

"For some, no benefit offered by alternative transportation trumps the perception of independence they get from driving their own cars," says MPO Manager/Master

cont on page 20, see Central Indiana Commuter Services

RTP Major Review Phase I Findings

Twenty million dollars. That's about how much our region receives in federal funding each year for transportation improvements," says MPO Assistant Manager Philip Roth, AICP. “To get it, we have to develop and maintain a comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that looks 20-plus years ahead to anticipate our region's transportation needs. That's a prerequisite for federal funding, and it's part of the reason we're doing a major RTP review right now," he explains. “Another prerequisite is that every improvement project contained in the RTP also must have been recommended through a federally certified transportation planning process.”

By federal mandate, the Indianapolis MPO is the region's primary transportation planner. As such, it is responsible for conducting a continuous, comprehensive and cooperative planning process with its many partners, including the Indiana

cont on page 14, see RTP Major Review Phase I Findings
In Q & A, members of your MPO staff answer questions posed to them via voice mail, e-mail, regular mail or in-person. In this issue, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing discusses the MPO’s efforts to promote regional transit.

In the last issue of teMPO, you reprinted a speech you made at the July 1st public meeting of the Indianapolis Transit Task Force. I agreed completely with its sentiments, especially “The aging of our population will accelerate the growth and geographic spread of transit dependency.” But can’t the MPO do more than make speeches to secure the future of public transportation? And, wasn’t the purpose of this Task Force to recommend changes to improve service now and in the future?

- Asked via the MPO’s 24-Hour Comment Line (317/327-8601)

Right on both counts. My statement to the Indianapolis Transit Task Force was intended to give the MPO’s official position on, and rationale for, the need for improved regional transit service. I gave the testimony both as a member of the Task Force, appointed by Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, and as the Manager/Master Planner of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the region’s primary transportation planner by federal mandate.

In each role, my voice is one of many. I am, for instance, one of 54 Task Force members. Also, the MPO is a planning agency, not an implementing agency, so our recommendations need to be approved by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC), before they can be implemented by someone else.

Are we, then, just speechmakers? Hardly. The MPO has promoted a multi-modal regional transportation plan since 1992, which includes strong pro-transit initiatives. For instance, we recommended the use of transit to help alleviate Northeast Corridor congestion back in 2000 as part of the conNECTIONS study. In 2003, we helped fund IndyGo Hyperfix service as a way of 1) testing the feasibility of transit corridor development from Fishers, Ft. Ben Harrison and Glendale Mall to downtown, and 2) reducing commuter congestion aggravated by highway construction projects.

Right now, we are in the final phase of the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS (see related story, page 7) which is currently evaluating route options for the possible first leg of a region-wide rapid transit system involving both rail and bus. IndyGo has been our planning partner in DIRECTIONS since December, 2002

cont on page 8, see Q & A
This map reflects the expanded MPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) as determined by Census 2000 data. This new MPA was recommended for approval by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council-Policy Committee in late 2002, and subsequently recommended for implementation by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). Final approval was given by Governor Joseph Kernan in fourth quarter, 2003.

**Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)**
(Projected Urbanization By The Year 2020)

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**Falling Into Place**
(from page 1)

details to these and other stories here in your Autumn issue of teMPO. Plus, you’ll learn more about the Central Indiana Commuter Services, the Central Indiana Suburban Mobility Study, IndyGo’s Downtown Transit Feasibility Study and Transit Task Force Recommendations for local service improvements. Read it all here, along with transportation trivia and MPO staff additions and promotions . . . only in teMPO.
Transportation Planners Converge on Indy

Nearly 170 professional transportation planners met in Indianapolis this September to share information and ideas on issues affecting travel throughout the Midwest. The planners, from Indiana and ten surrounding states, attended a combined Midwest Transportation Planning Conference and 2004 Annual Indiana MPO Conference, hosted by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the region’s primary transportation planner. The Indy MPO was asked to host the unique, joint conference, with assistance from the Michiana Council of Governments and the Indiana MPO Council, by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) whose representatives participated in the event.

“We were proud to show off our capital city and to discuss some of the transportation projects currently in our work program,” says Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “This was an opportunity for professional peers to discuss common problems impacting today’s transportation planning process, and their possible solutions,” he notes. “In turn, we plan to share what we learned through our Public Involvement Program at upcoming meetings and open houses, in our free publications, and on our web site (www.indygov.org/indympo).”

Among the conference’s agenda items were presentations on a variety of issues affecting transportation planning throughout the Midwest, including Air Quality, Context-Sensitive Design, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), Traffic Congestion, Safety and Security, Transit, Bikes and Pedestrians, and Freight Handling. The MPO is currently addressing these and other issues through planning initiatives like the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS (see related story, page 7), the Regional Pedestrian Route Plan (related story, page 9), the Major Review of its Regional Transportation Plan (related story, page1), and the recent release of its Marion County and Surrounding Area Bike Route Map (Summer 2004 teMPO, Volume Eight, Issue Two).

“Like many MPOs, we’re working hard to make our regional transportation system more multi-modal,” Dearing explains. “So alternative transportation was featured prominently in our agenda.”

By federal mandate, each urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more is required to have a designated MPO to conduct a “continuing, cooperative and comprehensive” transportation planning process. In this region, the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) is the designated MPO. As such, it is responsible for transportation planning in a 1,330 square mile area covering all of Marion County and portions of Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, and Hendricks Counties. For more information, contact Mike Dearing at 317/327-5139 (mdearing@indygov.org).
You've probably heard about it throughout the spring and summer, and there's good reason for that. The Downtown Transit Center Feasibility Study, like the promise of improved public transportation itself, offers benefits to everyone -- users and non-users alike -- including cleaner air, reduced traffic congestion and improved accessibility to jobs and services.

“A downtown Transit Center is the first of many customer service innovations that IndyGo is implementing to demonstrate that we are aggressively moving to attract daily commuters to mass transit,” said Gilbert Holmes, IndyGo President and CEO. “When it is completed, the Transit Center will help make IndyGo more efficient, and make transfers between buses faster and easier.”

On Tuesday, October 26, Bruce Behncke of IndyGo presented the findings to-date of the Marion County transportation provider's Downtown Transit Center Feasibility Study. The event was the fourth and final quarterly meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for 2004. This presentation and the subsequent November 9th Public Meeting at the Indianapolis Urban League, where the same information was discussed, were the latest in IndyGo's on-going efforts to keep the public informed and involved in the study process.

“We see a new, downtown transit center as a symbol of, and testament to, the value of improved transit service for the entire city,” Behncke explains. “That’s why we’ve insisted on our stakeholders, including the general public, taking part in every step of the study.”

The purpose of IndyGo's Downtown Transit Center Feasibility Study, which began in Spring, 2004 is to 1) examine alternative concepts and sites for a downtown transit center or centers, and 2) optimize bus routing within the Regional Center to improve passenger service.

To accomplish this purpose, IndyGo and its study team members, including project consultants URS, a transit engineering firm, and Storrow Kinsella Associates, an Indianapolis-based landscape architecture, urban design and planning studio, set the following goals for recommending a transit center location in three distinct areas:

Transportation and Mobility
• locate for easy passenger access and convenience; and, to facilitate bus and traffic circulation
• connect to other transportation modes such as parking, taxis, inter-city buses, future rapid transit and greenway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities
• improve the quality-of-life for residents and visitors

cont on page 6, see IndyGo Transit Center Study
Economic Opportunities and Investment

- urban design opportunity/place-making to enhance downtown Indianapolis and create a positive image for IndyGo
- facilitate highest and best use of adjacent properties, such as mixed-use development, sports and government offices, community facilities, and retail space

Feasible Site(s) Characteristics

- capacity to accommodate immediate and long-range needs
- cost-effective and affordable
- accommodate an enclosed building for passenger-waiting, restrooms, driver facilities, vending/restaurant/convenience, and retail

“We used these goals, and public input, to help us evaluate dozens of possible downtown sites throughout the spring and summer,” Behncke says. “We also assessed our current downtown bus operations and found it had some limiting characteristics, including a one-way loop on Capitol/Maryland/Delaware/Ohio with the heaviest bus stop activity on Ohio, up to 76 buses in downtown per hour which severely impacts traffic flow, and up to 25 buses downtown at one time,” he explains. “Once we developed a new routing concept to address these issues, three of the seven transit center site finalists rose to the top.”

The three top-rated potential locations for a downtown transit center were directly southeast of the RCA Dome between Senate and Capitol Avenues; the Virginia Avenue Right-of-Way south of Washington Street between Pennsylvania and Delaware Streets; and, the Indiana Avenue north site, south of Vermont Street between Senate and Capitol Avenues. Rated by goals and pre-determined desired site characteristics, such as ease of acquisition and capital cost, the RCA Dome Southeast site was selected for further study as the ‘anchor site.’

On October 20th, the IndyGo Board authorized the study team to proceed with the environmental review, grant application and preliminary land acquisition and engineering/design activity, all of which is currently underway.

For more information on IndyGo’s Downtown Transit Center Feasibility Study, or anchor site selection process, visit www.indygovtransitcenter.org, or contact Bruce Behncke at 635-2100 (bbehncke@indygo.net) or Meg Storrow at 639-3420 (storrow@storrowkinsella.com).
DIR ECTIONS. The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, has been the subject of teMPO articles since May, 2002 when your MPO first issued its Request For Proposal (RFP) to more than 70 transportation engineering firms. Since then, through ten issues and more than 15 articles, tempo has endeavored to keep its readers up-to-date on the study’s progress and upcoming public participation opportunities.

“We had 11 public meetings in Phases I and II, which began in December, 2002 and ended this past summer,” notes Amy Inman, M.S., the MPO Senior Planner who, along with MPO Assistant Manager Philip Roth AICP, supervises the project. “They were extensively covered by the media, as were our Phase I and II findings and our 2004 field trips to Vancouver, B.C., St. Louis and Ottawa, Ontario to investigate state-of-the art transit systems currently in-use.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE: To date, study activity has been the focus of nearly three dozen media advisories spawning more than 100 articles in the local press and at least as many broadcast news reports. During the week of July 21st alone, when the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) confirmed planner recommendations and public preferences by selecting the Northeast Corridor for further study as the possible first leg of a region-wide rapid transit system, local television network affiliates ran 53 news reports and The Indianapolis Star ran three articles and one editorial.)

“All of that work was preliminary to where we are right now in the middle of the study’s third and final phase,” Inman explains. “After nearly two years, we’re finally at the point of considering specific routes and technologies for the possible first leg of a region-wide rapid transit system. This is where people wanted to be all along.”

For the benefit of the uninitiated, DIRECTIONS is a three-phase transit study funded primarily with federal dollars. Its purpose is to evaluate the feasibility of a region-wide rapid transit system. If implemented, such a system could help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and increase mobility options throughout the Indianapolis region.

In Phase I of the study, planners assessed the suitability of more than 70 regional travel corridors as possible legs of a region-wide rapid transit system. Possible transit technologies were also used. In Phase II, feasible route alignments and technology options were developed for the region’s seven busiest commuter corridors. From these the Northeast Corridor, our region’s busiest, was selected for further study as the site of a possible starter system. The recently expanded scope of Phase III, now underway, includes detailed analysis of starter system alternatives and funding options, a Comprehensive Operational Analysis of IndyGo’s existing service, and development of an implementation plan for a possible region-wide rapid transit system. To date, first tier analysis cont on page 24, see DIRECTIONS’ Phase III Scope

The Northeast Corridor, stretching from downtown Indianapolis to Noblesville, was chosen for further study as the first leg of a possible region-wide rapid transit system.
when the study began and recently asked that a Comprehensive Operational Analysis of its existing service be added to the study’s scope-of-work. We’re happy to accommodate this request, in part, to help IndyGo begin to comply with Task Force recommendations.

You see, in August, 2004, after the Summer issue of teMPO was put to bed, the Indianapolis Transit Task Force issued its final report which includes an assessment of current service, recommendations for improvements, and validation of the contributions made by transit to the regional economy and quality-of-life.

Here are some excerpts:
The current system is:
• Relatively efficient (cost of $64/hr versus $84/hr for Columbus, O. transit service)
• Inadequate in terms of service, frequency and coverage area
• Inadequate in terms of local funding
• Too reliant on property tax as single source of local funding
• Underutilized - needs to be marketed, especially to employers

The Indianapolis Transit Task Force recommends:
• A dedicated source of additional local funding
• Reducing reliance on property taxes to fund IndyGo services
• Generating varying sources of funding, including exhausting local authority to increase the current distribution of County Option Income Tax, 25% – 30% from farebox revenues as well as other local revenue sources such as sales tax (other than food and beverage), environmental impact fees, and charter and other services to capture discretionary riders, advertising on bus shelters, etc.;
• County-wide coverage on a minimum of 15-30 minute frequencies (preferably 10-20 minute frequencies), and flexibility to extend service beyond the Indianapolis metropolitan area through use of express routes, etc.
• IndyGo as the core/foundation for a regional transportation system
• Public transit should be supported and utilized as a viable solution to address emissions reductions in the Indianapolis metropolitan area and surrounding counties recently designated as non-attainment for ozone
• Extensive outreach and advocacy will be necessary in order to secure buy-in from the general public, elected officials, governmental entities, and other stakeholders; and
• Specific timelines should be developed wherein various service strategy options will be examined, resulting in recommendations with defined scope, cost and timing.

In addition to these recommendations, the Task Force validated through its assignment, research, and public outreach that transit contributes to sustainable development and livability in Indianapolis and supports its overall economic growth plan by:
• Providing access to jobs and local business activity
• Providing a viable alternative to the automobile for residents who cannot or choose not to drive
• Reducing traffic congestion, energy consumption, and automobile emissions
• Supporting neighborhoods, government/community services, business districts and civic events by making them more accessible
• Reducing the need for additional parking facilities
• Supporting the mobility of pedestrians and bicyclists
• Supporting the independence of the elderly and disabled

You’ll be glad to know that the Task Force’s work hasn’t ended with these recommendations/observations. Since the release of its final report, Task Force members, convening organizations (Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation/IndyGo, the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, and the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce) and support staff are developing and implementing advocacy, outreach and funding strategies. Their efforts are focussed on solutions that will create a sustainable difference in public transit throughout the Indianapolis area.

For more information on the work of the Indianapolis Task Force, or to receive a complete copy of its final report “Rebuilding Public Transportation in Indianapolis”, contact Michael Carter at 317/327-3860 (macarter@indygov.org).
The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) hosted an Open House to encourage public review and comment on Phase 3 findings of its proposed Regional Pedestrian System Plan. The goal of the plan is to develop a long range strategy for pedestrian connectivity throughout the nine-county region. Open House discussion centered on pedestrian issues in Decatur, Wayne, Pike, Washington, Lawrence, Warren, Franklin and Perry Townships, including pedestrian/transit system integration, walk-to-school buffer/collector zones and environmental design guidelines.

The Pedestrian Plan Open House was held on Wednesday, October 20th at the Artsgarden, downtown Indianapolis. Exhibits and planners were available from 5:30 to 8 PM, and an informative presentation was made by MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman, M.S. and Meg Storrow of Storrow Kinsella Associates, a landscape architecture, urban design and planning studio and lead consultant on the project. Approximately 75-100 people attended the two sessions at 6 and 7:15 PM. Interested parties were encouraged to review the Marion County draft Pedestrian Route System plan prior to the meeting by both display advertising and a Media Advisory issued by the MPO. The draft plan is still available for review on the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo (click “Current Studies”).

“Our long range goal is to make walking an integral part of our regional transportation system,” explains Inman. “Eventually, we’d like to provide pedestrian access to all public transit stops, improve the mobility of non-drivers, establish safe routes to schools, and reduce traffic congestion and its related air pollution.”

Phase 1 of the project, which ended last year, considered study methodology and the feasibility of a proposed Cultural Trail in downtown Indianapolis. If implemented, the Cultural Trail will function as the hub of a system in the region’s most pedestrian-oriented environment. During this phase, modeling techniques were also established for evaluating pedestrian corridors and districts, and transportation interface patterns.

cont on page 10, see Pedestrian Plan Open House
In Phase 2, which ended in November, 2003, planners inventoried land use, residential, commercial and employment patterns for Center Township. Systems that affect walk-ability, such as sidewalks and transit routes, were also considered. In addition, areas that require ‘context sensitivity,’ such as historic neighborhoods, were identified along with environmental justice priorities.

