



INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

# ANNUAL REPORT

2014

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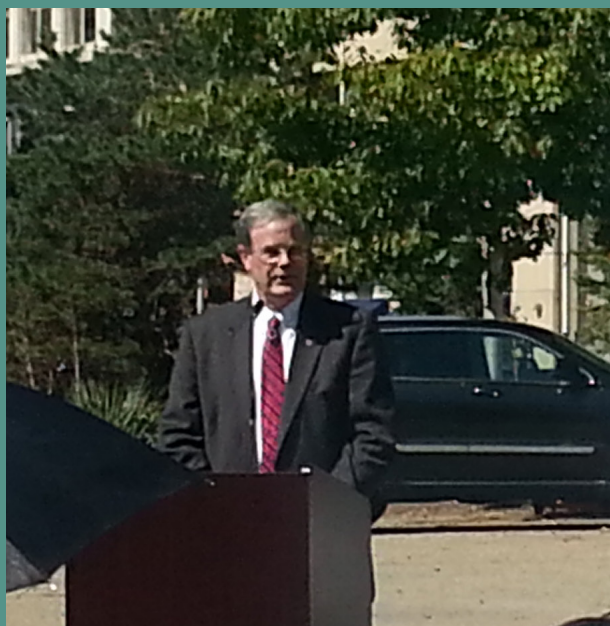
*Conducting  
a continuing,  
cooperative, and  
comprehensive  
transportation  
planning  
process.*

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The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is committed to conducting a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process in central Indiana. This Annual Report serves to illustrate to Local Public Agencies, partners, and the public the 2014 accomplishments of the MPO.



22 %

population growth



10.29M

transit trips, 23-year peak high



5 %

growth in total number of projects



## Message from the Executive Director



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*As we look to 2015, the MPO will continue to be responsive, innovative, and results oriented.*

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Welcome to the first annual report of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). I hope this document offers you a high level overview of the activities that the MPO has undertaken in 2014. First and foremost, the MPO continues to maintain a strong team of professionals to lead regional planning activities. While we did say farewell to Mike Dearing this year, as he set out to begin a new chapter in his life, his impact on the MPO will be felt for years to come. New to the Data team this year is Xiaozhuo (Lisa) Zhang. We were also able to expose three interns to real world transportation planning experience over the course of the year.

For me, the highlight of the year was the MPO certification process. This process occurs every 4 years and is conducted by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transportation Administration with our partners at the Indiana Department of Transportation and IndyGo. The MPO always finds this review process helpful as we get clarification and guidance on the various planning requirements. The certification review process this year resulted in no corrective actions, which hasn't happened in over 10 years.

As we look to 2015, the MPO will continue to be responsive, innovative, and results oriented.

A handwritten signature in dark green ink that reads "Anna M. Gremling". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anna Gremling  
Executive Director

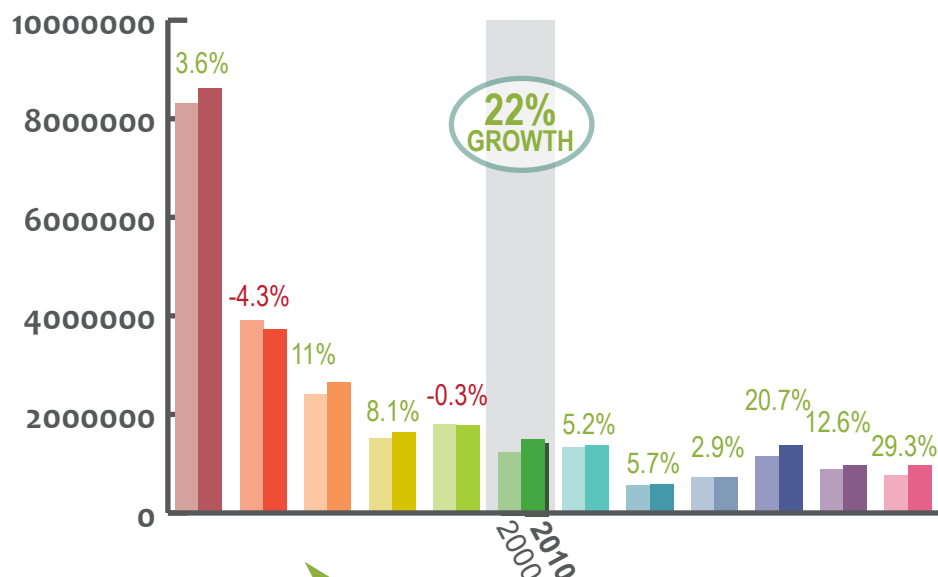
# REGIONAL TRENDS



## Urbanized Area

- Chicago
- Detroit
- Minneapolis
- Cincinnati
- Cleveland
- **INDIANAPOLIS**
- Milwaukee
- Grand Rapids
- Dayton
- Columbus
- Louisville
- Nashville

