Indy Connect Initiative Sees Strong Public Engagement Following Launch

For the past few months, thousands of Central Indiana residents have been weighing in on a draft regional transportation plan. Indy Connect, Central Indiana's Transportation Initiative, is led by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA), and IndyGo. It is an unprecedented initiative to educate the public and gather feedback on a regional long range transportation plan that includes expanded bus service, roadway enhancements, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and light and commuter rail; all of which could work together to connect people to people and people to places throughout Central Indiana.

In the weeks following the February 10th launch, Indy Connect representatives have hosted more than 30 public forums at town halls, libraries, and community centers throughout the region. Attendance at the public meetings has been strong, averaging about 50 to 75 people per meeting. Online engagement has also been robust. The website, www.indyconnect.org, has drawn over 60,000 page views and collected over 3,500 comments. Indy Connect also has over 3,200 followers on Facebook and Twitter.

Due to strong interest in these earlier meetings, additional dates were scheduled through April. The remaining meetings are:

- Thursday, April 22: Basile Opera Center, 4011 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 27: Oasis of Hope Baptist Church, 1701 E. 25th St., Indianapolis, 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 28: Eastwood Middle School, 4401 E. 62nd St., Indianapolis, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, April 29*: Noble of Indiana, 7701 E. 21st St., Indianapolis, 1 p.m.
  *The April 29th meeting will be targeted specifically toward individuals with disabilities, self-advocates, families, and service providers; but the general public is welcome to attend.

Though the past few months have been eventful, this is only the beginning of the process. This summer, planners will revise the draft plan, keeping in mind the public feedback that was collected. The revised draft plan will then be presented in another round of public meetings this fall.

Indy Connect encourages you to get involved by attending one of the upcoming public meetings, logging on to www.indyconnect.org, joining the Indy Connect Facebook page or following @IndyConnect on Twitter.
The End of an “ARRA”

The signs of spring are beginning to appear in Central Indiana. Robins are back, snow has changed over to rain, and green is returning to the trees. Yet spring is not complete without the familiar sights of orange cones, flashing yellow lights, and road crews! This year, those travelling throughout the region may notice an increased amount of road work taking place.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided $39.5 million of transportation stimulus funding to the Indianapolis MPO, allowing for an increased ability to maintain roads, repair bridges, and build new transportation projects including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. By January of 2010, fifty-nine projects selected to receive ARRA funding were awarded to contractors. Following that award, there was a balance of funds in the amount of $8.5 million due to bids that were lower than original cost estimates. The remaining balance was used to fund the secondary list of "reserve" projects that had been compiled for use in the event of such an occurrence. By March, thirty-three more projects were awarded.

With ninety-two total projects in the Indianapolis metropolitan planning area, thirteen municipalities and four counties received funding from ARRA. Many of the projects are street resurfacing; however there are also several bridge projects, a traffic signal and sign replacement project, and six trail projects that will provide additional bicycle and pedestrian accessibility. Construction is beginning on these projects as weather permits, and they must be completed by February 17, 2012. To view the final list of projects, please visit our website (http://www.indympo.org/Funding/IRTIP/Documents/MPO_ARRA_Table.pdf).

It may be a safe bet this season that you will encounter more road work than usual; however, it may help ease the discomfort to think about the opportunity that has been provided for improvements to the infrastructure (think: fewer potholes), and the jobs provided by the influx of construction work.

With the end of the ARRA, the MPO would like to recognize the efforts of all our participating local planning agencies, the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council’s Technical and Policy Committee members, as well as INDOT and FHWA for their help and support throughout this process. Thank you all for your hard work!

For more information, contact Cat Schoenherr, Senior Planner, at cshoenh@indy.gov or 317-327-5137.

Indy Connect - 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update

The update to the Indianapolis MPO’s 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update has been underway since late last year. The long range plan is a 20 - 25 year planning document that outlines regional transportation needs for roads, transit (which includes bus and rail), and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The planning process will recommend major capital projects to address transportation needs, determine when the projects will be completed, and present how the projects will be funded throughout the metropolitan planning area through the year 2035.

The schedule for the LRTP Update is as follows:

- January 2010: County Workshops were held to gather input from our planning partners in the region;
- February - April 2010: Indy Connect public meetings with special emphasis on transit;
- Summer 2010: Technical work on modifying the LRTP begins;
- Fall 2010: Development of the revised LRTP based on public comment and data analysis;
- October - November 2010: Round 2 of public meetings presenting the revised LRTP and obtaining public comment;
- December 2010: The final draft of the LRTP will be presented to the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) for content approval;
- January - May 2011: The required Air Quality Conformity analysis will be conducted and provide the final approval for the LRTP; and
- May 2011: The regularly scheduled IRTC meetings will provide the final approval for the LRTP.

If you have any questions or would like to offer comment on the LRTP Update, please contact Stephanie Belch, Principal Planner, at sbelch@indy.gov or 317-327-7599.
MPO School Involvement Program

Since January 1999 the MPO has partnered with the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration to ask Central Indiana middle and high schools to weave into their curriculum certain transportation topics. This endeavor acts as a supplementary part of the MPO's public involvement program and reaches a different part of the public than the normal public meeting or the TeMPO newsletter. This program has, in fact, received a best practice certificate for public involvement from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

On May 13, 2010, students from five high schools will present their input and viewpoints on the draft regional rapid transit system to public officials and other city leaders.

