

# teMPO

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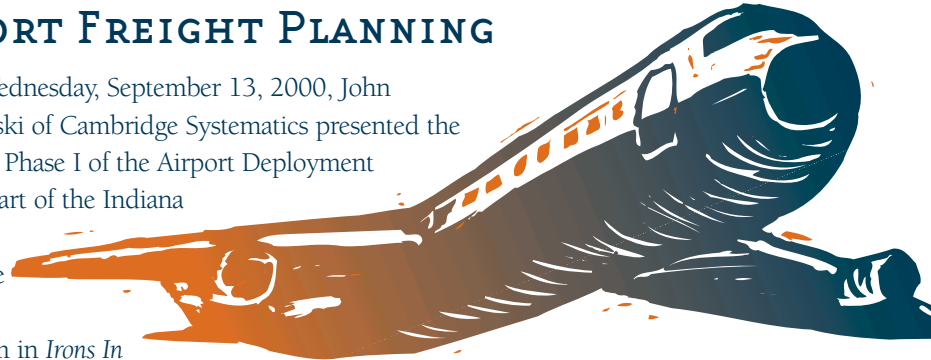
KEEPING PACE WITH OUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

## GETTING AROUND

As we near the holiday travel season, people start thinking about planes, trains and automobiles. So, why should teMPO be any different? This issue reflects the MPO's year-round focus on our region's various travel modes and their related projects. Read about freight handling opportunities around Indianapolis International Airport and progress on Marion County's Bike Route System. Learn how IndyGo plans to improve local bus service and what a transit critic thinks of conNECTions' RB4 rail option. Find out what amendments have been proposed for the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program and how the US 31 and SR 431 corridors could be upgraded. Plus, get the scoop on IndyGo's new electric buses, the CEC's new transportation-inspired community outreach programs, the MPO's new planner and identity program, and more! It's all here, it's all new, and it's all yours, when you "get around" to reading teMPO!

## AIRPORT FREIGHT PLANNING

On Wednesday, September 13, 2000, John Kaliski of Cambridge Systematics presented the findings of Phase I of the Airport Deployment Study, as part of the Indiana MPO Conference 2000 (see related item in *Irons In The Fire*, page 11). The Airport Deployment Study is part of the Indianapolis Intermodal Freight System Plan which began in March 1997 and has been the subject of extensive teMPO coverage ever since (Summer, 1997; Summer & Autumn, 1998). The goals of the plan were to:



- recommend improvements to the freight transportation system that will make Indianapolis businesses more competitive in global markets;
- suggest a priority list of projects for inclusion or rescheduling in the Indianapolis Transportation Improvement Plan (IRTIP) and long-range plan; and,

cont on page 7, see Freight Planning

## PEDDLING THE BIKE ROUTE SYSTEM

As previously reported in teMPO, Phase 5 of the Indianapolis Bicycle Route Plan was included in the MPO's Year 2000 Overall Work Program (Spring 2000). Phase Five is a two-step collaboration between Indy Greenways and the MPO to 1.) develop a network of routes that fills in between existing greenways and the axis system mapped out for Marion County in previous phases, and 2.) develop a new, comprehensive bike route map to replace the one produced in 1987. Also included in the project is the design of route signage and other system facilities for use throughout Marion County. Pedestrian route issues, originally to be included in Phase 5, were eliminated from the project on the recommendation of the management team, which felt they could not be properly addressed



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## ACRO-NYMBLE

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

AVL - Automatic Vehicle Location  
CAC - Citizens Advisory Committee  
CEC - Corporation for Educational Communication  
CMAQ - Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality  
DCAM - Department of Capital Asset Management  
EA - Environmental Assessment  
EIS - Environmental Impact Statement  
FHWA - Federal Highway Administration  
FTA - Federal Transit Administration  
IIA - Indianapolis International Airport  
INDOT - Indiana Department of Transportation  
IPTC - Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation  
IRTC - Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council  
IRTIP - Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program  
ITS - Intelligent Transportation Systems  
IUPUI - Indiana University/Purdue University in Indianapolis  
MIS - Major Investment Study  
MPA - Metropolitan Planning Area  
MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization  
STP - Surface Transportation Program  
TEA-21 - Transportation Enhancement Act (for the 21st Century)  
VMS - Variable Message Signs

## teMPO

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## IndyGo Plans Improvements

“We started changing IndyGo, and improving our transit service in response to expressed customer needs several years ago,” says Roland Mross, Director of Marketing and Development for the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IPTC)/IndyGo. “As a result, we have been rewarded with higher ridership numbers.” In 1999, the city's transit provider changed its name from Metro to IndyGo, resulting in improvements and ridership growth. As reported previously in teMPO (Special Edition/Winter 1999 issue), ridership increased 5% overall and 7% each month in 1999. This year, IndyGo added 40,000 hours of flexible, or “on-demand” service to complement its traditional fixed route operation. Now, the



transit provider can respond to expressed transit need with greater efficiency and economy through para-transit initiatives like Open Door (for persons with disabilities),

the 86th Street Route, Dial-a-Ride, FlexRide and the Access-to-Jobs program. “And, this is just the beginning,” says Mross.

In 1999, IPTC undertook the development of a formal enhancement/ expansion plan to systematically program future operational improvements. The purpose of the plan is to identify specific strategies for achieving the corporation's overall goal of increasing the region's reliance on local transit by 1.) better meeting the changing travel needs of existing and potential customers, 2.) expanding IndyGo's service area to encompass the entire region, and 3.) incorporating new technologies and initiatives to improve operational efficiency/economy and customer perception. The plan was developed by everyone at IndyGo, from the Board members who developed the plan's goals & objectives, to the operators who have the most direct relationship with the public. Now complete, the IndyGo 5-Year Implementation Plan details proposed improvements, including their supporting rationale, projected costs and preferred timeline for implementation.

“We're grateful to the MPO for recognizing the crucial role public transit will play in the region's future transportation plan and for funding the plan's development,” Mross says. Though on the upswing since 1998, IndyGo's ridership figures currently stand at about 10,000,000 riders per year and reflect about 2% of the county population. Some transit providers in other U.S. cities of similar size and character serve larger portions of their population. “Our implementation plan is intended to make sure IndyGo improves the quality and attractiveness of its service to encourage higher ridership,” Mross explains.

Details on internal and external improvements proposed for IndyGo over the next five years (2001-2005) include the following:

