INDIANAPOLIS REGION'S

tempo

KEEPING PACE WITH OUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

SPRING 2004
VOLUME EIGHT
ISSUE ONE

It's a Spring Thing

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

cont on page 3, see Spring Thing

In This Issue

Accelerate 465 Update

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

As one of the first interstates constructed in Marion County, the corridor's current design capacity is not sufficient to support existing and projected usage. In response, INDOT has selected Corridor Project Management Consultants (CPMC), led by HNTB Corporation, to:

• Upgrade interchange ramp and mainline capabilities

cont on page 12, see Accelerate I-465

Section 5310 Program

"There is no down side to this program," says MPO Senior Planner Kevin Mayfield, of the federally funded initiative he helps oversee in the Indianapolis region. "It offers transportation help to the people who need it most – the elderly and the disabled — and it provides it through the organizations these people turn to for aid," he says. Section 5310 of the Federal Transit Act (formerly known as Section 16) states as national policy that "elderly persons and persons with disabilities have the same right to access transportation services as other persons." The 5310 Program authorizes federal capital assistance grants to meet the special needs of these people where public mass transit services are unavailable or

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ACRO-NYMBLE

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

AGT – Automated Guideway Transit
AICP – American Institute of Certified Planners
APM – Automatic People Mover
BRT – Bus Rapid Transit
CAC – Citizens Advisory Committee
CBD – Central Business District
CEO – Chief Executive Officer
CIBA – Central Indiana Bicycle Association
CICOA – Central Indiana Council On Aging
CISTMS – Central Indiana Suburban Transportation and Mobility Study
CMAQ – Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality
CPMC – Corridor Project Management Consultants
DEIS – Draft Environmental Impact Statement
DMD – Department of Metropolitan Development
DPW – Department of Public Works
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA – Federal Highway Administration
FTA – Federal Transit Administration
GIPA – Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee
IBC – Indiana Bicycle Coalition
IIA – Indianapolis International Airport
INDOT – Indiana Department of Transportation
IRTC – Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council
IRTIP – Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program
ITC – Indianapolis Transit Consultants
ITS – Intelligent Transportation System
IUPUI – Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis
LRT – Light Rail Transit
LRTP – Long Range Transportation Plan
MCANA – Marion County Alliance of Neighborhood Associations
MDC – Metropolitan Development Commission
MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization
PSC – Policy Steering Committee
RTS – Rapid Transit Study
SR – State Road
TSM – Transportation System Management
UPWP – Unified Planning Work Program

Q & A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

In Q & A, members of your MPO staff answer questions posed to them via voice mail, e-mail, regular mail or in-person. In this issue, MPO Manager/Master Planner Mike Dearing discusses the MPO's role in addressing the region's air quality issues.