Phase 3 of the project is currently extending the Center Township pedestrian route system plan to surrounding “donut” townships within Marion County. Subsequent phases will expand it to communities outside of Marion County.

For more information on the Pedestrian Plan Open House, contact Amy Inman at 317/327-5646 (ainman@indygov.org).

**Did you Know?**

Americans apparently can’t be scared out of the skies... at least, not for long. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Bureau of Transportation Statistics, more domestic passengers traveled via U. S. Airlines each month this year than did during the same months last year.

Has the impact of the threat of another terrorist attack worn off as people get on with their lives? Hardly. Airline bankruptcies are becoming commonplace and security-related delays at domestic airports are reported at an all time high. Still, air travel is back, and in a big way!
Roth Promoted To MPO Assist. Manager/Master Planner

On Thursday, August 26th, the MPO announced the promotion of Philip Roth, AICP, to the newly created position of Assistant Manager. In his new role, Roth will assist MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing in supervising department activity and advising staff planners and consultants, while continuing his own slate of planning activities.

“This move is needed and well-deserved,” notes Dearing. “Our workload has increased significantly over the last few years and I want to make sure that we aren’t risking the loss of supervisory oversight and coordination of dozens of projects we currently have underway,” he explains. “Even with our recent hires which bring our staff count up to eight, or maybe because of them, I want to have someone authorized to step in when I can’t be present,” he explains. “Philip has proven himself adept in this role over the last couple of years, bringing great technical expertise to the job plus a willingness to work long hours without complaint.”

As Assistant Manager, Roth is expected to represent the MPO in more dealings with its planning partners, consultants and the media. In addition, he will continue his current planning responsibilities, which include:

- The Regional Transportation Plan (see related story, page 1)
- Updating and implementing the Congestion Management System
- Policy analysis and studies, including maintenance of the MPO’s economic and demographic projections
- Leading the MPO’s corridor planning efforts
- Coordinating with the Central Indiana Regional Citizens League in the development of their Planning Guide and other activities
- Project Co-Manager of DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Increase Regional Mobility
- Other special projects, as needed

“I appreciate the confidence Mike and the other members of the MPO staff have shown in me with this promotion, and I look forward to serving the region’s transportation needs for many years to come,” Roth says.

Philip Roth is a native of Washington, D.C. who holds a B.A. in Anthropology from Grinnell College (Iowa). In 1992, he earned his Masters degree in Regional Planning (MRP) from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Prior to joining the MPO in February, 2002, Roth served as Planning Department Manager for the Indianapolis office of HNTB Corporation, where he worked on a range of projects including conNEXTions — the Indianapolis Northeast Corridor Study, and the Indianapolis Economic Analysis project. His previous public sector experience includes work as Economic Development/Housing Planner for the New Albany (IN) Redevelopment Commission, where he was responsible for the community development program.

Philip and his wife, Megan Query-Roth, reside in a Northeastern suburb of Indianapolis with their son, Charlie, age two. A daughter is expected in December of this year.

Did you Know? . . .

The number of American roadway fatalities is declining, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Whether it’s due to increased seatbelt-use, better designed vehicles, or safer driving habits, about 1,000 fewer of our countrymen die each year from traffic accidents than did in the mid-eighties. In 1985, the annual tally was 43,825; in 2002 (the most recent figures available), 42,815. That’s good news!

Even better, the number of alcohol-related crash fatalities has dropped even more dramatically over the same period. In 1985, 23,168 died alcohol-related traffic deaths along America’s roadways; in 2002, nearly 6,000 fewer at 17,419! Remember a designated driver in your holiday plans.
On Monday, August 23, something unusual happened at the MPO. With the start of Heather Stouder's first day as the organization’s newest Transportation Planner, the MPO’s staff once again numbered eight – a total it had not achieved since early in 2003, when two members were lost to promotion and attrition.

“We’ve been working short-handed for quite a while,” notes MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing. “But timing is everything. It’s just taken us this long to find the right people at the same time we’ve had available funding to hire them,” he explains. “Last fall, we added a seventh staff member. Now, with Heather, we’ve found the right mix of education, experience and perspective to add an eighth.”

Heather Stouder is from Greenfield, IN, just 20 miles east of downtown Indianapolis. Raised by father Gary, a family physician, and mother, Joy, a high school mathematics teacher, Heather grew up the oldest of three daughters in a comfortable, small town atmosphere.

But local roots don’t indicate a parochial perspective. A commitment to public service and volunteerism has taken Heather and her family members on far-flung missions. Father Gary, now retired, is currently in Australia, filling in for vacationing physicians in areas short on medical professionals. Before becoming a teacher, mother Joy spent several years volunteering to assist visually impaired students in Hancock County. Middle sister Andrea, age 24, is now a middle school History and English teacher in Phoenix, AZ, after having served there with Teach For America for 2 years. Youngest sister Chrissy, 23, is an I.U. graduate currently living in rural China where she is helping to develop a new girls’ school, expanding the very limited educational options open to that region’s female population.

“I really wasn’t aware of it growing up, but my parents must have instilled a public service priority in us,” Heather says. “As with my sisters, mine kicked in after graduation.”

In 1998, Heather graduated with a B.S. in Biology from Butler University, where she enjoyed the urban setting and supportive atmosphere. “I loved the place,” she says, “but I’d probably go a little further away from home, if I had it to do over again – just to experience more of a change in people and ideas.”

Following graduation, Heather moved to Portland, OR, where she worked for three years as an AmeriCorps volunteer. During her first year there, she served as one of ten team members who implemented environmental restoration projects, including the reclamation of city parks and native salmon habitats – a popular and perennial cause in the northwest.

“It was while working for AmeriCorps that I developed my interest in environmental studies and social justice issues,” Heather explains. “That’s really what got me started in urban and transportation planning.” While in Portland, she also worked on a small organic farm and helped develop and run an AmeriCorps urban gardening project.

In 2000, Heather applied to graduate school at the University of Wisconsin - Madison -- an area routinely selected as one of America’s most livable cities due, in part, to its successful land-use planning and high park acreage-to-resident ratio. Over the next 3-years, she earned a Joint Masters of Science in Urban & Regional Planning and Land Resources, while working half time as a Graduate Assistant.

Now, as an MPO Planner, Heather hopes to promote alternative modes of transportation, strengthen links between transportation and land-use planning, and find new ways to enhance public participation in the transportation planning process.

“Heather’s goals are consistent with the MPO’s commitment to increasing the area’s mobility options through alternate modes of travel and to encouraging and accommodating public input as a crucial aspect of our transportation planning process,” says Dearing. “In short, she’s a good fit for us and we’re really pleased to have her on-board.”

Initially, Heather’s responsibilities will include working on the development of a new Congestion Management System, helping to complete the 2005 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and backing up project co-managers Philip Roth, AICP, and Amy Inman, M.S. on DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility.

In her free time, Heather enjoys gardening, cooking and travel, citing Europe and Australia among her favorite past destinations. She also loves sports, like basketball and swimming.

“Ultimate Frisbee is my current favorite,” she says. “It’s played with teams of seven, and you cover a lot of ground trying to catch the frisbee in the end zone. It’s very fast paced and takes a lot of team work.”

“Sounds like good training,” Dearing deadpans.

To welcome Heather to the MPO, or to contact her about her work responsibilities, call 317/327-5136 or e-mail her at hstouder@indygov.org.
The number of people participating in the Greenway Foundation’s Pedal & Park program jumped 72% this year over 2003 figures. As previously reported in t.eMPO, the program provides area cyclists with free, secured bike parking at popular greenways-adjacent events throughout the spring and summer.

Pedal & Park concluded its 2004 season on September 11th at the Penrod Arts Fair where 237 area cyclists enjoyed the free service, bringing its season total to 2,113 – 822 more than last year’s. Other 2004 Pedal & Park events included the Earth Day Indiana, Bike-To-Work Day, the Broad Ripple Art Fair, the Talbot Street Art Fair, and the Indiana State Fair where 1,500 cyclists were served over 12 days.

“These numbers are even more exciting when you consider that Pedal & Park has grown steadily over the last four years,” said Greenways Foundation President Matthew T. Klein. “We’ve had record numbers since 2001! This year’s huge jump proves that more people than ever want healthy, hassle-free transportation options and we’re helping to meet that demand.”

Since 2001, the Pedal & Park program has been sponsored by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the region’s primary transportation planner. As program sponsor, the MPO pays the foundation $1 for each bike parked in its bike corral at Pedal & Park events. Proceeds are divided among not-for-profit organizations whose volunteers continuously monitor the corral, including the Central Indiana Bicycling Association (CIBA), Indy Greenways, the Greenways Foundation and the Indiana Bicycle Coalition (IBC).

Because the MPO guarantees Pedal & Park volunteers a daily minimum, the program collected a total of $2,864 this year over 19 event days. These proceeds were dispersed by The Greenways Foundation to program partner organizations in proportion to volunteer time contributed.

“We can always use the money, but the real kick is thinking of how many cars we’ve kept off the streets,” says cycling advocate and Pedal & Park Volunteer Coordinator Catherine Duesing. “By leaving their cars at home, people get to enjoy a little exercise, our beautiful greenways and the weather -- not to mention travel convenience,” she said. “So, I think the program will keep right on growing.”

In addition, the MPO provides media/public relations support, and volunteer/literature display shelters as program sponsor. This year, the MPO’s new Marion County and Surrounding Area Bike Route Map was among the free literature being distributed.

“Our support of Pedal & Park is an investment in transportation system efficiency and regional health,” says MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing. “Programs like this one encourage people to use their bikes for transportation, not just recreation. That improves traffic flow, parking, area mobility and regional air quality for everyone.”

The Pedal & Park Program supports the use of non-motorized transportation alternatives, promotes travel along Indy Greenways, dispenses relevant transportation and recreational literature, and raises funds for partnering not-for-profit organizations. To volunteer to help at the bike corral in 2005, call 317/255-0559. To learn more about the Pedal & Park program, visit www.indygreenways.org/pedalpark.
The region’s current pattern of highways is relatively unchanged from this 1964 ‘augmented’ roadway system, although travel demand and peak hour congestion has increased dramatically.

RTP Major Review Phase I Findings
(from page 1)

Department of Transportation (INDOT), Federal Highway Administration, IndyGo, Indianapolis Airport Authority, and the general public. The MPO’s process was last re-certified in 2003 (a 3-year designation). Roth is the planner-in-charge of the current RTP major review, which just completed its first phase.

As previously reported in teMPO (Volume Eight, Issues One & Two), the MPO is currently working with Parsons Brinckerhoff, HNTB Corporation and Blalock and Brown to advance the forecast year of the region’s adopted 2025 Regional Transportation Plan to 2030 while also responding to changing conditions and needs, and its expanded Metropolitan Planning Area, or MPA. (NOTE: The MPO planning area was expanded by 77 square miles in 2003, as recommended by Census 2000 data. See map on page 3.)

The purpose of the Regional Transportation Plan is to 1) evaluate regional transportation needs over the next 25 years and prioritize projects for funding, 2) provide a framework for all other transportation planning efforts, 3) analyze air quality impacts for projects that increase roadway capacity, and 4) ensure a multi-modal focus to solving regional transportation needs.

“That’s a lot for a single document to do,” notes Roth. “And, because the $20 million we get for improvements is never enough to meet all of our region’s transportation needs, the plan must also be fiscally constrained and feature only the highest priority improvement projects,” he says. “So, there’s a lot riding on this review.”

Components of the review include assessment of transportation system needs, identification of system deficiencies, development & evaluation of alternatives air quality analyses, project prioritization, funding assessment, and public review and comment. Stakeholders in the review process include the public, community & elected officials, planners and engineers, Marion County’s Public Transportation provider - IndyGo, green-ways & trails providers, freight distributors, business interests, and others.

A cursory glance at the adopted 2025 Plan points out the need for a review. It contains $3.1 billion in transportation improvement projects over the next 20 years, but also identifies $371 million of “unfunded” needs -- that is, needs for which no implementation funding is anticipated.

Other key findings from the current RTP include:
• Total trips are expected to increase 49%
• Total travel time is expected to increase by 66%
• Total miles driven are expected to increase 55%
• Not enough resources to address all needs
There is a need to find ways to help solve the congestion problem other than increasing roadway capacity.

The review is divided in three phases. Phase I, February through Autumn, 2004, involved assessment of Existing Conditions and System Deficiencies. Phase II, January through December, 2005, will include Development and Evaluation of Possible Improvement Alternatives. Phase III, currently scheduled for January through December, 2006, will result in Findings, Recommendations, and a Final Plan. Throughout the nearly three-year review process, public outreach efforts will be continuous, offering frequent opportunities for review of review and comment.

Project divided into 3 Phases

“This review is unique is a number of ways,” says Lori Miser of HNTB Corporation who is working on the project. “First, it involves the MPO’s recently expanded, nine-county planning area which has yet to be evaluated in detail. Secondly, we are conducting this review under the region’s new nine-county non-attainment status for ozone,” she notes. “In addition, this review includes revisions to the existing travel forecast model.”

Key issues to be addressed in this review include the region’s limited opportunities for highway expansion, the need for increased mobility through alternative transportation such as transit and bicycle and pedestrian options, air quality considerations, and transportation planning’s relation to land-use planning.

Overview of Phase I RTP Review Findings

Phase I identified regional transportation system deficiencies in the following areas:

Roadway Deficiencies

- Central Indiana is healthy & vital
- Clear pattern of outward expansion
- Strong correlation between suburban growth and increased traffic volumes
- Traffic congestion is increasing region-wide
- Indianapolis invests less in transit than other similar cities
- Given past & continued growth, congestion cannot be solved solely by adding roadway capacity

The 1964 “augmented” Roadway System, used in the first Regional Transportation Plan, known as IRTADS, showed the regional interstate highway system fully defined. The arterial roadway system was also already developed. This pattern is relatively unchanged after 40 years.

Everything else, however, has changed in that time. Traffic

cont on page 16, see RTP Major Review Phase I Findings
Traffic Congestion

In 1982, Indianapolis ranked 54th out of the 75 largest urban areas in congested travel (% of peak hour vehicle miles traveled) and #61st in transportation system congestion (% of freeway and street lane miles), according to the Texas Transportation Institute. By 2001, however, the rankings had leapt to #18th and #11th place, respectively.

“According to the Texas Transportation Institute, our region had the most congested peak hours and the highest growth in peak hour congestion, between 1982 and 2001,” notes John Myers of HNTB Corporation. “We also had the most congested system and the highest growth in system congestion. So, only a multi-modal Regional Transportation Plan can change this -- one that involves streets/highways, transit, bicycle/pedestrian systems and land-use trends.”

One caveat to the TTI data is that other large urban areas have already completed significant improvements to their aging interstate system. INDOT is making similar improvements now through at least the next five years which will add much needed system capacity.

Transit Deficiencies

The existing transit system was found to be lacking adequate system amenities which dramatically impact quality-of-service. These deficiencies include sidewalks, bus shelters, park/ride facilities, express bus services and designated bus lanes. Other sub-standard service characteristics include infrequent routing, service area limitations, service configuration (e.g. routes operating radially from downtown with few cross-town routes available), and general lack of access to major shopping and business areas. Downtown-oriented routes follow a fixed pattern that was found to be duplicative and time-consuming for the rider. Reasons for the poor condition of service may include lack of a regional transit champion — a situation that may have been remedied with the formation of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and the historic lack of local funding support.

Compared with transit systems in cities of comparable size, the IndyGo system was found to offer less service and...
TRANSPORTATION AND THE ELECTION

It’s no secret to most readers of teMPO that the huge federal spending bill, known as Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) that funded roadway and transit projects expired in 2003. Efforts to authorize its successor, known variously as TEA-3 or Next-TEA, have stalled on Capitol Hill. After a short series of extensions, President Bush signed a measure in September to keep highway and transit programs funded through May 31, 2005. But, as of this writing, there is no indication when a new bill will be passed, or which version of the bill is likely to survive. Currently, three versions exist; one from the House, one from the Senate, and one from the White House, which is notable for being the smallest of the three.