- Students of **Brownsburg High School** will produce a 10-minute documentary that, in their words, "ends where it begins, with the re-introduction of trains as a mode of green transportation for current day Indiana."
- **Mount Vernon High School's High Tech Academy** students have created a short promotional movie that gives viewers a 3-D visualization of a rail system in the Indianapolis area.
- Students at **The McKenzie Career Center** in Lawrence have created a website and conducted a series of interviews with Lawrence area students and teachers, citizens, and business and community leaders to capture a snapshot of opinions about the proposed rapid transit system.
- **Noblesville High School** students are designing a potential train station for the rail line.
- Students of **The Walker Career Center** in Warren Township created a logo for the entire 5-school project and also designed animated 360° representations of possible diesel and electric locomotives that could power the region's planned rapid transit system.

2010 Planning Studies Chosen

For the past several years, the MPO has set aside a portion of the federal funds it receives for planning activities and made these funds available to local agencies for conducting transportation studies pertinent to their needs. Communities have used these monies for activities ranging from aerial photography to multimodal corridor studies to thoroughfare plans. Since 2006, approximately $2.2 million in federal funds has been utilized by the MPO's partners. An agency receiving funds must be a member of the MPO and provide the 20% local funds match for the study.

The MPO is preparing to make this program available again in 2010, with $1 million in funding available. At its February meeting, the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council approved projects to use the funds, and MPO staff has been moving forward with necessary procurement prior to the start of these studies. 2010 planning studies come from all over the Central Indiana region and include traffic impact studies, circulator studies, corridor plans, thoroughfare plans, and bridge reuse strategies.

For more information, contact Philip Roth, Assistant Director, at proth@indy.gov or 317-327-5149.
Central Indiana Regional Freight Study Underway

Freight issues are growing in significance in Central Indiana. Along with the industry's increasing importance to the local economy, traffic levels for freight movements are continuing to show strong growth. In fact, truck traffic on the region's interstate network is projected to increase by approximately 35% over the next twenty years.

To help assure that the MPO's transportation planning efforts are incorporating the most current and accurate freight information and addressing the highest priority freight issues, the MPO initiated a new freight analysis study in late March. The study is being done in coordination with the consulting team of Wilbur Smith Associates.

An overriding goal of this planning effort is to gather information about the local freight network and its operating characteristics. This will assist planners develop a better understanding of how the local freight movements fit in with the region's multimodal transportation network. This study will identify where opportunities may exist for improving intermodal connectivity and promoting freight efficiencies when making recommendations for the types and locations of future transportation improvements.

Three focal areas for the study will be:

- Rail operations and opportunities;
- Intermodal facilities and movements; and
- Identification of the most critical freight bottleneck locations.

The study is expected to be completed by the end of September 2010.

For more information, contact Tom Beck, Principal Planner, at tjbeck@indy.gov or 317-327-5646.

Upcoming Bicycle Events

Earth Day Indiana Kicks Off Pedal & Park's 2010 Season

Pedal & Park is a program that provides free parking for bicycles and rollerblades at public events. The purpose is to encourage use of non-motorized transportation alternatives, promote use of trails and greenways, dispense relevant recreational literature, and raise funds for the partnering not-for-profit organizations. During the past 9 years, Pedal & Park has parked almost 20,000 bikes. The bicycle corrals are continuously monitored by volunteers from program partners or event hosts. To volunteer, or if you have other questions or comments, send an email to Pedal & Park Chairman Tom McCain.

The 2010 Pedal & Park season starts with a bike corral at Earth Day Indiana (EDI) on Saturday, April 24. This is the 40th anniversary of the first Earth Day and the 20th anniversary of the Earth Day Indiana Festival, and this year EDI moves to its new home at White River State Park. The Festival combines 130 environmental and conservation exhibits with live music from local bands, special activities for kids, and food from local vendors. Bicycle access to White River State Park is available by following either the White River Wapahani Trail or the Downtown Canal. Pedal & Park will be parking bicycles (and rollerblades) at EDI from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit us there and at all the other Pedal & Park events on our 2010 season schedule.
Bike-to-Work Day 2010

Since the inaugural Indianapolis Bike-to-Work Day in the mid-1990s, this event has attracted an increasing number of participants and sponsors. Approximately 500 cyclists participated in Bike-to-Work Day last year, and this year's turnout is expected to be even larger due to increases in bicycle use and bike infrastructure. Indianapolis hosts numerous bicycling facilities, including greenways, the Cultural Trail, bike lanes, and bike lockers at several downtown locations. Bike-to-Work Day occurs annually on the third Friday in May. This year's event will be May 21, 2010.

Mayor's Bike Ride

Join the City of Indianapolis and the Marion County Health Department for the second annual Mayor's Bike Ride. This year the Mayor's Bike Ride will highlight the new bike lanes on Allisonville Road. The bike ride is June 5, 2010, with registration at 9:00 a.m. and ride at 10:00 a.m. There are two route lengths planned, a four-mile and a twelve-mile route (Route Map). Pre-register to get a Mayor's Bike Ride T-shirt at www.mchd.com/bikeride. Free bike helmets will also be given away while supplies last.
Indy Connect at a Summer Festival Near You

The MPO staff has been out and about this summer, spreading the word about Indy Connect: Central Indiana’s Transportation Initiative, at events and festivals all across Central Indiana. You may have seen us at the Central Indiana Chamber of Commerce Schmooza Palooza, the Indianapolis Air Show or the summer festival in your town. We are going to be at several more events through September. The next round of official Indy Connect public meetings presenting the final draft of the Long Range Transportation Plan will begin in October.

If you are at any of these events, be sure to stop by the Indy Connect table!