### Year 2001

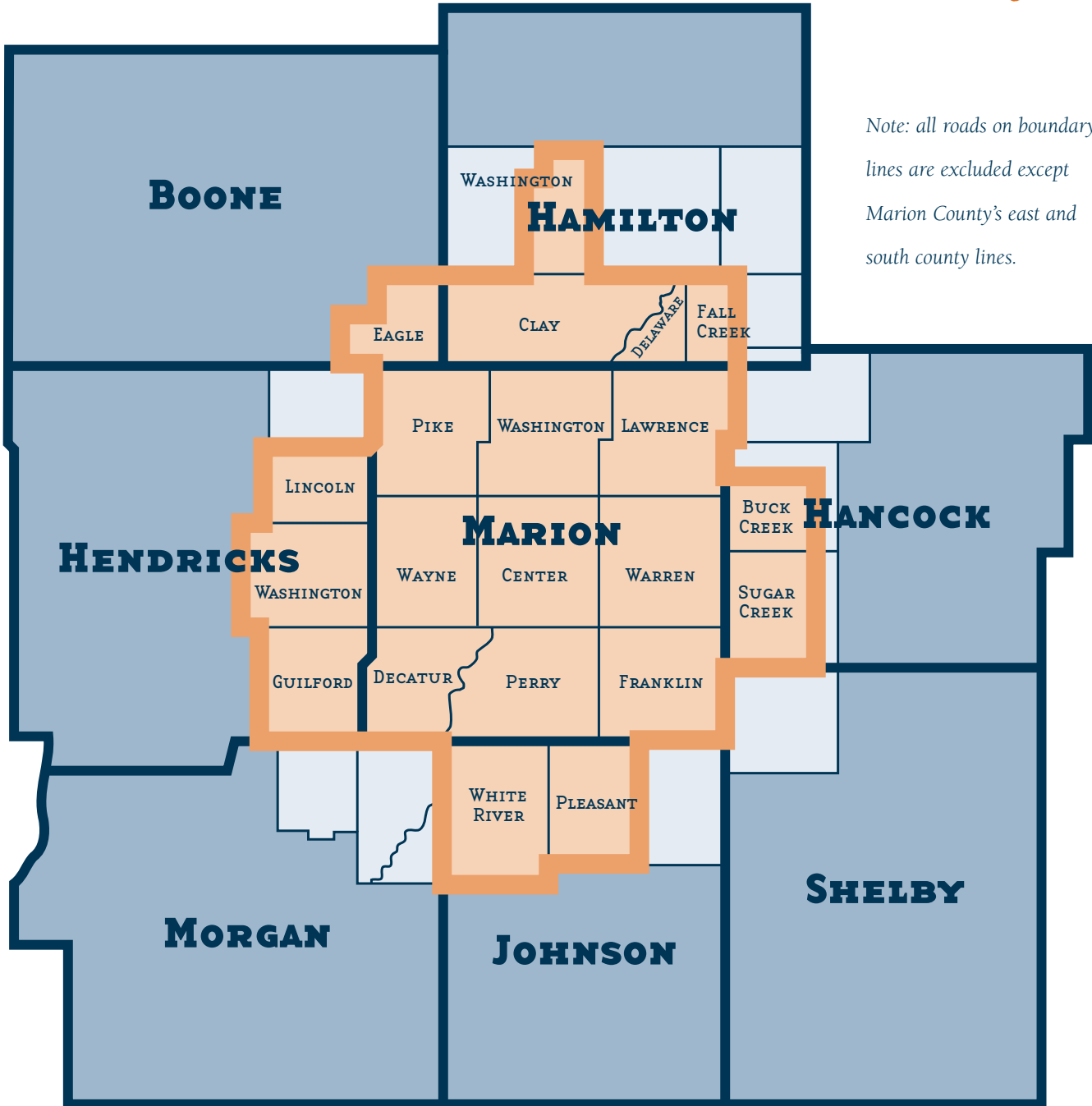
*Enhance Routes* - Review recommendations from the Indianapolis Transit System Review of October, 1999. Then, as now, IndyGo ran 40 fixed bus routes. Three of those routes serve 28% of IndyGo's riders. Six routes carry 50%! As part of

*cont on page 12, see Improvements*

# INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA**  
(PROJECTED URBANIZATION BY THE YEAR 2020)

 **MPO MODELING AREA**  
(STUDIED BECAUSE OF ITS PROXIMITY TO, AND INFLUENCE ON, MPA TRAFFIC)



*Note: all roads on boundary lines are excluded except Marion County's east and south county lines.*

## US 31/SR 431 CONGESTION STUDIED

As previously reported in *teMPO* (Special Edition #1, 1998), Hamilton County is the fastest growing area in Indiana. That growth has already contributed to traffic congestion throughout the northern and northeastern portions of the Indianapolis region. Two roadways most affected by this congestion are US 31 (Meridian Street) and SR 431 (Keystone Avenue). For this reason, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has undertaken two studies to address problems along these roadways.

INDOT's US 31 improvement project is a highly detailed study, called an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. It will answer key questions about the US 31 corridor between I-465 and SR 38, including what needs to be done to serve its existing and future travel demands, and how its transportation system can be improved with the fewest negative impacts on the area's environment, quality-of-life and business community.

When completed in 2003, the EIS will be used by INDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to make a final decision on what, if anything, needs to be done to the corridor's transportation system. The EIS will include preliminary design and engineering concepts for various improvement alternatives, which will have been

evaluated for both positive and negative impacts to social, economic and natural resources.

This EIS is a follow-up to a 1997 Major Investment Study (MIS) of the same corridor. That MIS recommended rebuilding US 31 to interstate highway standards, including on/off ramps (instead of at-grade) and signalized intersections. The current US 31 EIS is a much more detailed and intensive study and may not reach the same conclusions as the previous MIS.

The project team for the US 31 EIS includes engineers, environmental scientists, community development specialists

and transportation planners. Lead consultant on the project is Parsons Transportation Group, Inc., an international engineering, planning and environmental firm.

The project team began working earlier this year to gather corridor data, including ambient noise levels, air and water quality, resident wildlife and plant species, traffic flow, current transportation safety issues and the likely effects of potential improvements on area homes, businesses and historic/archeological resources. Appropriate federal, state and local agencies are also being consulted on these and other project-related issues.

The same project team is also involved with the less intensive environmental assessment (EA) of the SR 431 corridor. Traffic congestion along SR 431 has continued to grow along with the communities of Carmel and Westfield. INDOT is proposing to upgrade SR 431 to accommodate this growth and reduce congestion. First, however, INDOT must assess whether or not this upgrade will have significant impacts on the human or natural environment.

The EA will look at existing and projected traffic conditions, community issues such as noise and aesthetics, and environmental issues such as wetlands. As part of the EA, the project team will also evaluate a list of potential improvement alternatives.

If the EA determines that the proposed upgrade would have minimal impacts on the surrounding environment, a "Finding of No Significant Impact" or FONSI will be issued. In this case, the project would move into its final design phase, once approved by both INDOT and the FHWA.

Public participation in both the US 31 and SR 431 studies is encouraged, and will be accommodated

through public information meetings, newsletters, public hearings and the opportunity to review and comment on both the draft EIS and EA. Information on the US 31 project will also be available through its own web site ([www.US31indiana.org](http://www.US31indiana.org)) and video available at the Carmel, Westfield, Fishers and Noblesville Public Libraries. If you'd like more information on either project, contact INDOT Project Manager Brad Steckler at 317/232-5137 or Mark Fialkowski of The Parsons Transportation Group at 317/569-3670 ([us31.parsons@parsons.com](mailto:us31.parsons@parsons.com), [sr431.parsons@parsons.com](mailto:sr431.parsons@parsons.com)).

## IRTIP AMENDMENTS

As previously reported in *teMPO*, The Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP) documents federally-funded transportation improvement projects proposed for our region using available dollars within a three-year time frame. As such, it is an ever-changing document that reflects both the shifting project priorities of the MPO's planning partners and the competition to secure improvement funds as they become available.

"The MPO's job is to fairly consider the interests of all of our planning partners and to make sure that the projects funded in the IRTIP are in the best interest of our regional transportation system as a whole," says Mike Dearing, MPO Principal Planner, who is responsible for coordinating both the IRTIP and the longer term Indianapolis Regional Transportation Plan. Before projects can be considered for inclusion in the IRTIP, they must first appear in the Regional Transportation Plan. "Keeping the IRTIP current, and presenting newly proposed amendments for approval to the Technical and Policy Committees of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC), and to the Metropolitan Development Commission, has gotten to be a full time job," Dearing explains. This year alone, more than 169 amendments have been proposed to the IRTIP by 15 different requesting agencies.

An important aspect of getting those projects approved for implementation is providing the opportunity for the public to review and comment on them. In May, 2000, the MPO started running display advertising in the City/State section of *The Indianapolis Star* in conjunction with its traditional classified notices to promote awareness and review of IRTIP amendments. Dearing also regu-

larly attends the MPO's monthly Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting to present information on newly proposed amendments (as reported in the January, February, May, September and October issues of *CAC Minutes*).

At the October CAC Meeting, held on Tuesday, October 24, in the Public Assembly Room of the City-County Building, downtown Indianapolis, Dearing presented information on 26 newly proposed amendments to the 2001-2003 IRTIP. Both display (retail) and classified advertising promoting public review of, and comment on, these amendments appeared in the Wednesday, November 1 and

Friday, November 3 issues of *The Indianapolis Star*. As noted there, the public review period lasted two weeks and ended Wednesday, November 14.