Perhaps for this reason, local governments across the country appealed to voters with a record number of transportation ballot initiatives in the recent election.

According to The Center for Transportation Excellence, a non-partisan, Washington D.C.-based research group, voters faced at least 31 transportation-related initiatives in 12 states on November 2 that could raise more than $50 billion for everything from ambitious light rail and rapid bus projects to more routine roadway improvements. In 2004, the first year after the previous federal bill expired, a total of 53 transportation measures appeared on ballots, surpassing the 16 from 2003. Of the 22 measures already decided this year (as of this writing), 18 were approved.

“State budgets have decreased, local budgets are squeezed, and there is a lot of uncertainty at the federal level,” Center Program Manager Stephanie Vance told USA Today. “A lot of communities are being forced to turn to voters.”

Sub-committees and the CAC

At the October 26th meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee, the fourth and last quarterly meeting scheduled for 2004, MPO Manager and meeting facilitator Mike Dearing announced the formation of a new CAC sub-committee to focus on alternative transportation issues.

“We are currently looking at ways in which active members of the CAC might play a greater role in the regional transportation planning process than they traditionally have,” explains Dearing. “That may involve occasional presentations to the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (ITRC), or advocacy responsibilities for specific planning initiatives. Our goal is to give CAC members, and the public in general, greater opportunities for involvement in the process,” he says.

“Members of this committee, like the other existing CAC sub-committees, will work hand-in-hand with the MPO staff.

This is the third CAC sub-committee to be formed by the MPO. The others include the Sub-committee on Noise Barriers and the Senior Transportation Sub-committee.

For more information on these sub-committees, including membership responsibilities, or to suggest the focus of another sub-committee, contact Mike Dearing at 327-5139 (mdearring@indygov.org).
RTP Major Review Phase I Findings
(from page 16)

carry fewer passengers. Because of this, the IndyGo system incurs less operating and maintenance (O & M) expense than bus systems in peer cities, spending far less local money per capita. However, IndyGo receives the most O & M funding from the State of any system used for comparison and is most dependent on Federal Capital funds to enhance its system.

Bike/Pedestrian System Needs

The growing Marion County bike route system, incorporating both greenway paths and signed, on-street biking lanes needs to continue to be coordinated across municipal borders.

Did you Know? . . .

According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the average American uses transit five times more often than we do here in Indiana. In its 2002 American Community Survey Profile, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that only 1% of Hoosiers said they use public transportation (including taxis) on a regular basis. Throughout the U.S., it’s 5%. Could there be a link to our region’s air quality issues?

Progress has already been made since the publication of the Marion County Bike Routes map in 2001. The revised Marion County and Surrounding Area Bike Routes map, published this summer, shows bike route networks growing in Zionsville, Carmel, Fishers and Greenwood.

A region-wide pedestrian route system, now in development, needs to enjoy the same degree of implementation momentum. Lack of well-maintained sidewalks is a region-wide obstacle, inhibiting linkages to the existing transit system.

Currently nearly 100% of the IndyGo bus fleet features bike racks for convenient “Bike ‘n Bus” service, but broader application is recommended.

In addition, construction of both bicycle and pedestrian route facilities is currently on an “as can” basis, without any scheduled implementation assuring progress. These issues are considered now only when new roadway and development projects are proposed.

Freight System Needs

It’s often overlooked that transportation planning needs to consider the safe, efficient and economical movement of people and goods in, around and through our region. Freight handling focuses on the movement of goods.

Among the needs noted in this area are 1) the need for roadway facilities with adequate capacity and reduced congestion, 2) good access to intermodal facilities, such as the Avon Rail Yard, 3) rail trackage improvements identified in specific areas throughout the region, and 4) the need for adequate signage along truck routes.

Phase I Findings

Land Use - The region’s land use and development patterns have been a central determinant of travel characteristics. The Regional Transportation Plan should continue to focus on both land-use and transportation, concurrently.

Limited Roadway Opportunities – Unlike past transportation plans, it is unlikely that this RTP will identify roadway strategies to “solve” forecasted traffic problems. The high levels of service planned for in past studies are generally infeasible due to physical limitations, financial constraints, and current social priorities.

Need for Alternative Transportation Options – Transit and non-motorized travel should be re-evaluated in the context of the region’s overall transportation & mobility needs, while continuing to serve those who have limited mobility choices for travel.

Air Quality Considerations – Given the region’s recent non-attainment designation for the ozone pollutant, feasible ways to reduce single occupant vehicle use should be examined (see related story Central Indiana Commuter Services, page 1).

The challenge in this Regional Transportation Plan update will be to fully consider the wide range of potential options to meet future regional transportation needs. Although it will be important to define the appropriate future level of highway system improvements, it will be equally essential to define other land use and transportation system components and how they will work with the highway system to meet total system needs.

Next Steps

Phase II of the RTP Major Review, scheduled to start in January, 2005, will involve the development and evaluation of alternative transportation system scenarios, determination of evaluation criteria, establishment of evaluation criteria to analyze those scenarios, analysis of air quality issues, and consultation with the public and other stakeholders.

For more information on the Phase I findings of the Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan, or of its upcoming Phase II activity, contact MPO Assistant Manager Philip Roth (317/327-5149, proth@indygov.org), or Lori Miser or John Myers of HNTB (317/636-4682).
To encourage awareness of, and informed participation in, its regional transportation planning process, the MPO includes display advertising among the many communications strategies utilized in its Public Involvement Program. Featuring consistent use of the “IMPorTant” format to build awareness and heighten recall, these ads appear in publications throughout the region, including the City & State section of The Indianapolis Star and The Indianapolis Recorder.

The ads shown here ran in October and November, 2004. From the top, the first ad ran in The Indianapolis Star (October 12th issue) and The Indianapolis Recorder (October 8th issue) to promote public attendance and participation in an MPO-hosted Open House concerning the Regional Pedestrian System Plan (see related story, page 9). Held at the Artsgarden, downtown Indianapolis, the event offered interested parties exhibits, a PowerPoint presentation, and the opportunity for one-on-one discussion with transportation planners working on the project. The ad also encouraged potential attendees, as well as those unable to make the meeting, to review the draft plan on the MPO web site (indygov.org/indympo).

The second ad, promoting attendance at the October Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting, invited all interested parties to the year’s fourth and last such gathering. The ad mentions planned agenda items, including presentations on proposed amendments to the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTP), a progress report on IndyGo’s Downtown Transit Feasibility Study, and an update on the Central Indiana Suburban Transportation & Mobility Study (CISTMS) being conducted by the Indiana Department of Transportation and your MPO. (EDITOR’S NOTE: Presentation topics, added to the meeting agenda after this ad ran, included an update on Phase III activity for the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS.) The ad ran in the October 20th Star and the October 15th Recorder.

The third ad, or format/language variations of it, ran in more than 40 regional newspapers throughout the DIRECTIONS study area (see partial media list on page 18 of teMPO, Volume Seven, Issue Two). It encouraged attendance and participation in a November 17th Public Open House concerning route and technology options for a possible rapid transit starter system in the Northeast Corridor. In Phase III, the DIRECTIONS study team is developing feasible route alignment and technology options for the region’s busiest travel corridor, as well as conducting a Comprehensive Operational Analysis of IndyGo and developing an implementation plan for a possible region-wide rapid transit system. The ads ran between November 7th and November 12th.

Through its various Public Involvement Program outreach strategies, including display ads like these, the MPO will continue to inform its primary planning partner, the public, of upcoming participation opportunities.
Planner Mike Dearing. “That may be a ‘Hoosier’ thing, since historically we’ve enjoyed comparatively easy commutes. But, as peak hour congestion and commute times grow, and as regional air quality worsens, and as the cost of vehicles and gasoline rises, a lot of people are questioning that perception and looking for alternatives.”

Enter Central Indiana Commuter Services (CICS), a new program of services offered by IndyGo. The purpose of CICS is to encourage, accommodate and facilitate mobility options for employers and their employees throughout Central Indiana. Commuters are able to reduce the stress, expense and time required by their daily commutes, while their employers benefit from a more productive, reliable and happier workforce. Mobility options include alternative transportation modes such as public transportation, carpooling and vanpooling, but CICS offers benefits even to those willing to bike or walk to work by providing Emergency Ride Home service to all registered program participants.

“Our goal isn’t to promote one travel mode over another, but rather to reduce single occupancy vehicles and facilitate use of the alternative that best meets a commuter’s needs. If that’s walking or biking, we’re all for it,” says CICS Program Manager Ruth L. Reiman. “We can remove the traditional obstacles that keep most people in their cars by coordinating ride matches through our growing data base, providing the use of vans for larger groups on longer commutes, and guaranteeing participants a “fall back” service in times of emergency,” she explains. “These strategies help people break old habits and leave their cars at home. And that improves regional traffic flow and air quality for everyone.”

Clearing the air, and the roads
Reducing traffic congestion and its related air pollution are key to the success of the new program since CICS is funded with federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) dollars through the MPO.

“It’s one of a group of transportation planning initiatives we’re involved with right now that help address our region’s non-attainment status for the pollutant ozone,” says Dearing. “It also fits well with our objective of enhancing transportation system efficiency throughout the region by reducing peak hour demand while increasing mobility choice,” he explains. “In this case, IndyGo receives the funds as our implementing partner.”

The CICS service area includes Marion, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, Hendricks and Boone Counties. Among the services provided by the program are:

• Automated ride-matching for the formation of carpools and vanpools
• Assistance in the operation of vanpools, including vehicle use coordination
• Creation, coordination and maintenance of a database of area commuters who are interested in ridesharing, who ride

cont on page 21, see Central Indiana Commuter Services
transit on a regular basis, and who carpool or vanpool to work on a daily basis

• Emergency Ride Home service for all registered participants working for program-active employers, including those who bike or walk to work
• Outreach to area commuters through advertising and promotional events

Did you Know? . . .

According to U.S. Census Bureau’s 2002 American Community Survey Profile, Hoosiers are a little more likely than other Americans to drive to their jobs alone. Nationwide, about 77% of people take a ‘single occupant vehicle’ to work; in Indiana, it’s 83%. The Hoosier workforce, age 16 and older, totals 2.8 million (compared with 128.6 million for the U.S.), so 83% equals 2,324,000 who could share the ride but don’t.

Surprisingly, though, the percentage of workers who report regularly carpooling is exactly the same here as it is across the nation – 10%.

participants who would experience less congested roadways, and the entire region whose air quality would improve,“ she notes. “We’ve been building our data base for three months now under this premise.”

To make the program work for everyone, CICS provides coordination and support to this basic list of commuter services:

Carpooling

A carpool is made up of two or more people riding together in the same vehicle. People who team up with another person for the drive cut their commuting costs in half. The more people in a carpool, the bigger the savings. And not only do car-poolers save money by sharing the ride, all but the designated driver also save time by being able to do other tasks on the ride in, like reading the newspaper, or reviewing paperwork for the day ahead.

“Most people who start off doing it just a few days a week end up committing to their carpool full-time,” Reiman says. “The benefits and savings are addicting.”

Currently, only about 10%, or 280,000, of Indiana’s commuters enjoy the benefits of carpooling. In Central Indiana, finding a carpool partner can be as easy as calling 317/327-RIDE – the same number to use to inquire about any of the CICS services.

Vanpooling

A vanpool is made up of seven to 15 people who commute together in a passenger van. CICS can help in coordinating use of the van. One member of the group volunteers to drive (and rides at a discounted rate), while the cost of operation is divided among the passengers.

Vanpooling is ideal for people who commute farther to work, at least 15 miles one way. The longer a commute, the more economical a vanpool becomes. Also, the more passengers in a van, the less each rider pays.

Vanpools can also be a very convenient means of travel, since the vanpool members themselves determine their pick-up/drop-off points, their schedule and their route.

cont on page 22, see Central Indiana Commuter Services
Public Transit

Another commuting option that often goes unconsidered in Central Indiana is public transportation. With regular ridership at only about 1-2% of total population throughout Marion County, IndyGo maybe the most under utilized, over criticized option available.

“I’ve found that most of the people who criticize IndyGo have never ridden it, or haven’t ridden it in years,” says Mike Terry, IndyGo Director of Business Development. “We’ve made substantial changes in the flexibility and responsiveness of our service and non-riders just don’t know about them. It’s ironic to me that it’s not our customers who complain most about our service. They value it, as evidenced earlier this year when we had to cut a few under performing routes to meet budget shortfalls. The people who complain most are non-customers who have no idea what our transit service is like.”

Could public transportation get you where you need to go? It’s reasonable to assume that the vast majority of Marion County’s commuters have never checked to see if IndyGo service could meet their needs . . . even though it is the least expensive way, by far, to get around at a $1 a day. Why not, at least, consider the transit option by visiting www.indygo.net? There, you may find a route and schedule that meets your commuting needs.

Emergency Ride Home Program (ERH)

What happens if you carpool to work, but suddenly get an emergency call, saying “your child is sick and needs to be picked up from school.” With ERH, no problem.

As long as you’re a CICS-registered commuter who carpools, vanpools, rides transit, bikes or walks to work, and works for a participating employer, ERH will provide taxi service to your destination at no cost. That’s a security blanket most commuters can live with, and a great no-cost employee benefit area businesses can provide to their workforce. It’s a great incentive to encourage employee participation and a great way to reduce demand for parking.

“Mobility options for commuting are available right now throughout most of Central Indiana,” says Reiman. “And, as more people sign up in our database, more options become available everyday.”

To become a part of the solution to your, and the region’s commuting woes, just fill out and mail back the CICS Commuter Profile on page 23. CICS will enter your information into its database and provide you with a list of people who live and work near you as possible matches for carpooling or vanpooling partners. You can then contact these people, meet, and plan your commute together. It’s that easy, and totally FREE.

If you are already part of the solution, get credit for it! If you currently carpool, vanpool, ride transit, bike or walk to work at a participating employer, register with CICS. That way you qualify for the Emergency Ride Home Program.

For more information on the benefits of Central Indiana Commuter Services, or on the tax benefits available to bus riders and vanpools, call 888/737-RIDE or visit www.centralin-commuter.net. It could be the first step to improving your commute and the roads and air we share.

Did you Know? . . .

Improving your lonely commute can not only save your nerves; it could save you big bucks. According to the American Automobile Association, it costs an average of 51.7 cents per mile to own and drive a car. This figure includes gasoline, vehicle maintenance, insurance and depreciation.

This means that if you have a 40-mile daily round-trip commute, you’re spending $20 a day, $434 a month and $5,208 a year (not including parking)! And, this doesn’t even consider the wear and tear on your nerves from road construction, winter storms, and traffic accidents that block your route. No wonder people are turning to CICS. It just makes dollars... and sense!
# Central Indiana Commuter Services Commuter Profile

To be entered into the CICS commuter database, please fill out the following form and mail it to:
Central Indiana Commuter Services, 212 W. 10th St., Suite C485, Indianapolis, IN 46202-0276. Or, fax it to: 317.631.4304.

## Personal Information

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<td>First Name</td>
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## Employer Information

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## Additional Information

Please select the type of transportation you most often use to/from work on a weekly basis.

- Drive alone
- Carpool
- Ride the Bus
- Other

Work Hours: ___ AM / PM – ___ AM / PM    Total Hours Weekly: _____

Are these hours flexible?  
- Yes
- No

What is the round trip mileage of your daily commute? ________

Smoking preference:  
- non
- smoking

How/where did you hear about CICS? ______________________________________________________

I understand that the above information will be placed in the Central Indiana commuter Services (CICS) database, and use to help match with others who are interested in sharing a ride. This information will only be used by CICS sponsored rideshare agencies and not sold or distributed to any other organization or agency. I am 18 years of age, or older.

Signature: ___________________________  Date: ____________

Signature Date
of specific starter system route options has been completed and routes containing ‘fatal flaws’ have been identified. Following public review of these findings, second tier analysis will involve screening in greater detail and include specific cost and available funding criteria. “We already have a lot to talk to people about,” says Roth. “Through our web site, public relations, media partnerships and our publications, we’re trying to keep people apprised of this study that’s moving ahead, speeding up, and branching out.