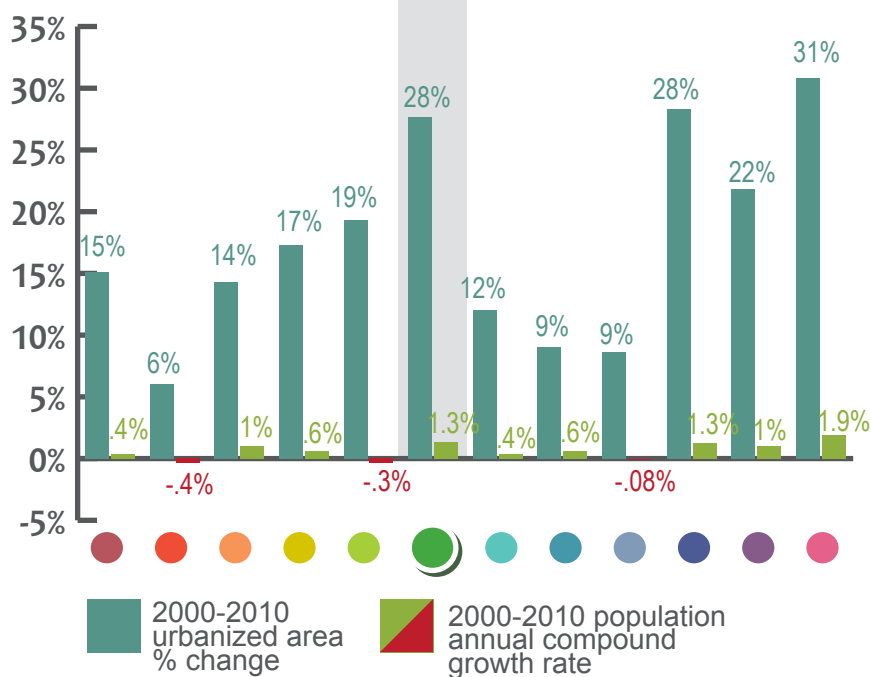
## POPULATION



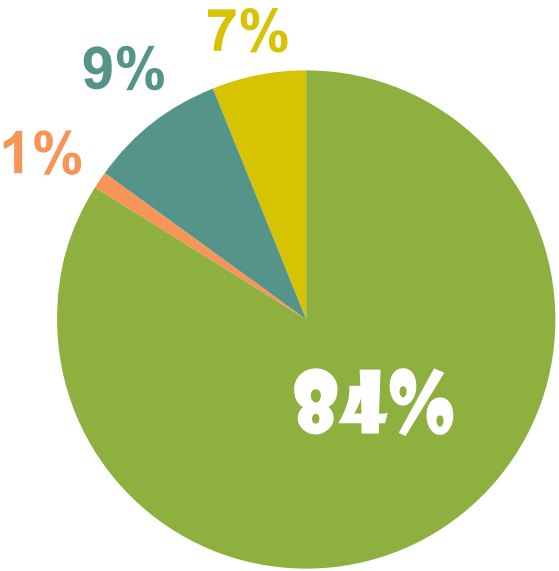
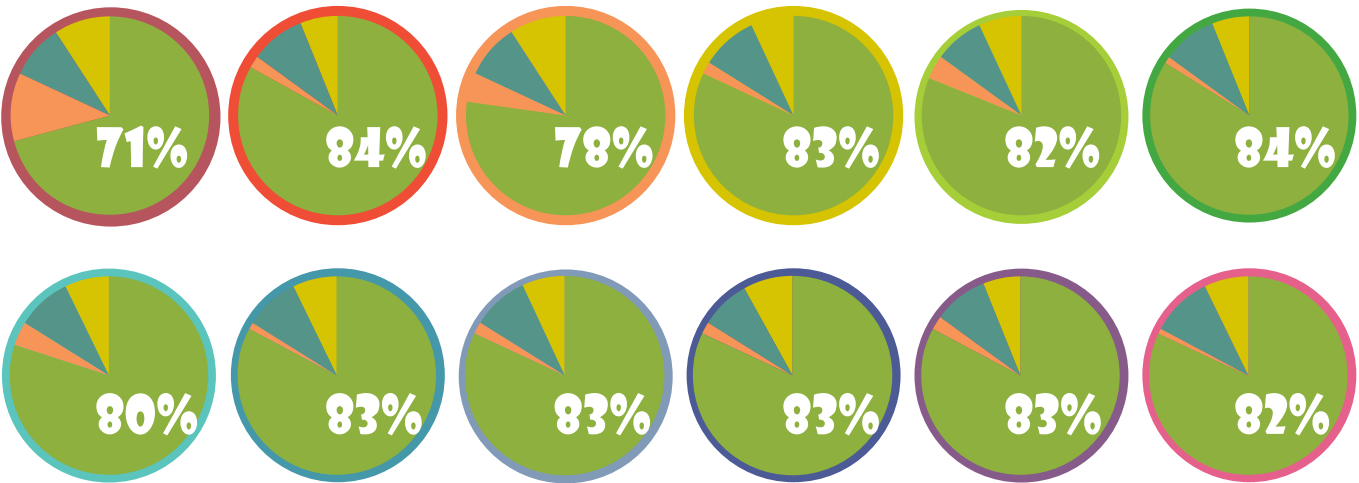
**1** INDIANAPOLIS LED THE MIDWEST IN GROWTH BETWEEN 2000 AND 2010 AT 22%

**2** INDY'S URBANIZED AREA GREW BY 153 MILES, THE LARGEST PERCENT GROWTH BESIDES COLUMBUS & NASHVILLE. INDY IS ONLY BEHIND NASHVILLE IN POPULATION GROWTH.

## GROWTH



MODAL SPLIT



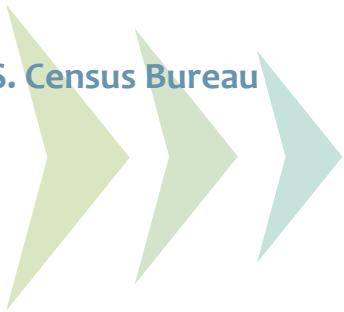
**3** INDY HAS MORE DRIVING TO WORK ALONE THAN ANY LARGE MIDWEST CITY BUT DETROIT.

INDY HAS THE LOWEST PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MODE SPLIT IN THE COMPARISON.

INDY DOES MORE CARPOOLING THAN ANY CITY IN THE COMPARISON BUT MILWAUKEE, LOUISVILLE, AND NASHVILLE.

- Driving Alone
- Public Transit
- Carpool
- Other

Source: 2010 Census, U.S. Census Bureau





# PROGRAMMING

The programming section of the Indianapolis MPO is responsible for the development, maintenance, and implementation of the four-year Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP) that currently covers years 2014 through 2017 including an illustrative year of 2018. The MPO works cooperatively with multiple agencies and is guided by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations. As legislation, guidelines, policies, priorities, and personnel change, MPO staff work to adjust the program.

In 2014, staff dealt with many changes and challenges including federal funds carryover balances, quarterly tracking of projects, spending scenario development and a call for new 2019 projects.

The MPO has traditionally been allowed to carry over funding from one fiscal year to the next and from transportation bill to transportation bill. Over the course of several years, the MPO had accumulated a substantial amount of “carryover” funding that remained on the books. Staff examined every project and program from numerous fiscal years and worked closely with INDOT finance staff to agree on the

actual carryover amount of roughly \$40 million. Simultaneously, INDOT implemented guidance that prohibited carryover of any kind. Known as an annual allocation or “use it or lose it” policy, this directive resulted in significant changes in the way that local projects funded by the MPO are developed and monitored and how the MPO administers the program.