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

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

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

Mike Dearing
MPO Manager/Master Planner

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

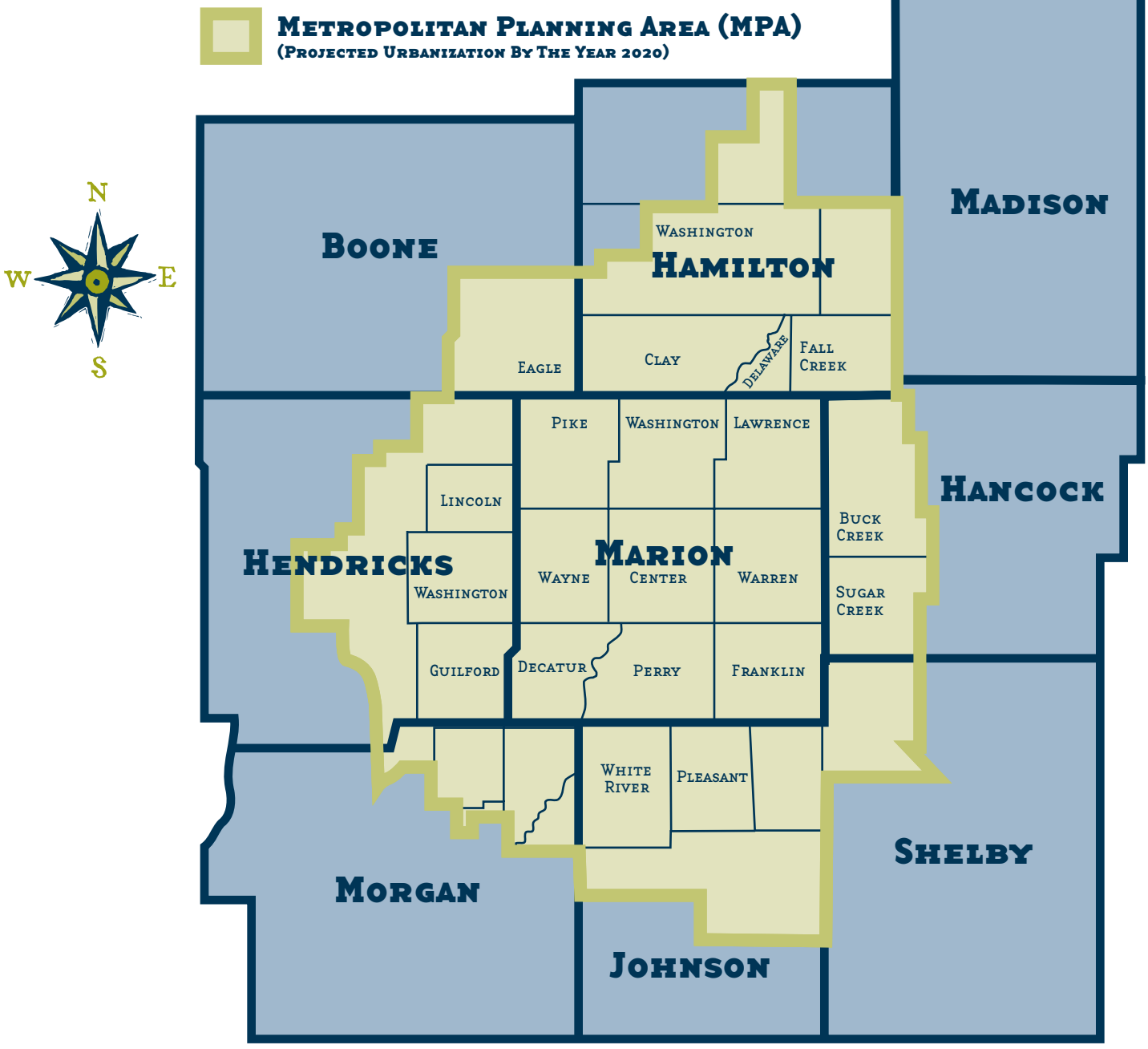
Failure to meet these standards affects, and reflects on, all of us who live, work or travel in the non-attainment area. It also involves state and municipal planners who

cont on page 4, see Q & A

APPROVED

INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

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



Spring Thing

(from page 1)

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

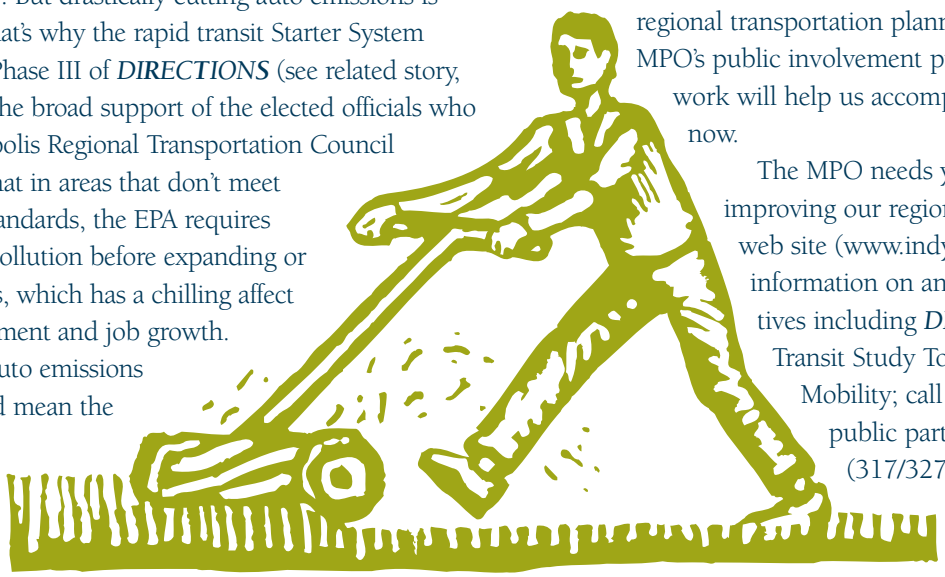
Plus, you can find out what's happening with the MPO's major review of the Regional Transportation Plan, meet one of the private citizens who traveled with the MPO to Vancouver, B.C. and learn how a little known federal transportation program changed the lives of seniors in New Palestine. It's all here,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