Preferred Alternatives Recommended for Tier 2 Analysis

In the first half of Phase III, the MPO and lead project consultants Schimpeler American and Jacobs Engineering developed 15 – 20 possible starter system routes within the Northeast Corridor worthy of further study (see map, page 7). These routes were evaluated by node (points along a route) and segment (spans between nodes) offering planners a moderate level of detail. Upon Tier 1 analysis, a number of these routes were found to be ‘flawed’ -- that is, possessing characteristics believed to be contrary to previously established Community Goals or System User Priorities (see side bar, page 26). Such flaws include negative impacts on park lands, historic sites or the environment, or disproportionate burdens being placed on minority or low-income populations. While not ‘fatal,’ these identified flaws dissuaded the study team from further route investigation or recommendation.

“It’s conceivable that the IRTIC could recommend a route for further study despite an identified flaw if they feel its potential benefits outweigh its disadvantages,” notes MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing. “That’s not likely, but it’s certainly their prerogative as they determine where, when and if region-wide rapid transit will be a part of our future.”

The IRTC, to which the MPO makes its recommendations, serves as the decision-making body for the regional transportation planning process. As such, the elected officials who make up the IRTC’s Policy Committee will oversee the DIRECTIONS study through its scheduled completion in May, 2005.

Of the remaining routes without an identified ‘flaw,’ the following four have been recommended for Tier 2 analysis:

Alternate One
I-69 / Binford Blvd. / RR at Monon Trail / Central Business District (CBD) – RR Belt

This alternate uses the I-69 right-of-way between the City of Noblesville in Hamilton County and I-465. It uses Binford Boulevard right-of-way between I-465 and 38th Street at the Fairgrounds. It uses the railroad right-of-way that parallels the Monon Trail between 38th Street at the Fairgrounds and 10th Street at Massachusetts Avenue. Around downtown, it uses the railroad corridor that encircles the Central Business District (CBD) on the east, south, and west between 10th at Massachusetts Avenue and 16th Street at Bush Stadium. Alternate 1 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer center on South Street and with the proposed Cultural Trail at the Monon/Mass Avenue Trailhead and at Virginia Avenue.

Alternate Two

cont on page 26, see DIRECTIONS’ Phase III Scope
Possible Route Alternatives 1 through 4 are candidates for more detailed study, having already been found to provide an efficient, low-impact path for a rapid transit starter system in the Northeast Corridor. Alternative 5, shown here for comparison purposes, also is technically feasible, but involves impacts to the natural or human environment considered unacceptable by study planners.
Hoosier Heritage RR / RR at Monon Trail / CBD Railroad Belt

Alternate 2 uses the Hoosier Heritage Railroad (formerly, the Nickel Plate Line) between Noblesville in Hamilton County and 38th Street at the Fairgrounds. It uses the railroad right-of-way paralleling the Monon Trail between 38th Street at the Fairgrounds and 10th Street at Massachusetts Avenue. It also uses the railroad corridor that encircles the CBD on the east, south, and west between 10th Street at Massachusetts Avenue and 16th Street at Bush Stadium. Alternate 2 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer center on South Street and with the proposed Cultural Trail at the Monon Trail/Massachusetts Avenue trailhead, and at Virginia Avenue.

Alternate Three
Allisonville Road / Keystone Avenue / CBD RR Belt

This alternate uses the Allisonville Road right-of-way between Noblesville in Hamilton County and 38th Street at the Fairgrounds. It uses the Keystone Avenue right-of-way with I-70 on the south, between 39th Street at the Fairgrounds and 10th Street at Massachusetts Avenue. Around downtown, it uses the railroad corridor that encircles the CBD on the east, south, and west between 10th Street at Massachusetts Avenue and 16th Street at Bush Stadium. Alternate 3 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer center on South Street and with the proposed Cultural Trail at the Monon Trail/Mass Avenue trailhead and at Virginia Avenue.

Alternate Four
Keystone Avenue with 86th & Hoosier Heritage RR / RR at Monon Trail / CBD Interior

This alternate uses the Hoosier Heritage Railroad right-of-way between Noblesville in Hamilton County and 86th Street. It uses 86th Street and I-465 right-of-way between the Hoosier Heritage Railroad corridor and Keystone Avenue between I-465 and 38th Street at the Fairgrounds. (Both 96th Street and 82nd Street are alternatives to the 86th/I-465 link that can be investigated.) Alternate 4 uses the railroad right-of-way that parallels the Monon Trail between 38th Street at the Fairgrounds and 10th Street at Massachusetts Avenue. It penetrates the CBD core on North Street (or, alternately, on Massachusetts Avenue north of North Street), or Delaware Street (or Alabama Street), on South Street (or Merrill or McCarty Streets), on West Street, and on Michigan Street to the new Student Center on the IUPUI campus from which it extends northwest to 16th Street at Bush Stadium. Alternate 4 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer centers on Virginia Avenue and on South Street and with the proposed

Did you Know? . . .

We Hoosiers spent an average of 48 hours less time commuting last year than our Illinois neighbors. Illinois ranks fifth in length of average commute time at 27 minutes; Indiana ranks 35th at 21.2 minutes. Rankings are based on two daily trips and 250 workdays per year. Number #1-ranked New York registered the longest average commute time at 30.4 minutes, which means Knickerbockers spend 76 hours more commuting a year than we do.

Source: U. S. Census Bureau
Cultural Trail at multiple points, including Massachusetts Avenue, North Street, Alabama Street, Market Street, Washington Street, Virginia Avenue and West Street.

“Each of these routes have already been modeled using one of the transit technologies we’re still considering,” explains Charlie Schimpeler of Schimpeler American. “These include Automated Guideway Transit (AGT) which has the highest capital cost but lowest operating cost, Light Rail Transit (LRT), and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) which has the lowest capital cost but highest operating cost. (EDITOR’S NOTE: Based on its impressive operation as part of the Ottawa rapid transit system, planners may also consider diesel multiple unit [DMU] rail service.) “Our goal is to ultimately select a route in which any of the technologies will work,” says Schimpeler,” but for Tier I analysis, we just modeled one a piece.”

**INDYGO COA**

Also, in the first half of DIRECTIONS’ Phase III activity, planners have begun data collection through ride-checking for a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) of the existing service offered by IndyGo, Marion County’s public transportation provider. The request to incorporate the analysis into the region-wide study was made by IndyGo Chief Executive Officer Gil Holmes with the support of the IndyGo Board of Directors. The analysis, like the study itself, will be 80% funded with federal dollars. IndyGo is paying the remaining 20% ‘local match’ of $58,000.

“This is money well spent for us,” says Holmes. “We asked the MPO to accommodate this analysis to help us implement the recommendations of the Indianapolis Transit Task Force (see related story, page 2) and to begin development of a blueprint for meeting the transit needs of our community,” he explains. “At our public meetings, we heard that people wanted an objective evaluation of our services from transit experts who could recommend short- and long-term improvements. This is the best, least expensive way to do that, while positioning IndyGo to play an integral role in a possible region-wide rapid transit system.”

The IndyGo COA is being conducted by Manuel Padron & Associates and Schimpeler-American, both firms working on DIRECTIONS under the umbrella name of Indianapolis Transit Consultants (ITC). The analysis is focussing on optimizing the current fixed route transit network by providing IndyGo with short-term (1-3 year), near-term (4-9 year) and long-term (9-15 year) efficiency recommendations.

Based on this definition, a rapid transit system should operate primarily in a dedicated guideway, separated from roadway traffic.

**A regional rapid transit system should be designed to:**

- primarily address commuter trips, which produce the most regional congestion during peak periods
- attract “choice” riders while efficiently serving “transit-dependent” riders, based on desirable travel times, system amenities, and accessibility
- provide optimum service headways (time between transit vehicles), comfort, reliability safety, and efficiency
- minimize negative social and environmental impacts
- operate with average speeds of 30 mph which are comparable to, or greater than, average speeds common to single occupant vehicle use throughout the region.

Based on this definition, a rapid transit system should operate primarily in a dedicated guideway, separated from roadway traffic.

**Rapid Transit System Community Criteria**

In order of importance to the public:
1. Mobility/Congestion Relief
2. Economic/Social Development
3. Land-Use Benefits
4. Minimum Environmental Impact
5. Connection to/Integration with other systems
**Did you Know? . . .**

Many American not only drive their cars, they use them to drive home their points. According to a Roper survey conducted for Mercedes-Benz, the bumpers of many serve as billboards for self-expression. Here are the percentages of all American drivers and what their bumper stickers are talking about:

**Bumper Sticker Topic**

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New Year, New Challenges

It's hard to believe that a new year is upon us once again and, with it, arrive new challenges in our regional transportation planning process. Some come with familiar names as planning initiatives started in 2004 or before are completed and become the focus of debate among elected officials serving on the Policy Committee of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC). The IRTC is the decision-making body of our transportation planning process and, as such, is the group to whom the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) presents its planning recommendations. In the first quarter of 2005, those recommendations will include findings and analysis from the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, was expanded to include a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) of the existing service offered by IndyGo, Marion County’s public transportation provider. The request to incorporate the analysis into the region-wide study was made by IndyGo President and Chief Executive Officer Gil Holmes with the support of the IndyGo Board of Directors. Eighty percent of the analysis, like the DIRECTIONS study itself, is being funded with federal dollars. IndyGo is paying the remaining 20%, or ‘local match’ portion of the COA cost, of $58,000.

Preliminary CISTMS Findings

In the Fall of this year, we reached a milestone in the suburban mobility study,” says John Myers of HNTB Corporation, a transportation engineering firm and primary consultant on the INDOT project. “We completed the evaluation of two possible improvement alternatives intended to ease future suburban congestion, and the analysis provided some very valuable information on the level of improvements needed,” he notes.

As previously reported in teMPO (Spring, 2004 and Special Edition, 2002), The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is conducting the Central Indiana Suburban Transportation and Mobility Study (CISTMS – pronounced “systems”) in conjunction with the MPO. The primary goal of the study is to identify key issues pertaining to suburb-to-suburb mobility within the nine-county Central Indiana region (basically, the suburb-

IndyGo COA Process

As previously reported in teMPO (Autumn, 2004), the scope of work for the third and final phase of DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, was expanded to include a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) of the existing service offered by IndyGo, Marion County’s public transportation provider. The request to incorporate the analysis into the region-wide study was made by IndyGo President and Chief Executive Officer Gil Holmes with the support of the IndyGo Board of Directors. Eighty percent of the analysis, like the DIRECTIONS study itself, is being funded with federal dollars. IndyGo is paying the remaining 20%, or ‘local match’ portion of the COA cost, of $58,000.
In Q & A, members of your MPO staff answer questions posed to them via voice mail, e-mail, regular mail or in-person. In this issue, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing discusses the role of the new Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) in the regional transportation planning process and how the RTA differs from both the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) and the MPO itself.

This summer I read in the paper that the Indianapolis City-County Council passed an ordinance to establish a Regional Transit Authority in a tight vote. This ‘RTA’ is supposed to plan for regional solutions to traffic congestion, including rail and bus transit. How is the RTA different from the MPO? Where does the IRTC (Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council) fit in? And, what’s happening with the RTA? I haven’t heard about it in months.

- Asked in-person at the October Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting

When you put it like that, it sounds a little like alphabet soup. But each of these organizations has a specific role in regional transportation planning. I’ll try to describe them here, pointing out the similarities and differences and starting with the newest group about which the least is known.

RTA

On Tuesday, June 7th, the Indianapolis City-County Council voted to establish a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) by a 15 to 13 vote. The vote broke mainly along party lines. Though most Council members acknowledged the value of planning transportation on a regional basis, many Republicans were concerned that an RTA might eventually gain taxing authority to implement its plans – a power it does not currently have.

Passage of the RTA had previously been defeated by the then Republican controlled Indianapolis City-County Council back in 1997 for the same reason. At that time, as now, surrounding communities had the opportunity to opt ‘in’ or ‘out’ of RTA participation. Many had already done so when Indianapolis opted ‘out’, effectively shelving the initiative. This time, cities and towns from the eight counties surrounding Marion County, including Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan and Hendricks, tabled the issue until Indianapolis had addressed it first. Many have
This map reflects the expanded MPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) as determined by Census 2000 data. This new MPA was recommended for approval by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council-Policy Committee in late 2002, and subsequently recommended for implementation by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). Final approval was given by Governor Joseph Kernan in fourth quarter, 2003.

**New Year, New Challenges**

(from page 1)

TIONS. Read about the activity of the study’s third and final phase here in two articles: IndyGo COA Process and DIRECTIONS AA Update.

Also in this issue, find out 1) how the MPO plans to re-structure its Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to more completely involve interested members of the public in our regional transportation planning process (2005 CAC Re-structuring), 2) how the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), in conjunction with the MPO, plans to use what it has already learned from the CISTMS study to help improve suburban mobility throughout Central Indiana (CISTMS Bookend Findings), and 3) how the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), newly adopted in 2004 by the Indianapolis City-County Council, is likely to function cooperatively with the IRTCs and MPO’s planning responsibilities (Q & A on the RTA). Plus, get information on recent public involvement meetings, a tentative schedule for upcoming 2005 meetings, and details on how Marion County’s Snow Plan will handle the winter upon us (2004/2005 Snow Plan). It’s all here, and it’s all yours as you read on, and ring in the New Year . . . with teMPO!
subsequently opted ‘in.’ RTA participants as of this writing include the City of Indianapolis-Marion County (ordinance passed 6/2004), Town of Plainfield (9/2004), Town of Fishers (9/2004), Hamilton County (10/2004), Town of Speedway (11/2004) and the City of Beech Grove (12/2004).

Passage of an RTA had been a hot topic during the 2003 Indianapolis mayoral election year. It was a stated goal in The Peterson Plan II – Mayor Bart Peterson’s agenda for his next term. The Mayor was also quoted in a July 9, 2003 Indianapolis Star editorial as saying “The notion of buses or trains stopping at the county line is crazy. You’ve got to plan mass transit on a regional basis.”

That is one of two basic reasons for the formation of the RTA. According to the 2000 Census, more than 170,000 daily commuters come into Marion County to work. The other good reason is that most Central Indiana officials think they have stronger voice when competing for federal dollars if they speak together. From 1998 to 2003, the Indianapolis region received about $140 million for local road projects from various federal programs, some of which can be, and was, used for mass transit initiatives.

Following the Council passage of the RTA ordinance, the Mayor’s office released a June 8th Media Advisory that read, in part:

Currently, most decisions about transit in Central Indiana are made independently, county by county. The RTA would focus on long term regional transportation options for Indianapolis and Central Indiana. It does not have taxing authority, but would plan for, coordinate and implement regional transit options."

I think the emphasis on “transit” is a valid one, since individual travel via private vehicle use doesn’t offer much regional benefit. Group travel via transit vehicles, on the other hand, promises to reduce congestion and air quality problems while increasing mobility options for area residents. For this reason, many people assume RTA stands for “Regional Transit Authority,” as you did in your question, instead of “Regional Transportation Authority.”

Questions & Answers
(from page 2)

The following individuals have been appointed to the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). Open seats are indicated with their source of appointment. All appointments are as of January 1, 2005.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representing</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Director</td>
<td>Fannie Mae Indiana Partnership Office</td>
<td>(Former) Governor Joseph Kernan</td>
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<td>(Former) Commissioner</td>
<td>INDOT</td>
<td>(Former) Governor Joseph Kernan</td>
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<td>Municipal Executives acting jointly</td>
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CAC Re-structuring

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is the foundation of our Public Involvement Program (PIP),” says Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “CAC meetings were the first formal strategy the MPO implemented to share regional transportation planning information with area residents on a regular basis to get their input,” he notes. “Every other strategy we employ today began as a way to help accomplish the CAC’s mission.”

As regular tMPO readers know, the Metropolitan Planning Organization founded the Citizens Advisory Committee more than a decade ago as a way of soliciting informed public input on a variety of transportation-related issues. The first meeting of the CAC was held on August 2, 1994. To ensure diverse geographic representation of constituents throughout its planning area, and of representatives from special stakeholder groups, the MPO invited neighborhood associations to designate their own participants. Other CAC members were appointed by elected officials or transportation-related entities, such as IndyGo, the Indiana Motor Truck Association and the Central Indiana Regional Transit Alliance. Additional valued stakeholder groups with active participants on the CAC include the Hoosier Environmental Council and Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana.