To better manage projects and ensure that the region’s annual allocation of federal transportation funds are obligated each fiscal year, the MPO staff developed and adopted a quarterly tracking policy in 2014. The policy was adopted by the Indianapolis Regional

Transportation Council in August. The goal of the tracking policy is to improve communication with each LPA, monitor and maintain project budgets and increase on-time delivery of the MPO's program. 2014 represents the first full year in which the MPO required quarterly reports of each LPA project in the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and held tracking meetings each quarter to discuss each project with our LPAs. The policy is a reflection of the MPO's project tracking methodology over the last year and was well received by the MPO's reviewing agencies and LPAs with MPO funded projects.

Working with INDOT to develop a five-year spending scenario to spend down the agreed upon carryover balances required considerable effort by staff, not only to examine the current program through 2018, but to add new projects for 2019. This necessitated a new, unanticipated call for projects in 2014 for all four of the funding programs the MPO administers. Using the MPO's on-line project database (MiTIP), the MPO issued a call in May for new projects in 2019. The MPO received 88 project applications totaling \$172.8 million from 24 local public

agencies. At a special December meeting, the IRTC approved the staff's recommendation of 52 projects totaling \$98.4 million for illustrative year 2019 and parts of 2018 and 2020.

In 2013 the MPO implemented an on-line project database known as MiTIP. MiTIP is an interactive database for all projects in the Indianapolis MPA from the time of application to project close-out. MiTIP provides real-time information on LPAs, increasing accessibility to all parties, including the public. MiTIP is now used exclusively by the region's LPAs to submit project amendments and modifications, quarterly reports and new project applications.

After considerable design and development work by the MPO and our consultant, EcoInteractive, the MPO launched a Google Map-based feature on the Public Access Portal. This mapping feature allows the public to find projects in any given area by zip code, address or by using the zoom feature on the map. The MPO presented MiTIP at the annual Indiana Statewide MPO conference generating considerable positive feedback and interest. ■

***The Metropolitan Indianapolis Transportation Improvement Program database, known as MiTIP, allows the public to view programmed transportation projects contained in the IRTIP on-line. MiTIP represents the most current version of the IRTIP at any given time.***

***[mitip.indympo.org](http://mitip.indympo.org)***

## MPO Programming

# BY THE NUMBERS...

**\$1.5 billion**

Total 2014 funding for the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP) in the Indianapolis MPA, including 761 distinct projects and/or phases.

**\$88 million**

2014 federal dollars obligated (authorized) to pay for projects in the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), moving projects toward implementation.

**528**

Amendments and modifications processed by the MPO staff in 2014. The IRTIP is dynamic and continually changing as project schedules and estimates change, the MPO must amend and modify the program to keep it current.



By administering the IRTIP, local agencies are able to move their federally funded projects to construction and completion in a timely manner.

**[37]** local projects went to letting in 2014 and

**[21]** local projects completed construction.

To ensure that project schedules and budgets are maintained as closely as possible, the MPO tracks each project from initial entry into the IRTIP through construction to completion. As a result, the MPO reviewed...

**[632]** Quarterly Reports and

**[484]** Construction Status or Project Status reports while holding

**[16]** quarterly tracking meetings with

**[36]** of our LPAs<sup>1</sup>, INDOT<sup>2</sup> and FHWA<sup>3</sup>.

By the end of 2014, the MPO had...

**[191]** registered users of our secure on-line project database, MiTIP, and numerous visits to the MiTIP Public Access Portal.

1. Local Public Agencies  
2. Indiana Department of Transportation  
3. Federal Highway Administration

# Long Range Planning

*The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Area's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a document that is long-range in scope and helps guide the development of the area's transportation system through the year 2035. It is amended and updated once a year or as changing conditions and community needs dictate.*

The transportation planning process and major updates to the LRTP identify policies, strategies, and major projects needed for the future. Realistic projections of available financial resources (federal, state, local, and in some cases, private) are also forecast to 2035. This makes sure the plan is “fiscally constrained” and not a wish list of projects. One of the biggest changes will be the mandated use of performance measures to evaluate systems and projects.

Early in 2014, MPO staff updated the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to include several interstate expansion projects as funded by the Indiana General Assembly. Staff asked for reaffirmation by the IRTC Policy Board of the original Goals and Objectives from the 2035 LRTP approved in 2011. Reaffirming these Goals and Objectives allows the MPO to maintain an approved LRTP through 2017. This will allow the new federal transportation bill, which includes new requirements for the transportation planning process, to be announced.

## GOAL 1

**PRESERVE, MAKE  
SAFE, AND IMPROVE  
UTILIZATION OF  
THE EXISTING  
TRANSPORTATION  
SYSTEM.**

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Maintain the existing network in a state-of-good repair.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Use cost-effective transportation system management, transportation demand management, intelligent transportation system, and operational improvements and techniques to increase the efficiency and safety of the existing transportation system.

## GOAL 2

**ENHANCE REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION  
MOBILITY AND  
ACCESSIBILITY.**

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Provide cost-effective transportation improvements to address identified mobility problems and reduce the growth in traffic congestion.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Provide appropriate travel options and choice for all users, including auto, transit, paratransit, bicycle, and pedestrian.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Improve accessibility to regional employment and activity centers.

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Enhance connections between modes.