Questions & Answers

(from page 2)

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Clearly, we've come a long way, but have a long way to go before we "clear the air." And, it's going to take all of us to get the job done.

DIRECTIONS Enters Phase III

On Tuesday, April 13, the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) helped *DIRECTIONS*, The Rapid Transit Study To Improve Regional Mobility, reach an important milestone. The IRTC, to which the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) makes its recommendations, serves as the decision-making body for the regional transportation planning process. As such, the elected officials who make up the IRTC's Policy Committee have been overseeing the *DIRECTIONS* study since its inception in December, 2002. Now, nearly sixteen months later, they voted to endorse *DIRECTIONS'* Phase II findings and to authorize the start of its third and final phase. In so doing, the IRTC endorsed the travel corridors recommended by the MPO to become a rapid transit "Starter System".

Connections to the past

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

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

"*DIRECTIONS* was intended to answer these questions," Dearing notes.

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

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

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

"These fact-finding trips are just part of our efforts to offer the public the most complete information available," Dearing says."People came to our meetings to learn, *and give us their opinions*. That's exactly why we scheduled a meeting in each travel corridor – to hear about transit from the residents and commuters most likely to use it.

At six public meetings held in mid-to-late February, participants reviewed and commented on the study's findings to-date and indicated which system routes they thought best for each corridor. In addition, the attendees were invited to consider the pros and cons of Light Rail Transit (LRT), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and AGT. (To review the route/technology options in each corridor, see *teMPO* Special Edition, February 2004, or visit the MPO web site at indygov.org/indympo/directions).

To insure that the study meets its goal of arriving at a *locally preferred* region-wide rapid transit system plan, the MPO promoted its Phase II public meetings via direct mail throughout the region, display advertising in nearly 40 newspapers, media advisories sent to 50 print, radio and television news providers, radio adver-

cont on page 6, see DIRECTIONS Phase III

DIRECTIONS Phase III

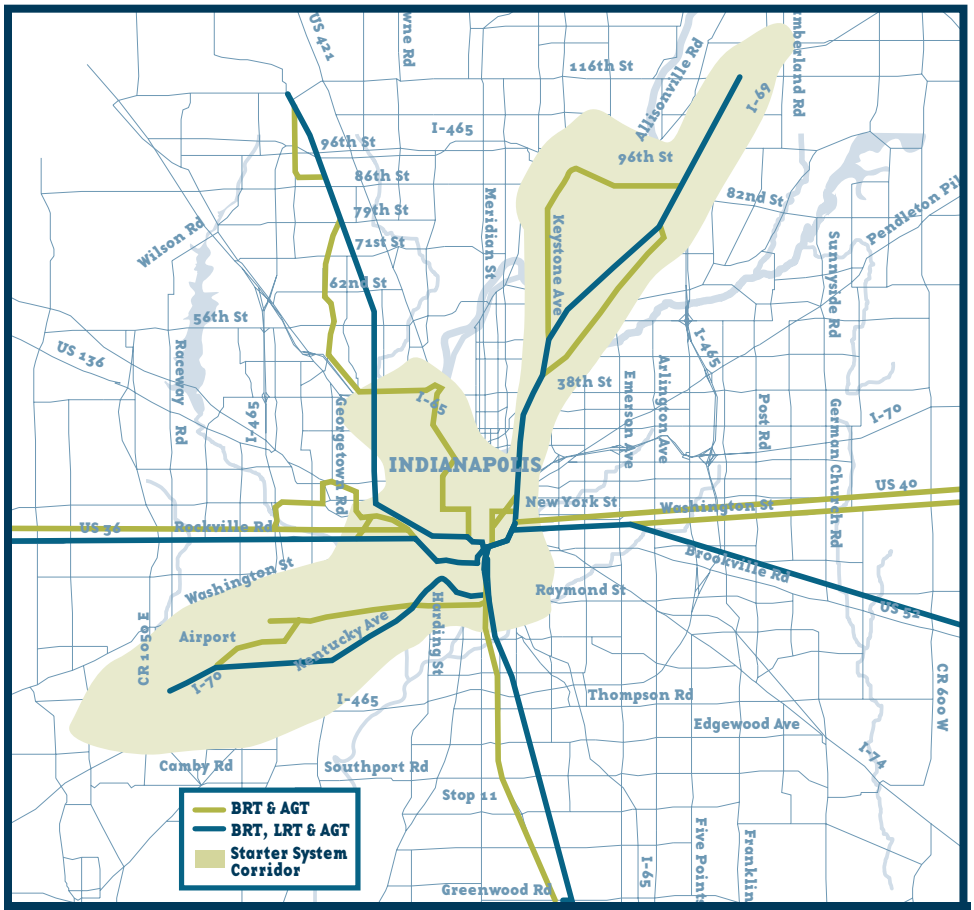
(from page 5)