“The idea was to bring together very different perspectives to evaluate the information being presented to the CAC,” explains Dearing. “These people weren’t transportation planners and didn’t pretend to be. Instead, they brought their own insights to the process that were based on where they lived, the groups they represented, or their own areas of special interest, such as environmental or historic conservation, senior issues or environmental justice,” he notes. “These insights informed our planning process.”

Significant public input gathered at CAC meetings, as well as comments received via other outreach strategies (e.g. Internet Discussion Boards, 24-hour MPO Comment Line, e-mails or phone calls), are passed on to the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) when the MPO makes its transportation planning recommendations. The Policy Committee of the IRTC, which is comprised of elected officials from throughout the area, is the decision-making body for the regional transportation planning process. Because the Citizens Advisory Committee is an advisory board to IRTC, it meets on the same quarterly schedule.

Reasons for Re-structuring

“During the conNECTions study of Northeast Corridor transportation, members of the CAC decided to meet on a monthly basis to ensure that their input would help guide the fast-paced project,” Dearing notes. “Quarterly meetings just weren’t timely enough. From 1999 through 2001, the CAC met at least ten times a year and enjoyed its highest ever member participation and meeting attendance,” he says. “We want to re-capture that sense of commitment and facilitate even more opportunities for public involvement in our transportation planning process.

cont on page 10, see CAC Re-structuring
Why haven't you heard more about the RTA over the last six months? Probably because it really isn’t up and running yet. Only six of its potential 18-23 members (depending on the total number of participating counties, cities and towns) have joined by passing a local ordinance. With so few members in place, and many surrounding counties/communities still considering whether or not to opt ‘in’, no real, long term method of working has yet been adopted. Also, the search for an Executive Director, responsible for developing a five-year plan, is still underway.

Once the right person is found, his or her salary for the first year will be paid by the MPO – an indication of how closely the two groups will work.

**MPO**

As regular teMPO readers know, the MPO has many planning partners, including the Indiana Department of Transportation, County Highway Departments, IndyGo and the general public. The RTA is the newest among them. Unlike the rest, though, the RTA’s regional emphasis closely matches that of the MPO whose planning area is shown on page 3. Also, both entities have an interest in transit options, although the MPO plans for all transportation modes and usually avoids advocating one over another.

To do so consistently might jeopardize the MPO’s mission of conducting a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative regional transportation planning process, which must interest, inform and involve the public. People must believe that we objectively assess the information before us on a case-by-case basis, including public input. You can’t be seen as both an advocate and objective.

By federal mandate, the MPO is the region’s primary transportation planner. That federal mandate also sets us apart from the RTA, which is locally authorized, and attests to the value of what we do. All projects that receive federal funding must be the product of the federally certified planning process we conduct. They must appear first in our long-term Regional Transportation Plan before they can be programmed for implementation in our three-year Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP). When our planning partners wish to amend the IRTIP due to changing budgets or priorities, they must go through us. We, in turn, present their proposed amendments for review and comment to the public, the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council, and the Metropolitan Development Commission.

**IRTTC**

The IRTC is made up of two committees: the Technical Committee comprised of engineers and planners from throughout the nine-county region, and the Policy Committee comprised of elected official from throughout the MPO planning area. The 35-member IRTC Policy Committee is currently the decision-making body of the MPO’s regional transportation planning process. As such, the MPO presents its findings and recommendations to the IRTC for approval. If the IRTC rejects the MPO’s recommendations, for whatever reason, those recommendations are not implemented. A lot of people still don’t understand this. As a planning agency, the MPO cannot implement its recommendations by itself. The IRTC Policy Committee is also not an implementing agency, like our planning partners INDOT or the Indianapolis Department of Public Works (DPW), but as elected officials its members represent the implementing agencies from their jurisdictions.

It’s a question in my own mind exactly how much the decision-making role of the IRTC will overlap with that of the new RTA. Clearly, the RTA has been established as an entity that can implement its own programs, a power the MPO does not have. However, it’s unlikely that the RTA will have its own planning abilities beyond those provided by the MPO. So, our role and the likelihood of the RTA and MPO working together is assured. And since RTA members have been/will be appointed by elected officials from every participating jurisdiction, the question of who serves as official decision-maker may not be an issue.

To see who has already been named to the RTA, what seats remain open, and who appoints those representatives, see the box on page 4. For more information on the RTA, visit the MPO web site or contact me at 317/327-5139 (mdearing@indygov.org).
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**ION AA Update**

In its Autumn, 2004 issue (Volume Eight, Issue Three), teMPO detailed the scope-of-work involved in the third and final phase of **DI**

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**IONS**, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility. That scope, which had been expanded during the summer, includes 1) detailed alternatives analysis (AA) of routes and technologies, and an investigation of funding options, for a starter system in the Northeast Corridor, 2) a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) of IndyGo’s existing service (see related story, page 1) and, 3) the development of an implementation plan for a possible region-wide rapid transit network.

Since the publication of that issue, Phase III AA has progressed toward its scheduled completion in the first quarter of 2005. On Wednesday, November 10th, the MPO presented technically-feasible starter system routes for the Northeast Corridor, as well as ‘flawed’ routes involving impacts to the natural and human environment considered unacceptable by transportation planners. This information was presented at the fourth quarter, regularly scheduled meeting of the Policy Committee of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC), which is comprised of elected officials from throughout the area and which serves as the decision-making body for the regional transportation planning process. A week later, this information was also presented for review and comment at a Public Open House. Public input from that session guided planners in choosing which routes to include in Tier 2 analysis.

“Many of the routes under consideration interact with the proposed bus transfer center and Cultural Trail downtown,” notes Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “We’re eager to study these in greater detail from a construction cost and available funding perspective, but we wanted to hear which routes the public likes first,” he explains. “That’s why we really promoted this meeting through advertising and public relations and why it was so important that people interested in region-wide rapid transit attend.”

**Rapid Transit Open House**

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**IONS’** Starter System Open House was held on Wednesday, November 17 in the Community Room of Glendale Mall, 6101 N. Keystone Ave., Indianapolis. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss specific starter system alternatives for the Northeast Corridor. On July 21, 2004, the IRTC confirmed planner recommendations and public preferences by selecting the Northeast Corridor, the region’s busiest, for further study as the possible first leg of a region-wide rapid transit system. At the November 17 meeting, attendees also learned about routes that were eliminated due to ‘fatal flaws’. Exhibits and planners were available from 6:30 - 8PM and a 7 PM presentation was followed by a lengthy and animated Q & A session. Between one and two hundred people participated in the meeting, which was the subject of nearly 80 print and broadcast news stories before and after the event, including a cover story and several follow-up pieces in *The Indianapolis Star*, the region’s newspaper of record.

Dearing opened the meeting with a brief overview of the MPO’s federally mandated role as the region’s primary transportation planner and a brief history of the **DI**

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**IONS** study (see sidebar, page 26). MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman, M.S., who is supervising the study, then led meeting attendees through the Phase III findings to-date, including a review of the routes Tier 1 AA found worthy of more detailed study. At the conclusion of her PowerPoint presentation, Inman and the ITC consultants conducted the follow-up Q & A. ITC is an umbrella name for a joint co-venture of two transportation, engineering and design firms, headed up by Schimpeler American of Louisville, a division of American Consulting Engineers, and Jacobs Engineering.

Most of the Q & A discussion, which took place in front of local news camera, concerned the need for and cost of a rapid transit system. Those opposed to building such a system stated their belief that regional traffic congestion, even in the northeast corridor, had not reached a point where a transit solution was necessary. If it did, sometime in the future, they questioned 1) whether people accustomed to the convenience of their cars would ever use it, 2) the impact such a system cont on page 8, see **DI**

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**IONS’ AA Update**

PAGE SEVEN
would have on property values and traffic flow adjacent to its route, and 3) how much it would cost area residents and how that money would be collected.

Proponents of rapid transit acknowledged the growth in regional traffic congestion documented through independent research by groups such as the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI). Many who have lived elsewhere expressed their belief that reliable, efficient and economical transportation is a quality-of-life benefit offered by most other big cities. They also cited the region’s air quality non-attainment status, continued population growth and development sprawl, and spiraling gasoline and vehicle costs as reasons to implement a rapid transit system plan as quickly as possible. Rapid transit advocates, like opponents, also are concerned about how much a system will cost, but feel the long term benefit to the region far outweigh the expense, especially if 30 – 50% of the system’s cost can be covered by federal funding – a conservative planning scenario.

The MPO considers significant public input gathered at its meetings, from its 24-hr. Comment Line (327-8601), or on the internet (MPO web site: www.indygov.org/indympo, DIRECTIONS Discussion Board: indygov.org, click “Discussion Forums-DiRecTionS”) as a part of the planning process and conveys such information to the IRTC.

Tier 2 Routes

Of the possible rapid transit starter system routes presented at the November 17th Public Open House, the following four were found worthy of detailed Tier 2 alternatives analysis by members of the public, the IRTC Policy Committee and study planners. They are:

**Alternate 1**, which uses the I-69/Binford Blvd. right-of-way between Noblesville and 38th St. at the Fairgrounds. It then follows the railroad right-of-way that parallels the Monon Trail to 10th St. at Massachusetts Ave. Around downtown, it uses the railroad corridor that encircles the Central Business District (CBD) on the east, south, and west between 10th St. at Massachusetts Ave. and 16th St. at Bush Stadium. Alternate 1 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer center on South Street and with the proposed Cultural Trail at the Monon/Mass Avenue Trailhead and at Virginia Avenue.

**Alternate 2**, which uses the Hoosier Heritage Railroad right-of-way between Noblesville and 38th St. at the Fairgrounds. There it picks up the railroad right-of-way paralleling the Monon Trail to 10th St. at Massachusetts Ave. It also uses the railroad corridor that encircles the CBD on the east, south, and west between 10th Street at Massachusetts Ave. and 16th St. at Bush Stadium. Alternate 2 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer center on South Street and with the proposed Cultural Trail at the Monon Trail/Massachusetts Avenue trailhead, and at Virginia Avenue.

**Alternate 3**, which uses the Allisonville Rd. right-of-way between Noblesville and the Fall Creek Parkway. It uses the Keystone Ave. right-of-way with I-70 on the south, between 39th St. at the Fairgrounds and 10th St. at Massachusetts Ave. Around downtown, it uses the railroad corridor that encircles the CBD on the east, south, and west between 10th St. at Massachusetts Ave. and 16th St. at Bush Stadium. Alternate 3 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer center on South Street and with the proposed Cultural Trail at the Monon Trail/Mass Avenue trailhead and at Virginia Avenue.

**Alternate 4**, which uses the Hoosier Heritage Railroad right-of-way between Noblesville and 86th St. It follows 86th St. and I-465 right-of-way between the Hoosier Heritage Rail corridor and Keystone Ave. between I-465 and 38th St. at the Fairgrounds. This route then picks up the rail right-of-way cont on page 26, see DIRECTIONS’ AA Update
Possible Route Alternatives 1 through 4 are candidates for more detailed study, having already been found to provide an efficient, low-impact path for a rapid transit starter system in the Northeast Corridor. Alternative 5, shown here for comparison purposes, also is technically feasible, but involves impacts to the natural or human environment considered unacceptable by study planners.
As a start, Dearing announced the formation of a new sub-committee at the CAC’s last regularly scheduled meeting in October. Its purpose is to focus on alternative transportation issues. Members of this committee, like those of the other existing CAC sub-committees (Sound Barriers, Senior Transportation Issues) will work directly with MPO staff in studying the topic, investigating possible solutions or initiatives and, possibly, presenting recommendations at public meetings and to the IRTC.

“Nothing is off the table here,” says Dearing. “After 10 years, maybe the CAC needs to be re-thought to remain a vital part of our planning process.”

Do you have ideas on how the CAC can play a larger role in regional transportation planning? Or, what issues it should tackle? Or, how information should be presented to make it more interesting? Or, how meetings can encourage increased attendance? If so, share your thoughts with the MPO between now and March 30th by e-mailing them to MPO Planner Catherine Kostyn (ckostyn@indygov.org) or PIP Communications Consultant Joe Whitman (whitman@net-direct.net). Also, please indicate if you are interested in serving on the CAC.

The CAC is currently scheduled to continue meeting on a quarterly basis (see Meeting Schedule, page 13). To encourage attendance, meeting dates, times and locations are always announced via media advisory, newspaper advertising in The Indianapolis Star and The Indianapolis Recorder, direct mail, and on the MPO web site (www.indygov.org/indympo). Meetings are usually scheduled on the second or third Tuesday of the month from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. For more information, contact Mike Dearing at 317/327-5139 (mdearing@indygov.org).

The following people are currently listed on the MPO’s web site (indygov.org/indympo) for having participated on the Citizens Advisory Committee or attended its meetings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Merri Anderson, Marion County All <strong>i</strong>[n][g][h][t] Neighborhood Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Robert Adsit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lloyd Bandy, Hamilton County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Joseph Billerman, IPTC/IndyGo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jeff Bennett, Historic Landmarks Foundation?</td>
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<td>• Earl Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ray Carnamarella, Central Indiana Bicycling Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Jeanie Chrisman, Indianapolis Public Transportation Corp./IndyGo</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Joseph Copeland, Hancock County Highway Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Kenneth E. Cragen, President, Indiana Motor Truck Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Michael Dearing, Indianapolis MPO</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ron Deer, Central Indiana Regional Transit Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Duane Ettinenne</td>
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<tr>
<td>• William Gervasio, Johnson County</td>
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<td>• Bart Giesler, Aviation Association of Indiana</td>
</tr>
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<td>• John Harrold, Cumberland Town Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ben Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Scott Honeycutt</td>
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<td>• Shannon Joseph</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Paul Kilian</td>
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<td>• Shirley King, Southport</td>
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<td>• Andy Knott, Hoosier Environmental Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Amy Kotzbauer, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana</td>
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<td>• Dan Lake</td>
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<td>• Elmer Lowery, Speedway</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dorothy Mack</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Paul Maves, Speedway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Phillip McGeath, President Indiana Association of Rail Passengers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Howard Perry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thomas J. Quigely, Exec. Vice President Indiana Rail Road Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lee Rahmoeller, Metro Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>• John Sharer, Manager of Special Project, Indiana Rail Road Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Judith Spencer, Indiana Motor Truck Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ron Sullivan, Cumberland Town Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Richard Vonnegut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hadi (Mike) Yamin, NORA Community Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>• John Zerbo, Fishers</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Interested Persons</th>
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On Tuesday, November 9, IndyGo took the findings to-date of its Downtown Transit Center Feasibility Study to the public at a five hour Open House held at the Indianapolis Urban League. The meeting location at 777 Indiana Avenue offered attendees maximum accessibility by being within easy walking distance of many downtown employment centers, by offering adequate parking for those who drive, and by being served by both Bus Route 10 (10th Street) and Bus Route 5 (East 25th Street-North Harding) for the transit-committed.

The purpose of the meeting was to present information, and gather public comment, on IndyGo’s downtown Transit Center site recommendation, proposed changes in IndyGo’s downtown routes, and the project’s timeline. As previously reported in tempo (Autumn, 2004), the three, top-rated potential locations for a downtown transit center are 1) directly southeast of the RCA Dome between Senate and Capitol Avenues, 2) the Virginia Avenue Right-Of-Way south of Washington Street between Pennsylvania and Delaware Streets, and 3) the Indiana Avenue north site, south of Vermont Street between Senate and Capitol Avenues. Rated by goals and pre-determined desired site characteristics, such as ease of acquisition and capital cost, the RCA Dome Southeast site was selected for further study as the ‘anchor site’, or the one preferred for initial development. In late October, the IndyGo Board authorized the study team to proceed with the environmental review, grant application and preliminary land acquisition and engineering/design activity which is currently underway.