**OBJECTIVE 5:** Support commercial goods movement within and through the region.

## GOAL 3

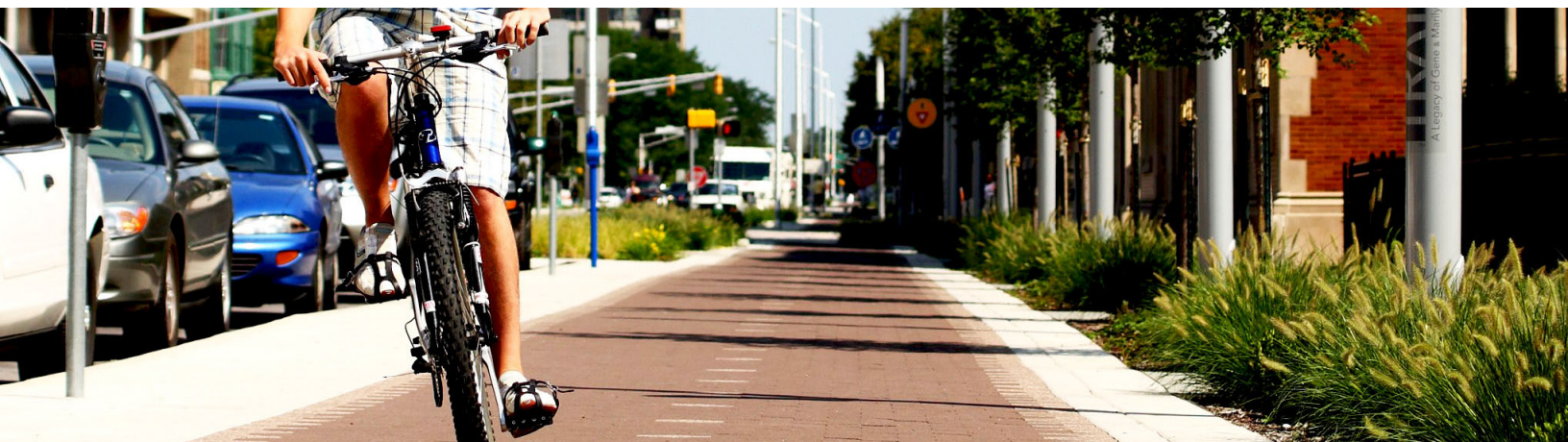
**COORDINATE  
TRANSPORTATION  
SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS  
TO BE CONSISTENT WITH  
REGIONAL VALUES.**

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Partner with state and local jurisdictions to ensure transportation and land use are complementary.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Enhance transportation system sustainability and minimize impacts of the transportation system to the built and natural environment.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Support regional economic development.

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Support transportation security.



# MULTIMODAL

Multimodal Planning examines alternate forms of transportation beyond personal passenger vehicles. Walking, biking, and using transit are different “modes” that enhance the overall transportation system for the region and make communities more enjoyable. The MPO funded and developed the following programs and projects during 2014.

## IndyGo Forward

The MPO and IndyGo conducted a comprehensive operational analysis, which identifies potential efficiencies, analyzes the changing market for transit, and serves as a plan for growth. IndyGo Forward began in June 2014 and will continue into the first quarter of 2015. Outcomes of the study will be:

- ▶ A new routing pattern to serve the Downtown Indianapolis Transit Center, Opening in Late 2015
- ▶ Agreement on Transit System Priorities
- ▶ Implementable service improvement packages
- ▶ 2021 scenarios based on different funding levels
- ▶ Long Range (2035) scenarios including rapid transit lines

Additional information on IndyGo forward can be found at [www.indygo.net](http://www.indygo.net) and the final report will be posted at [www.indympo.org](http://www.indympo.org) at the conclusion of the study. ■



## IndyGo/IPS Study

IndyGo approached the MPO for assistance on an Indianapolis Public School system transportation study in 2013. IndyGo’s goal was to analyze where students live in relation to existing bus service. The purpose was to find money saving solutions for IPS by providing rides to school on public transportation.



The study began with data collection and mapping where students live relative to the school they attend. Analysis began to determine which students were able to use IndyGo routes in either a one-seat ride or with one transfer with a trip under 45 minutes. Using that methodology, it was determined that approximately 3,000 IPS students could utilize IndyGo Service for their trip to school. The potential cost savings to IPS were estimated at between \$1.7 M and \$2.5 M annually based on different scenarios in the study. IndyGo will be working with IPS to determine if the IPS board would like to pursue a new bussing arrangement based on the study findings. ■

## Pedal & Park

The Pedal & Park Program provides free, supervised parking for bicycles and rollerblades at public festivals and events in Central Indiana. The MPO sponsors this program each year to encourage the use of non-motorized transportation alternatives, promote the use of trails and greenways, and dispense relevant literature. 2014 was the 14th season of Pedal & Park. The program parked over 6,000 bicycles this year bringing the total to over 45,000 since the program began. The largest annual events in the Pedal & Park Program are the Indiana State Fair, the Indianapolis Mayor's Polar Bear Pedal, and CarmelFest. For

more information regarding the program or to find out how to get Pedal & Park at a local event visit [www.pedalandpark.org](http://www.pedalandpark.org). ■



## Complete Streets Policy

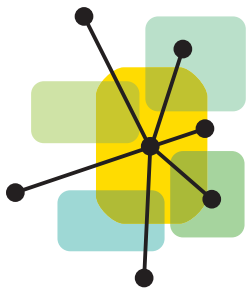
Beginning in 2013, the Indianapolis MPO created a regional Complete Streets Policy. To aid in the creation of the policy, a committee of interested IRTC representatives was formed to review draft versions of the policy and provide feedback and discussion. This committee of 13 IRTC representatives including small and large municipalities; counties; and representatives from INDOT, CIRTA, and the Indiana Complete Streets Coalition met four times between September 2013 and January 2014. The policy was approved by the IRTC in March 2014 and became effective in June 2014. The final policy applies to any Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) or Surface Transportation Program (STP) project within the Urbanized Area Boundary (UAB) federally funded via the MPO. In the future, projects within the UAB that are federally funded via the

MPO within the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program are intended to be applicable to the regional Complete Streets policy. The policy establishes minimum requirements for consideration and integration of pedestrian or bicycle facilities into roadway projects. It also establishes procedures for exceptions to the policy and a Task Force of the IRTC to provide guidance on the approval or denial of requests for exception to the policy.

The MPO's Complete Streets Policy was effective during the 2019 call for all project applications. Applicants were surveyed on their compliance to the policy, or their intent to request an exception. As of the writing of this annual report, all projects within the UAB that were approved for 2019 TAP or STP funding are expected to comply with the newly approved Complete Streets Policy.

