

MONON RAIL TRAIL

OVERVIEW UPDATE

In 1994 Indy Parks Greenways initiated a comprehensive planning and scoping effort to study conditions of the rail corridor and develop specific recommendations for future development. The planning involved the Monon Steering Committee, a group of neighborhood and interest group representatives, which was active in the original master planning and also included several public meetings. The result of this work was instrumental in securing the TEA funding which was later used for development of the trail. The comprehensive development plan also helped to establish the standards by which all future greenway trail projects would be developed.

Implementation of the Monon Rail Trail Plan began in 1995 with the construction of the trail between 86th Street and Westfield Boulevard, a length of 2.96 miles. This Phase 1 section of the trail is perhaps the most scenic since the trail crosses the White River, the White River overflow and the Central Canal. Major features of this section are the red bridge structures painted in the original Monon red. Much of the original structures of the railroad bridges were restored and new deck and railings were installed. The overlooks on the White River Bridge are very popular viewing areas. Major linkages within this section include the commercial areas along 86th Street and Broad Ripple, the Indiana School for the Blind, the Indianapolis Art Center, the White River and the Central Canal Trail.

Construction of Phase 2 & 3 of the Monon Trail began in the spring of 1997 and included 3.55 miles of trail from Westfield Boulevard up to and including the bridge over Fall Creek Boulevard. Major features of this section include the new bridge over Kessler Avenue, and the renovated bridges over Fairfield Ave. and Fall Creek Boulevard. Important connections in this section include the commercial areas of Broad Ripple, the Indiana School for the Deaf, the Indiana State Fairgrounds, Boulevard Station (an historic train station currently being restored to be used as offices for the Central Indiana Bicycling Association) and the Fall Creek Greenway Trail.

In 1997 Phase 6, the one mile trail section between 86th Street and 96th Street, was constructed. In order to provide a safe crossing of 86th Street a new pedestrian activated traffic signal was installed just east of the trail. Railings were provided along 86th Street to direct trail users to this crossing. Parking next to the trail at 91st Street was constructed to alleviate parking problems in the 86th Street commercial properties. The trail will connect to the Carmel Monon Trail at 96th Street.

The final phases of the Monon Trail (Phases 4&5) were approved for TE-21 funds during summer 2000. Construction of this section of trail, which extends from Fall Creek Parkway to 10th Street, is anticipated to begin in late 2001. Major features of this section

of trail include rehabilitation of the railroad bridge over Fall Creek and connections to the Fall Creek Greenway Trail, Douglass Park, J.T.V. Hill Park and the Old Northside Soccer Complex.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE RECOMMENDATIONS

2001 to 2006

1. Complete the Monon Rail Trail within Marion County-Construction of phase 4 & 5 will complete the development of the 10 mile Monon Rail Trail within Marion County. The construction of this trail section will begin at the Monon Bridge over Fall Creek, where there will also be a trailhead linking the Monon trail to the Fall Creek Greenway, and will continue south to 10th Street. This project will include 2.82 miles of trail, the renovation of the railroad bridge over Fall Creek, a trailhead at 25th Street; flashing yellow crossing lights at 30th Street, 16th Street and 10th Street. The south Monon Trail will also include a trailhead connection to the Old Northside Soccer Fields and continue on into downtown Indianapolis.
2. Call Boxes-To address security concerns on the south Monon Trail it is recommended that emergency call boxes be placed approximately every 1600 feet. These call boxes will ring directly to 911 and should be designed to be as vandal resistant as possible. Additionally, it is recommended that emergency call boxes also be placed on the existing northern Monon Trail.
3. Indy Greenways coordination with law enforcement and neighborhoods on safety issues will be critical to the continued success of the Monon Trail.
4. Existing Trail Improvements
 - Review street crossings at 86th Street, 75th Street and 38th Street for improved safety and study feasibility of a pedestrian bridge over 86th Street.
 - Provide screening of port-o-let facilities to improve aesthetics.
 - Develop partnerships to provide additional drinking fountains with dog dishes.
 - Provide additional bike racks at high use areas.
 - Install crushed limestone shoulders on northern trail sections to provide improved surface for jogging and space for dog walking.
5. Planning Issues
 - Develop plan for linking Monon Trail to Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood and to Douglass, J.T.V. Hill and Oxford Terrace Parks.
 - Consider 52nd Street as an alternate route connecting the Monon Trail and the Fall Creek Greenway Trail.
 - Assist in the preparation and implementation of a community access plan to identify bike routes and alternative means of access from neighborhoods to community facilities and greenways.

- Work with Carmel to coordinate with trail development north of 96th Street.

2007-2012

1. Continue to provide existing trail upgrades, neighborhood access points and coordination with law enforcement and neighborhoods.