

## RESOURCE MEETINGS

On November 30, 2006, INDOT and the I-69 Community Planning Program Consultant Team hosted two informational meetings for federal and state agencies, universities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide information about the I-69 Community Planning Program and to solicit information from those organizations about experience in the region and resources available. Forty-two persons attended representing 37 different organizations (Figure 1).

**Figure 1  
Organizations Represented at Meetings of November 30, 2006**

<b>Federal Agencies</b>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration
<b>State Agencies</b>	
Indiana State Department of Agriculture	Indiana Finance Authority
Indiana Economic Development Corporation	Indiana House & Community Development Authority
Indiana Workforce Development	Indiana Department of Transportation
Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs	Indiana Geographic Information Council/IMAGIS
<b>Universities</b>	
University of Southern Indiana, Center for Applied Research and Economic Development	IUPUI, The Polis Center Purdue University, Center for Regional Development
University of Evansville	IUPUI, Solution Center
Purdue University-Planning with POWER	Indiana University, Indiana Business Research Center
Indiana University, Advancing Indiana	IUPUI, School of Public and Environmental Affairs
Ivy Tech Workforce and Economic Development	IUPUI, Center for Urban Policy and the Environment
<b>Other</b>	
The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization	Indiana Conservation Alliance
Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana	Association of Indiana Counties, Inc.
Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission	Indiana Planning Association
Duke Energy Indiana	Indiana Geological Survey
Central Indiana Corporate Partnership	Indiana Builders Association
Indiana Grantmakers Alliance	Indiana Statewide Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc
Hoosier Rails to Trails Council	Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana
The Nature Conservancy	Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization

The program included a presentation on details of the I-69 Community Planning Program. An agenda is provided in Figure 2. At strategic points in the presentation, attendees were asked to provide feedback. A few general observations are provided in Figure 3. A complete list of comments is shown in Appendix A.

## **Figure 2 Meeting Agenda**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Program Overview
- Planning for the Interstate
- Questions and Discussion
- Role for Resource Organizations
- Additional Discussion
- Schedule and Website
- Next Steps

## **Appendix A Feedback from Meetings with Resource Organizations on November 30, 2006**

### **What critical issues face the 15-county region and/or the eligible communities?**

- Indiana Bat is endangered; concern regarding habitats (summer roosting and winter hibernacula/caves) in Eastern Greene/Western Monroe Counties
- Logistics/distribution hub—significant potential
- Economic development potential is great; likely will change the character of the region, but not until after the highway is built
- Need an agile workforce
- Regional workforce boards need good information about what is coming so that they can help with the goals established and workforce/skills needed
- Agriculture economic development potential; concerns about depleting supply of agricultural land
- GIS—opportunity for statewide GIS mapping
- Two large electric plants in southwestern Indiana
- Rural roads—carry very large loads/heavy coal/cut stone/petroleum trucks
- Underground gas/oil lines that are not mapped very well
- GIS in region is not well positioned
- INDOT has good info on state jurisdiction; looking for ways to fill in data on local roads (length of local roadway, traffic and truck volumes)
- Business attraction
- What communities want regarding potential growth—help them think it through
- Intergovernmental cooperation—plan at county/region
- Septic systems in karst areas; some natural communities in those systems can be easily destroyed by sewage.
- Focus is often parochial and actions are reactive; need to move to regional thinking and proactive
- Need for trail connections between communities in the region. Status of the trail along I-69?
- Additional staff
- Connectivity within the region
- Broad transportation network
- Communities must choose who will decide their futures—the communities themselves or outsiders
- Particular locations will be well positioned to capitalize on this new infrastructure
- Workforce problem because of aging “baby boom” population and not much immigration of younger residents
- Limited broadband access; need upgrades to capitalize on economic development opportunities
- Major freeway access/connection
- Overdependence on the manufacturing sector
- Establish complimentary strengths of included communities to get a bigger bang; identify regional gaps
- Importance of ongoing implementation

- Indiana Commerce Connector
- Limited resources to address change in local traffic flow
- Who will provide emergency services along I-69 and who will fund those services?
- Regional growth strategies
- Opportunities in manufacturing
- Region 8 and Region 11 are working on regional economic development strategies
- Connections with broader logistics and transport planning
- Relationship with Orange County and new casino
- Region may experience many of the issues that have arisen in Orange County in planning for the new casino