The policy was evaluated in "The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2014" by Smart Growth America. According to the rankings the MPO's policy is:

- ▶ #18 of 80 policies passed in 2014 in the US
- ▶ #4 of 39 regional policies ever passed in the US
- ▶ #52 of 672 policies ever passed in the US (top 10%)
- ▶ scored the third highest of a total of 11 policies passed in Indiana to date. ■



# INDY CONNECT

CENTRAL INDIANA'S TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE



The Indy Connect process is intended to provide transportation options – from local bus, to rapid transit, and pedestrian and bike pathways – and connect people to jobs, healthcare, education, and shopping. It is intended to increase Central Indiana's competitiveness and economic development opportunities while improving the environment, job growth opportunities, and quality of life. Now

that several of those various transportation components have been completed, the planning of local bus and rapid transit corridors remain. The Indy Connect studies developed by the Indianapolis MPO during 2014 include planning for the Red, Purple, and Green rapid transit lines, and a significant update to the IndyGo Comprehensive Operational Analysis.

## GREEN RAPID TRANSIT LINE

The Green Rapid Transit Line is a proposed rapid transit project that will connect Downtown Indianapolis with Fishers, Noblesville, and many places in between. The project proposes to route vehicles along the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority rail corridor currently used by the Indiana Transportation Museum to operate the State Fair Train. Both light rail transit (LRT) and bus rapid transit (BRT) vehicles are being evaluated for suitability on the corridor. There are 16 proposed stations along the route.

### Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The Green Line Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is being conducted by the MPO. Over the last few years staff has been gathering data from technical modeling efforts. The MPO's consultant, HNTB, completed work in June that allowed for the creation of

operating plans for both Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) vehicles. This provided the MPO with the ability to begin work on an administrative draft of the DEIS and submit it to the FTA on August 15th, 2014. Initial comments were received from the FTA on October 22nd, 2014. Document review is expected to continue into 2015 and the required 45 day public comment period for the DEIS is expected to begin around April/May. ■



## RED RAPID TRANSIT LINE

The Red Rapid Transit Line is an approximately 28-mile planned corridor connecting the cities of Carmel, Indianapolis, and Greenwood. The Red Line may also connect to the City of Westfield, north of Carmel. It will link the significant business districts of downtown Indianapolis and the US 31 corridor in Carmel, and will be a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service.

### Tiger VI Grant

In March 2014 the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo) submitted an application for a TIGER VI grant. The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) is a discretionary grant program administered through the US Department of Transportation. The MPO assisted with the application. The application requested \$2 million of federal funding to be matched by \$1 million of local funding in order to advance the Red Line through the environmental review (a documented Categorical Exclusion as determined by FTA Region V) and engineering design phases. In addition, a special vehicle procurement process would take place to determine the feasibility of and recommendations for the first all-electric bus rapid transit (BRT) line in the United States. IndyGo was notified in September 2014 that the full federal funding amount requested would be awarded for the project. It is anticipated that those funds will be available for use in early 2015.

The MPO will continue to provide assistance as the Red Line moves through the environmental and engineering design processes during 2015.

### Supplemental Studies

An Alternatives Analysis (AA) for the Red Line rapid transit corridor was completed in December 2013, and a Recommended Alternative (RA) was determined for the majority of the route. However, there were some areas along the route that needed additional study to inform a final recommendation. Specific studies were conducted during 2014 for those undetermined sections of the alignment.

- ▶ Feasibility of using Meridian Street instead of the Capitol Avenue / Illinois Street one-way couplet between 16th Street and 38th Street
- ▶ Feasibility of using only Washington Street for transit between the Downtown Transit Center and Capitol Avenue
- ▶ Feasibility of using only Capitol Avenue between Maryland Street and 16th Street, with a northbound transit lane



- Identify options to improve the Meridian & 38th Street intersection to better accommodate transit operations
- Feasibility of connecting the recommended Red Line terminus in the City of Carmel to the City of Westfield, and, if feasible, recommendation for route

## PURPLE RAPID TRANSIT LINE

The Purple Rapid Transit Line will provide an important east-west crosstown connection within Indianapolis, located on approximately 38th Street close to the center of Marion County.

### Alternatives Analysis

The MPO conducted an Alternatives Analysis (AA) for the Purple Line rapid transit corridor. The Purple Line is recommended at this time as two separate routes, one serving west Indianapolis and one terminating in Lawrence on the east side. Both routes would have direct service to downtown Indianapolis. The AA was

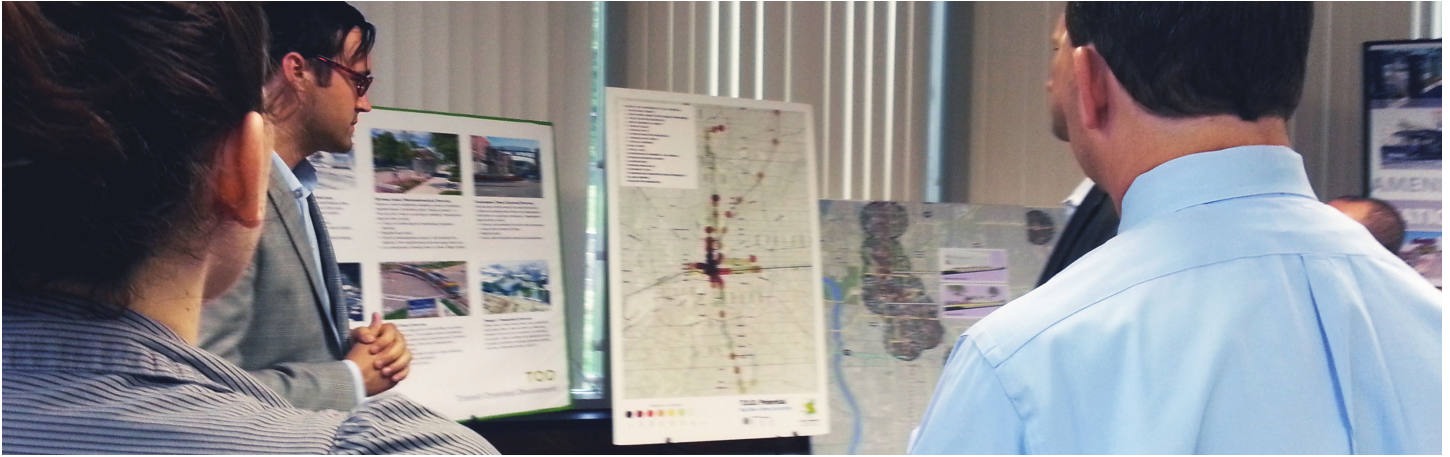
released for public review in January 2015, and anticipated to be approved by the IRTC in February 2015. The AA recommends the vehicle type (BRT), route, and schedule for the Purple Line, as well as providing capital and operating cost estimates.





