

Appendix H

Public Participation- Comments and Responses

Citizen Input and Comments – 2035 Transportation Plan

Meetings:

March 18, 2013 – Open House, Omni Room, Citizens Square

May 22, 2013 – Open House, Omni Room, Citizens Square

Comments from the March 18, 2013 Transportation Open House:

- 1) **Comment:** Public transit needs to be greatly expanded in NE Fort Wayne as it is nearly non-existent. Would like to see added routes, shelters and shorter headways (less than 60 minutes).

Response: No funding for service expansion at this time. Shorter headways on existing fixed routes are top priority should funding become available. Citilink Access demand response service is provided within the city limits of Fort Wayne & New Haven.

- 2) **Comment:** There is no on-street parking, no biking facilities and vehicles travel very quickly because it is so open. This is not a comfortable environment for a downtown area. I would like to see a road diet for Clinton Street so that there is more space for walking. Street trees and furniture would be nice as well.

Response: INDOT evaluates the inclusion of all feasible bike and pedestrian design features in our project scopes. Major projects including road reconstruction, added capacity, and safety modifications and bridge replacements are primary candidates for the consideration of these accommodations. Multi-use paths are also evaluated in the scoping process and have been incorporated to several recent state projects.

- 3) **Comment:** Very few vehicles use Flutter Road. Very little development is happening on Flutter Road. I do not want to see Fort Wayne continue to sprawl towards and past Flutter Road. The \$10,000,000 being spent on this project would be put to better use making inner-city streets more pedestrian friendly.

Response: Development has occurred and is expected to continue at the west end and in the area surrounding Flutter Road. Traffic levels can be expected to increase along both St Joe Road and Flutter Road from the east to access the St Joseph River crossing and I-469, bolstering the importance of the Flutter Road connection into the Maplecrest Road-St Joe Road intersection.

- 4) **Comment:** I was glad to see bicycling and walking improvements/additions included in the plan. I think that all of the human-powered transportation options you can add would be beneficial to NE Indiana. This means more bike lanes, more sidewalks, more recreational trails. Things like this are quite a bit less expensive to build and bring HUGE returns to a city/area. There are many studies that show the positive effects of building more options for bicycles, joggers and walkers and I hope to see more of that incorporated into local planning.

Response: Pedestrian/bike infrastructure is included with all major capital projects. While the costs of construction of such features are minimal, the lack of available rights-of-way is typically a major setback. Acquiring these rights-of-way can be expensive and time consuming. Therefore it is not feasible to include construction of such facilities with low cost roadway improvements, unless the rights-of-way are already available.

- 5) **Comment:** My concerns are how bicycling and walking are incorporated into the projects at each level? Sidewalks near schools should have the highest priority.

Response: The Bike Fort Wayne plan is the City's vision for a bikeway network. It is the City's intention to include bike facilities into road projects within the defined network of the Bike Fort Wayne plan. More information can be found at www.cityoffortwayne.org/bikefortwayne

The Walk Fort Wayne plan establishes policies to include new sidewalks and pedestrian facilities on city arterial and collector roadways. Priority sidewalk areas are identified in the plan, and were identified based on the level of current or anticipated pedestrian traffic. Schools were included in prioritizing these areas for new sidewalks. More information can be found at www.cityoffortwayn.org/walkfortwayne

- 6) **Comment:** I hope that, and would like to see, the Bike Fort Wayne Plan incorporated into the 2035 Plan. This is essential. It seems that trails are not a cost effective manner to transport cyclists. At \$750,000/per mile it seems as though it needs to be looked at.

Response: The Bike Fort Wayne plan represents the City's vision for a bikeway network, and it's the City's intention to implement it. Many of the components of the plan are reflected in the 2035 plan. The bikeway network presented in Bike Fort Wayne is envisioned to complement the existing and growing trail network. While trails may be more expensive to construct, many cyclists continue to be more comfortable commuting on shared use pathways rather than on-street facilities.