“Our meeting drew people who currently ride IndyGo, as well as those who don’t but who see the improvement of local transit services as key to the region’s quality-of-life and continued economic growth,” says Mike Terry, IndyGo Director of Business Development. “We had dozens of attendees between 3 and 8 PM, not including media people and elected officials coming to hear the Q & A.”

The meeting agenda invited interested parties to come at 3 PM to browse exhibits and talk with representatives of IndyGo and project consultants URS, a transit engineering firm, and Storrow Kinsella Associates, an Indianapolis-based landscape architecture, urban design and planning studio. URS personnel gave a PowerPoint presentation at 4 PM, and again at 6 PM – both sessions followed by comment/question sessions and lively discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 8 PM.

“To many people, the idea of a new Transit Center represents a renewed commitment to regional mass transit and the first of many innovations that put customer convenience and comfort foremost among our considerations,” says Gil Holmes, IndyGo President and CEO. “These people showed up to see if our expectations for a Transit Center matched their priorities. Since our model was based, in part, on what we’d already learned through extensive public outreach, I think they were pretty satisfied,” he explains.

At its most basic, a transit center provides a centralized location to catch the bus or to make a transfer. It provides passenger amenities such as weather protection, route and schedule information, retail conveniences and staffed, passenger assistance. Parking, a taxi stand, and proximity to long-range bus, rail and future rapid transit connections, as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, will allow people to move throughout the region easily, efficiently and economically.

“Improved bus service, and its resulting growth in ridership, will enable the region to grow without increasing traffic congestion, air quality problems and the demand for parking facilities,” notes Terry.

For more information on IndyGo’s Downtown Transit Center Feasibility Study, or the information presented at the November 9th Public Open House, visit www.indygotransitcenter.net.
As part of its on-going public involvement program, the MPO conducts public meetings throughout the year to gather input for the regional transportation planning process. Many of these meetings relate to one specific Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) project, such as the rapid transit study DIRECTIONS or the Regional Pedestrian Plan, both of which were the subject of special meetings in 2004. Other public meetings, like those shown below, are held on a regular basis and address a variety of transportation-related issues.

All the meeting times, locations and dates shown here are subject to change. Please confirm all information a week prior to each meeting at indygov.org (click ‘Calendar – Events Calendar’). While all planning meetings are technically open to the public, only those shown in bold-face are structured to accommodate public review and comment on the information presented.

The Policy Committee of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) is the decision-making body of the regional transportation planning process to which the MPO makes its recommendations.

Before addressing the IRTC, the MPO presents all information concerning its regional transportation planning efforts to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for public review and comment (see related story, page 9). Members of the public interested in this information are strongly encouraged to attend CAC meetings or to view them on government access channel WCTV (cable channel 16). The MPO conveys significant public comment related to its recommendations to the IRTC.

Among the information regularly presented for public review and comment at CAC meetings are possible amendments, proposed by the MPO’s planning partners, to the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program, or IRTIP. The IRTIP documents federally funded projects programmed for our region over a three-year period.

Once the IRTC signs off on IRTIP amendments, the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) approves their implementation.

A tentative schedule of 2005 meetings follows below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIANAPOLIS REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL (IRTC)</th>
<th>INDIANAPOLIS REGIONAL CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)</th>
<th>TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (IRTIP) 2005 SCHEDULE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TECHNICAL COMMITTEE</td>
<td>POLICY COMMITTEE</td>
<td>JANUARY 30th Submit new projects for 2006-2008 IRTIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARCH 10th 9:00 AM</td>
<td>MARCH 16th 9:00 AM</td>
<td>FEBRUARY 2nd 1st quarter IRTIP amendment deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPW 604 N. Sherman Dr. Fall Creek/White River Rm.</td>
<td>City-County Bldg Suite 2501</td>
<td>MARCH 30th MDC approval of IRTIP amendments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNE 23rd 9:00 AM</td>
<td>JUNE 29th 9:00 AM</td>
<td>MAY 25th 2nd quarter IRTIP amendment deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPW 604 N. Sherman Dr. Fall Creek/White River Rm.</td>
<td>City-County Bldg Suite 2501</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUNE 21st 6:30 to 8:00 PM</td>
<td>City County Bldg Room 118</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>JULY 6th</td>
<td>MDC approval of 2005-2007 amendments</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>AUGUST 25th 9:00 AM</td>
<td>AUGUST 31st 9:00 AM</td>
<td>JULY 8th 2006-2008 IRTIP to INDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPW 604 N. Sherman Dr. Fall Creek/White River Rm.</td>
<td>City-County Bldg Suite 2501</td>
<td>JULY 27th 3rd quarter IRTIP amendment deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 27th 9:00 AM</td>
<td>OCTOBER 25th 6:30 to 8:00 PM</td>
<td>SEPTEMBER 7 MDC approval of IRTIP amendments</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPW 604 N. Sherman Dr. Fall Creek/White River Rm.</td>
<td>City County Bldg Room 118</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 5th 4th quarter IRTIP amendment deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 28th MPO call for submittal of new local projects for the 2007-2009 IRTIP - due date is January 30, 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOVEMBER 9th 9:00 AM</td>
<td>NOVEMBER 16th MDC approval of IRTIP amendments</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPW 604 N. Sherman Dr. Fall Creek/White River Rm.</td>
<td>City-County Bldg Suite 2501</td>
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Air Quality and the MPO

On Friday, October 8th, 2004, MPO Assistant Manager/Master Planner Philip Roth, AICP, made a presentation to the Central Indiana Air Quality Advisory Group which is comprised of representatives from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other stakeholder groups. The subject of the presentation was MPO transportation planning efforts intended to improve Central Indiana’s air quality while addressing traffic congestion issues.

The following comments are excerpted from that presentation:

The MPO planning area (see map on page 3), has been designated as a non-attainment area for federal standards of air pollution, including ground level ozone, and fine particulate matter (known as PM 2.5, or matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter -- less than a third the diameter of a human hair). Generally, transportation accounts for more than a third of ozone pollution.

Another type of pollution for which our area has been recently designated as a non-attainment area is Particulate PM 2.5, which contains ammonia, benzene and other chemicals. PM 2.5 air quality levels, though influenced in part by the use of diesel fuel, have as much to do with agricultural and power generation uses as with transportation. For this reason, we’ll direct our comments to the problem of ozone pollution and its remedy through transportation planning.

Ground-level ozone is a colorless, odorless air pollutant that forms when the sun’s ultraviolet radiation combines with emissions from automobiles, small engines and industrial sources. Each ozone molecule is composed of three atoms of oxygen — one more than the oxygen molecule we normally breathe to sustain life. This additional oxygen atom makes ozone extremely reactive.

Ozone formed near the Earth’s surface results in smog, damaging the environment and human health. In high concentrations, ozone can affect the throat, respiratory tract and lungs. Ozone can also reduce crop and forest yields; damage the appearance of trees and plants; and limit plants’ ability to withstand disease, insects, harsh weather and other pollutants.

Philip Roth
MP0 Assistant Manager/Master Planner

In 1970, with the creation of the Clean Air Act, the EPA established federal limits on the ground-level ozone concentration permitted in outdoor air. These limits were health-based and were designed to ensure that U.S. residents were breathing healthy and safe air.

For several years, Indianapolis’ ozone levels did not meet those federal standards, and the region was designated as a non-attainment area. Thanks to years of hard work from the city and the business and industrial community, Indianapolis reduced ozone levels below the federal standards and returned to attainment status in November, 1994.

However, due to new stricter ozone standards Central Indiana, like many major metropolitan areas, is now again in violation of federal standards. In April, 2004, all nine counties in Central Indiana were found to be in violation of the new standards (More than 470 counties were cited nation-wide).

Is it any wonder why? According to IDEM, more than 200,000 residents of the nine county metropolitan area, about a sixth of our total population, commute to work outside of their home counties. That’s a lot of rush hour miles of stop/start travel where idling engines compound our air quality problems. Clearly, the MPO’s best hope for helping to improve the region’s air quality lay in its efforts to reduce traffic congestion.

Improving the Flow

Reducing demand, especially during peak hour usage, is one sure way to improve the flow of traffic. The MPO has been attempting to do this in a variety of ways, long before the 2004 non-attainment designations.

In 1998, the MPO began

cont on page 25, see Air Quality

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 • Principal Planner . . . . . . . 317/327-5403 scunning@indygov.org
Mike Dearing • Manager/Master Planner . . . . . . . 317/327-5139 mdearing@indygov.org
Amy Inman, M.S. • Senior Planner . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 317/327-5646 ainman@indygov.org
Catherine Kostyn, M.A. • Planner . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 317/327-5142 ckostyn@indygov.org
Kevin Mayfield • Senior Planner . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 317/327-5135 kmayfield@indygov.org
Philip Roth, AICP • Asst. Manager/Master Planner . . . . . . 317/327-5149 proth@indygov.org
Heather Stouder, M.S. • Planner . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 317/327-5136 hstouder@indygov.org
Sweson Yang, AICP . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 317/327-5137 syang@indygov.org
Chief Transportation Planner

For more information on our regional transportation planning process, visit the MPO web site at www.indygov.org/indympo.
"This is a good investment for us and the community we serve," says Holmes. "People want an objective evaluation of our services from transit experts who can recommend short- and long-term improvements," he notes. "Our goal for this COA is to help IndyGo meet its current customer needs while preparing it for a future role in a possible region-wide rapid transit system."

The COA is being conducted by Manuel Padron & Associates of Orlando, FL, and Schimpeler-American of Louisville, KY, both firms working on DIReCTIONs under the umbrella name of Indianapolis Transit Consultants (ITC).

"ITC has assembled a team of highly qualified consultants, each having extensive expertise in bus operations and planning, to conduct this COA," notes Charlie Schimpeler. "Our work approach combines extensive data collection and technical analysis with sound planning judgement and in-depth knowledge of future high capacity transit corridors gained from the work we’ve already completed on DIReCTIONS."

The COA is focusing on optimizing the region’s current fixed route transit network by providing IndyGo with near-term (1-3 year), short-range (4-9 year) and long-range (9-15 year) efficiency recommendations, and establishing a sound base system from which future transit initiatives/networks might be developed. Projected impacts and benefits of such recommendations will also be identified during the analysis process, which will include clear opportunities for public review and comment, such as Open Houses tentatively scheduled for January and March, 2005.

**COA Purpose/Objectives**
The purpose of the COA is to perform a comprehensive analysis of existing transit services within the Indianapolis area and to provide a basis for the development of an improved bus service network that will 1) address current demand and 2) facilitate expanded service to the region as the economy continues to grow.

To accomplish its purpose, the COA incorporates the following key objectives:
- Provide a reliable database and a statistical picture of the overall ridership by stop and route productivity and performance (by segment) upon which existing transit service can be evaluated with respect to measures of efficiency and effectiveness
- Evaluate existing IndyGo fixed route bus service to determine changes to route alignments, schedules and service frequencies that will improve individual route and system-wide service efficiency, effectiveness and productivity
- Reduce operating costs initially, and provide for an opportunity from which to build future efficient and effective service initiatives
- Increase ridership and operating revenue
- Minimize impacts on existing riders and provide improved mobility opportunities for the future
- Meet Environmental Justice requirements (Title VI)
- Identify unmet transit needs and develop service proposals for near-term, short-range and long-range timeframes that can assist IndyGo and the community in transitioning from the existing fixed route bus system to a multi-modal transit network
- Develop service proposals that can be incorporated in IndyGo’s short- and long-range plans that are consistent with other regional transportation and land use planning efforts

"Building future transit networks based on an efficient and effective existing system will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of those future networks," says MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman, M.S., who is supervising the DIReCTIONs study.

Population density is one of several key factors when evaluating a transit route’s ridership potential.

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"Building future transit networks based on an efficient and effective existing system will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of those future networks," says MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman, M.S., who is supervising the DIReCTIONs study.
We have to make sure that the building blocks of tomorrow’s system are as strong as possible today.”

COA ‘M.O.’

Since September, 2004, an extensive amount of data has been collected as part of the modus operandi or ‘M. O.’ of the analysis. Data collection efforts have consisted of 1) an update of the bus stop inventory, 2) a full ridecheck of the IndyGo transit system, documenting passenger boardings by both route and bus stop and bus running times, 3) service area field observations, 4) interviews with IndyGo front line staff including bus operators, supervisors, service planning and scheduling personnel and management staff, 5) a review of all relevant past transit planning documents and efforts, and, 6) a thorough review of existing and historical IndyGo bus route ridership and performance data.

INDYGO COA Process

(Task 1: Data Collection and Review)

The purpose of the Data Collection Task is to assemble and review all information presently available and to collect new data for a comprehensive analysis of the IndyGo transit system, including route ridership and performance, system operations, and procedures. This task involves:

• updating the bus stop inventory
• ridechecking IndyGo transit system, including passenger boardings (by route and bus stop) and bus running times
• making service area field observations
• interviewing IndyGo front line staff including bus operators, supervisors, service planning/scheduling personnel and management staff
• reviewing all relevant past transit planning documents/efforts, and
• reviewing existing/historical IndyGo bus route ridership and performance data

COA Tasks

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• reviewing all relevant past transit planning documents/efforts, and
• reviewing existing/historical IndyGo bus route ridership and performance data

Task 2: Evaluation of Existing Service

This task includes the development of Service Performance Monitoring Indicators (operational, financial and customer service). Based on IndyGo’s existing bus system performance indicators, on the results of peer group analysis, and on the experience of the project consultants, these indicators will facilitate the analysis and evaluation of alternatives for restructuring the bus system in subsequent study tasks. Task 2 involves:

• preparing route performance profiles and service efficiency analysis
• identifying key operational, alignment and schedule issues, such as headways (service frequencies), passenger loads by route segment relative to capacity, locations of transfer centers and opportunities for timed transfers, peak-to-base vehicle ratio, directness and redundancy of route alignments, transfer needs and opportunities, interlining (scheduled ‘through’ routes), operating hours and days of service, deadhead operations, reverse commuting, traffic and bus turning movement considerations, and passenger amenities
• producing an existing service analysis summary report

Task 3: Service Needs Analysis

Unlike the previous task which focuses heavily on existing service ridership patterns and use, performance, efficiency and effectiveness, this task concentrates on future needs from a travel pattern and market/environment perspective. In addition, Task 3 examines IndyGo in relation to systems in similar cities. Task 3 involves:

• focusing on travel patterns and market/environment perspective
• examining travel patterns throughout the region
• analyzing existing socioeconomic/land use data and future projections such as income, age, auto ownership and population densities
• conducting peer group analysis by comparing the IndyGo transit system with those of similar cities (in population, population densities, land use mix, economic environment, etc) noting transit system service levels, cost-performance, etc.
• developing a summary report on service needs

Task 4: Development of Service Plans

This task involves the review and analysis, in detail, of all data obtained and generated to this point in the COA process as input to development of service plan recommendations. This includes:

• Study Area Review, including collection of all existing route service data, service area field observation documentation, input from front line staff/managers, and public input;
• Analysis of Transit Needs, including market conditions, current and future travel patterns, and the on-board survey results;
• Transit Service Analysis, including the results of the ridecheck survey and downtown transfer analysis, all route performance and market profile analyses, and peer group analysis

cont on page 16, see see IndyGo COA Process
Upon completion of Task 1 (Data Collection and Review), the COA consultants began developing service performance monitoring indicators. These performance indicators will be used by IndyGo to analyze and evaluate system restructuring alternatives during the COA’s subsequent tasks. These indicators will also assist IndyGo and the study consultants in evaluating various service initiatives now and in the future, as well as in evaluating the performance of existing service.

Task 2 of the COA also includes preparation of route performance profiles and a service efficiency analysis (currently underway). The route performance profiles include detailed route level data and analysis which will assist the study team in evaluating 1) service effectiveness, 2) revenue generation, 3) cost-efficiency, 4) cost-effectiveness, and 5) service quality indicators. From this analysis, key operational, alignment and route schedule issues will be identified.

In addition to the evaluation of existing transit service, a service needs analysis (Task 3) will be conducted. This analysis (nearly complete) is focusing on future transit needs from a travel pattern and market/environment perspective. The service needs analysis consists of 1) Travel Pattern Analysis – examining travel patterns throughout the region, 2) Socioeconomic/Land Use Analysis – analyzing existing and future socioeconomic data such as income, age, auto ownership and population densities, and 3) Peer Group Analysis – a comparison of the IndyGo transit system with those of similar cities (in population, population densities, land use mix, economic environment, etc) noting transit system service levels, cost-performance, etc.

