

B & O RAILCORRIDOR

OVERVIEW

Now an inactive rail line, the B&O Rail Corridor extends 7.1 miles from the Marion County/Hendricks County line east to the intersection of Michigan Street and Concord Street. The corridor then joins an active Conrail line. The eastern two-thirds of this corridor are completely developed with moderate-density residential and industrial land uses. The western third of the corridor is rapidly developing as a residential area. Major community facilities along the corridor include Ben Davis High School, the Indiana Girls School, the Country Club of Indianapolis, Leonard Park in Speedway, and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The B&O Rail Corridor is easily accessible from several thoroughfares, such as Country Club Road, Girls School Road, Lynhurst Drive, and West 10th Street.

Public input and adjacent landowner concerns will be important issues in the future planning of the B&O Rail Corridor. The updating of the Indianapolis Greenway Master Plan found enthusiastic support for the development of this corridor into a greenway trail. The potential linkages through development of a trail were of utmost concern and include Eagle Creek Greenway and Eagle Creek Park, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, various schools and recreation facilities along the corridor, connection to Downtown and connection to Hendricks County and western Indiana. Other ideas raised were the possibility of using trailheads for bike parking with access to IMS shuttles or as a remote park and ride location in coordination with the IndyGo bus routes and bike racks on buses program.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE RECOMMENDATIONS

2001 to 2006

1. Research property ownerships and proceed into land acquisition phase.
2. Assist in preparation and implementation of a community access plan to identify bike routes and alternative means of access from neighborhoods to community facilities and greenways.
3. Work with adjacent counties to monitor trail development and potential for connections.

2007 to 2012

1. Develop a comprehensive planning report for trail development of the corridor.
2. Develop a pilot trail project on a section of the corridor.
3. Continue to work with adjacent counties on trail progress and linkages.

Public Vision Statements

The B&O Rail corridor team envisioned that their greenway corridor would be developed as a multipurpose trail providing biking, hiking, and horseback riding. The corridor will link important facilities in Wayne Township, including Ben Davis High School, the proposed sports complex at Girls School Road, and Leonard Park in Speedway. The corridor team identified coordination as a critical factor in the development of this greenway corridor--coordination with local governments, neighborhood groups, and residents of the areas that this corridor would cross.

The B&O Rail corridor should be wide enough for two-way bicycle/pedestrian traffic, a horse trail, and buffer vegetation. "Special areas" such as natural areas, the area between Main Street to 10th Street, and any undeveloped land west of 1-465 should be redeveloped in conjunction with the corridor. The placement of support amenities such as water fountains, public restrooms, and rest areas should be incorporated into the design of the trail, possibly at existing facilities such as Leonard Park. Security issues need to be addressed like providing bollards or other security devices to prevent motor vehicles from gaining access to the trail.

About half of this corridor lies within the town of Speedway. As of this writing, Speedway is also considering the reuse of the B&O Rail corridor. To ensure that the B&O Rail corridor serves the neighborhoods in the surrounding vicinity, coordination with the community of Speedway and transportation agencies such as the Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) should occur. Through this coordination, several activities could be initiated, such as the marking of access points, development of subdivision regulations that require corridor access, and integration of future roadway improvements with the corridor. The bridge over Eagle Creek needs to be restored. The restoration could coincide with a linkage to trails planned for Eagle Creek corridor.

Coordination with adjacent landowners is also an important factor in the development of this corridor. Homeowner associations and businesses should be contacted for help in developing programs to encourage use of the corridor. In addition, development of this corridor should be coordinated with the Eagle Creek corridor as well as Hendricks County and others to the west along the 6-mile corridor that extends to the Indiana-Illinois state line.