

the Evansville MPO *Express*

Transportation Planning Updates for Henderson, Vanderburgh, and Warrick counties

E-Scooters are in Evansville

Electric scooters (e-scooters) are a shared use vehicle that can be rented using a smartphone app. They are considered a relatively inexpensive means of travel, particularly for short trips in urban areas. In preparation for this new micromobility option, the City of Evansville passed an e-scooter ordinance with the intent to ensure safe ridership and the sensible integration of the e-scooters in the overall transportation network.

Some highlights from the ordinance include:

- E-scooters are to be used primarily on local roads with low traffic volumes, and users

must obey traffic laws and devices applicable to vehicles. They are prohibited from use on the Greenway, sidewalks, and highways like the Lloyd Expressway.

- E-scooters must be parked in an upright position at the street curbside, and in a manner that does not obstruct curb ramps and leaves a clear path for sidewalk users.
- E-scooters can only be operated by people 16 years of age or older and only one person can ride an e-scooter at a time.

The ordinance also requires operators to collect and share anonymized data, including e-scooter use, parking compliance, crashes, and general trip related information. The data will be used to monitor compliance with the ordinances and for integrating e-scooters into planning for the broader transportation network.

Currently there are two options for rentals: Joy Punkz and Lime. Users are encouraged to wear helmets.



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Evansville MPO



Henderson • Vanderburgh • Warrick

EMPO Certification Review

On January 12 and 13, the Evansville MPO underwent a Certification Review of the planning process that was jointly conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The review team looked at some of the core functions of the MPO, including but not limited to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Participation Plan (PP), and the Congestion Management Process (CMP).

Aside from reviewing the MPOs core functions, the review team looked at compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO, the State DOTs, and public transportation operators in conducting the transportation planning process.

The FHWA and FTA certified the MPOs metropolitan planning process, while commending the MPO on noteworthy practices and providing recommendations to improve the planning process moving forward.

Henderson's SHIFT Projects



In the past, Kentucky's Highway Plan proposed more projects than there were dollars to pay for them. Starting in 2017, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet proposed the Strategic Highway Investment Plan for Tomorrow (SHIFT) process to prioritize projects and fiscally constrain the Highway Plan.

SHIFT was developed to be data-driven, objective, transparent, collaborative and dependable. The data-driven components include Safety, Asset Management, Economic Growth, Congestion, and Benefit/Cost.

The EMPO participates in this process by working with the City of Henderson and Henderson County and the legislators elected in this area to identify and add needed projects to the unfunded projects database (CHAF), selecting a limited number of projects from the database that are considered high priority to "sponsor", and assigning "Boost Points" to projects that have merit above and beyond the identified performance measures.

The EMPO's Technical Committee and Policy Board approved the following projects for "sponsorship" at their meetings on May 13, 2021.

Watch for the assignment of "Boost Points" on the MPO's agenda in the coming months.

Project ID/ CHAF ID	Route	Type of Work	Description	BMP	EMP	Total Cost
IP20040011	051-CS-1014-000	Minor Widening	Reconstruct Atkinson St to improve level of service and reduce congestion	0.248	0.856	\$8,978,000
IP20070066	051-KY-0351-000	Reconstruction	Improve safety and level of service in the area of Graham Hill	2.582	3.567	\$7,348,000
IP20080088	051-KY-0416-000	Reconstruction	Reconstruct KY 416 to improve safety and level of service	0.000	7.363	\$41,358,000
IP20080098	051-CS-1115-000	Reconstruction	Reconstruction of Elm St to improve level of service and pedestrian safety and mobility	1.573	2.898	\$9,777,000
2-383.20	051-CS-1372-000	Reconstruction	Address safety and congestion along Watson Ln	0.309	0.850	\$5,900,000
IP20190168	051-KY-1539-000	Reconstruction	Reconstruct KY 1539/Zion Larue Rd from KY 351 to Henderson city limits	0.000	0.727	\$6,187,000

On the DOT: INDOT's Podcast

Submitted by: Jason Tiller, Vincennes District
Communications Director

Did you know that INDOT has a Podcast? "On the DOT" is available on your favorite podcast hosting site. Each month they bring on a guest to discuss INDOT related issues that affect everyone on Indiana roads. It's an exciting opportunity for an in-depth look at INDOT and their many service

offerings and to find answers to burning questions that you may have about topics like vegetation management, litter pick up, customer service, legislative issues and so much more. New episodes of "On the DOT" are posted every third Thursday of the month and you can find it on SoundCloud, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Stitcher and anywhere else you find podcasts.



CRRSA and ARP Transit Funds

The 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided \$25 billion to urbanized areas (Section 5037 recipients) and rural areas (Section 5311 recipients), but did not consider the needs of the non-profit agencies that provide transportation to seniors and individuals with disabilities. Thankfully, the 2021 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Act (CRRSA) and the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) also included funds for Section 5310 recipients, in addition to Section 5307 and 5311 recipients. These funds can be used to help MPOs and States fund projects to assist agencies that provide transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

In Evansville, the MPO sent out a request for applications to area non-profits for these funds. Within the request, applicants were asked about their costs required to purchase equipment to fight the COVID pandemic or the decrease in funds from donations and/or normal fundraisers that typically went toward funding transportation. The MPO received five eligible applications for these funds. Each one of them was for operating expenses to help fund their transportation service. Each agency experienced a loss in funding in 2020 and the beginning of 2021 due to a decrease in funds they would have normally received from donations from individuals or corporations and/or fundraising events that could not happen or were reduced in scale.