Referring to a three-page handout he distributed to meeting attendees, Dearing briefly described the following amendments by requesting agency, project scope and estimated cost. Unless otherwise noted, federal funding pays for 80% of these projects with the remaining 20% contributed by the appropriate local jurisdiction.

### Requested by INDOT

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) requested the addition of the following four amend-

ments which cover twelve distinct projects:

- Include Phase 1 of the US 421 lane addition project (from .16 mile south to .9 miles north of I-465) to IRTIP program year 2001, along with a companion sign project at the same location. Also, add a light modernization project to I-465 at US 421. Road project cost: \$5,300,000, \$4,240,000 of which is federal funding. Sign project cost: \$100,000, all federal. Lighting project cost: \$140,000, all federal.

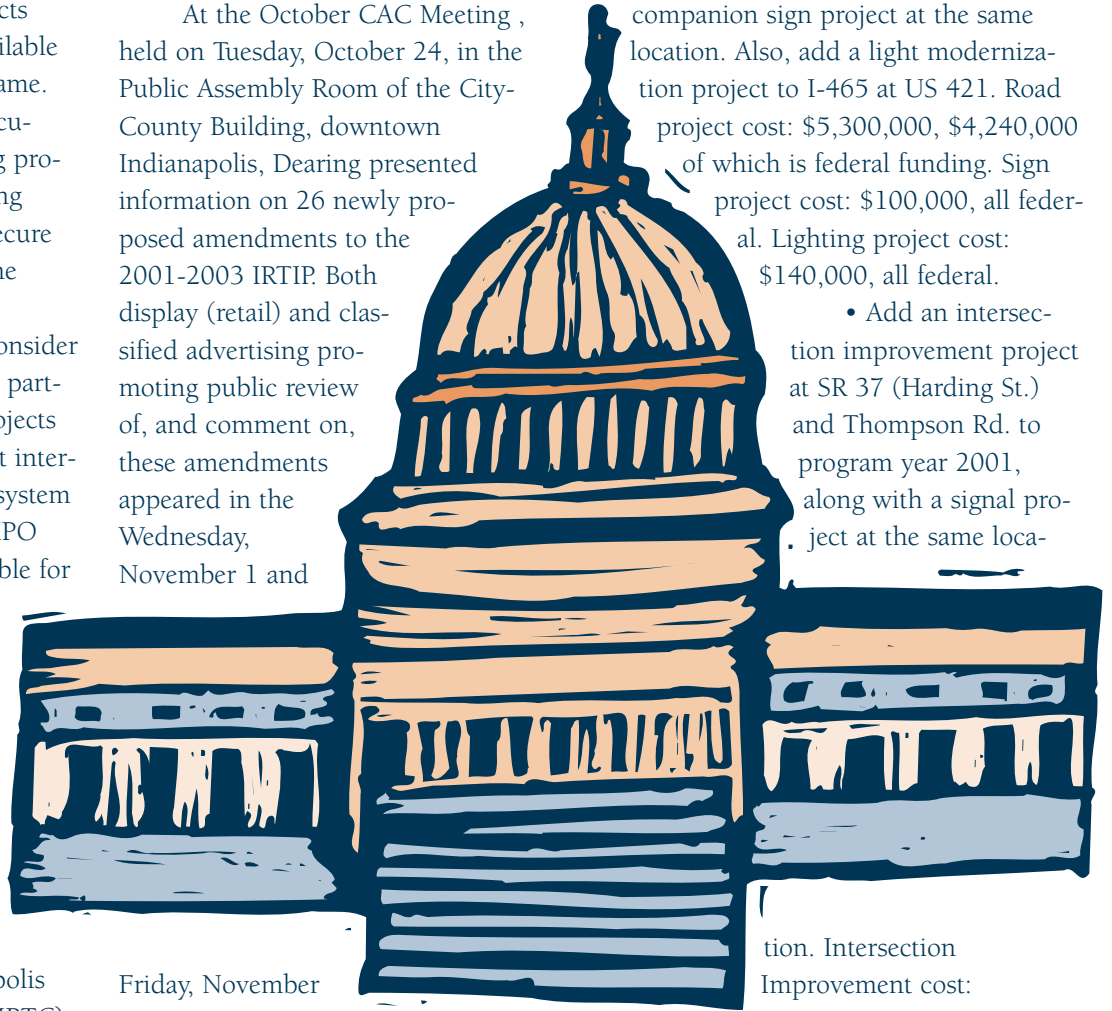
- Add an intersection improvement project at SR 37 (Harding St.) and Thompson Rd. to program year 2001, along with a signal project at the same loca-

tion. Intersection Improvement cost: \$470,000, \$376,000 of which is federal funding. Signal project: \$80,000, \$64,000 of which is federal.

- Add landscaping along the I-465 (East Leg) and US 40 (Washington Street) interchange at a cost of \$550,000 (\$95,000 federal)

- And, include the preliminary engineering phase to program year 2001, and the construction phase to program year 2003 for seven bridge rehabilitation projects: I-65 NB lane under I-70; I-65 NB over ramp under the same bridge; ramp to I-70 EB over I-70 WB; I-65 SB over I-70 WB and ramp; I-65 NB over I-70 WB and ramp; I-65 ramp over a proposed I-70 ramp;

*cont on page 15, see Amendments*



## MPO PROFILE

Meet Monica Cougan, an education innovator who became involved with regional transportation planning in 1998, and has seen the experience change both her career path and the not-for-profit organization for which she works. “It’s true,” Monica admits. “Everything I know about transportation planning I’ve learned in the last two years. But now I view myself and the Corporation for Educational Communications (CEC) as full partners in the process, making sure the input and participation of local young people are encouraged and accommodated.”

Until recently, Monica was the Associate Director of Distance Learning for the CEC. As such, she served as the MPO’s primary contact on the Distance Learning Project as part of *conNECTIONS* — the study of Northeast Corridor Transportation (For more information, see “Class Act,” *teMPO* - Spring 1999 and “CEC Projects Go The Distance,” *teMPO* - Autumn 1999). The project involved ten northeast corridor schools and 25 educators who worked with the MPO and the CEC to develop curriculum projects that combined transportation planning with diverse academic disciplines, such as Fine Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Language Arts.

Overall, the project had as its goals to 1.) promote citizen awareness and participation in the study, 2.) design, implement and evaluate curriculum applications using actual study data shared among participating schools via distance learning technologies, and 3.) demonstrate learning communities which connect home, school, community leaders, neighborhood organizations, students and teachers. Though cooperatively administered through the MPO, the CEC and the Central Indiana Educational Services Center (CIESC), the project’s resounding success in achieving these goals is due, in large part, to Cougan. “It was definitely a group effort,” says Mike Dearing, MPO Principal Planner and MPO Distance Learning Coordinator, “but I give a lot of the credit to Monica’s enthusiasm, professionalism and vision. Though it was a new concept for all of us, her experience as an educator kept us on-track.”

With a B.S. in Education from Ball State, a Masters in Education from Butler University and six years experience teaching seventh and eighth grade, Monica saw to it that each of the approved projects met specific curriculum goals, including Mastery of Basic Skills and Fundamental Processes; Development of Intellect; Citizenship Participation and Career/Vocational Preparation. “We saw Monica’s work through the CEC as a new way to increase public involvement in our regional transportation planning process at school and at home, while allowing the MPO to support the educational process,” Dearing explained.

So positive was the reaction of all participants in the *conNECTIONS* Distance Learning Project that Dearing involved the CEC in the current phase of the Bike Route System Plan (see “Peddling the Bike Route System”, page 1). “It just made sense to ask area schools and their students where they go and how they get there,” says Cougan. “The CEC was delighted to have another travel-related opportunity, this time with the MPO acting as funding partner to cover the cost of staff coordination and participating faculty time.”