Task 4 involves the development of service plans for IndyGo’s consideration. ITC will evaluate a range of potential service alternatives for the overall IndyGo service area, sectors, and individual routes. The results of the analysis of transit needs, service performance and ridership, together with the input from the various IndyGo staff and the consultant team fieldwork, will provide guidance to the development of service alternatives.

Service alternative recommendations will be developed for three time frames: near-term (1-3 years), short-range (4-9 years) and long-range (10-15 years). The rationale for identifying service recommendations for these three-time periods centers around how the results of these recommendations will be used.

**Did you Know? . . .**

In 2003, Indiana residents spent an average of 21.2 minutes commuting to work one way, which ranked the state 35th in average commuting times nationally. According to new figures from the U.S. Census Bureau, Indiana reported the second shortest commute times of any Midwestern state (behind Wisconsin at an average of 20.4 minutes). The national average is about 24.3 minutes.

Though some ride transit purely by choice, IndyGo serves as an economical means of travel for many more without options.

**Near-term** service recommendations will be designed to address existing system inefficiencies, immediate opportunities for service cost savings, redirection of existing financial and physical resources to areas and opportunities that will provide the greatest impact (e.g., ridership growth, financial efficiency,
political support, etc.) in the near-term, and are intended to provide IndyGo with a redesigned, efficient base transit system from which to build a future multi-modal transit network.

**Short-range** service recommendations will provide IndyGo with continued service improvement recommendations, coupled with expansion services (e.g., new routes, service types, etc.), for implementation over a 4 to 9-year period. These service improvements/enhancements will be designed to build upon the revised more efficient near-term bus system, and provide service growth and patronage as a transitional phase to more long-range multi-modal higher capacity transit service (to be defined as part of the Regional Transit Study).

**Long-range** service recommendations will include additional new transit services throughout the Indianapolis region, as well as identify supporting bus networks for higher capacity transit modes and corridors. Supporting bus networks will be defined for the priority corridors identified in the Regional Transit Study (RTS) for use in travel demand forecasting.

Additional tasks involved in the COA include conducting a public outreach program throughout the project and issuing a Final Report upon the COA’s completion.

**Potential Findings**

The IndyGo service area has changed markedly over the past 10-20 years as new growth in both population and employment has gravitated toward I-465 and beyond. This has led to a shift in travel patterns (work trips and otherwise) by Indianapolis area residents and workers. In most other major U.S. cities, a similar outbound shift in residential and commercial development has led transit agencies to look for ways to improve the coverage and efficiency of their service. For this reason, and to better meet the needs of their own changing travel market, IndyGo and the MPO have initiated this Comprehensive Operational Analysis of the existing transit system.

Completion of the COA will provide an assessment of overall IndyGo system effectiveness and efficiency, and facilitate the development of a revised system to meet the current and future mobility needs of the Indianapolis region. The COA study effort will result in recommended bus service modifications, changes to service levels and new bus routes. These service recommendations will be identified for three timeframes: near-term (1-3 years), short-range (4-9 years) and long-range (10-15 years) and will be detailed in the following manner:

- **Transit services** will be developed within the following hierarchy of service types:
  - Regional Service – higher speed activity center to activity center service providing cross-regional mobility. Examples of regional services include express and limited stop service.
  - Local/Crosstown Service – moderate to slow speed transit service linking a series of major and minor activity centers with frequent bus stop spacing. These services would operate primarily on major arterial roadways with

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**Did you Know? . . .**

According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), 37.2 million people traveled 50 miles or more this past Thanksgiving to be with family or friends – a 3% increase over 2003’s heavy turn-out.
minimal deviation on minor streets/roadways.
– Neighborhood/Activity Center Circulators – slower speed transit service penetrating the local neighborhoods and commercial activity centers, providing direct connections to Regional and Local/Crosstown services at transit centers or major transfer locations.
– Flex-Route Transit Service – Flexible or demand response type service designed to serve a defined area. This service may also combine local fixed route service along a segment or the entire route with flexible route service in specific areas or available along the entire core route alignment.

- Complete service parameters for each route or service by day of the week, including service spans, frequencies by time period, timed transfers, vehicle requirements by time period, service hours and miles, roundtrip running times, trip distances, and route interlining combinations.
- Maps and alignment descriptions of all route alignment changes will be prepared. Any changes in operating policies that are required to implement the service will be identified.
- A review of existing passenger amenities, and suggested potential improvements, will be provided. This review will focus on a combination of high-boarding sites and locations where route changes may be appropriate.
- Should some service changes need to occur prior to others, or in conjunction with others, a phasing plan or schedule will be identified.
- Ridership and costs for both operations and capital improvements will be estimated.

 insults of developing new and improved bus service for the Indianapolis region, the MPO and IndyGo encourages and accommodates the interest and involvement of its planning partners, including members of the public. Future opportunities to provide input on the development of the region’s transit system will be heavily promoted by the MPO.

“It’s everybody’s business,” says Mike Dearing, MPO Manager/Master Planner. “In other cities where rapid transit systems have been implemented, the use of existing bus systems has grown dramatically.”

Gil Holmes agrees. “Increased transit use helps with traffic congestion and air quality – two areas of real concern in Central Indiana,” he says. “People who take these problems seriously will continue to partner with the MPO and IndyGo in trying to solve them.”

For more information on DIRECTIONS’ COA of IndyGo, contact IndyGo Director of Business Development Michael Terry (635-3344, mterry@indygo.net). For more information on Phase III of DIRECTIONS, contact MPO Senior Planner Amy Inman (327-5646, ainman@indygov.org).
Irons In The Fire

CICS Report

Ruth Reiman, Manager of Central Indiana Commuter Services (CICS), reports that the program has already been embraced by three prominent area employers: the State, the City, and Marion County.

The purpose of CICS, a new program of services offered by IndyGo, is to encourage, accommodate and facilitate mobility options for employers and their employees throughout Central Indiana. Commuters are able to reduce the stress, expense and time required by their daily commutes, while their employers benefit from a more productive, reliable and happier workforce. Mobility options include alternative transportation modes, such as bus-ridership, carpooling and vanpooling, but CICS also offers benefits to those who bike or walk to work by providing Emergency Ride Home Service to all registered program participants.

“The State of Indiana has been carpooling for more than five years as part of its 1999 ‘Greening The Government’ Executive Order,” explains Reiman. “But now with the availability of CICS services, they’ve made employee commuting options the focus of increased promotional activity.”

On November 17, the State hosted a CICS Transportation Event following the program’s kick-off news conference, and did so again on January 11th. As of press time, the state has 64 registered program participants, including two cyclists, 20 transit riders and 42 car-poolers who enjoy preferred parking at their place of employment.

The City of Indianapolis has also begun a serious commitment to the CICS program. Two CICS Transportation Fairs were held in November and December of 2004 to explain program benefits and available services to City-County Building employees. Currently, the City boasts 18 registered program participants, including one cyclist, seven car-poolers, and ten transit-riders. City employees enjoy free IndyGo passes, provided by their employer, when they give up their parking spaces.

So do employees of Marion County, which currently has eight registered program participants, including one cyclist, three car-poolers and four transit-riders.

“It’s a good beginning,” notes Reiman, “and these numbers can only grow as more state, city and county employees hear about the convenience CICS offers.”

For more information, state employees can contact their Employee Transportation Coordinator Janet Fox at 232-7658; City employees should call Collin Kebo at 327-5212; and, employees of Marion County can call their Employee Transportation Coordinator Sara Logsdon at 327-3015. All others interested in learning more about CICS, should call 888/737-RIDE or visit www.centralincommuter.net.

MP0 To Expand Latino Outreach

“We’ve done the best we can on very limited funds, but we’re feeling the need to do more,” says Mike Dearing of the Latino outreach initiative that’s one component of the MPO’s on-going Public Involvement Program. “Because of the language barrier, making a special effort to involve the Hispanic segment of our resident population can be an expensive proposition,” he notes. “Still, we’ve managed over the last few years to regularly run display advertising promoting upcoming public meetings in La Voz de Indiana and La Ola Latino-Americana, issue media advisories to all regional Latino news sources including UniVision, produce and distribute special literature at Latino community venues, involve neighborhood representatives in our bi-monthly Community Inclusion lunches, and even have paid translators at some of our public meetings.”

In 2005, the MPO plans to augment the above outreach efforts to encourage increased Latino interest and involvement in the regional transportation planning program. At Dearing’s request, PIP Communications Consultant Joe Whitman developed an overview of proposed expanded activity last fall. It includes a more frequent schedule of Spanish language ads and media advisories, a meeting program coordinated through the Mexican Consulate and the City’s Director of Latino Affairs, use of a Spanish-speaking meeting facilitator to act as the MPO’s ‘voice’ at special events, literature aimed at addressing transportation-related issues unique to the Hispanic market, and the possible appointment of one or two prominent Latinos to the Citizens Advisory Committee (see related story, page 5). The number of issues of teMPO produced each year would be reduced from five to four to fund the proposed work.

Did you Know? . . .

Did you know that Thanksgiving, 2004 was the busiest ever for U. S. fliers. According to the Air Transport Association, a trade group, about 16.3 million Americans boarded flights during the 11 days surrounding the holiday.
The CISTMS study area is 3,522 square miles. It includes Marion County, but is focused on the eight surrounding counties: Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan and Hendricks. CISTMS is examining the busiest travel corridors within this area: SR 32/38 on the north, SR 9 on the east, SR 44/144 on the south, and SR 267/39 on the west (see map, this page). In addition, parallel routes will be evaluated, including 146th St. in Hamilton County, the proposed North-South Corridor (Ronald Reagan Parkway) in Hendricks County and the proposed East-West Corridor in Johnson County.

“We’ve completed that process now, and have been sharing our findings about these minimum and maximum options, or ‘bookend’ alternatives, with the public since early fourth quarter, 2004.”

On October 26th, Myers and his HNTB co-worker, Lori Miser, presented CISTMS findings to-date at the MPOs Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting. This presentation has been broadcast repeatedly on government access channel WCTY (Cable Channel 16). In addition, INDOT and HNTB personnel have made CISTMS presentations to various special interest groups and the information remains available on-line at INDOT’s website (http://in.gov/dot/projects/).

Transportation Findings

The two initial alternatives evaluated by CISTMS represented the potential minimum and maximum feasible solutions for addressing suburban roadway congestion.

The Current Plan Alternative, or minimum option in this study, includes all improvements currently featured in the 2025 Regional Plan with only minor improvements within the four corridor areas. This alternative adds no ‘through’ travel lanes and includes only relatively small projects within the study corridors, many of which are already listed in local transportation improvement programs.

The Outer Belt Alternative, or maximum option, assumes that in addition to system improvements already included in the Regional Transportation Plan, roadways will be built or upgraded to interstate standards within each of the study corridors. Linking these roadways would provide a new circumferential freeway or “outer belt.” It would be located along or generally parallel to travel corridors five to fifteen miles outside of I-465. This is the most extensive improvement option being considered by CISTMS.

For the purposes of this study, the “Current Plan” and “Outer Belt” alternatives represent the “least” and “most” improvements that could occur in these corridors. Within this range, the type of improvements proposed for each of the

cont on page 21, see Preliminary Findings
Preliminary Findings
(from page 20)

four corridor areas (north, south, east and west) could be different.

“For example, a new terrain freeway could be located parallel to SR 9 on the east side, while other travel corridors within the study area receive smaller scale improvements to existing facilities,” explains Miser.

To evaluate the Current Plan Alternative, a year 2000 baseline scenario was developed for comparison with year 2025 projections. Table 1 illustrates changes forecasted between 2000 and 2025 if only minimal improvements are made to study travel corridors.

To assess the impact of the Outer Belt Alternative on travel congestion, all four study area travel corridors were assumed to be upgraded and linked within the 2025 travel forecast model network. This roadway was envisioned to be an interstate-type facility with four traffic lanes for movement of traffic and grade-separated interchanges at all state highways, interstate highways, and other limited-access highways. Table 2 on page 22 compares the changes between the Current Plan (minimum change) Alternative and the Outer Belt (maximum change) Alternative.

The two maps on this and the next page illustrate forecasted daily traffic volumes for the Current Plan and Outer Belt Alternatives. A review of these maps, and the forecasted traffic levels they illustrate, indicates:

• The highest forecasted traffic levels on an outer belt would be between I-69 and I-70 on the north side (74,000 vehicles/day), south of I-70 on the east side (44,000 vehicles/day), and between I-70 and the new I-69 on the west side (48,000 vehicles/day).

• The most significant traffic pattern change would be on I-69 north, where the traffic would use a segment

Table 1: Forecasted Travel Growth, 2000-2025
(CURRENT PLAN ALTERNATIVE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person Trips</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>35% increase in person trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Trips</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>36% increase in vehicle trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>53% increase in daily vehicle miles traveled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Trip Length (mi)</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>9.94</td>
<td>12% increase in trip length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles at LOS E or Worse</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>111.6% increase in significantly congested roadways</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Level of Service E on a multi-lane highway represents conditions that are at or near capacity, an unstable level of traffic flow.
of the outer belt to access I-70 instead of I-69 and I-465. This would reduce the traffic volume on I-69 northeast of I-465 by approximately 28,000 vehicles per day.

- To a lesser extent, the future I-69 south exhibits a similar pattern. Some motorists would use a segment of the outer belt to access I-70 on the southwest side. Traffic on I-69 would be reduced by 23,000 vehicles/day.
- Generally, the outer belt would not greatly affect state highway volumes within the study travel corridors. The greatest traffic volume reductions would occur in the southwest (Morgan County) on SR 67 (12,000 vehicles/day), SR 267 (6,000 vehicles/day), and SR 39 (6,000 vehicles/day).
- Some reduction in traffic volumes would occur on I-465. The greatest reduction would occur on the west and the northwest sections (7,000 – 18,000 vehicles/day), and on the east side north of I-70 (13,000 vehicles/day).

Land Use Findings

One tool used in the evolution of potential CISTMS’ strategies examined the interrelationship between transportation and land use in Central Indiana. This process included a panel of experts in the areas of economic development and land use planning. Panel members were asked to consider the impact of minimum and maximum changes to roadways in each of the study corridors and to relate them to potential development patterns in the future. These findings were factored into a quantitative review using specialized computer models that analyzed land use and traffic impacts.

A regional land use model has been developed by the Center for Urban

cont on page 23, see Preliminary Findings

Table 2: Forecasted 2025 Conditions (Current Plan and Outer Belt Alternatives)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Current Plan</th>
<th>Outer Belt</th>
<th>Percent Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Trips</td>
<td>7.2 million</td>
<td>7.1 million</td>
<td>-0.1% decrease in vehicle trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)</td>
<td>71.1 million</td>
<td>72.4 million</td>
<td>1.9% increase in daily vehicle miles traveled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Trip Length (mi)&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>9.94</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>2% increase in trip length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles at LOS E or Worse&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>-14.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup>Level of Service E on a multi-lane highway represents conditions that are at or near capacity, an unstable level of traffic flow.
<sup>2</sup>A detailed analysis of trip lengths based on travel time reveals that all trip lengths for all trip purposes decrease slightly. This means that average travel speeds have increased for the Maximum Change Alternative with the availability of the proposed outer belt highway.
Preliminary Findings
(from page 22)

Policy and the Environment at IUPUI to evaluate the effects of policy alternatives in Central Indiana. The model, called LUCI (for Land Use in Central Indiana) is calibrated based on historical patterns of land conversion to urban areas, and considers factors such as availability of water and sewer and environmental constraints on developable land. A version of the model, referred to as LUCI/T, incorporates transportation accessibility measures and was used to analyze future land use impacts during this phase of the CISTMS study.