- 7) **Comment:** Need a lane on Vance Avenue to turn right onto Maplecrest Road so that we are not caught behind cars waiting to turn left.

Response: This turn lane will be incorporated with the widening of Maplecrest between State Blvd and Stellhorn Road which is expected to be under development by the end of the year.

- 8) **Comment:** Thank you for adding sharrows in your plan for bicyclists (along Maplecrest Road). This kind of consideration will make it safer for bicyclists, especially at peak traffic times. I use Reed Road (currently marked with sharrows north of State Blvd) and appreciate the sharrows and signs. Thank you for the chance to comment!

Response: We are happy to hear that you are enjoying the new sharrows along Reed Rd. We plan to continue to install sharrows in the future as the bikeway expands.

- 9) **Comment:** Please add painted bike lanes along the shoulders of Dupont Road from Lima Road to Coldwater Road. Dupont Road is heavily travelled, and its connection to Dupont Hospital, the YMCA and Soloman Park makes its current configuration dangerous for bicyclists – especially bike commuters.

Response: This section of Dupont Road is under design for widening and will include a sidewalk on the north side with a multi-use trail on the south side. There will also be a grade separated crossing of Dupont Road with the Puffer Belly Trail (which is proposed to be built along the New York Central Railroad Corridor). Because of the amount of traffic on Dupont Road, a separated multi-use path as opposed to on-street bike lanes was considered to be more appropriate. The schedule for construction of this project is expected to be 2015.

- 10) **Comment:** Please add bike lanes along Clinton St from Auburn Rd to Dupont/SR 1. There are many neighborhoods along this section of roadway. Clinton is currently too narrow from Auburn Rd north to safely ride a bicycle, particularly at peak traffic times, especially during the winter morning hours when the sun is not up yet.

Response: This section of Clinton Street is two lanes with no continuous paved shoulder. It is in the transportation plan to be widened to four lanes. When this widening occurs, it will be designed to urban street standards which will include curbs, sidewalk and multi-use trail.

- 11) **Comment:** Please add bike lanes along SR 1/Leo Rd from Tonkel Rd to Grabill Rd. SR 1 is dangerous for bicyclists currently. A narrow shoulder is currently in place, but is discontinuous. A marked lane along the shoulder is preferable, especially in winter because it could easily be plowed and sanded/salted. Thank you for the chance to comment!

Response: INDOT evaluates the inclusion of all feasible bike and pedestrian design features in our project scopes. Major projects including road reconstruction, added capacity, and safety modifications and bridge replacements are primary candidates for the consideration of these accommodations. Multi-use paths are also evaluated in the scoping process and have been incorporated to several recent state projects. The addition of bike lanes would likely be in conjunction with a future added travel lanes project on this section of SR 1. However there are no plans to widen SR 1 at this location currently.

- 12) **Comment:** use this property as a future site for an interstate interchange (e.g. I-269) delivering travelers from I-469 easily to downtown from a new I-469 interchange between US 24 & US 30. This would supporting growth for downtown and encouraging visitors outside the beltway.

Response: There is no plan to provide an Interstate route into the Downtown area. Such a plan would have significant impacts to land use in the built up areas of the City. The one-way pairs of Washington/Jefferson and Lafayette/Clinton serve as major thoroughfares into the downtown.

- 13) **Comment:** I noticed Bass Road is listed for improvements. That area is listed on the plans for a future bike path to Buckner Park. The road currently is very narrow particularly over some hills. It should be improved/widened to accommodate the bike path.

Response: Bass Road is currently being designed to be widened to three lanes from Scott Road to Hillegas Road. Improvements include a continuous center two-way turn lane, profile improvements (reducing the hills and valleys), and a multi-use trail separated from the roadway. The section of roadway by Buckner Park to be widen is scheduled for construction in 2016/2017.

- 14) **Comment:** I noticed that it is listed for reconstruction/modification. The bridge should be widened, or reduced to 2 lanes, each lane wider, to ease bike/car interaction.