Based on the success of this second, MPO-inspired community outreach project, the CEC decided to position itself to seize future opportunities. The organization, founded in 1994 as an education-based grant funding organization with capital provided by Ameritech, originally had four areas of investment: distance learning hardware (equipment), content providers (e.g. The Indianapolis Childrens Museum, The Indianapolis Museum of Art); Teacher Grants (i.e. to fund the conception and development of faculty ideas that utilized video conferencing); and, Distance Learning Coordination (i.e. technical support). To these, the CEC has added a fifth: the Community Initiatives Grant Program. Cougan will serve as the new program’s Director.

“It’s an idea whose time has come,” she says. “We already have a number of community-outreach projects on the drawing board, many again having to do with transportation (see related story, page 9). Encouraging young people to deal with issues like mobility that touch all of our lives brings real world experience into the classroom, while offering decision-makers exciting perspectives and a promising new avenue for input.” A promising, new avenue? “Ah, another road metaphor,” Cougan smiles. “I guess I’d better get used to them.”



Monica Cougan - Education Advocate, “Roads” Scholar

## FREIGHT PLANNING

(from page 1)

- identify steps to establish an effective intermodal freight planning process.

Phase I of the Airport Deployment Study, the subject of Kaliski's conference presentation, was recommended in the original plan to assess the vicinity's freight handling system in greater detail and to identify opportunities for improvement based on developing trends. This Phase I briefing report was subsequently presented to the study review committee for review and comment in an October 12 meeting sponsored by Indianapolis International Airport (IIA) and Federal Express. Committee members include representatives from INDOT, the Indiana Motor Truck Association, the Federal Highway Administration, Con-way Central Express and other organizations involved in freight handling concerns.

"These are critical issues," says Sweson Yang, AICP, MPO Chief Transportation Planner, who has had primary responsibility for overseeing both the plan and its follow-up study. "Nothing will have a greater impact on our region's quality-of-life and ability to compete in a world economy. These are aspects of our regional transportation plan that cannot be overlooked or underestimated."

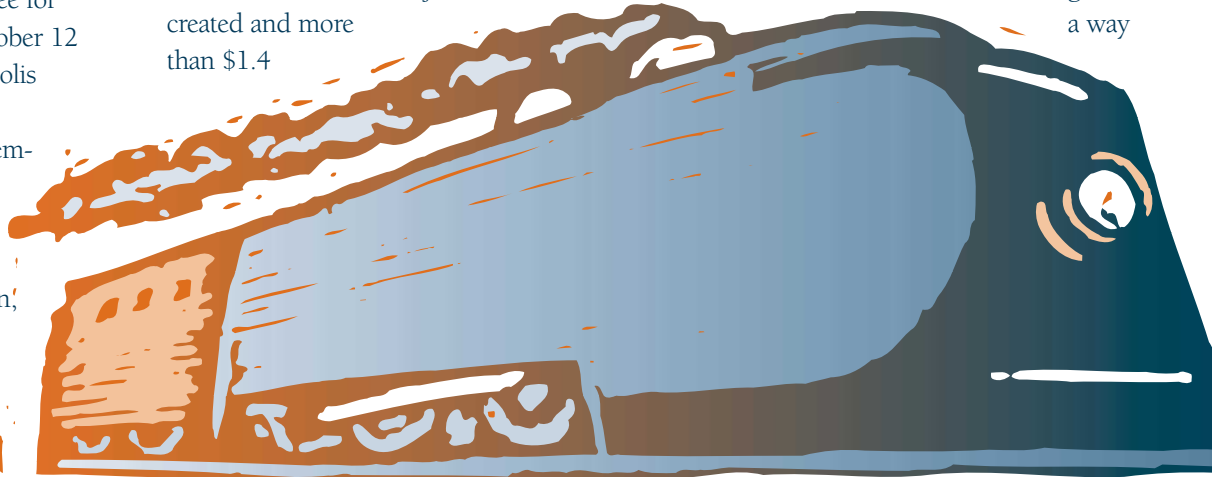
The region's intermodal freight system — the network of trucking routes, rail lines and air shipping services that move goods in, around and through the Indianapolis metropolitan planning area is already key to our local economy. Shipping ranks among the top seven independent industries for generating local dollars and jobs. In 1993, it moved 82 million tons of goods, valued at \$69 billion, or more than twice our region's personal income of \$31 billion (1993 figures). Over the next 20 years or so, the amount of materials moved is projected to increase 41% to 115,620,000 tons annually, if we're capable of handling it.

"That's really what the Intermodal Freight System Plan is all about," says Yang, "making sure that the "Crossroads of America" is able to both serve, and benefit from, the anticipated growth of American commerce."

The airport vicinity is only part of the system, but it is unique among intermodal transportation development areas. The area employs more than 10,000 and is one of the Indianapolis MPA's largest employment centers. Between 1990 and 1997, more than 5,000 jobs were created and more than \$1.4

Zone" and recommended for it several high-priority improvement projects. Included among these was a new I-70 interchange at Six Points Road, the improvement of Six Points Road from the new interchange north to I-74 including the north/south corridor, and the extension of Six Points Road on new alignment from the interchange southeast to SR 67. Also recommended was the realignment and widening of I-70 from six- to eight-lanes, from Six Points Road to the I-465

interchange, in a way



billion was invested in new business. Over the next 20 years, it is estimated that nearly \$2 billion in public and private investments will be made at the airport and its surrounding vicinity, generating approximately 16,000 more jobs.

In addition, the airport vicinity encompasses one of the largest rail classification yards between St. Louis/Chicago and the east coast, one of the largest package freight airport hubs in the U. S. and the junction of several major interstate highways, including I-70, I-65, I-74, and I-69. These facilities, together with major freight transportation providers including Federal Express, CSX Railroad and various large trucking and warehouse distribution activities make the area a key location for logistics-dependent businesses wanting to reach regional, national and international markets.

For these reasons, the Intermodal Freight System Plan named the Airport Development Area a "Freight Priority

that permits airport taxi aprons to the airport property south of I-70 — a consideration crucial to the expansion of the Federal Express facility.

Also, for these reasons, the Intermodal Freight System Plan recommended undertaking the Airport Intermodal Transportation Study in 1998, which became the Airport Deployment Study and subject of Kaliski's presentation.

The goals of the study are:

- Promote the Indianapolis Airport area as an intermodal transportation district with value-added services and world-class infrastructure
- Prepare an intermodal freight transportation strategy for the airport area that 1.) prioritizes infrastructure projects for funding and improvement and 2.) defines complementary Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and transportation management initiatives

cont on page 8, see Freight Planning

## FREIGHT PLANNING

(from page 7)

- and, coordinate airport-area investment among public and private stakeholders.



“Our overall goal is to help realize this key development area’s long term growth potential by making sure it doesn’t become “land locked” with congested

routes,” Kaliski says. “The study team began by assessing current conditions and found that the shipping resources in the IIA and CSX-Avon Yard vicinity are extensive, but have growing access problems.”

To achieve its stated goal and objectives, the study team will follow Phase 1’s system assessment with the identification and screening of improvement alternatives. Then, they will detail their preferred strategies and prepare an action plan.

“Paying close attention to key freight and logistical trends helped guide our decisions,” Kaliski said. Among the most important:

### From national to global markets

Increasing domestic, NAFTA and global trade, the out-sourcing of shipping services for comparative economic advantage and the emergence of global trade blocs and city-state trade areas all suggest that there will be an increased need for shipping services in the region’s future. These trends suggest an increase in freight traffic and congestion along trade corridors and at ports, airports and border crossings. There are also likely to be changes in the location of high volume lanes and economies of scale for freight carriers, as well as greater demand for global trade infra- and info-structure. So, Indianapolis is well positioned to grow as a major interior shipping city, if well prepared..

### From a manufacturing to a service economy

Manufacturing employment is declining, while production is on the rise. Employment growth is seen in service, information and high-tech industries, including e-commerce and e-business. These trends suggest there will be more small shipments of light, high-value freight moving longer distances in the future. There will also be greater demand for shipping reliability and speed and for package and air freight services. Carrier consolidation may also be required to drive down the cost of operating high-value transport services.