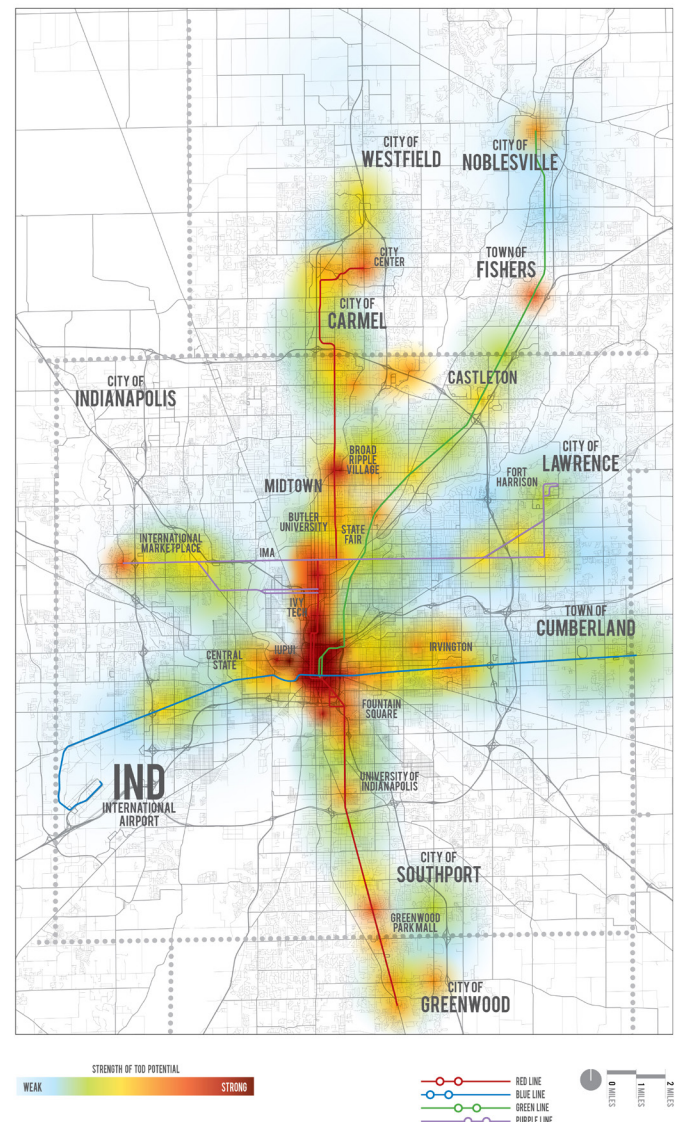
# TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

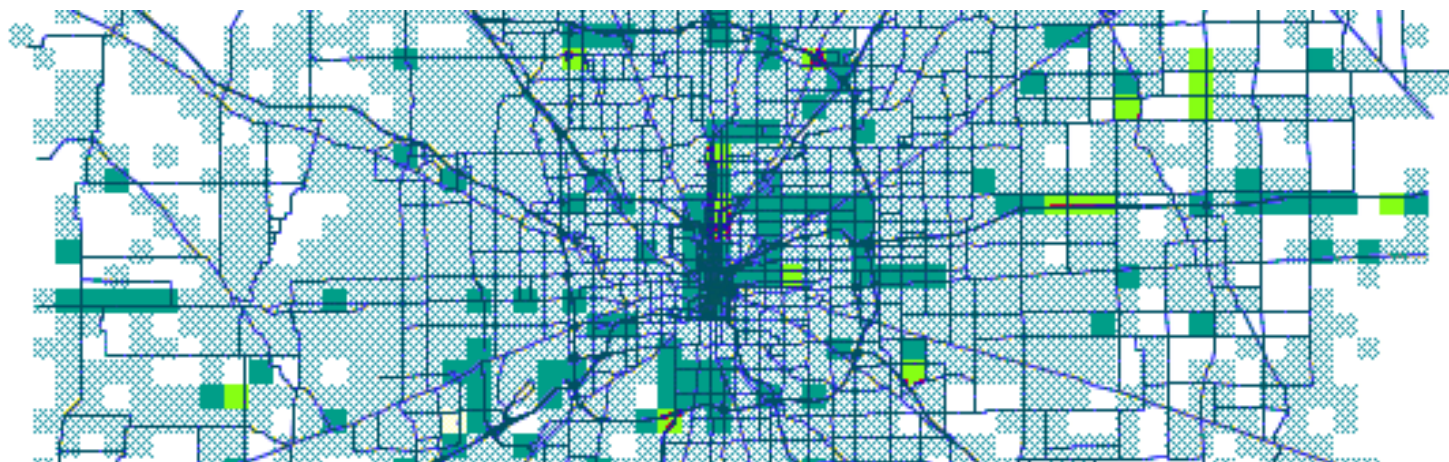
The Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategic Plan analyzes regional market dynamics and land use characteristics to assess the potential for transit-oriented development along the Red, Blue, Green, and Purple Lines.



The MPO updated and expanded the TOD Strategic Plan. This document was finalized in February 2015. The major components of this effort included:

- ▶ Analyzing and scoring the recommended Purple Line corridor and updating information for the Green Line corridor. This updated information was combined to create an updated “heat map” that identifies the stations along the four rapid transit corridors with the highest potential for successful TOD.
- ▶ Creating case studies and recommendations for value capture techniques to apply within the Central Indiana region along the rapid transit corridors. These recommendations can assist local communities as they plan for development near the recommended transit stations.
- ▶ Using existing data and GIS modeling, determining the size necessary for value capture districts.
- ▶ Creating cutsheets for each recommended station on the rapid transit corridors. The cut sheets identify opportunities and potential issues, as well as recommendations for transit-supportive development around each station.