Response: When this bridge is replaced by Allen County Highway later this year, the roadway will be reconfigured to provide two travel lanes (one lane in each direction) with bike lanes. The bike lanes will extend from Wayne Street to Niagara, where the Rivergreenway crosses Anthony Blvd.

- 15) **Comment:** We invite you to connect with Fort Wayne Area Planning Council on Homelessness. I work at the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services (OHNS) and in our focus groups lack of public transportation is an issue we hear of. There may be opportunities to partner. OHNS administers public funding and grants to improve self-sufficiency. Thank you.

Response: Met to discuss ways we could partner. Sent preliminary proposal to see if Citilink could qualify for CDBG funding to expand our discount pass program for social service agencies. Citilink, Countilink & CTN will be participating in a panel discussion of transportation issues at the May 6th meeting of the Homeless Taskforce.

- 16) **Comment:** Thank you for working with us over the last year to improve public transportation in the far southeast quadrant of the city. You coordinated several meetings with Citilink, Councilman Hines and city representatives that helped us to focus on the public transportation needs in the far southeast quadrant.

Residents of the far southeast quadrant of the city would like to see continued commitment of transportation options. Convenient public transportation and improved streets are part of the infrastructure that will help improve the economic development in the area.

Would like to see street improvements to Tillman Road, McKinnie Avenue or Oxford Street as main east-west streets in the southeast quadrant, from Calhoun to Hessen Cassel. We in the far southeast can appreciate the “gateway” concept for beautifying our city, but feel the priority should be improved streets.

Again, thank you for the work you do. We in the far southeast quadrant of the city do not want to be left behind in progress toward improved transportation and economic development.

Response: Tillman Road is scheduled for resurfacing this year just east of Calhoun Street to John Street.

Paulding Road has been identified for a road diet (conversion from 4-lanes to three, including a center left-turn lane and bike lanes) between Lafayette and Hessen Cassel. This would reduce left-turning crashes as well as better serve the urban type land uses in the area including bicycle traffic. The current traffic volumes in the area do not justify the need for 4-travel lanes.

Oxford and McKinnie Streets have also been identified for road diet type project (between Anthony and Hessen Cassel) (conversion from 4-lanes to three, including a center left-turn lane and bike lanes) as the amount of traffic these routes carry does not warrant the need for 4-travel lanes.

Citilink Response: Met several times with representatives from Crown Colony area asking for extension of Route 3 service. Instituted this route change with the move to our new station as a 3 month demo; which has been instituted as a permanent change. Citilink Access demand response service is provided within the city limits of Fort Wayne & New Haven.

Another suggestion to provide direct fixed route access from Crown Colony to Wal-Mart was also discussed. There is no funding at this time to add any service, and this request is not consistent with expansion priorities as expressed in the TDP/Bus Fort Wayne/2035 plans.

- 17) **Comment:** A round-about will require too much space/property to install. Additional turn lanes and a signal would be more efficient to improve this intersection.

Response: A roundabout design is being evaluated as an option for improving this intersection. If a roundabout is the selected option, it will be designed to accommodate the current and anticipated vehicle types, including semis and large delivery trucks. Regardless of the selected

design, additional right-of-way will be acquired to ensure sufficient land is available for the improvement. In many cases, roundabouts require less land than a traditional widened intersection. Roundabouts also provide improved safety, require less maintenance and may be cheaper and more cost effective at this location. For these reasons a roundabout is under consideration.

- 18) **Comment:** There needs to be a complete, well connected sidewalk system. There are many locations where the sidewalk is nonexistent, incomplete or has deteriorated to a point where it is unsafe. Sidewalks that provide connectivity to the trail system should be a priority. Many neighborhoods are not safely connected to the trail system with sidewalks. A priority should be placed on constructing sidewalks along transit routes to facilitate access to the transit service.