### From “push” to “pull” logistics systems

There is a customer-driven shift toward specialized products and services, manufactured-to-order goods and time-definite delivery. This means that, in the future, manufacturers will operate with lower inventory levels and less slack production capacity, creating greater dependence on transport services. Also, there will need to be closer integration/coordination of shipper/carrier operations and greater demand for reliable, flexible and economical door-to-door freight services.

### From modal fragmentation to cross-modal coordination

The trend here is toward increasing cross-modal coordination for door-to-door service. For the freight shipping industry, this means better and more complex freight services will rely on the rapid development and adoption of emerging technologies to trace shipments and manage vehicles. Also, there will probably be an increase in carrier concentration and consolidation among high-service, low-cost transport providers and value-added logistics and information managers.

### From system development to system optimization

Trends indicate an increase in “spot capacity” from new infrastructure projects; limited capacity increases from larger trucks, trains and planes; and, significant increases in operational capacity from ITS-

enabled freight transportation systems. These trends suggest the future importance of investing in operations research techniques for shippers as well as the high expectations the industry has for ITS in scheduling, routing, dispatching, highway and traffic management, shipment tracing and stowage and terminal management.

“From everything we’ve seen in Phase I, the demand for freight activity in the airport vicinity appears to be on the rise, now and in the future,” says Kaliski. In 1997, the area shipped \$97 billion in inbound and outbound goods — an increase of \$14 billion in just four years! And more of these shipments contained high-value goods. Trucking is still the dominant mode for local freight movement, but other modes offer unique advantages to future business. Parcel/mail, for example, accounts for a high percentage of value goods, while rail and air are critical for long-distance shipments. “This illustrates why we’re working on an integrated, intermodal freight system plan,” Kaliski points out. “Every type of freight handling has a role in the region’s future economy.”

Sweson Yang agrees. “Even though we’ve only completed Phase 1 of the Airport Deployment Study, we’ve learned an incredible amount,” Yang says. “Clearly, the demand for new and integrated freight handling services is growing and our region can grow with it. To play a critical role in the global economy, though, and to enjoy the future employment and quality-of-life that comes with it, we have to prepare for it now,” he says. “How we go about doing that is what the rest of this study is about.”

The study’s Phase II review meeting on alternative strategies will be hosted by Brightpoint, Inc. in January, 2001. For more information on any aspect of the Airport Deployment Study, which is scheduled to conclude with Phase III recommendations by May, 2000, contact Sweson Yang at 317/327-5137 (syang@indygov.org) or John Kaliski at 617/354-0167 (jgk@camsys.com).

## CEC EXTENDS (OUT)REACH

In response to its successful design and administration of community-oriented distance learning projects that aid both participating students and local sponsoring agencies, the Corporation for Educational Communication (CEC) has established a new program as part of its core mission: the Community Initiatives Grant Program. This program is a direct outgrowth of the vision of John Harrold, Cumberland Council President and Chairman of the Educational Subcommittee for the MPO's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) (See "MPO Profile," *teMPO* - Autumn 1999).

Envisioning a reciprocal learning opportunity between the CEC and the MPO, Harrold encouraged projects that would allow educators to engage students in real world issues impacting their community while providing the MPO with informed public participation and input into the regional transportation planning process. In this way, the first two examples — the *conNECTIONS* Classroom and Bike & Hike Projects — served as 21st Century Learning Models that opened the classroom to the community, and vice versa, using distance learning technology as the enabling tool.

“Future Community Initiatives Grant Program projects will follow a similar model,” says Program Director Monica Cougan. “Community Initiative Goals remain virtually the same, as do our curriculum objectives. However, projects funded through this new program need to incorporate a very specific list of characteristics.” Included among these are:

“Future Community Initiatives Grant Program projects will follow a similar model,” says Program Director Monica Cougan.

“Community Initiative Goals remain virtually the same, as do our curriculum objectives. However, projects funded through this new program need to incorporate a very specific list of characteristics.” Included among these are:

- Authentic Community Issue Actively under Study by a community Organization
- Multiple District Study (Encourage Urban, Suburban and Rural Mix)
- Interdisciplinary Approach
- A minimum of three months study of the issue within the classroom
- Collaborative School Partners
- Opportunity for student solutions to be incorporated within the sponsoring community organization proposals
- Research component
- Funding Partner
- Community Awareness Component (presentation opportunities, Venues, Publications)

“Though these intended project parameters are still being evaluated, we feel good about the direction,” Cougan says. “The CEC is now, and has always been, about expanding education through distance learning technologies. Now, by shifting some dol-

lars from our established Content Providers, we're able to connect with outside organizations who are interested in involving area students in their projects and in becoming funding partners. So, instead of just being presented to,” she explains, “participating students have the opportunity to work with material, develop their own solutions, and learn by doing.”

A handful of projects have already met the new program's funding criteria and are in various stages of development. These include:

### CLASSROOMS ON THE GO!

In this project, area students and teachers will work in partnership with the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IPTC)/IndyGo to investigate and develop ideas for increasing rider usage and improving the perceived value of bus transit to meet the

region's growing demand for mobility. Specific areas of consideration could include new ways to 1.) increase customer service and operational economy under the American Disabilities Act; 2.) meet the unique transit service needs, and language barriers, faced by the region's growing Hispanic population;

3.) identify and improve the perception of transit among potential riders; and, 4.) investigate bus transit as a regional mobility aid.

High Schools participating in the Classrooms on the Go project include Arsenal Tech, Ben Davis, Broad Ripple, Cathedral, IPS Goodwill and Perry Meridian. In addition, the project will be part of the curriculum at the IPS Goodwill School just west of the IUPUI Campus, where 80% of the student body is adult and five languages are spoken. Approved projects will involve History, Urban Issues, Geography, Government, Fine Arts, Marketing, Spanish, Latin American Studies, Social Studies and Adult Basic Education.

### INDIANAPOLIS INSIGHT

This project, sponsored by the Division of Planning of the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development, intends to encourage and accommodate public interest and input in the new comprehensive plan for Indianapolis/Marion County. A comprehensive plan is required by state statute as a basis for zoning and must include objectives and policies for future land use development and development of public ways (roads), places, land, structures and utilities.

Indianapolis Insight offers the public the opportunity to work with City-County planners to develop a preferred vision for the region's future. Though still in the early planning stage, the CEC's role in this program would be to facilitate the participation of school faculty and students within Marion County through a

*cont on page 16, see (Out)Reach*



## RAIL TRANSIT CRITIC COVERED

In the interest of a free exchange of ideas, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Peoni and others involved in the Northeast Corridor transportation study attended an event sponsored by local opponents of the rail/transit option being considered as one of the alternatives in the *conNECTions* study. Wendell Cox, a

*“The conNECTions’ Public Involvement Program has always been about sharing information and accommodating public input.*

*That input can come from those who oppose the alternatives being studied as well as those who support who them. We try to consider all perspectives.”*

*— Mike Peoni*

nationally known rail transit critic, spoke to a crowd of about 200 people at Eastwood Middle School, 4401 East 62nd Street, Indianapolis, on the evening of October 3rd, 2000. “I knew that Mr. Cox had been hired specifically to criticize the RB4 rail option, but I think it was important and appropriate for the MPO and others involved in the *conNECTions* study to attend,” Peoni said. “The *conNECTions*’ Public Involvement Program has always been about sharing information and accommodating public input. That input can come from those who oppose the alternatives being studied as well as those who support who them. We try to consider all perspectives.”

During his 40-minute presentation, Mr. Cox strongly criticized the various rail transit projects springing up across

America primarily because, in his opinion, they cost too much and are used by too few to be considered cost-effective.

“There is no example of an effective urban rail system in this country,” he said, “almost none, anyway.” He cited Portland, OR, and St. Louis, MO, two recent examples of successful rail transit applications, as “complete failures”.