# DATA & MODELING

The Data & Modeling section of the MPO is in charge of the travel demand model and various socioeconomic data and forecasts that support the metropolitan planning process. This section provides support by assisting with project funding applications for the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality program and the Highway Safety Improvement Program; data and modeling staff are also responsible for modeling air quality conformity determinations for Long Range Transportation Plan updates and amendments. This section also continues to provide modeling support to the Indy Connect initiative.

## Travel Demand Model Updates

The Travel Demand Model (TDM) is a set of computer programs used to estimate current and future vehicular and passenger travel on roads and transit systems. We began 2014 with the completion of several changes initiated in 2012. These enhancements included an update to model constants and coefficients, a new methodology to calculate premium transit link travel time, and adopting a different method of coding specific types of links. Once these changes were complete, MPO staff worked with the software manufacturer to update the underlying code of the TDM to work properly with the newest version of the software. The updates reduced total model run time by more

than 50% while retaining model results similar to earlier TDM versions.

Model Version	Base Year Run Time	Future Year Run Time
Old TDM (Version 6)	10 hours	12-15 hours
New TDM (Version 7)	4.5 hours	5-6 hours

A final, significant update to Travel Demand Model in 2014 was an update to the Air Quality Post-Processor (AQPP) used to assist in determining Air Quality Conformity for the Long Range Transportation Plan and project evaluation. The AQPP was checked to make sure it worked with all other model updates and updated to incorporate Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions for anticipated future use. ■



## OTHER 2014 PROJECTS

- ▶ Completed our required traffic counts for the federal Highway Performance Management System (HPMS) for 2014.
- ▶ Updated our tools for estimating vehicular pollutant emissions for different type of transportation projects.
- ▶ Assisted in the prioritization of project applications for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program and the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).
- ▶ Worked on our submission for proposed changes to the Federal Functional Class System, the FCS, for roads and began the process of updating the National Highway System (NTS) and the National Truck Network (NTN) for the Indianapolis region.
- ▶ Began a review of Indiana State crash records for the Indianapolis metropolitan area for the period January 2013 through June 2014. Results will be used in the development of data to help in the submission of HSIP applications by Local Public Agencies (LPA).
- ▶ Began the development of a regional Pavement Data Repository to support the prioritization of road reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. This repository is meant to eventually support LPA pavement management programs that will qualify LPA projects for the use of federal funds in road maintenance programs.

## STOPS (Simplified Trips-on-Project Software) Development

MPO staff has focused on learning how to create inputs, run, and interpret the results of this model developed by FTA to support future transit planning and modeling activities. Currently, staff uses the output of this model as a point of comparison with output from the Travel Demand Model.

## BEHIND THE SCENES: NEW STAFF



We added a new staff person to the data section! Xiaozhou (Lisa) Zhang will be working on data support for travel demand model, a congestion management process, travel data development, and other GIS support activities. Xiaozhou joined the MPO in December 2014. Xiaozhou graduated from Rutgers University, earning a Master of City and Regional Planning in October 2014. Xiaozhou comes from a GIS background with her B.S. in GIS and M.E. in Surveying and Mapping in Wuhan University in China. During her study in China and the U.S., Xiaozhou has developed rich professional and practice experience in GIS and planning, especially in spatial data analyzing and visualization.

## BEHIND THE SCENES: INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The MPO was able to pursue multiple projects with the help of paid interns in 2014. Ball State University Masters of Urban & Regional Planning students, James Rinehart and Nirmani Liyanage, worked as interns with the MPO during the summer. Their work included mapping and GIS work on Red Flag Investigations, development of a walk study comparing Indianapolis with the top 30 largest US metropolitan areas, introductory work identifying parcels with the greatest Transit Oriented Development potential along the route of the proposed Red Rapid Transit Line, and development of a template for this MPO 2014 Annual Report.

Ball State Masters of Urban & Regional Planning graduate, Jessica Kartes, began working with the MPO as an intern in October. Jessica was instrumental in completing Red Flag Analysis reports begun by James and Nirmani. She also participated in analysis for the IndyGo/IPS Transportation study, environmental justice mapping, and development of the 2014 MPO annual report.

The MPO Internship program has proven very useful to help staff planners stay on top of changes and improvements in the metropolitan planning process. The fresh perspective on real world problems and solutions is very valuable. The MPO plans to continue using interns to support our work in the region.



Nirmani Liyanage



James Rinehart



Jessica Kartes

## BEHIND THE SCENES: RETIRING STAFF



Michael Dearing enjoyed his last work day with the MPO on August 22, 2014. An invaluable resource, staff and IRTC members alike were sad to see him go. After 35 years of public service, 20 of them with the Indianapolis MPO, he's now happily enjoying his well-earned retirement. Some of Mike's vast accomplishments include: managing the IRTIP, developing the first Comprehensive Bicycle System Map for Marion County, developing an award-winning School Involvement Program, and serving as an Executive Director for the MPO. He finished his career leaving the Central Indiana region a better place than he found it, and for that he will be missed. Thanks, Mike!



# SPECIAL PROJECTS

## Red Flag Investigations

The Indianapolis MPO has pursued Red Flag Investigations on projects within the Transportation Improvement Program to demonstrate project readiness and the ability to expend funds in a timely fashion. A Red Flag Investigation (RFI) provides detail on infrastructure; water resources; mineral exploration; hazardous materials; endangered, threatened, or rare species; and cultural resources within ½ mile of a project.

The work on RFIs began as part of the MPO internship program in the summer of 2014 and is expected to transition to MPO staff in 2015. As of December, the MPO completed RFI's on a list of projects 17 projects included within the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program. The majority of those projects

were state fiscal year 2018 illustrative projects that had not yet received environmental approval. The MPO intends to assist with development of Red Flag Investigations for TIP projects within state fiscal year 2019 next year. ■

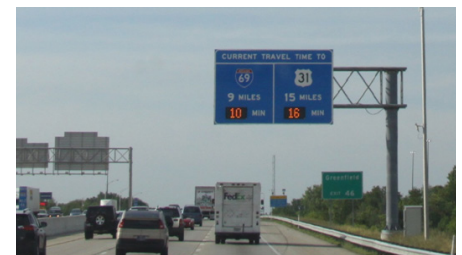
## Intelligent Transportation Systems

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) refers to technological systems that enhance the transportation network by providing traffic information to end users. The best local examples of ITS are the large dynamic message signs located on interstates in the metro area and the bus-only traffic signals in downtown Indianapolis.