- July 16 - 18: Indiana Black Expo Summer Celebration at the Indianapolis Convention Center
- September 2: HobNob at the Indiana State Museum
- September 3 - 6: 15th Annual Rib America Festival at Military Park in downtown Indianapolis
- September 11: Penrod Art Fair at the Indianapolis Museum of Art
- September 11 - 12: Zionsville Lions Club 57th Annual Fall Festival at Lions Park in Zionsville

On Board Passenger Survey Results

IndyGo and the MPO conducted an on board passenger survey in the fall of 2009 to examine travel behavior and characteristics of existing IndyGo riders and to identify opportunities to improve service for current and potential riders. The study analyzed a total of 3,990 surveys collected from riders on local service routes and IndyGo's Commuter Express (ICE) routes.

The data will be used for federal reporting requirements and to complete the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA, or "bus plan"), which evaluates existing transit service in order to provide recommendations for short, mid and long-term transit plans. It is also one of several studies being utilized as part of Indy Connect: Central Indiana's Transportation Initiative. Other uses for the data include travel demand forecasting, route design and bus stop ammenities.

Rider Profile Data

Overall, the existing ridership data suggests that the core IndyGo system is heavily influenced by socio-economic and transit-dependency factors. For example, more than 50% of riders are from households that do not own a vehicle and nearly 70% reported a household income of less than $25,000 a year. Also, with 80% of transit users riding the bus more than 3 days per week and 30% riding 6-7 days per week, the indication is that IndyGo has opportunities to greatly expand ridership if more resources become available to improve service (i.e., increased trip frequency and hours of operation). Additionally, the working-age population, aged 25-64, is a key growth demographic that currently comprises about 75% of all
Purpose of Travel
Travel behavior data indicates that IndyGo passengers are typically travelling to and from work (70% of riders). However, school trips also account for a small portion of rider trip purpose.

Service Access
Survey data also indicates that adjusting the bus system to minimize transfers may attract more passengers. A majority of riders must use more than one bus to complete a one-way trip, suggesting that many trips are to destinations outside the downtown core. Also, about 90% of riders walk to the bus stop, as well as to their destination after leaving the bus. Of those who drove to access transit, many used the ICE routes, which suggests opportunities for park and ride locations.

View more information on the MPO website and the complete report at http://www.indygo.net/bus_plan_studies/index.htm.

Traffic Counting and the Highway Performance Monitoring System

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the MPO conduct traffic surveys to determine the volume and type of vehicles and the weight of trucks using the roads and highways in our Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). These surveys provide information essential to the general administration of transportation programs. The data collected during traffic surveys are used in determining vehicle miles of travel (VMT), project design parameters, roadway network classification (also known as Functional Classification) and the Level of Service (LOS) provided by the transportation system. Traffic counts are conducted annually to obtain traffic surveys, process raw counts and maintain current and historic databases for the road system.

In addition to doing traffic counts for the MPA, the MPO is also responsible for maintaining a database for the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS). The HPMS is a national roadway information system that includes data on the extent, condition, performance, use and operating characteristics of the nation's highways and arterials. There are 383 HPMS roadway segments in the MPA that the MPO must count. These segments are counted on a three-year cycle. The HPMS was originally developed in 1978 as a continuing database to replace special biennial condition studies that had been conducted since 1965.

The major purpose of the HPMS is to support a data driven decision process within the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Department of Transportation and Congress. The HPMS data are used extensively in the analysis of transportation system conditions and performance and investment needs. Reports are used by Congress in establishing highway authorization and appropriation legislation and to determine the level of federal highway taxation. HPMS is a nationally unique source of highway system information that is made available to those in the transportation community for highway and transportation planning and other purposes through the annual Highway Statistics series and other data dissemination media.

Senior Planner Kevin Mayfield oversees the traffic counting program for the MPO. If you see him setting out counters around town, please be alert and use caution. For any questions about the MPO's traffic counting program, please contact Kevin at kevin.mayfield@indy.gov or 317-327-5135.

Indianapolis Cultural Trail

In 2007, construction began on a new and exciting project in downtown Indianapolis. By 2008, residents and visitors alike got their first glimpse of what is quickly becoming a world-class urban bike and pedestrian path - The Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene & Marilyn Glick. When finished in 2011, the eight-mile trail will connect Indy's five downtown cultural districts: Fountain Square, Indiana Avenue, Mass Ave, The Canal & White River State Park, and the Wholesale District. It will also connect with the Monon Trail, allowing visitors easy access between downtown and Broad Ripple Village, and will serve as the downtown hub for the entire Central Indiana greenway system. For a timeline of Trail construction, please click here.

In the past year, the Cultural Trail has seen significant progress. The first big announcement came in February 2010, when the Cultural Trail was one of only 51 projects selected out of about 1,400 proposals as a recipient of a federal grant from the nationally competitive Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. As 1
of only 2 trail projects selected, the Trail received $20.5 million, bringing the total funds raised to $62.5 million, surpassing the original goal of $55 million by $8.5 million.

The other milestone reached by the Trail just last month is the completion of the North Corridor, a one-mile stretch including portions of Indiana Avenue, St. Clair Street, Walnut Street, the Canal, Meridian Street, the American Legion Mall and North Street. (Click for Trail map.) This corridor includes the Glick Peace Walk, a two-block corridor paying tribute to 12 great Americans selected by the Glick family to honor people of peace whose creativity, perseverance and concern for others improved life for everyone who came after them. The Glick Peace Walk was made possible through a gift of more than $2 million from Gene and Marilyn Glick - in addition to their $15 million contribution to the entire Trail.