A total of \$86,645 will be made available to the eligible applicants, which will deplete the CRRSA and ARP funds available for the Evansville MPO region. The region received \$43,322 from CRRSA and \$43,323 from ARP.



What is Micromobility?



Micromobility is defined as “transportation over short distances provided by lightweight, usually single-person vehicles (such as bicycles and scooters)”. Micromobility is growing in popularity in downtowns and special districts to help people move between destinations without

having to drive their vehicle short distances, thus helping to relieve traffic congestion.

In Evansville, micromobility options can be seen in and around downtown and along Franklin Street. Lime scooters are available downtown and along Franklin

Street; Joy Punkz scooters are available downtown; and the Upgrade Bike Share is available at a few locations downtown, on North Main Street, in Haynie’s Corner, on Franklin Street, on North First Avenue at Ivy Tech, and in downtown Henderson, KY.

Planes, Trains, Buses, and (some) Automobiles

The CDC announced a federal mask requirement for all public transportation systems that took effect February 1, 2021 and was extended by the TSA to be in effect through September 13, 2021. Masks must be worn by all passengers of airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, and rideshares. Masks must

be worn while on vehicles, as well as at the transportation hubs (airport, bus terminal, train station, etc.). So don’t forget your mask when flying out of EVV, riding on METS, HART or WATS buses, or taking a taxi, Uber or Lyft.



Regional Transportation Guide Updates

Beginning in October 2018, the Regional Transit Advisory Committee (RTAC) began work on developing the Evansville-Henderson Regional Transportation Guide. The final version of the guide, in brochure form and online, was completed in May 2019. It includes all of the public, non-profit, and for-profit transportation providers in Vanderburgh, Henderson, Warrick, Gibson, and Posey counties.

The goal of the guide was to help those in the Evansville-Henderson region realize all of the options available for transportation. The guide includes information about METS, HART, and WATS, numerous medical transportation services, transportation options for seniors and individuals with disabilities, taxi and ridesharing services, and information about Evansville Regional Airport and Greyhound service.

Beginning in April 2021, the RTAC realized that it was time for a full update to the Regional Transportation Guide. There have been no updates in the past two years, but several changes in regional transportation providers.

Updates to the guide will be completed this summer. The majority of the updates include changes in details of existing providers. Some have modified their hours of operation, moved to a new addresses, or changed their price per trip. There are also four new transportation providers since the original guide that will be added and one provider that no long operates that will be removed. The Evansville-Henderson Regional Transportation Guide is available on the MPO website (evansvillempo.com) on the right side of the front page. The new version of the guide will replace the original version once all of the updates have been completed.



Construction is Moving Right Along!

Covert Avenue is being converted from a 4-lane to 3-lane road diet with bike and pedestrian accommodations. The phases between Vann Avenue and Weinbach Avenue are either complete or near complete. Work is ongoing in the remaining phases with project completion expected in September of this year.



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Walnut Street was designed and constructed in three separate phases. Portions of construction are complete for Phase 1 between US 41 and Weinbach Avenue, with ongoing work on the sidewalk, trail and driveways. Phases 2 and 3 are in the preliminary engineering/design and right-of-way acquisition phases. Phase 1 is expected to be complete in mid-August. Phase 2 is expected to be let in October 2021, and Phase 3 is expected to be let in December 2022.



Washington Avenue Pedestrian Bridge

Following concerns from local community leaders regarding pedestrian safety at the US 41 and Washington Ave Intersection, INDOT and the City of Evansville announced a partnership to study the viability of a separated pedestrian crossing at the intersection. In 2020, after a road safety audit, data gathering, the evaluation of three alternatives, and input from public, INDOT announced

the preferred alternative is the construction of a pedestrian bridge over US 41 between Washington Ave and Blackford Ave.

A Public Information meeting was held in May 2021 to offer interested people an opportunity to view and comment on the proposed pedestrian crossing. The open house was an in-person event, where participants

were able to speak with project representatives and view and comment on design options.

The next steps include completion of the environmental study and analysis as well as the final design. Project letting is currently scheduled for spring 2023 with anticipated construction to begin in the 2023 construction season.



Evansville's Bicycle Incentive Program

Information provided by: Mychelle Christian, Active Transportation Liaison for the Evansville Trails Coalition

The Evansville Trails Coalition has teamed with over 40 local businesses to promote bicycle use and safety by offering incentives for riding your bike around town.

Riders just need to show their bicycle helmet at participating businesses to receive the incentive that has been established, typically a free item or discount off of a purchase. Just look for the window cling displayed at

the front of the store to know if a business is participating.

The bicycle incentive program helps to increase economic growth for local businesses.

For more information and to see a list of participating businesses, go to <https://www.walkbikeevv.org/bike-incentive-program>