These systems are intended to inform travelers, thereby creating a safer overall transportation experience and reducing congestion. Other

examples include timed signals at intersections, real-time bus information, and cameras that monitor traffic on central Indiana interstates.

Early this year, Indianapolis MPO staff began the necessary update to the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture. The ITS Architecture communicates and catalogs ITS initiatives throughout the central Indiana region. The update consisted of utilizing the newest ITS software, contacting stakeholders to determine significant changes, and modifying the architecture based on stakeholder inputs. The updated ITS Architecture can be found on the MPO website. ■





# ADMINISTRATIVE

## Public Involvement Plan

The Indianapolis MPO reviews the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) every two years and makes any necessary updates. In November 2014 the MPO revised the Public Involvement Plan and distributed it to select local advocacy groups for review. The document is intended to be released for the official 45-day public comment period in December 2014. After incorporating public comment, the plan will be presented to the IRTC for approval in February 2015.

Notable revisions for the 2014 PIP update include:

- ▶ Extending the public review time for IRTIP amendments or additions to the Illustrative List from a minimum of 7 days to a minimum of 10 days
- ▶ Document reorganization to highlight the various methods of public outreach used by the MPO
- ▶ Notice that the MPO's PIP will serve as the public participation process for

the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo) Program of Projects (POP), since these projects are included in the MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which incorporates a public review and comment period

- ▶ Simplification and clarification of the MPO's goals and procedures
- ▶ Explicitly stated processes for the adoption of a new or updated Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP), and Public Involvement Plan (PIP)
- ▶ The addition of a minimum review time for an IRTIP Illustrative List of projects

## Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs)

Metropolitan planning agreements, required by federal law, identify mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan planning process. In the Indianapolis metro area, there are two agreements that must be in place: between the MPO, the Indiana Department of Transportation, and IndyGo; and between the

MPO and the two adjacent metropolitan planning organizations, Madison County Council of Governments (MCCOG) and Columbus Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO). In 2014 the MOA between the MPO, INDOT and IndyGo was signed by all parties; approval will be sought for the MOA between the three MPOs in early 2015. ■

### 3C Review

Large MPOs like the Indianapolis MPO are required to have the metropolitan planning process certified by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration no less than once every four years. In 2014 the MPO underwent this review that included MPO staff responding to almost 100 questions covering eighteen topic areas.

After submitting the paperwork to FHWA and FTA, each agency, along with MPO planning partners, Indiana DOT and IndyGo, spends a day (or two) speaking with MPO staff and others responsible for the metropolitan planning process. A public meeting is also held for the public to offer input to the planning process. Final results of the Certification

Review showed the MPO with no corrective actions, nine recommendations, and 2 commendations. This is good news for the region as the MPO continues to provide a sound transportation planning process for the citizens of central Indiana. ■

### Organizational Study

Beginning in late 2012, the MPO endeavored on an extensive study of its organizational structure. The comprehensive study examined all facets of the organization, from its finances to its structure. The study also solicited comments from IRTC representatives; staff conducted an online survey and in-person surveys of over 30 IRTC representatives. The Organizational Study Committee listened to the information and deliberated on the recommended course of action, maintaining the existing structure but making minor changes including updating the Bylaws, adding a hosting agreement, and holding annual member education activities. The full report, meeting minutes, and meeting PowerPoints are located on the MPO website. As one of the Study's first

recommendations, MPO staff began working on updating the Bylaws. The Bylaws for the Indianapolis MPO were originally adopted in 2009. The intent of the 2014 update was to create a document that can be easily referenced, address minor issues identified by the Organizational Study, and identify other improvements.

MPO 101, or Understanding an MPO, was created from member feedback. In both the online survey and in-person interviews, a number of representatives expressed the need for an educational component to learn about the MPO/IRTC. Considering the complexity of the MPO/IRTC and its policies and procedures, many members felt overwhelmed in IRTC meetings until they had attended for several years. This steep learning curve resulted in poor participation and attendance from new members. MPO 101 is intended to provide representatives with a functioning understanding of the MPO/IRTC. The first MPO 101, an interactive presentation, was held after the annual retreat in June 2014. From this first experience, MPO staffers will make the necessary adjustments to improve this component of member education. ■

INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
INDIANAPOLIS REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION 14-IMPO-009

A RESOLUTION honoring Mike Dearing for his 35 years of public service to the citizens of central Indiana.

WHEREAS, Mike Dearing, a life-long resident of central Indiana, a veteran of the US Air Force, and a graduate of Ball State University has dedicated his life to public service, spending 35 years planning the transportation future of central Indiana, and the last 20 years working for the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council; and,

WHEREAS, during his employment with the Indianapolis MPO, Mike managed the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program, programming millions of dollars of transportation funding in the region; and,

WHEREAS, Mike developed the first Comprehensive Bicycle System Map for Marion County and later, the Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan for the region; and

WHEREAS, Mike developed the award winning School Involvement Program, a program that brought real world problem-solving opportunities into Indiana classrooms; and recognized nationally as a Best Practice by US Department of Transportation, and by the State of Indiana for Outstanding Service –Learning Community Partner; and,

WHEREAS, Mike has worked selflessly and tirelessly to make the MPO's transportation planning process responsive, transparent, and worthy of trust to the citizens of central Indiana; and

WHEREAS, Mike has been a trustworthy, loyal and entertaining supervisor and co-worker to the MPO staff, and multidimensional planner to the members of the IRTC; and,

WHEREAS, Mike's efforts have left Central Indiana a better, more vibrant place;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the IRTC hereby honors Mike Dearing on the occasion of his retirement.

The above and foregoing resolution was adopted this 20th day of August, 2014, by the IRTC Policy Committee.

DATE: August 20, 2014



Anna Gremling, Executive Director  
Indianapolis MPO  
for the IRTC Policy Committee Chair



*Questions or Concerns?*

**INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN  
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