Next time you find yourself downtown, please take some time to check out the Cultural Trail. Although not yet complete, there is already plenty to see from the design of the trail itself, to the buildings and monuments the trail passes, the sculptures along the Peace Walk and, of course, Ann Dancing!

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**Indy Bikeways Plan**

The Department of Public Works’ (DPW) Indy Bikeways plan will create more than 200 miles of bike lanes across the city over the next 15 years. You can find out more about the plan at [http://www.sustainindy.org/bikeways_plans_maps.cfm](http://www.sustainindy.org/bikeways_plans_maps.cfm). Both drivers and cyclists will have to beat the learning curve and learn how to share the road safely as the network of bike lanes grows. The Indianapolis Department of Public Works is producing bike education materials, including public service announcements on the Sustain Indy website, and distributing them at bike events and locations around the city.

Here are some safety tips to help you bike smart and drive smart:

*For bicyclists:*

- Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as motorists
- Wearing a bicycle helmet is strongly recommended
- Ride a bicycle on the right side of the road, in the same direction as other traffic
- Use hand signals to communicate your actions to motor vehicles
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalk
- At night, a bicycle must have a white light visible from the front and a red reflector or light visible from behind; wear retro-reflective clothing when possible

*For motorists:*

- Share the road with bicyclists. Remember that they have the same rights, rules and responsibilities as all other road users
- Pass a bicyclist only when it is safe, giving ample room (3’ minimum) and when there is no danger from oncoming traffic
- Look for bicyclists. You must develop you eye-scanning patterns to include cyclists
- Before opening the door of your parked car, check behind for cyclists
- Do not drive in or double-park in bike lanes

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**Pedal & Park Update**

The Pedal & Park bike corrals have been busy this spring after eight events thus far in the 2010 season. A major milestone was reached at the 55th Annual Talbot Street Art Fair on June 12th and 13th, when the 20,000th bike was parked through the program! Most recently bike parking was provided at the grand opening of 100 Acres: The Art & Nature Park at the Indianapolis Musuem of Art, the Meridian-Kessler Home and Garden tour and Carmel Fest.

There are several more events where you will find Pedal & Park between now and August. Here are some dates to keep in mind:

July 25: [Brickyard 400](http://pedalandpark.org/2010-season-schedule/)
August 6-22: [Indiana State Fair](http://pedalandpark.org/2010-season-schedule/)
August 14: [Mass Avenue Criterium](http://pedalandpark.org/2010-season-schedule/)

For the full 2010 season schedule visit [http://pedalandpark.org/2010-season-schedule/](http://pedalandpark.org/2010-season-schedule/). To volunteer, or if you have other questions or comments, e-mail [Pedal & Park Chairman Tom McCain](mailto:Pedal%20&%20Park%20Chairman%20Tom%20McCain).
Ozone Season - KnoZone Season

It's summer in Central Indiana, and several things are certain: heat and humidity, thunder showers, neighborhood cookouts, fairs and festivals and, of course, Knozone Air Quality Action Days. On Knozone Action Days, the Air Quality Index rises to the orange level and the focus is on warning the public that the air quality is expected to be unhealthy for some individuals. On those days, everyone can take steps to keep our air safe. There are some simple things people can do to reduce ground level air pollution and the need for Knozone Action Days:

- Leave early to avoid morning rush-hour
- Bring your lunch or walk to lunch
- Walk, bike, carpool or use public transit instead of driving
- Use a programmable thermostat
- Avoid drive-through windows at restaurants or banks
- Don't burn trash or leaves
- Turn your lights off when not in use

The MPO must also consider ozone in transportation planning because exhaust from automobiles contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone. The Indianapolis MPO's nine-county area is designated an ozone maintenance area, meaning that our ozone levels were previously above the ozone budget established by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). Any new roads or road projects adding lanes must be modeled to show that they will not increase ground-level ozone above IDEM's established levels.

The Air Quality Action season runs from April through November. For more information about Central Indiana's air quality and Knozone Action Days, visit the Knozone Website.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Metropolitan Transportation Planning Certification Review

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are jointly conducting the prescribed quadrennial Certification Review of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (IMPO) transportation planning process on August 23-25, 2010.

Individuals who would like to share substantive comments about local application and implementation of the federally prescribed metropolitan transportation planning process may do so by contacting Mr. Larry Heil of FHWA at 317-226-7480 or Mr. Reginald Arkell of FTA at 312-886-3704; or by e-mail or letter. All comments will be summarized and addressed by USDOT in the Final Certification Review Report. Comments must be received by midnight on August 25, 2010.

Please address your comments to:

Larry Heil
USDOT, Federal Highway Administration, Indiana Division
575 N. Pennsylvania St., Room 254
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
Larry.Heil@dot.gov

Or

Reginald Arkell
USDOT, Federal Transit Administration, Region 5
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, IL 60606
Reginald.Arkell@dot.gov
Creating Transit Centered Communities

A team of national experts held a workshop in Indianapolis on August 27th to share best practices and insight on Transit Oriented Development benefits, planning, financing and implementation. The workshop was made possible through a grant from Living Cities, a philanthropic collaborative of foundations and financial institutions focused on improving the lives of low income people and urban areas, and the Harvard Kennedy School's Project on Municipal Innovation. The team consisted of Catherine Cox-Blair (Reconnecting America), Jeff Kingsbury (Green Street Ltd.), Marilee Utter (Citiventure) and Dena Belzar (Strategic Economics).