To substantiate his claim that rail transit in Indianapolis would fail, Mr. Cox asserted that the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority corridor heads downtown “when most of the people now work in the suburbs”. “However,” Peoni notes, “downtown Indianapolis has the region’s highest employment concentration, with 86,000 workers (not including IUPUI employees) commuting in to work daily. That’s about 13% of the region’s overall workforce.” In addition, Mr. Cox warned that RB4 could cost more than estimated and that “your suburbs will end up subsidizing the poor of Marion County”.

Mr. Cox dismissed concerns regarding air quality and urban sprawl. He suggested that building more highways would add capacity and spread out congestion. Peoni points out that the *conNECTions* study is looking for long term strategies that will improve both traffic flow and mobility options. “We agree that improved highways are part of the solution but they also present significant challenges and costs. This is particularly true as the region becomes more fully developed and building new or improving existing roadways result in taking homes and businesses,” he says. “The *conNECTions* study is

telling us that we can no longer build ourselves out of congestion and that we need to provide alternatives to private vehicle use. And, until we complete the study, we don’t know what the best mix of solutions will be.”

For more information on all of the options being evaluated by *conNECTions*, including RB4, read the *teMPO* double issue dedicated to the study (Special Edition & Summer 2000). If you would like to request a copy of the Special Edition, or to voice questions, comments or concerns regarding the study, please contact Mike Peoni at 317/327-5133 or [mpeoni@indygov.org](mailto:mpeoni@indygov.org).



## UPDATED CONNECTIONS SCHEDULE

Public involvement has always been an important part of the *conNECTIONS* study of Northeast Corridor transportation. That remains truer than ever as the study continues toward completion.

The schedule of public involvement for *conNECTIONS*' Draft

Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which details in part the likely impacts each of the remaining alternatives would have on the human and natural environment, was included in our last *teMPO* (Special Edition & Summer 2000). Because the DEIS must be reviewed by federal agencies before

being made available to the public, it now appears that public review will not begin before January, 2001. This delay will in no way shorten the public review and comment period. Area residents will still have 45-days during which a Public Hearing on *conNECTIONS*' DEIS will be held.

## IRONS IN THE FIRE

### IDENTITY DEFINED

Maybe you've already noticed, but it hasn't been officially announced that the Metropolitan Planning Organization has a new look. The logo pictured here, the result of a identity development process that began early this year, is suggestive of the MPO's expanding responsibilities and Central Indiana location. "The orbit path around our initials represents the way I-465 circumscribes Indianapolis," explains Mike Peoni, AICP, MPO Manager/Master Planner. "Because we represent the transportation interests of various neighboring communities, our initials extend beyond this circle. And the star that makes the orbit path is centered within the "O" of "MPO", a reference to the map icon that usually designates a capital city."

As part of the MPO's identity development program, staff business cards and letterhead were produced — both necessities for transportation planners who must operate independently of the city-county government in which they're housed to achieve their mission of a "cooperative, comprehensive and coordinated transportation planning process. "Our letterhead lists most of the entities with whom we work, including the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council, 16 communities, eight counties and ten federal state and municipal agencies," says Peoni. "It and our logo help focus and define our continuing public involvement program, building public recognition and recall among our planning partners."



### PLANNING STAFF EXPANDED

On September 6, 2000, Stephanie Belch joined the MPO as a Senior Planner, bringing the organization's staff count to six. "We are still very small when you consider our planning area and the size of other MPOs in comparable urban regions around the country," explains Mike Peoni. "So, we're delighted to be able to add a person to our staff, particularly one of Stephanie's caliber and experience." Formerly with the Indiana Department of Transportation and the Michiana Area Council of Governments, Stephanie will include transit development issues and a special neighborhood study among her new responsibilities.

### NATIONAL TRENDS NOTED

In the first week of September, MPO Principal Planner Mike Dearing attended the Pro Bike/Pro Walk Conference in Philadelphia accompanied by Mike O'Loughlin, INDOT's State Bicycle

Coordinator, and Joe Whitman, MPO Communications Consultant. "My company saw this conference as a worthwhile investment in our relationship with the MPO and a great opportunity to gain a national perspective on regional pedestrian and bike-related issues," Whitman said.

The conference attracted more than 600 attendees from 48 of the 50 states, plus 7 foreign countries, and consisted of more than 60 workshops and 200 concurrent presentations over a three day period. "It was grueling, but time very well spent," said Dearing, who attended seminars on topics as wide ranging as funding for bike facilities and route plan implementation. "What we learned will contribute to initiatives we currently have underway, including our regional Bike Route System Plan and User Map. (see related story, page 1).

### STATE CONFERENCE HOSTED

Your MPO played host to other designated transportation planning entities from around the state for Indiana MPO Conference 2000, September 11 - 13. This three-day seminar encouraged planners statewide to gather with their peers and share the problems, and solutions they have in common. The conference, headquartered in the new Adams Mark Hotel, downtown Indianapolis, included Opening Remarks from Mayor Bart Peterson of Indianapolis and INDOT Commissioner Cris Klika; a reception, private screening and dinner at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis; a guided tour of the Indianapolis Greenways System; and, fifteen presentation on topics like Livable Communities Through Design, Central Indiana ITS Initiatives and the Hoosier Helper Van and Airport Freight Planning (see related story, page 1).

### OZONE REDUCED

The fifth year of the MPO's ozone awareness (Knozone) and reduction (Nozone) program ended in September. The program educates area residents about local ozone issues and encourages their voluntary cooperation in reducing the colorless pollutant. Ground-based ozone forms when vehicle, lawnmower and industry emissions react in the presence of sunlight and high temperatures. For this reason, the program is active only during the summer months. This year, meteorological conditions required the Knozone Program to declare only four Nozone Action Days -- a relatively mild season when compared with previous years. In 1998, for example 12 Nozone Action Days were declared; in 1999, 11.

## CHANGES (from page 2)

the route enhancement, IndyGo will attempt to identify/implement lower cost options for serving riders along poorly performing routes, expand AM/PM Commuter Express Service, expand Access-to-Jobs service using a new \$1 million grant and \$1 million local match, assess/improve daily operations, and enhance Open-Door Service for the disabled.

*Implement Advanced Technology -* Acquire/deploy Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system hardware and software to aid IndyGo's dispatch and communications, and train AVL management/operation personnel.

*Expand Public Relations Program -* Increase participation in neighborhood meetings, expand marketing services to increase public awareness, and increase public relations staff.

*Establish A Downtown Circulator System -* Establish a permanent circulator system in time for the 2001 World Police and Fire Games (June 9 - 16, 2001) which will connect major downtown destinations, serve residents, commuters and visitors, and improve bus operations/congestion in the downtown area.

*Establish A Downtown Transit Center -* Establish a temporary bus transfer center for the 2001 World Police & Fire Games, while searching for an appropriate location to construct a permanent facility.

*Position IndyGo To Provide Regional Transit Service -* Designate staff spokesman to lead IndyGo's regional service effort, communicate effort to

regional decision-makers, establish regional funding mechanism and rideshare program, and expand IndyGo park & ride services/facilities.

*Enhance Bus Shelter Program -* Expand bus shelter locations and establish a bus shelter design that will provides opportunities to post useful information and maximize advertising revenues.

*Increase Seasonal Route Services -* Lead transportation planning/operations for the 2001 Police & Fire Games and enhance transit service offered for Colts, Pacers and other special events.

*Comment:* "Every initiative proposed for 2001, our first year of plan implementa-

## Year 2002

Continue all of the 2001 initiatives, plus:

Establish an AVL-based Customer Information System, under *Implement Advanced Technology*,

Construct a *Permanent Transit Center Downtown*,

Expand IndyGo's Park and Ride Facilities/Services to 21st & Shadeland, Mt. Comfort Road & I-70, Girls School Road and US 36 and Lions Park, and construct 25 new bus shelters in IndyGo's current service area.