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

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

The Present Milestone

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



Proposed Starter System Corridors

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

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

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

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

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

cont on page 20, see DIRECTIONS Phase III

Suburban Mobility Study

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

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

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

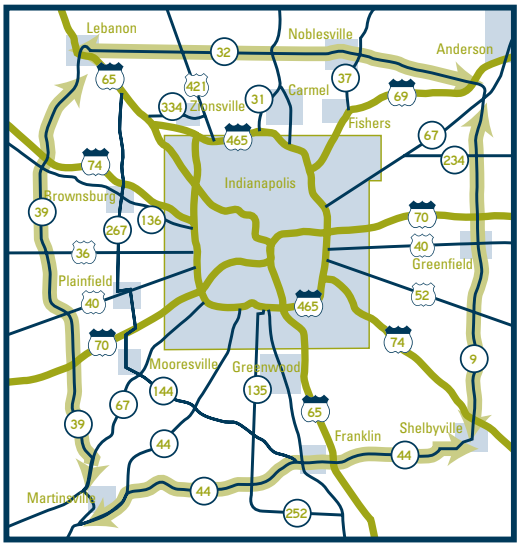
Thanks to three years of effort from INDOT and its various planning partners, including twelve MPOs, Indiana was among the first states in the nation to have a project-specific statewide LRTP (NOTE: Since the plan's completion, a thirteenth MPO has been formed in the Columbus area, where the population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

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

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

Did you Know? . . .

One of the primary reasons for the CISTMS study is the expectation that population and employment will continue to grow in the suburban counties surrounding Indianapolis. As such, growing demands on the transportation system need to be addressed to maintain or improve system efficiency and safety.



CISTMS Study Area

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

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

To accomplish its goal, the study is examining the interrelationship of land use and transportation by modeling various road-

cont on page 14, see Suburban Mobility

SECTION 5310 PROGRAM

(from page 1)

inadequate. Eligible grant applicants include private non-profit organizations and organizations that coordinate specialized transportation services.

"I can't believe we're not flooded with grants requests," says Harry Fox, Director of CICOA Senior Transportation Services, who serves with Mayfield on the local Transportation Advisory Committee

that reviews grant applications. "We need to get the word out about this program, because I see a lot of need that's going unmet."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INDOT requires each applicant to submit their grant request to their MPO for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MPO reviews these applications in relation to

cont on page 16, see Section 5310 Program

YOUR MPO STAFF

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

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For more information on our regional transportation planning process, visit the MPO web site at www.indygov.org/indympo.

Regional Transportation Plan Review

Among the many projects recommended by the MPO in its 2004 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is one called "Major Review of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)." This, like all projects in the UPWP, is described in adequate detail for professional planners who need to review and evaluate the program before approving its implementation. However, the casual browser, including most of *teMPO's* readers, may need more detail to truly understand what's being funded and why. For this reason, we offer another installment in our on-going series of articles focussing on UPWP projects and what they entail.