You will find the presentations from the workshop on the MPO website at http://www.indympo.org/Plans/MultiModalPlanning/Pages/Home.aspx under the heading of "Recent Projects." The entire workshop was recorded by Channel 16 WCTY and will be televised. It is available for online viewing at http://indianapolis.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=3 under the special events category. The MPO is working to distribute the program to stations in surrounding counties as well.

A Greener Welcome

On October 7th, Eli Lilly and Company, in collaboration with Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc. (KIB), will landscape and enhance the interchanges that form the western gateway to urban Indianapolis for Lilly's third annual Global Day of Service. Nine thousand volunteers will swarm interchanges along I-70 from the airport to downtown Indianapolis, planting some 73,000 native plants, trees and shrubs, creating A Greener Welcome to our city.

To ensure safety of volunteers working along the highway and motorists who could become distracted, and to enable the project to be completed in 12 hours, a 6 mile section of I-70, from I-465 on the west side to I-65 downtown, will be closed from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 7th. A traffic management plan is in place for the temporary closure so traffic will be diverted to other roadways. Motorists will be notified while on the
roadways by overhead electronic message signs. Additionally, statewide media will be informed about this project so the public will be informed well before the event.

For more information, please contact:

Carole Copeland / Lilly
(317) 277-3661
Carole_Copeland@Lilly.com

or

Linda Broadfoot / Keep Indianapolis Beautiful
(317) 264-7555 x112
lbroadfoot@kibi.org

ARRA Funds Benefit Small Community Transportation Projects: City of Southport’s Walnut Street Improvement Project

In 2009, the City of Southport received $154,341 for resurfacing and ADA improvements to the curbs and sidewalks on Walnut Street from Southport Road to Stop 10 Road. The Recovery Act funds also paid for the construction engineering activities associated with the improvements. Project construction started in July 2010 and was completed in August 2010, well ahead of the February 2012 deadline for completion of ARRA-funded projects.

The improvement project resurfaced a deficient roadway and brought curbs and sidewalks into compliance with ADA requirements. New signage and pavement markings were also installed as part of this project. The project received several accolades from Southport Mayor, Robin Thoman, and the City Council at the August City Council meeting. In addition, many Southport citizens have offered their positive comments and approval of this project.

This ARRA-funded project is a great example of how even the smallest of improvement projects can be a symbol of pride and progress for a small community such as Southport.

Restoring Plainfield’s Historic Town Center: Town Center Streetscape Project

The Town of Plainfield is undertaking several related projects to restore and improve its original town center. The Town Center Streetscape project used multiple funding sources including three Transportation Enhancement grants totaling $1,985,869, an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant in the amount of $2,580,927, and local funds in the amount of $2,207,103 for streetscape improvements along this two-mile long stretch of US 40. This project will enhance the aesthetics and pedestrian accessibility within the downtown area.

A comprehensive set of improvements include better defined intersections; elimination of on-street parking in favor of landscaping amenity zones to establish a more pedestrian friendly downtown environment; complete reconstruction of the pavement, curbs, and sidewalks; the replacement of the underlying storm sewers, sanitary sewers, and water mains; and installation fiber optic conduits and cables. New amenities include decorative railings, ornamental benches and trash receptacles, storm water planter areas, curb ramps, crosswalks and parking areas constructed of permeable pavers, new wider concrete sidewalks, ornamental street lighting with LED fixtures, way-finding signage, and numerous landscaping enhancements. The sewer system improvements enabled Plainfield to complete a significant separation of the existing combined sewers under the US 40.

See the August 2010 issue of Plainfield’s newsletter for other projects happening there!

There's a New Main Street in Speedway

As a commercial hub for the Town of Speedway, Main Street has, like many cities and towns across the state and country, seen a decreased level of retail activity over the past few decades. Likewise from an infrastructure standpoint, there has been a decline in the quality of the pavement, sidewalks, curbing and gutters. Armed with a sound vision and the support of the community, the Speedway Redevelopment Commission (SRC) and design partner, Indianapolis-based American Structure Point, began construction of a new, improved Main Street in November 2009.

Currently underway is the locally-funded renovation of Main Street, which runs from 10th Street to 16th Street in the heart of Speedway. This stretch of road has been host to
Indianapolis 500 racers and victors; is a generational reminder of the Town's history in the automotive industry; and welcomes tens of thousands of mini-marathon participants to the Town.

The Main Street project was phased into four segments to allow maintenance of traffic, retail access and accommodation of the three major race events at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Included in the Main Street renaissance is:

- Replacement of existing sidewalk with wider, more pedestrian-friendly walkways;
- Enhanced curbside parking;
- Enhanced lighting, banner poles, benches, trash receptacles; and
- A bicycle lane and amenity areas.

Under-the-road improvements are also taking place. The Main Street project includes the installation of a storm sewer system to capture and convey rain water. The Town also replaced and upgraded an 80-year old sanitary sewer main and installed a new drinking water main to replace an antiquated piping system.

To meet aesthetic and environmental goals, sustainable design strategies were implemented, including features such as porous paver strips, which border the street and pedestrian walkway to capture and convey surface storm water. Linear rain gardens are recessed between the bike lane and pedestrian way, providing enhanced vegetation areas, infiltration basins, and surface storm water conveyance.

The Main Street project's goal is to provide a high-quality urban environment utilizing sustainable solutions on what is destined to become one of the most highly visible streets in the Town. The improvements will enhance economic development opportunities in the area, beautify Main Street, improve the environment and encourage outdoor use and alternative transportation.

As the project nears completion of Phase Three in late October, the vision is unfolding...