**What resources are available to assist these communities?**

- Ball State Center for Community and Economic Development, including Community Development toolbox
- The Shovel Ready Program
  - 12 pilot sites approved in June and September 2006; one site in Vanderburgh County
  - Application is lengthy; 31 pages
  - Program modeled after similar programs in New York and Oregon
  - Fast track permitting with state agencies; hope to cut 30% of permitting time by completing Phase I environmental studies and wetland delineations, collecting letters of community support, ensuring the availability of infrastructure (electric, gas, water, sewer, and internet) and supportive zoning
  - \$10K grant with 100% match; reimbursed in arrears
- State Revolving Funds provide low-interest loans for water/sewer
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife has grants for endangered species; annual award; could be paired with other funding
- Patoka National Refuge has established a purchase boundary (Contact: Bill McCoy)
- Region 15 Plan Commission; Director—Lisa Gelhausen
- Office of Community and Rural Affairs
  - Community Focus Fund planning grants are available for comprehensive planning but not for zoning; low-to-moderate income communities
  - Community Focus Funds available after communities establish planning; low-to-moderate income communities
  - Main Street program can assist with revitalization of downtowns
  - Regional offices are currently involved with local communities
  - Provides liaison between rural communities and state and federal programs
  - Provides technical assistance on grant programs
- Indiana Economic Development Corporation has regional offices
- Soil and water conservation district offices—protect natural resources
  - Each is managed by 5 supervisors
  - May be aware of additional funds/technical assistance, including Fish and Wildlife funds
  - SWCD monies typically go directly to land owners
- Indiana Main Street program—promote programs
- Indiana Biodiversity Initiative
- Indiana Heritage Trust Fund
- Sycamore Land Trust
- Nature Conservancy
- Universities
- [igs.indiana.edu/GISAtlas](http://igs.indiana.edu/GISAtlas)
- Pre-disaster planning GIS layers (could be shared with other communities)
- Community foundations (Lilly's GIFT program)
- Small Business Development Center
- Purdue has an extensive economic clusters database
- Consultant community

- Certified grant administrators
- Indiana Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Consultants (ACEC)
- Purdue Planning with Power program
- Indiana Conservation Alliance

**Do you have specific questions or advice about the development of the toolbox?**

- Parcel level data will be very valuable
- Will it be online? Printed?
- Web-based
- Limited internet capacity within corridor; may also need a CD version
- Varied experience with technology generally
- Need tutorial for either website or CD to address limited access, experience
- How will the program distribute the toolbox?
- Has the program been targeted at elected and appointed officials or citizens? Elected and appointed officials
- Starting points, contacts, etc. for small towns
- Simple zoning for those without it
- Keep the scale and structure of the toolbox simple
- Don't recreate the wheel; make sure current data/info is known
- Does the state have transfer of development rights legislation? No specific enabling legislation currently. Still may be able to do under current law.
- Organize by tools available to counties, cities, and towns?
- Include ordinances
- This program may overlap other mandates communities find themselves under (disaster management)

**Do you have specific questions or advice about development of the grant program?**

- Utilize certified grant administrators to market program and to assist communities in applying.
- Status of federal funds that are filtered through state agency?
- Can other federal funds be used to leverage this program?
  - HUD funds typically require a 10-25% match
  - Federal grants usually require non federal \$ for match
  - FEMA may allow federal match.
- U.S Fish and Wildlife will work with project staff to identify areas at risk and process for disclosing information about endangered species
- Some programs such as CFF have limits on the number of outstanding grants at any one time
- Shovel ready program is a \$10K grant with 100% match; reimbursed in arrears
- How receptive were local communities? Communities were receptive. Quite a bit of variation in the needs identified. Project staff impressed upon them that \$50K is just a first investment in the future.
- Do all communities get the same amount regardless of impact? The program requires communities to justify what they ask for, but it is not competitive per se.
- Some communities will need significant assistance
- Communities should be required to share hazards data with region to get grants
- Make sure communities take advantage of the grant dollars; pair them up for greater success
- Maximize dollars by creating data resources that can be used by multiple communities
- Team up communities to accomplish similar tasks; several counties utilize the same consultant to prepare zoning ordinances
- Are grants limited to areas with or around interchanges? No.
- Source of funds? 80% federal/20% state.
- Pool of funds? \$1.5 million
- How were eligible communities chosen?
  - Used 2 and 5 mile buffers

- Reviewed by I-69 Study Management Team led by the INDOT Commissioner
- A few communities added after the initial announcement
- Will direct technical assistance be available? Yes.

**What possibilities are there to leverage the I-69 Community Planning Program with other resources?**

- Finding ways to engage university students
- Sharing resources among communities
- Quarter/annual meeting with cities/counties to encourage peer cooperation and to develop a sense of regionalism
- Teaming up with communities that aren't necessarily adjacent; economies of scale for professional services
- Difficult to leverage monies directly because of federal match requirements
- IEDC, OCRA, and other state agencies have regional staff who can help to match resources to community needs
- For low income communities, resources could be combined to prepare a comprehensive plan (CFF funds) and a zoning ordinance (I-69 CPP program)

**Are there additional resource organizations that we should contact?**

- State Soil and Water Conservation Board
- BSU Center for Community and Economic Development
- Indiana Association of Cities and Towns
- Association of Indiana Counties
- NRCS
- Indiana Bond Bank
- Private business programs
- Columbus MPO
- Ducks Unlimited
- Walmart

**Other issues?**

- Timing for construction
  - Tier 1 Records of Decision have been entered
  - Tier 2 processes are currently wrapping up
    - Section 1 Record of Decision expected in December
    - Section 2 and 3 expected in early spring
    - Remaining sections expected by mid-year
  - Construction will progress from South to North
  - Design work has been let for the first part of Section 1
- Locations of interchanges?