Background

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

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

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

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

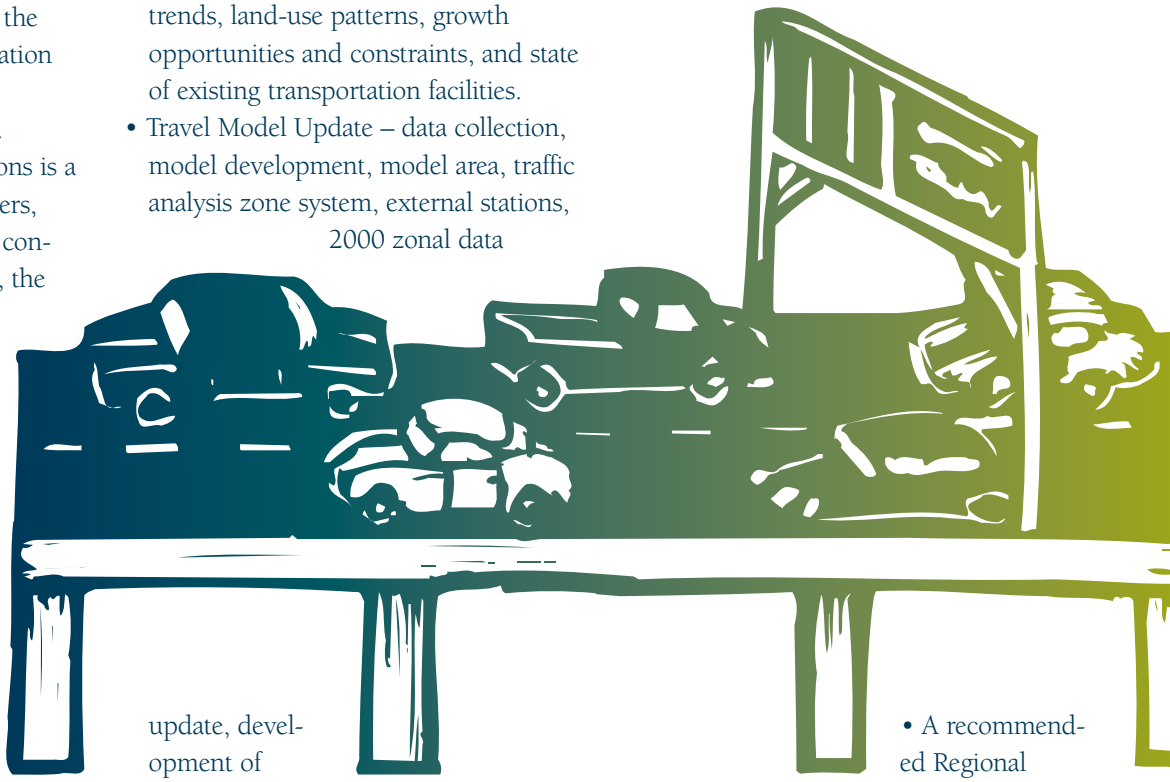
- Past Accomplishments and Background – expanded MPA, regional transportation planning process partners, public involvement program, and consideration of planning factors.
- Assessment of Existing Conditions – historical population and employment trends, land-use patterns, growth opportunities and constraints, and state of existing transportation facilities.
- Travel Model Update – data collection, model development, model area, traffic analysis zone system, external stations, 2000 zonal data update, development of transportation network, trip generation, trip distribution, traffic assignment, calibration, mode choice, and transit assignment.
- Deficiencies in existing transportation system – deficiencies and issues associated with meeting travel demand for the highway system, public transportation, air & rail transportation and freight system.

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

This includes:

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

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



- A recommended Regional Transportation Plan, including plan components, performance and cost effectiveness
- A Cost-Feasible Plan with revenue forecasts, project priorities and phasing, system performance, air quality confor-

cont on page 10, see Transportation Review

Transportation Review

(from page 9)

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

- Implementation Strategies
- A Final Report

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

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

Phase 1 Tasks

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Did you Know? . . .