Traffic Calming, Pedestrian Connectivity and Neighborhood Identity: Historic North Meridian Street, Indianapolis

HARMONI is a community-based organization serving the Historic Midtown area of metropolitan Indianapolis. Midtown is generally bounded by the State Fairgrounds/Monon Trail, Broad Ripple/White River, Michigan Road, and Fall Creek. HARMONI seeks to enhance the livability of Midtown by addressing pedestrian connectivity and safety, traffic calming while maintaining traffic flow, and neighborhood district identity.

With the expansion of commuter traffic from the northern suburbs, Midtown neighborhoods have increasingly become divided by high-speed, high-volume automotive traffic. In 2009, HARMONI was awarded an MPO planning grant to conduct an environmental study, preparing Midtown area projects for design and construction in the event federal funds become available. Storrow Kinsella Associates was selected as the lead consultant for the environmental study, with assistance from Weintraut and Associates and HNTB.

Pedestrian Connectivity and Safety

There are gaps in the sidewalk system, including the lack of crosswalks for pedestrians across Meridian Street, Illinois Street and Westfield Boulevard. Despite the traditional neighborhood pattern, increased traffic and impediments to walkability have contributed to the decline of local business and sense of community.

HARMONI has proposed intersection and pedestrian improvements for Midtown, including raised landscape medians on Meridian Street and Westfield Boulevard along the Alice Carter Place frontage, new and infill sidewalks with tree lawns, and pedestrian crossings at several major intersections.

On the Meridian Street bridge over the canal, seating nodes will be developed along with protected pedestrian crossings.

Traffic Calming

There are significant traffic safety concerns at several intersections, such as at Westfield and Meridian, with dangerous turns and unclear wait zones. With increased commuting traffic loads on Meridian Street between the northern suburbs and downtown Indianapolis, speed and traffic management have also become a concern.

HNTB assisted in the development of a traffic study report for potential improvements on Meridian Street in the Midtown area, and for traffic engineering changes in the vicinity to support HARMONI's mission of neighborhood stabilization, walkability, bikeability and creation of inspired places. A range of potential traffic control actions were identified to address these issues. The traffic study made the following conclusions and recommendations:

- Re-time signal system for 35 mph throughout - traffic will flow better, while maintaining volume;
- Install traffic signals at Meridian & 54th and Meridian & 43rd;
- Install 4-way STOP at 56th & Central; and
- Install motorist information speed signs.

Neighborhood District Identity
In addition to reconstructed pavement and new sidewalks, curbs and gutters, improvements will include light poles, sign posts, and wayfinding signs. Materials that are compatible with the historic district will be utilized where budgets allow. Landscaping will have seasonal interest and mitigate microclimate impacts.

Taken together, the physical and operational improvements presented for this project will enhance the character of the area and improve conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists, while maintaining the essential function of Meridian Street and surrounding roadways with respect to regional mobility.

**IndyGo Updates**

**IndyGo Purchases New Hybrid Fleet**

IndyGo plans to welcome 22 new 40-foot, low-floor buses into its fleet. Of those 22 buses, 11 will incorporate the latest electric hybrid technology, resulting in fuel savings, reduced emissions and smoother, quieter rides.

"We're very excited about adding these 'green machines' to our fleet as they will further accelerate our companywide 'Go Green' sustainability initiative," said IndyGo President and CEO Mike Terry. "Bus service, in general, is a 'greener' way to travel, but these hybrids will do even more to reduce the environmental impact on the city as well as lessen our dependence on fossil fuels."

IndyGo purchased these 22 replacement buses using grant dollars, local funds and stimulus money via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The decision to convert 11 of the buses to hybrid came after IndyGo received an Electric Hybrid Grant initiated by Senator Richard Lugar.

Each IndyGo hybrid bus combines a diesel-fueled combustion engine, made by Columbus, Indiana-based Cummins, with a battery-powered electric motor, allowing it to deliver better fuel economy as well as generate 99.84 percent fewer emissions than a conventional bus. A Hoosier-built Allison transmission sends the power from the engine to the drive wheels.

These hybrid models also save energy by using regenerative braking systems, allowing the buses to capture and store energy while stopped in traffic. “Every time someone steps on their brakes, they are wasting energy,” said Mike Moles, IndyGo's director of maintenance. “With regenerative breaking, you can capture as much as half of that wasted energy and put it back to work, reducing fuel consumption up to 25 percent.”

The 22 new IndyGo buses will hit the streets in January. They will join 133 other IndyGo buses, which include two 2004 hybrid models, and replace 25 buses from 2000 that have met the retirement requirements set forth by the Federal Transit Administration. The hybrid designs will be easily identifiable via the IndyGo ‘Green’ logo with the leaf.

**IndyGo Adds Service Amenities**

Communities often use Transportation Enhancement funds from the federal government to expand travel choice and strengthen the local economy. It’s a program that better integrates a transportation system with the community it serves. Recently, IndyGo used some of these funds to add new bike racks and benches at several locations throughout the city including: College Avenue at 10th Street, 46th and 52nd Streets; Illinois and 46th Streets; and Broad Ripple and Carrollton Avenues.
Highway Safety Improvement Program

One source of federal funding for transportation improvements is the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). The overall purpose of this program is to significantly reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads through the implementation of infrastructure-related highway safety improvements. Eligible projects will receive 90% of the total cost through this program. The MPO has the responsibility of soliciting project applications and selecting projects for which documentation will be forwarded for review and eligibility determination by the multi-agency Highway Safety Advisory Committee (HSAC).

