Session Summary:

ASLA Annual Meeting & Expo Session Number: FRI-A01
Date: Friday, November 06, 2015
Time: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM
Room: E352, Level 3
Presentation: The Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan—Indy’s Next Big Thing
Speakers:
Ron L. Taylor, FASLA, Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group
Andre T. Denman, City of Indianapolis
Scott L. Siefker, ASLA, AICP, Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group

Learning Outcomes:
1. Learn what the City of Indianapolis is doing to position itself as an attractive destination for young professionals and the role that its greenways play in that strategy.
2. Learn about the Indy Greenways system and how the new greenways plan plays into the overall strategy of connecting the city and improving quality of life.
3. Learn the comprehensive public engagement strategy used to demonstrate demand and elevate priority for the new system.
4. Learn how the planning team provided the financial impacts and analysis to illustrate the economic impact the new system would have on the City.

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Plan Concept Highlights

- Establishes a vision of over 250 miles of greenways throughout the City of Indianapolis.
- Outlines an expansion of the greenways system into the ring townships that have been underserved by greenway development.
- Identifies improvements, access, and new connections along the existing greenways in the system.
- Establishes nine new greenway corridors.
- Provides new greenway routes from the outer townships to the downtown area, much like the Monon Trail provides from the north.
- Provides east-west and north-south connectivity in the ring townships, creating more localized connections within each township.
- Provides a 64-mile circle around the city connecting Fort Harrison State Park, Eagle Creek Park, Southeastway Park, and Southwestway Park.
- Provides greenway connections to over 70 Indy Parks facilities.
- Provides regional connections to eleven trail systems beyond Marion County.
- Provides administrative and policy recommendations for future operations of the greenways.
- Establishes design standards for the overall system that address safety, accessibility, and funding eligibility requirements.
- Provides an overall network that is integrated into the other major transportation components of the city—such as the Indianapolis Bikeways and future Indy Connect rapid transit lines.
The master plan is a document that helps to clearly identify costs and priorities for the development of the greenway segments. Driven by public engagement, it provides an opportunity for the City to understand the desires of residents and to align appropriate funding with those priorities. The Greenways Master Plan will look at the City’s trail and greenway system and identify critical issues, needs, improvements to the existing system and new trail development. It will outline priorities for improvement and implementation over the next ten years.

It is the new master plan and vision for Indy Greenways that identifies new trail enhancements and improvements to the existing greenway network, outlines new direct trail routes to downtown, identifies new routes in the southern townships, and identifies routes that connect the four flagship parks in the County creating a shared-use, multi-modal path that circles the city. The Full Circle Plan is the outcome of the greenways master planning process and sets the priorities and long-term vision for the development of Indy’s greenway system.

The master planning process helps to determine the community’s priorities for new trail development and helps to identify the types of facilities and improvements desired for the system. It also allows the City to identify potential costs and develop a plan for implementation. The master plan is a needed step in qualifying for a variety of funding sources.

The Full Circle Plan is a multi-million dollar initiative if all the recommendations for improvements to the existing system and new segments were to be fully built out. Many factors can affect the cost and it is estimated that the full build out of the system is a long-term process.

The master plan will identify potential funding sources that could be used for implementation of the plan. It is likely that many different sources of funding would be required to construct the entire system. Potential funding sources could include different local, state and Federal funding sources. There are also opportunities for public-private partnerships to be used for the plan.
Q. How will this study tie into the other City initiatives?

A: The greenways master planning effort will look at how the greenway system coordinates and works with many of the other initiatives in Indianapolis including the on-street bicycle lane network, public transit, waterways, neighborhood centers, and areas for potential redevelopment. The plan will examine how the greenways can best compliment many of these efforts and be part of an overall unified system of bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in the City.

Q. When will these new trails be built?

A: First and foremost, this plan establishes the long-term vision for greenways and trail. As part of the planning process, costs and an implementation plan will be established that examines and evaluates the routes based on a number of criteria. The master plan will identify new trail segments, costs, and priorities for development over the next ten years including short-term implementation as well as long-term goals. Many of these segments may be built well beyond the 10-year timeframe.

Q. How will the City prioritize the implementation of different trail segments?

A: Many factors will be used to determine the exact timing for the design and construction of the system. These factors could include availability of funding, the timing of other projects in an area, or the identification of opportunities that promote implementation. In addition, the master plan will identify the potential economic impact of each segment, the potential connectivity to neighborhoods, the potential of regional impact, and several other factors that will assist in establishing priorities for the system.

Q. What are the next steps for this plan?

A: Once the recommendations are approved and adopted by the Indy Parks Board, they will be incorporated into the City’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the City’s Connectivity Plan, and ultimately will be incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan.

MORE INFO:
To find out more about the project, Like Us on Facebook or check out the website at: www.indygreenwaysmasterplan.wordpress.com. For specific questions regarding this planning effort contact: greenways@tswdesigngroup.com