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

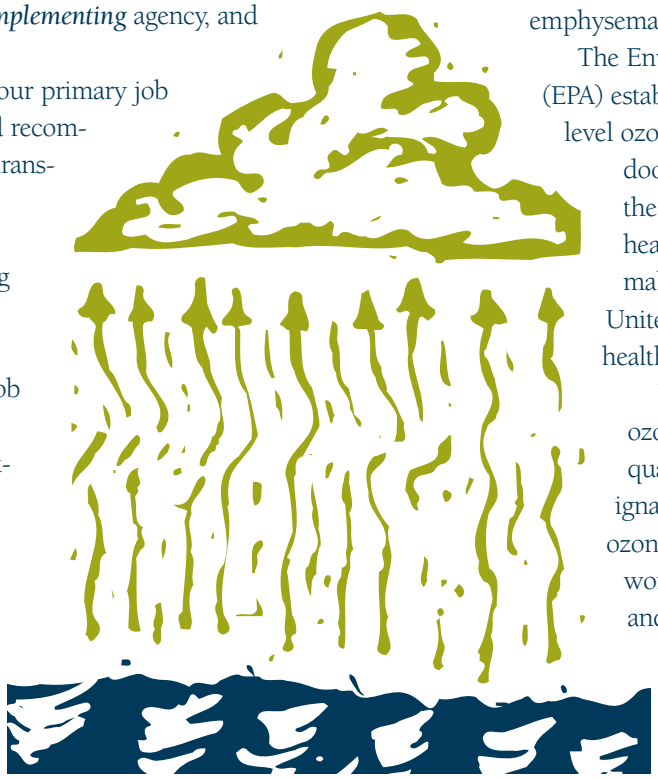
New York	55%
Washington, D.C.	37%
Boston	31%
San Francisco	31%
Chicago	27%
Philadelphia	27%

Living In The Knozone

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

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

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



Background

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

cont on page 18, see Knozone

Accelerate I-465

(from page 1)

- Improve deteriorating mainline, ramp pavement and bridges
- Upgrade geometric conditions to current standards

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

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

It is currently planned, that:

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

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

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

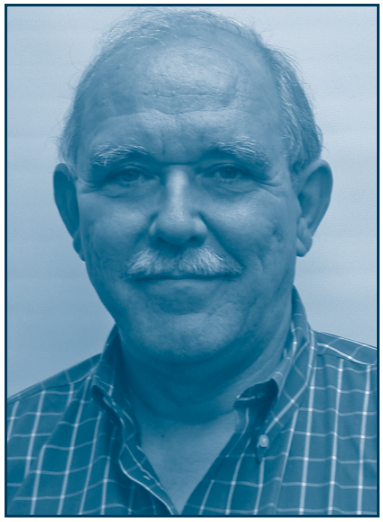
For more information on *Accelerate 465*, please visit the project web site at www.accelerate465.in.gov, call the project information line at 1-866/214-1778, send e-mail inquiries or comments to accelerate465@hntb.com, or contact Public Outreach Lead Matti McCormick at 317/917-5315 (fax:317/917-5215).

16. Just South of the 56th Street Interchange
15. Between 38th and 56th Street
14. 38th Street interchange
13. Between I-74 and 38th Street
12. I-74 East of I-465
11. I-74 / Crawfordsville Road
10. Between 10th Street and I-74
9. 10th Street interchange
8. US 36 / Rockville Road
7. Between US 40 and US 36
6. US 40 / Washington Street
5. Airport Expressway
4. Between I-70 and Airport Expressway
3. I-70 interchange
2. SR 67 / Kentucky Avenue
1. East of SR 67

MPO Profile

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

"It's all connected," says Bob, who has served as Professor of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI) for 26 years. "I think deep down most people know that, but sometimes they don't want to think about these connections," he notes. "When it comes to transportation issues, a lot of people don't want the facts to get in their way of their opinions."



Bob Lehnen

Looking Down the Road And Around The Corner

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bob can be reached at rlehnen@comcast.net.