There were two opportunities to submit applications for HSIP funding in 2010. During the first application period in August there were 19 applications submitted to the HSAC. Eighteen projects were approved for a total cost of $5,231,000, of which the federal dollars awarded comprised 90% or $4,707,901.

During the second application period, which ended in September, eleven of 20 applications have been found eligible to receive $2,742,524 of federal HSIP funding. Approval is pending on seven additional projects.

The MPO expects information soon regarding a 2011 schedule for application submittals, the first of which may happen soon after the first of the year. Questions about the HSIP process may be directed to the MPO's HSIP coordinator, Mike Dearing, at (317) 327-5139.

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) Announces Safe Routes to School Awards for 2010

The Safe Routes to School Program, in its fifth year, awarded $3.4 million statewide to 39 Indiana schools. The Indianapolis area received just over $1 million, which will benefit 11 different schools. Congratulations to the following schools:

- Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School and Indianapolis Public School (IPS) No. 84 Center for Inquiry: awarded $250,000 for traffic calming measures, bike parking, pedestrian countdown signals, sidewalk reconstruction, and drainage improvements and equipment;
- Eagle and Brown Elementary schools in Brownsburg: awarded $250,000 for shared use paths, crosswalks, curb ramps and signs;
- Center Grove Elementary and Middle schools in Johnson County: awarded $250,000 for sidewalk construction and a pedestrian bridge;
- Belzer Middle School, and Harrison Hill, Sunnyside and Amy Beverland Elementary schools in Lawrence: awarded $243,126 for construction of sidewalks, a shared-use path, crosswalks and signals; and
- IPS Thomas D. Gregg School No. 15: awarded $75,000 for a comprehensive Safe Routes plan, encouragement, outreach, education, training and incentives.
Hancock County and the Town of McCordsville, with the assistance of United Consulting, recently completed a Corridor Study and Environmental Analysis of County Road (CR) 600 West (Mount Comfort Road) from CR 300 N to CR 1000 N (96th St.), running through a portion of western Hancock County and the town of McCordsville. The need for improving this corridor is being driven by continued expansion, both commercial and residential, in east central Indiana. The continued growth in Hancock and Hamilton Counties and McCordsville will result in future capacity requirements for this area.

Recent improvements to the I-70 Interchange with Mount Comfort Road included adding travel lanes to the Mount Comfort Corridor north to CR 300 N. At the northern end of Mount Comfort Road, Hamilton County is widening Olio Road (same alignment as Mount Comfort) north to Geist Reservoir; from the Reservoir north to I-69 is already 4-lanes.

The main objectives of this study were to 1) provide connectivity to adjacent segments already widened on the northern and southern end; 2) avoid at-grade crossing of the CSX railroad crossing in McCordsville; and 3) provide a quality north/south arterial thoroughfare through western Hancock County.

The next phase of this study will include meeting with elected officials of Hancock County and McCordsville to discuss the study's recommendations. Once an alternative alignment is jointly accepted, officials can begin incorporating that alignment in to their planning documents and pursue funding of the project.

Vanpooling with CICS

Central Indiana Commuter Services (CICS) is the region's rideshare program. The program's mission is to help reduce air pollution and traffic congestion. CICS promotes riding IndyGo, carpooling, biking and walking to work. CICS also offers a vanpool program for Hoosiers with long daily commutes.

What is Vanpooling? Vanpooling is a group of 7 to 15 people commuting to and from work together in a CICS van. Vanpooling can save passengers hundreds of dollars a year if they commute 15 miles or more each way compared to the cost of driving alone. Vanpoolers spend less for gas, parking, repairs and maintenance on their vehicles. Plus, they don't have to fight traffic congestion and can sleep, read or relax on their way to and from work.

Vanpooling operates similarly to a park and ride program. The vanpool group meets at a parking area in their neighborhood, board the van, and commute daily to their workplace. Each member of the group pays a monthly fare. The primary and back up drivers are volunteers from the vanpool group. CICS offers a monthly vanpool subsidy. Most federal agencies offer employees a $120 vanpool subsidy. Employers can subsidize vanpool fares or allow employees to use pre-tax dollars.

What is the Environmental Impact? One vanpool can remove as many as 14 vehicles and their emissions from the road each day. Currently, CICS has 4 vanpools on the road. CICS vanpoolers commute everyday from to Indianapolis from Anderson, Bloomington, Cloverdale and Greenfield. Collectively, these 44 vanpoolers reduce their Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by approximately 2,400 each day. That's over 576,000 VMT a year!

Vanpooling is a win-win situation for commuters, employers and the community. To find out more information about vanpooling, please contact Central Indiana Commuter Services (CICS) at (317) 327-RIDE or visit their website at www.327ride.net.
Rural/On-Demand Transit Providers Improving Connectivity

As the Indy Connect Long Range Transportation Plan moves forward with proposals for sweeping changes in regional mass transportation options, Central Indiana's rural and on-demand transit providers are planning some changes of their own. Representatives of small transit operators from nine counties surrounding Marion, as well as IndyGo staff, have met regularly for the past year to discuss new ways of coordinating their services in order to provide seamless county-to-county public transportation. It has only been during recent years that a few of the region's on-demand providers have amended their operating policies to allow for service across jurisdictional boundaries in order to meet the growing demand for cross-county travel options. For most Central Indiana residents, travelling by transit to a destination in a neighboring county involves scheduling rides with two or more providers, paying several separate fares, and waiting for connections in locations that are inaccessible or in isolated, remote areas.