The 2025 Current Plan forecast shows an increase in urbanized land area of 299 square miles (34%), bringing the total urbanized land area in the region to 849 square miles. Marion and Hamilton Counties are forecast to experience the most urbanization, with each developing between 60 and 65 square miles of land or just over 20 percent of regional new land urbanized. The forecasted growth in urbanized land for each county is:

- Marion: 63 sq. mi.
- Hamilton: 63 sq. mi.
- Hendricks: 51 sq. mi.
- Johnson: 33 sq. mi.
- Hancock: 28 sq. mi.
- Boone: 23 sq. mi.
- Morgan: 15 sq. mi.
- Madison: 14 sq. mi.
- Shelby: 9 sq. mi.

Evaluated at the county level, land use modeling for the Outer Belt Alternative shows negligible change in total urbanized land when compared to the Current Plan Alternative. The difference is less than 0.1 square mile per county.

This very small difference in land use patterns suggests that the CISTMS ‘bookend’ alternatives would have only minor impacts on land use development patterns when viewed from a regional perspective. This conclusion was supported by longer-term analysis that showed little impact on development out to the year 2040, after the outer belt freeway had theoretically been in place for 15 years.

It should be noted, however, that although the regional impact would be limited, an outer belt freeway would affect localized land use patterns. Development would likely occur around major interchanges, especially highway-oriented establishments such as restaurants and gas stations, as well as warehousing and distribution centers. Smaller office parks may also locate near major interchanges such as new I-69/outer belt interchanges in the northeast.

CISTMS modeling to-date indicates that even at interstate standards, an outer belt would not attract traffic at the level of other regional interstate highways. With one exception, an outer belt would not greatly reduce traffic volumes on any other roadway. This applies to parallel state highways through the counties served, as well as to I-465 in Marion County. The exception is I-69/I-465 south of Anderson, where the outer belt segment linking I-69 to I-70 would provide a new option for accessing downtown Indianapolis.

Likewise, an outer belt would apparently have little effect on the location and intensity of regional urbanization (land use). The reasons for these minimal impacts/benefits include:

- The outer belt would be located relatively far from the center of the Indianapolis region and would remain well beyond the edge of the urbanized area, even in 2040.
- With one or two possible exceptions, it would provide little accessibility benefit to existing employment centers, such as downtown Indianapolis, the airport and Hamilton County near I-465, U.S. 31 and SR 431.
- There is a significant amount of land available for development closer to the urban core. These areas will continue to have a higher accessibility to employment, even with the proposed transportation improvements.

In short, CISTMS forecasts indicate that it will be decades before growth and development pushes the urban fringe to the CISTMS study travel corridors. Even then, there is no indication that an outer belt will be needed.

“We learned a lot from fully evaluating these ‘bookend’ alternatives, but neither is likely to be considered for CISTMS’ final recommendations,” notes Myers. “Instead, we’ll continue modeling alternatives somewhere between the ‘minimum’ and the ‘maximum’ to find the ‘optimum’ alternative for addressing future suburban congestion problems and to develop year 2025 recommendations for the corridors under study,” he says.

For more information on CISTMS, including findings from its ‘bookend’ alternatives’ evaluation, contact John Myers at 317/636-4682 (jwmyers@hntb.com) or visit www.in.gov/dot/projects or www.indygov.org/indympo (click on “Documents”).

Did you Know? . . .

The nine-county greater Indianapolis region, which is also CISTMS’ study area, included approximately 550 square miles of urbanized land in 2000 (year of the last Census). Of this total, nearly half (255 square miles) was in Marion County. In the surrounding eight counties, urbanized land ranged from a high of 69 square miles (Hamilton County) to a low of just 14 square miles (Shelby County).
To encourage awareness of, and informed participation in, its regional transportation planning process, the MPO includes display advertising among the many communications strategies utilized in its Public Involvement Program. Featuring consistent use of the “iMPOrtant” format to build awareness and heighten recall, these ads appear in publications throughout the region, including the City & State section of The Indianapolis Star and The Indianapolis Recorder.

The first ad shown here, or format/language variations of it, ran in nearly 40 regional newspapers throughout the DIRECTIONS study area (see partial media list on page 18 of teMPO, Volume Seven, Issue Two). It encouraged attendance and participation in a January 19th Public Open House at the Indianapolis Urban League concerning findings from a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) of IndyGo’s current bus service. The ads ran the weeks January 3rd and 10th.

The second ad, promoting attendance at the third and final Phase III meeting of DIRECTIONS, will be placed in upcoming issues of the same 40+ publications. The meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 1st at Glendale Mall, 6191 N. Keystone Ave., Indianapolis. Its agenda will include the presentation of detailed information on potential route and technology options for a Northeast Corridor starter system to serve as the first leg of a region-wide rapid transit system. Information will include station locations and projected ridership, capital and operating costs, and possible funding options.

The third and final ad shown here is a mock-up of an ad promoting the first quarter 2005 meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), tentatively scheduled for March 8th. CAC meetings are the foundation of the MPO’s Public Involvement Program. They act as a regular forum through which the MPO can share information, and gather public input, on a variety of transportation-related topics, including proposed amendments to the Indianapolis Transportation Improvement Program, or IRTIP. This ad will appear February 26th (Recorder) and March 1st (Star).

Through its various Public Involvement Program outreach strategies, including display ads like these, the MPO will continue to inform its primary planning partner, the public, of upcoming participation opportunities.

**teMPO** is published quarterly by your Metropolitan Planning Organization, part of the Department of Metropolitan Development. If you know of anyone who would like to receive teMPO, or if you have any questions concerning its publication, please call:

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Metropolitan Planning Organization
1821 City-County Building
200 East Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-3310

temPO was written and prepared for publication by Whitman Communications, Inc.
conNECTions, a study of northeast corridor transportation intended to improve mobility within the region’s most congested travel corridor. The study’s resulting recommendations included 1) increasing capacity in the northeast quadrant of I-465 which is being implemented by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), and 2) implementing transit planning within the corridor. The latter recommendation led to DIRECTIONS, The Rapid Transit Study To Increase Regional Mobility, which is currently considering starter system options for the northeast corridor as the first leg of a possible region-wide rapid transit system. If implemented, such a system could help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and increase mobility options throughout the region.

The MPO also consistently promotes the use of alternative modes of transportation as a means of reducing traffic congestion and increasing mobility options. Since 2000, the MPO has sponsored the Pedal & Park program which provides free bike parking to area cyclists at greenways-adjacent events throughout the warm spring and summer months when ozone is most likely to form. In 2004, Pedal & Park enjoyed a 72% jump in program participation. In addition, the MPO updated the Marion County & Surrounding Area Bike Route Map in 2004, expanding its coverage to adjacent communities that now offer posted travel routes to area cyclists.

The MPO is also involved with the planning of pedestrian-related facilities, including the Regional Pedestrian Route Plan and the Cultural Trail. Because of their relatively low projected usage (within the total scheme of regional miles traveled), these efforts are assumed to offer minimal relief from the congestion problem. However, because they are also relatively low cost to implement, they offer the MPO and its planning partners superior cost effectiveness.

**Other strategies**

Promoting other forms of travel isn’t the only way to reduce traffic congestion. There are operational strategies, such as those employed by INDOT’s Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) that can help preserve and increase traffic flow and, thereby, reduce ozone. It’s estimated that one-third of highway congestion is caused by non-recurring events, such as flat tires, fender benders, etc. By aiding emergency workers, and informing travelers of upcoming delays and alternative route options, ITS keeps traffic moving . . . and the air a little cleaner.

The MPO’s Congestion Mitigation System (CMS) actively considers strategies intended to reduce congestion and increase traffic flow. These include 1) traffic light synchronization, which reduces stop/start travel and has been accomplished by the Indianapolis Department of Public Works throughout Marion County over the last few years, 2) ramp metering which regulates the influx (and impact) of traffic from surface streets onto highways, and 3) carpool lanes, which could further promote the use of multiple occupancy vehicles.

The MPO further promotes the use of transit by supporting IndyGo, Marion County’s public transportation provider, in a variety of ways. Currently, IndyGo and the MPO are collaborating on an assessment of the current bus system’s strengths and weaknesses and considering possible improvements to help meet current customer needs and to prepare IndyGo for a future role in a possible region-wide rapid transit network (see related story, page 1). IndyGo and the MPO are also cooperatively developing a New Starts application for federal funds that could double the size of the existing bus fleet, and sharing planning information related to the new Downtown Transit Center, now in the works (see IndyGo Transit Center Study, Autumn 2004).

Finally, the MPO has lent communications and planning support to the Central Indiana Commuter Services (CICS), IndyGo’s newest service, by assisting in the arrangement of meetings with potential employer partners and by helping to ‘get the word out’ through its free publications (Summer and Autumn, 2004 teMPO, August 2004 CAC Minutes. To read the latest on CICS, turn to page 19 in this issue.

All of these efforts are a means to an end. In fact, the entire MPO transportation planning process is directed toward improving the region’s quality-of-life. That means clean air to breath and fast, efficient ways to get around – both active goals for your MPO.

For more information on any of these planning efforts, contact Philip Roth at 317/327-5149 (proth@indygov.org) or visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo.
that parallels the Monon Trail to 10th St. at Massachusetts Ave. It penetrates the CBD core on North St., South St., West St., and Michigan St. to the new IUPUI Student Center where it extends northwest to 16th St. at Bush Stadium.

Alternate 4 can interface with IndyGo’s proposed bus transfer centers on Virginia Avenue and on South Street and with the proposed Cultural Trail at multiple points, including Massachusetts Avenue, North Street, Alabama Street, Market Street, Washington Street, Virginia Avenue and West Street.

Since publication of the Autumn issue of teMPO, and the presentation of possible routes at the November 17 public meeting, Tier 2 analysis has begun examining tentative transit station locations along all alternate routes.

“As a general rule, stations will be placed

"As a general rule, stations will be placed

cont on page 28, see DIRECTIONS’ AA Update

DIRECTIONS’ Progress

DIRECTIONS is a three-phase transit study funded primarily with federal dollars. Its purpose is to evaluate the feasibility of a region-wide rapid transit system. If implemented, such a system could help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and increase mobility options throughout the Indianapolis region.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is conducting the study, is the region’s primary transportation planner by federal mandate. As such, the MPO regularly encourages and accommodates public participation in its regional transportation planning process. The DIRECTIONS study, which began in December 2002 and is now in its third and final phase, has already held 11 public meetings to help establish community transit goals and build consensus for a potential rapid transit system.

In Phase I of the rapid transit study, planners assessed the suitability of more than 70 regional travel corridors as possible legs of a region-wide rapid transit system. Possible transit technologies were also screened.

In Phase II, which began in September of 2003, feasible route alignments and technology options were developed for the region’s seven busiest commuter corridors. From these the Northeast Corridor was selected for further study as the site of a possible starter system. This selection was made by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council, or IRTC.

The IRTC serves as the decision-making body for the regional transportation planning process. As such, the elected officials who make up the IRTC’s Policy Committee will oversee the DIRECTIONS study through its scheduled completion in Spring, 2005.

In the first half of Phase III, which began in July, 2004, the MPO and lead project consultants Schimpeler American and Jacobs Engineering developed 15 – 20 possible starter system routes within the Northeast Corridor worthy of further study. These routes were evaluated by node (points along a route) and segment (spans between nodes) offering planners a moderate level of detail. Upon Tier 1 (preliminary) alternatives analysis (AA), a number of these routes were found to be ‘flawed’ — that is, possessing characteristics believed to be contrary to previously established Community Goals or System User Priorities. Such flaws included negative impacts on park lands, historic sites or the environment or disproportionate burdens being placed on minority or low-income populations. Following public review of these findings via the web, regional media coverage and a well attended Public Open House, Tier 2 AA involving detailed screening, including specific cost and available funding criteria, began. Phase III AA will continue through early March when another Public Open House is planned.

DIRECTIONS is scheduled to conclude with a vote on its findings by the IRTC in March, 2005.
Our snow season started Christmas week with a blast of cold air and a thick blanket of snow, over 11 inches, throughout Marion County,” said Pat Carroll, Deputy Director of Operations for the city of Indianapolis, Department of Public Works (DPW). “Even if we don’t get anymore snow this winter, which doesn’t seem likely, we are ready,” he adds. “Before the first flake touches down, we have to know who, what, where, when and how much.”

Whether or not we find ourselves hip-deep in the white stuff until late March, it’s assuring to know that DPW’s snow removal plans for the 2004-2005 season began last spring and are the result of a process that included Local 725 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), public safety officials, school transportation directors and other city agencies. “We are trying to guard against surprises, so it makes sense to get relevant input from all the players,” explained John Burkhardt, DPW Administrator of Maintenance Services. “That added up to some significant changes in our thinking.”

This year, those changes include:

• Adjustment to routes resulting from input from schools, public safety personnel and citizens

• Greater concentration on our “rush hour” priority routes, such as Washington Street, Madison Avenue, Meridian Street, 38th Street, 82nd Street, 86th Street, Keystone Avenue, Binford Boulevard and Shadeland Avenue and other major carriers of in-bound and out-bound traffic

• Fine tuning of our use of winter chemicals so they are utilized with maximum efficiency and economy

DPW’s snow removal plans also include additional communications tools that provide citizens with vital winter weather information, including the City’s snow line at 327-SNOW (7669) and web page at www.indygov.org/dpw/snow. Both were first activated on November 1, 2001 and return annually when the temperature starts to drop.

Did you Know?...

During the month of October, 2004, airport screeners seized ammunition 2,000 times. During the first ten months of the year, they also seized 2,150 handguns, as well as a land mine and the occasional chainsaw!

Source: Transportation Security Administration

Management System (IMS) and provides up-to-date summaries of labor, material and vehicle costs for each snow fight.

Labor

DPW has over 400 individuals from all DPW Divisions performing as office assistants, semi-skilled laborers, snow divers, heavy equipment operators, supervisors and managers available for normal and extended (12 hours) snow fighting shifts, if necessary. When the residential contractors are called into service for plowing assistance, the Department of Metropolitan Development also supplements the DPW staff with over 40 field inspectors.

Material

The city’s salt barns hold approximately 20,000 tons of salt and started the 2004-2005 snow season at capacity. The use of material during the recent storm has DPW replenishing each location. These salt barns are located at or near 1900 N. Martin Luther King; 21st and Sherman; West Street; 65th and Binford Blvd; Lafayette Road at Trader’s Point; Tibbs and Southport; and 5 Points near I-74 and I-465.

Vehicles

DPW has 91 snow trucks equipped with plows and salt spreaders. When hazardous weather is imminent, a fleet of more than 130 pieces of equipment can be mobilized including 26 Solid Waste trucks equipped with plows. In times of severe weather United Water, a private consortium that manages the city’s wastewater treatment and collection system, provides a limited number of vehicles and drivers. In addition, DPW has 21 on-call contractors with 107 pickup trucks with plows to assist with snow removal in the residential areas as time and resources allow.

“Our people are highly motivated and trained in the newest snow fighting technology and techniques each year,” said Steven Quick, AFCSME Local 725 President. “How we deploy them to maximize the benefit of their efforts is always a joint decision between labor and management and reflects a great, on-going partnership.”

For additional information on DPW’s 2004-2005 Snow Plan, contact Pat Carroll, Deputy Director of Operations, at 327–2954 (pcarroll@indygov.org) or visit www.indygov.org/dpw/snow.
approximately .5 – 1 mile apart or to serve specific, large ridership generators, such as the IUPUI campus,” Inman explains. “Such locations, though tentative, allow us to continue detailed Tier 2 activity, including cost and ridership analysis. If we find that a nearby location would promote increased ridership or cost significantly less either in acquisition or construction costs, we’d recommend moving the station,” she says. “Although we have planning guidelines in place, there are no hard and fast rules. By staying open to new information, we insure that our eventual recommendation is the region’s preferred alternative.”

The MPO will present complete Tier 2 AA findings, as well as the results of DIRECTIONS’ IndyGo COA assessment at a joint Public Open House on Tuesday, March 1st. The meeting will be held in the Community Room of Glendale Mall and will include multiple exhibits, presentations on both AA and COA findings, and opportunities for public review and comment. For more information, visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo, contact Amy Inman at 327-5646

Exhibits like these helped inform meeting attendees and their lively Q & A discussion which lasted well over an hour.

(ainman@indygov.org) or watch for related stories from your local print and broadcast news providers.