Suburban Mobility

(from page 7)

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

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

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

Functionality

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

cont on page 15, see Suburban Mobility

CISTMS Works Within LRTP View

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

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

Statewide Mobility Corridors which connect urban areas of 25,000 persons or more in Indiana and neighboring states, provide macro-level accessibility to cities and regions around the state, and play a vital role in economic development. Characteristics of Statewide Mobility Corridors include:

- Upper level design standards
- High speed travel
- free-flowing traffic conditions
- Serves long distance trips
- Large "through traffic" volumes
- Heavy commercial vehicle flows
- Carry longer distance commuter traffic
- Generally multi-lane, divided
- Full access control desirable, no less than partial access control
- Railroad and highway grade separations desirable
- desirable to bypass congested areas

Regional Corridors connect smaller cities and regions, feed traffic to Statewide Mobility Corridors, and provide for regional accessibility. Characteristics of Regional Corridors include:

- Mid-level design standards
- High to moderate speed
- Free-flow to the extent practicable in rural areas
- serve medium distance trips
- Carry medium distance commuter traffic
- Moderate through traffic volumes
- Moderate commercial vehicle flow
- Potential for heavy local traffic volumes
- Typically, at grade intersections with highways and railroads, with consideration for railroad separation
- High-level, two-lane or multi-lane
- Partial access control desirable
- Conventionally routed through cities and towns

Local Access Corridors serve intra- and inter-county short distance trips, provide access to local residences and businesses, and provide access to rural areas and small towns. Characteristics of Local Access Corridors include:

- Lower-level design standards
- Moderate to low speed
- At-grade intersections with highways and railroads
- Minimal access control
- Short distance trips
- Moderate local traffic volumes
- Typically two-lane with multi-lane exceptions
- Frequent interaction with non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians
- Routed through cities and towns

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

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

Suburban Mobility

(from page 14)

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

Safety

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

Quality-of-Life

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

Cost-Effectiveness

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

Equity

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

Did you Know? . . .

In the last ten years, population growth in the "donut" counties has grown at 3.5 times the rate of Marion County's (28% vs. 8%). During the same period, jobs increased in these eight counties by 42% while declining in Marion County by 6%.

Existing Conditions, Future Needs

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

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

Did you Know? . . .

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

No-Build Alternative

This category does not include any roadway improvements beyond those already programmed for construction. This alternative will be the base condition to which other alternatives will be compared.

Minimum Change Alternative

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

Medium Change Alternative

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

Maximum Change Alternative

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

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

For more information on CISTMS, which is scheduled for completion by the end of the year, contact Steve Smith of the Indiana Department of Transportation (ssmith@indot.gov.org) or Lori Miser of HNTB Corporation (lmiser@hntb.com). Or, visit the INDOT website at in.gov/dot/projects (CISTMS is listed under "Planning") or the MPO website at indygov.org/indympo.

SECTION 5310 PROGRAM

(from page 8)

TIP goals and objectives and prioritizes them. The MPO also facilitates the TAC quarterly meetings.

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

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

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

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

Did you Know? . . .

According to the U.S. Census 2002 American Community Survey, large U.S. cities with the longest average commuter travel times are New York (38.4 minutes), Chicago (32.7 minutes), Philadelphia (30.3 minutes), Riverside, CA (29.8 minutes), Baltimore (29.7 minutes), Washington, D.C. (29.4) and San Francisco (29.2). For comparison purposes, the average commute reported for the greater Indianapolis region (Marion County and portions of the surrounding eight counties) in the Commuter Practices and Preferences Survey conducted last year by the MPO was 23 minutes. Is it purely coincidence that five of the cities cited by the U.S. Census as having the longest commutes also have the highest percentage of transit commuters? (see page 10 for details.)

A 5310 Case Study

Independent Residential Living at 5971 W. US 52 #E, New Palestine meets the needs of about 190 clients with physical, mental or age-related disabilities in Hancock, Shelby, Marion and northern Johnson County. This non-profit home healthcare and rehabilitation provider gears its services toward helping individuals maintain their independence and quality of life most often while continuing to live on their own.

"Personal care, daily living and employment assistance, meal preparation, financial training and serving as escorts/teachers on shopping trips and doctor or dental visits are all part of what we offer," says Chris Jones, IRL Executive Director. "Everything you might need a hand with if you have a disability, including getting around the community in reasonable comfort and convenience."

Toward that end, IRL aids its customers in locating and accessing available transportation options. For example, it teaches Marion County clients how to use IndyGo para-transit service on a regular basis. But, with the sometimes exception of Johnson County, IndyGo service doesn't extend beyond Marion County and client needs can't always observe the procedures and schedules of para-transit service.

For this reason, IRL operates its own fleet of 12 Vans to keep up with the growing demand for client transportation. This year, a new C-type van with wheelchair lift will likely be added to the fleet, allowing IRL to retire its oldest and least reliable vehicle, thanks to a successful Section 5310 grant application.