*Comment:* "We can't overestimate the importance of managing public perceptions and encour-

aging public input in



tion, contributes to our overall goal of expanding and improving service," notes Mross. "That's why most continue from year-to-year." Each strategy relates directly to improving customer service, operational efficiency, or the way IndyGo is perceived by potential customers and regional decision-makers. "The World Police & Fire Games are a showcase opportunity for us," Mross says. "We intend to make the most of them to build awareness of enhanced IndyGo service and to jump start longer term improvements, such as our downtown circulator system and transit center."

IndyGo's implementation process," says Shannon Joseph, IndyGo's Marketing Manager. "That's why we think that customer input is key to so many of our our initiatives."

Mary Lynn Ricks, IndyGo Public Affairs Director, agrees. "Our customers are really the best improvement planners we have," she says. "That's why our participation in neighborhood meetings will continue to expand. We want to talk with people a lot more to find out first hand what's working and what we can do better."

## CHANGES *(from page 12)*

### Year 2003

Continue all 2001 initiatives, plus:  
Expand IndyGo's Park and Ride Facilities/Services to Avon Middle School and US 31 & 151st Street, construct 25 new bus shelters within IndyGo's current service area, and construct five new bus shelters *outside* IndyGo's current service area.

*Comment:* "This year is the first in which we plan to expand the location of our (bus) shelters beyond our current service area," Mross notes. (For a second straight year, park & ride facilities will also be constructed further out from Center Township.) "These bus shelters are the same steel and glass structures being built downtown right now," he says. "Their presence shows that IndyGo

In October, 2000, the IPTC/IndyGo successfully applied for federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to acquire five electric buses. These buses will be used to establish and operate a circulator service in downtown Indianapolis. IndyGo intends to introduce this new service at the World Police and Fire Games in June of 2001. "The Metropolitan Planning Organization is very enthusiastic about this project," says Mike Peoni, AICP, MPO Manager/Master Planner. "We think it will demonstrate the potential benefits of using alternative energy and new technology in public transportation, as well as reduce street congestion and improve downtown air quality."

The total purchase cost of the buses is \$3,125,000, 80% of which (\$2,500,000) is federal funding. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is providing \$1,250,000 of the federal share with State CMAQ funds. The MPO will provide the remaining \$1,250,000 in federal funding from its available CMAQ allocations, as well as the entire local match of \$625,000.

IndyGo hopes to take possession of the new buses in May, 2001 and begin circulator service soon thereafter.

recognition of these improvements and top-of-mind awareness of IndyGo's changing role as a regional transit

### Year 2005

Continue all 2001 initiatives, plus:  
evaluate the performance/impact of the downtown circulator system,  
construct 25 new bus shelters within IndyGo's current service area,  
and construct 10 new bus shelters *outside* IndyGo's current service area.

*Comment:* "Enhancing transit service should be seen not only as a way to improve regional mobility, but also as an opportunity to improve regional air quality, cut personal transportation costs, and strengthen our sense of community," asserts Mross. Ricks and Joseph agree.

"About 90 years ago, Indianapolis had one of the most utilized transit systems in the country, if not the world," they say. "Implementing IndyGo's plan is a multi-pronged approach to re-capturing this advantage for everyone who lives in the region."

For more information on IndyGo's 5-Year Implementation Plan, contact Mary Lynn Ricks at 317/614-9239.



is serious about expanding its service area and about customer comfort."

### Year 2004

Continue all 2001 initiatives, plus:  
construct 25 new bus shelters within IndyGo's current service area, and construct 10 new bus shelters outside IndyGo's current service area.

*Comment:* "As IndyGo's service area expands, we plan to use marketing and advertising to help increase public

provider," Joseph says. "Still, our best promotional tool will remain good word-of-mouth, just as it is now. That's why we plan to manage our customer complaint rate even while increasing our service area. (NOTE: This year, IndyGo reduced its customer complaint rate to 2.2 per 100,000 rides. That's already a minuscule 2 one-hundredths of one percent, or an apparent customer satisfaction rate of 99.75%!)

## PEDDLING *(from page 1)*

given the scope and schedule of the current phase. They are currently slated to be addressed in the near future.

"We've been working a long time to get where we are," says Mike Dearing, MPO Principal Planner, who has overseen the project since its inception in 1995. Past phases have included:

Phase 1: Identifying the plan's north-south and east-west axis

Phase 2: Developing facility design standards for all likely trail, path and travel lane configurations.

Phase 3: Estimating cost figures for system implementation, including federal and local funding requirements

Phase 4: Developing model ordinances to help Marion County and neighboring jurisdictions to incorporate the proposed route system into their planning process.

"In Phase 5, we are attempting to identify bicycle routes that encourage real-life usage, such as work trips, recreational travel and running errands," Dearing explains. "This is part of our goal to make regional transportation more multi-modal by offering area alternatives to car travel, which will lessen traffic congestion and help improve air quality."

Part of that effort has involved finding routes most used by non-motorized travelers for running errands and commuting, while also tying into the existing paths of Indy Greenways. To accomplish this, planners and the public identified important destinations that needed route access as "Primary Nodes." The proposed bike routes connecting these nodes are the result of computer-modeling, five public input meetings and a school project which encouraged local students to use the same informa-

tion planners had. "We worked again with the Corporation for Educational Communication (CEC) to assess the current demand and future potential of non-motorized transportation among our region's young people," Dearing says. "After all, they will benefit most by the planning decisions we make now."

Other planning partners in Phase 5 include INDOT, elected officials from neighboring communities and project consultants HNTB, all of whom contributed to the project's success. "For example, INDOT allowed us to keep the bridge over Shadeland Avenue as a crossover bridge," Dearing notes. "This is critical to the use of the Penn Central Rail Corridor path, which we incorporated into the Bike Route Plan's eastern axis." Dearing also notes that INDOT put in a large culvert where I-465

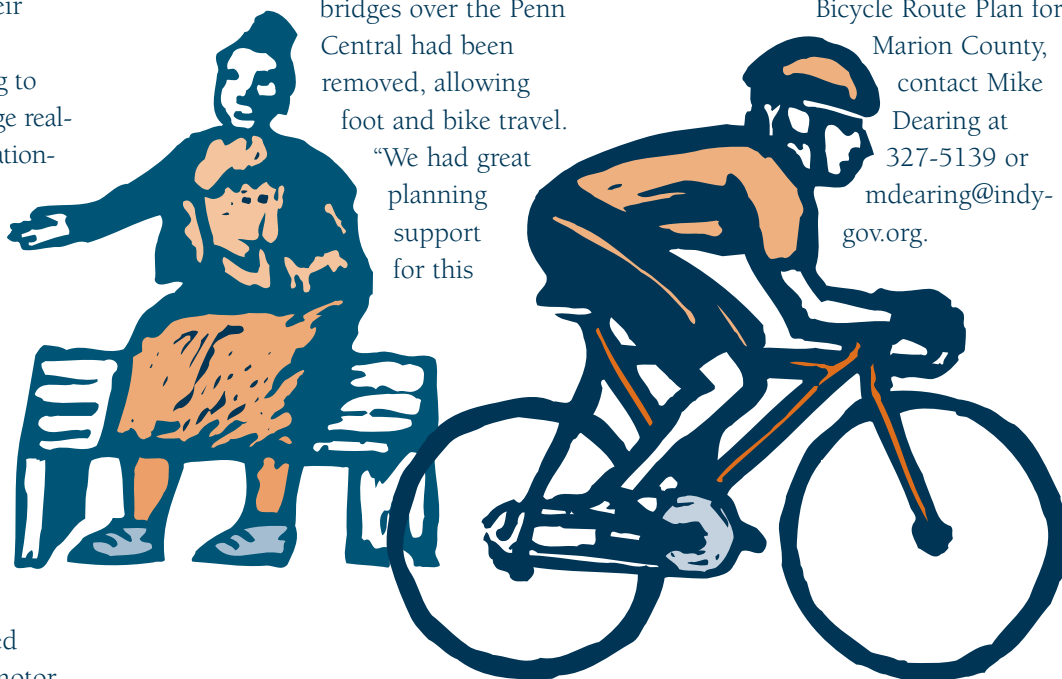
bridges over the Penn Central had been removed, allowing foot and bike travel.