In July 2010, the Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA) concluded the Central Indiana Regional Rural & On-Demand Transportation Study, which outlines operational and service changes that could be implemented by transit providers in the region in order to improve county-to-county connectivity. The full report and executive summary can be viewed at the CIRTA website at www.cirta.us (click on "What's New"). Potential changes include, but are not limited to, building transfer centers at county lines for use by connecting providers, implementing a common fare system for all transit systems in the region, creating connector routes to link IndyGo routes with service in adjacent counties, or sharing resources like maintenance facilities, marketing opportunities or dispatch centers.

CIRTA is coordinating the effort to implement these changes with the cooperation of IndyGo and the on-demand transit providers in Morgan, Hendricks, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Delaware, Hancock, Shelby and Johnson Counties. For more information, please contact CIRTA Program Liaison Christy Campoll at (317) 327-7585.

IndyGo Spends Federal Funding Wisely

When it comes to buying fixed assets or adding to the value of an existing fixed asset, IndyGo relies on federal grants for capital purchases. Over the past couple of years, the bus company has used federal formula dollars, as well as stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, to improve its operations and efficiency measures. IndyGo is very methodical in how it prioritizes its capital needs and spends money. The company did a comprehensive analysis of its operations a few years ago, deciding to apply federal funding in ways that would offer a return on investment, increase efficiency and reduce environmental impact.

As a result, the company has finished of is in teh process of implementing several great initiatives that stick to its responsible-spending mantra, some of which are highlighted below.

**Facility Improvements:**

IndyGo's 9-acre headquarter building, having not received any major updates since the 1980s, required several long-overdue HVAC repairs and efficiency modifications. The company has responded by:

- Updating its facility's roof, insulation and windows;
- Adding new hydraulic bus lifts to the garage;
- Replacing two 25-year-old boilers that were used for heating its administration offices with state-of-the-art models that are 50% more efficient;
- Recycling its waste motor oil for use in a waste oil furnace that heats the bus staging area;
- Incorporating energy efficient lighting throughout its building, reducing any unnecessary lighting and installing lighting controls such as motion sensors and timers; and
- Greening its bus washing facility to collect water runoff during the bus wash cycle, filter the dirty water and reuse it for next bus wash cycle.

After implementing the above and several other efficiency measures, IndyGo consulted with IPL to measure its electricity usage and Citizens Gas to measure its use of natural gas (pre and post upgrades). The result: $100,000 in savings from one year to the next.
New Buses:

IndyGo currently has 146 fixed route buses, many of which have exceeded their life expectancy and often require major repairs. Current federal funding is allowing IndyGo to purchase 22 new buses, including 11 hybrid models, which will improve operational efficiencies, reduce maintenance costs and lessen the impact on the environment. These new vehicles are slated to hit the city streets in early 2011.

Safety and Transit Enhancements:

IndyGo is committed to making travel safe and convenient for its riders. Through federal funding, IndyGo has managed to upgrade its onboard cameras to store more data for longer periods of time, add global positioning systems to its buses and implement new bus stop amenities throughout the city. Over the past year, IndyGo has installed 5 shelters, 8 benches, 16 bike racks, 266 linear feet of sidewalk, 2 curb ramps, 14 solar shelter lights and 3 solar bus stop lights.

Anyone who wants to request a new bus stop amenity is encouraged to contact IndyGo at feedback@indygo.net. However, because funding can be limited, the company must factor in several criteria before being able to install new amenities.

While IndyGo can't use federal funds to expand the frequency of its service, the enhancements the company has made will definitely increase customer satisfaction as well as allow the company to operate more efficiently so that it can control costs and remain within its certified budget, which is important in times of decreased revenue.

Show Your Civic Pride: Join the IndyGo Adopt-A-Stop Program

Keeping our city clean takes the cooperation of everyone in the community. And thanks to the civic-minded folks, businesses, community groups, and individuals who have adopted 59 IndyGo bus stops throughout the city, Indianapolis is a better place to live and work for all of us.

There are more than 4,000 bus stops in Indianapolis just waiting for someone to love them. By joining IndyGo's Adopt-A-Stop program, you earn public exposure while making a positive impact on the city. All you have to do is pick up any litter around the stop, empty the trash can, replace the liner weekly and report maintenance issues or vandalism to IndyGo. So, in as little as 10 minutes per week, you can make a big difference.

Program Highlights:

- IndyGo provides adopter with five one-day fare passes for fixed route service.
- IndyGo installs a garbage can if one is not already at the stop.
- IndyGo furnishes stop with a text-only sign featuring the adopter's name (logos cost $100).
- IndyGo supplies adopter with trash bags.
- IndyGo recognizes adopter via various communication channels.

If you are interested in adopting a stop or learning more about the program, please contact IndyGo business development coordinator Bryan Luellen at (317) 614-9284.

MPO Releases 2011 Request for Qualifications

On December 14, 2010 the Indianapolis MPO issued the 2011 Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit statements of qualifications for transportation-related professional planning and/or engineering services. The RFQ is available for viewing on the MPO's website at www.indympo.org. The website also includes the MPO's 2011 Unified Planning Work Program that lists projects and studies anticipated for execution during 2011 for which the MPO may need assistance as defined in the RFQ.

The RFQ will be sent to approximately 145 registered and qualified professional organizations. Statements of qualification are due by noon on Friday, January 14, 2011, and should be sent to the attention of Philip Roth, Assistant Director, Indianapolis MPO, Suite 1922 City-County Building, 200 East Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204. If your organization is not currently on our list of RFQ recipients and you are interested in responding to the RFQ with a statement of qualifications or if you have questions, please contact Philip Roth at (317) 327-5149 or Mike Dearing at (317) 327-5139.