"The Section 5310 Program and members of our local Transportation Advisory Committee have helped us a lot over the years," says Jones. "They're a big part of how our fleet has grown, and how so many of our clients have been able to stay in their own community and become active contributors to it, even going on to donate their own time and talent through volunteer activities," she notes. "Every federal dollar granted through 5310, and matched 1-to-4 on the local level, offers big quality-of-life and community paybacks."

Independent Residential Living's 5310 grant application was recommended for approval for one vehicle by the Marion County Transportation Advisory Committee. This recommendation was sent to the Indiana Department of Transportation for final approval which is expected in June. If awarded, the new van is anticipated to join its fleet in six to twelve months. For more information on Independent Residential Living, call toll-free 887/861-0032 or visit www.irlinc.org.

Irons In The Fire

Peddlin' Environmental Awareness

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

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

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

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

CAC Meets

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

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

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

cont on page 19, see Irons in the Fire

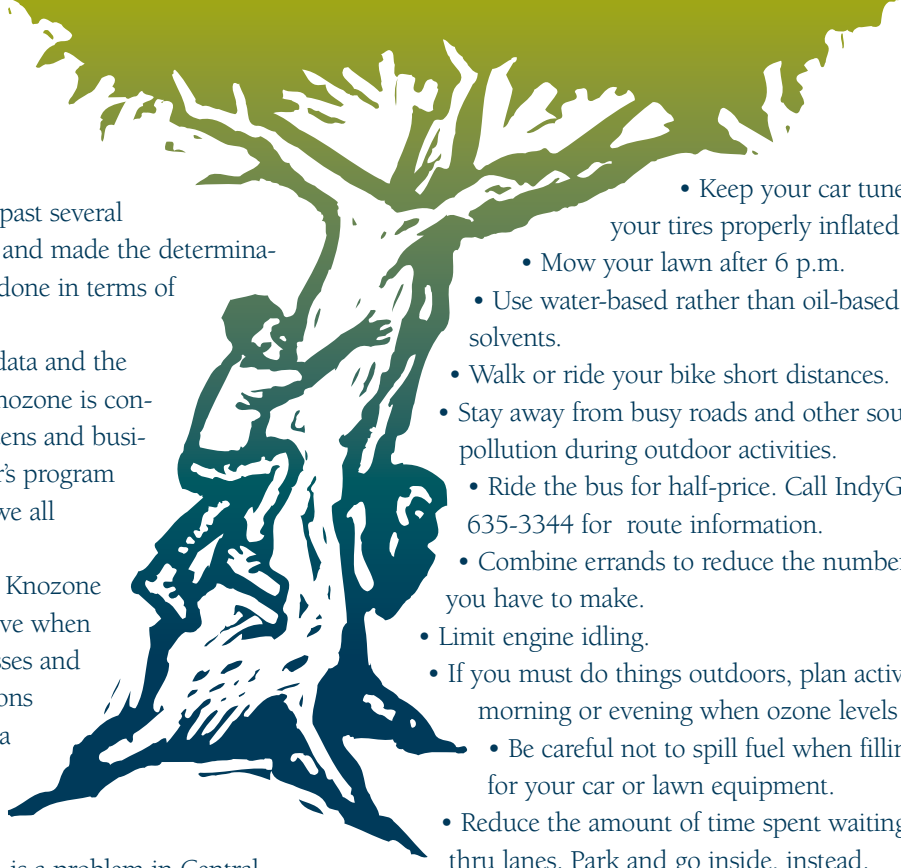
Knozone

(from page 11)

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

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

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



What We Can Do NOW

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

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

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

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

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

Then, try to follow these voluntary guidelines:

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

Be "In The Kno"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Irons In The fire

(from page 17)

Indianapolis Transit Task Force

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

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

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

Year of The Bike

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

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

Did you Know? . . .

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

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

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DIRECTIONS Phase III

(from page 6)

A Consensus Finding

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

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

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

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

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

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- Learn about upcoming public participation opportunities from the MPO Hotline at 317/327-IMPO.
- Or, for in-depth information, visit the MPO web site at www.indygov.org/indympo.