"We had great planning support for this

path and that's made all the difference," he says. With comprehensive planning and cooperation like this, the proposed route plan can be implemented more quickly and economically than expected. "We have about \$2 million for planning, design and construction until the year 2003," Dearing explains, "so I think we'll see a lot of progress over the next few years."

When Phase 5 is complete, the Bicycle Route Plan User Map will be available at the City-County Building, Public Libraries and Park Facilities and area bike shops. "We also intend to implement a bicycle education/safety program as part of this initiative," Dearing explains, "because we want to make sure people know how to bike, before they get on our routes."

For more information on the Bicycle Route Plan for Marion County, contact Mike Dearing at 327-5139 or [mdearing@indy.gov.org](mailto:mdearing@indy.gov.org).



## Y O U R M P O S T A F F

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

<b>STEPHANIE BELCH • SENIOR PLANNER</b>	<b>317/327-5136</b>
<b>STEVE CUNNINGHAM • SENIOR PLANNER</b>	<b>317/327-5403</b>
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For more information on our regional transportation planning process, visit the MPO web site at [www.indygov.org/indympo](http://www.indygov.org/indympo).

## **AMENDMENTS** *(from page 5)*

and, I-70 WB over a proposed ramp 3. Preliminary engineering for each of these projects: 415,000 (\$13,500 federal). Construction cost for each: \$400,000 (\$360,000 federal).

### **Requested by DCAM**

The Department of Capital Asset Management requested the postponement of six Group 1 Urban STP projects to times outside of the 2001-2003 IRTIP. These include two bridge rehabilitations (Highland Ave/North Street Bridge over Pogue's Run and W. 86th St. over Big Eagle Creek); two road rehabilitations (S. Emerson Ave. from Churchman to Raymond Street and Hanna Ave. from US 31 to Keystone Ave.), an intersection improvement at E. Washington Street and College Ave., and the addition of travel lanes to E. 21st St. from Post Road to Mitthoefer Rd.

DCAM also requested the addition of four Group 1 Urban STP projects to program year 2001 or 2002 of the IRTIP, including two landscaping/enhancement projects along 38th Street. One project covers 38th St. from Martin Luther King to Meridian; the other, from Meridian to Fall Creek. Each is estimated to cost \$1,500,000 (\$1,200,000 federal). A drainage/wetlands project is also requested as part of the Fall Creek/Binford Blvd reconstruction at a cost of \$500,000 (\$400,00 federal) and a new road segment construction on the Ameriplex Parkway (from Decatur Blvd to the I-70/Six Points) at a cost of \$1,000,000 (\$800,000 federal). In addition, a new rail crossing is requested as part of the Harding Street added lanes project. This new crossing is for a spur line from the Indiana Railroad to the Indianapolis Power and Light facility west of Harding. Its estimated cost is \$700,000 (\$560,000 federal).

### **Requested by The City of Carmel**

Carmel has asked to add to program year 2001 the land acquisition phase for the 116th St road reconstruc-

tion project from Rangeline Road to College Avenue. The construction phase of the project is already in the IRTIP. Land acquisition cost is estimated at \$2,000,000 (\$1,600,000 federal).

### **Requested by The City of Greenwood**

Greenwood has requested the addition of a road reconstruction project on Frye Road from Madison Avenue to US 31 for program year 2002. Construction cost is estimated at \$1,200,000 with only \$360,000 being federal funds. This is an exception to the usual 80/20 federal funding rule.

### **Requested by Hamilton County**

Hamilton Co. has asked to add a land acquisition phase to the intersection improvement project at 106th Street and College Ave. for program year 2001. The construction phase of the project is already in the IRTIP. Estimated cost for land acquisition is \$2,000,000 with only 50% being a federal match. This, too, is an exception to the usual 80/20 federal funding rule.

### **Requested by Johnson County**

Johnson Co. has requested the addition of two projects to the IRTIP. In program year 2001, they want to add a land acquisition phase to the road reconstruction project on Smith Valley Rd (from SR 135 to Peterman/Berry Road) at a cost of \$1,000,000 (\$800,000 federal match). In program year 2002, they want to add a land acquisition phase to the road reconstruction project on Smith Valley Rd (from Peterman/Berry Rd to Morgantown Rd) at a cost of \$1,000,000 (\$400,000 federal match). The construction phase for both projects is already in the IRTIP.

### **Requested by The City of Lawrence**

Lawrence requested the addition of three projects to the IRTIP. In program year 2001, they want to add the preliminary engineering phase for the 79th St. new road project (from

Sunnyside to Oaklandon) and the road reconstruction project on 79th Street (from Oaklandon Road to Carroll Road). The construction phase for both segments of the project is already in the IRTIP. In program year 2002, Lawrence requested the addition of a bridge replacement project on E. 52nd St. over Indian Creek. It is estimated to cost \$1,288,015, only \$360,000 of which will be federal funding.

### **Requested by The City of Southport**

Southport has requested the addition of two projects to program year 2001 of the IRTIP. One is the preliminary engineering phase for the Anniston Drive road reconstruction (from Walnut Street to McFarland Rd.) which is estimated to cost \$40,000 (\$32,000 federal). The construction phase of the project is already in the IRTIP. The other requested project is the installation of a guardrail on Walnut Street/Stop 10 Road at a cost of \$7,000 (\$5,600 federal).

During his presentation, Dearing also mentioned an IRTIP amendment too recently requested to be included on his handout: the funding of five electric buses for IndyGo which will serve a downtown circulator route system (see related story, page 13). The cost of these buses will be \$3,125,000 with \$2,500,000 being federal funds.

"Although the approval process for all of these amendments may take us through the end of the year, I'm sure the IRTIP will see further changes in 2000," Dearing says. "The IRTIP, and the Regional Transportation Plan which feeds it projects, are both very dynamic documents, intended to be responsive to the changing transportation needs of our planning partners and the public we serve." For more information on these amendments, contact Mike Dearing at 317/327-5139 or [mdearing@indygov.org](mailto:mdearing@indygov.org).

## (OUT)REACH *(from page 9)*

variety of approved curriculum projects. These projects will meet the previously stated Community Initiatives Grant Program academic goals, while dealing with developmental trend information in the areas of population growth and movement, unemployment rates and annual per capita personal incomes.

### **I-69 EXTENSION**

This project would involve the CEC with the proposed, and much debated, extension of I-69. INDOT is seeking additional avenues for sharing study information and soliciting public input. Community Initiatives Grant Program projects could be used to engage the public in communities located along the extension's alternative routes. "If it comes to fruition, this will be the CEC's first attempt to coordinate a long term, multi-year project with schools outside of Marion County," Cougan notes. The project would represent a new opportunity

PAGE Sixteen



to build awareness and family involvement among the people most impacted by the proposed extension. "Plus, we're hoping that a project that involves students in this issue may help to inspire the interest and encourage the education of future engineers," says Cris Klika, INDOT Commissioner.

### **CARMEL PUBLIC ARTS**

This project, now in its initial planning stage, would deal with the Monon Trail between 96th Street and 116th. Carmel-Clay Parks, which currently manages this stretch would be the funding partner. The

purpose of the proposed project would be to improve the aesthetics of the trail. Possible enhancements could include both sculpture and botanical gardens and a mural on the I-465 overpass. If possible, the CEC hopes to involve Broadripple and Carmel High Schools, as well as "sister" schools in East Chicago and San Diego.

Other possible Community Initiatives Grant Program projects currently under discussion include the US 31 Corridor (see related story, page 4) and the Indianapolis Greenways System. "The CEC is not dedicating this new program exclusively to transportation-related issues," notes Cougan, "but a number of projects on the drawing board do deal with them. I think that testifies to the importance mobility, like education, plays in our current and future quality of life."

For more information on the CEC's Community Initiatives Grant Program, contact Monica Cougan at 317/231-6526.



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