Response: A complete, well connected sidewalk system is a goal of the Walk Fort Wayne plan. The ten year plan prioritizes new sidewalks along major roadways within the City. Priorities were selected based on a number of criteria including, but not limited to, proximity to schools, parks and transit system. More information can be found at www.cityoffortwayne.org/walkfortwayne

The City is currently working on a Trails Fort Wayne plan. One of the priorities of the plan is to improve access to trails from neighborhoods. It is likely that sidewalks will be included as a means to improve trail accessibility to neighborhoods.

- 19) **Comment:** sidewalks need to be constructed along Bluffton Road between Brooklyn Avenue and Lower Huntington Road in Waynedale. A sidewalk should also connect from Bluffton Road to Foster Park (Dog Park and Athletic Fields) on Winchester Road. Sidewalks need to be constructed along Stellhorn Road between Maplecrest Road and Lahmeyer Road.

Response: The Walk Fort Wayne plan is the City's vision and plan for new sidewalks along major roadways. All of the mentioned roadways are identified in the plan as needing sidewalks. Additionally, many segments of the roadways mentioned are prioritized in the plan and are intended to have pedestrian facilities installed over the next ten years. For more information on the Walk Fort Wayne plan, please visit www.cityoffortwayne.org/walkfortwayne

- 20) **Comment:** Transit service needs to be extended to serve the Chapel Ridge area (Maysville Road and Meijer Drive) and the Dupont Road and Lima Road commercial areas.

Response: Parkview is funding (at 100%) the new Medlink Route 15 which expands service to the PRMC in the Dupont Road area to supplement existing service provided by the Flexroute 21. Citilink Access demand response service is provided within the city limits of Fort Wayne & New Haven. Otherwise, there is no funding for service expansion at this time. Shorter headways on existing routes are top priority should funding become available.

- 21) **Comment:** The Transportation Open House a few weeks ago indicated sidewalks are projected for both sides of Ludwig Road from Coldwater to west of Lima Road. Neighborhoods along that route feel a sidewalk is needed on only one side and the multi-million dollar savings might make this severely-needed project more feasible.

Local discussions have repeatedly concluded the north side is the best from

Coldwater Road to at least the service road west of Logan's Restaurant. This included discussions with Smith Field.

Response: The preference and policy of the City is to promote sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. This philosophy encourages a pedestrian network that is connected and complete, and aims to establish a safe pedestrian environment for area residents.

However, depending on the characteristics of an area, exceptions are made. (Examples may include areas where the surrounding land use doesn't generate much pedestrian traffic, or natural or other physical barriers such as rivers or rail road tracks that prohibit sidewalk construction.) If it is decided that only one side of a roadway will receive a sidewalk, the side chosen to receive facilities will reflect the highest utility and service the greatest number of people in the surrounding community.

- 22) **Comment:** The demand for a sidewalk on Sharon Drive is such that the neighborhood association is discussing doing it ourselves in 100 foot increments as time, money, and opportunity allow. Again, asphalt is the overwhelming preference. Has anything been done to allow asphalt instead of concrete in Code?

Response: Current code does not allow for an asphalt sidewalk. There needs to be a larger discussion regarding the benefits/shortfalls of using this material for sidewalks.

Comments from the May 22, 2013 Transportation Open House:

- 1) **Trails:** Would like a new bike trail for the Science Central/Fort Wayne Children's Zoo area. Also would like to have a new trail at Parkview Hospital.

Response: The Pufferbelly Trail (Fourth St to Fernhill Ave) will indirectly connect Science Central to the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo. The Pufferbelly Trail will run from Fourth Street along the west side of Clinton Street cutting over to the new pedestrian bridge over State Boulevard north to Fernhill Avenue with a trail spur to the zoo.

There is currently some trail/sidewalks within the Parkview North Hospital complex connecting (eventually if not already) to Dupont Road, Diebold Road and Union Chapel Road.

- 2) **Push Buttons:** Please examine the lights w/push buttons at the Scott & Covington intersection on the north side of street.

Response: This intersection is set up to default the green indication for east/westbound through traffic on Covington Road in the absence of any vehicles on Scott Road. As this green indication comes on by default, the pedestrian walk indication also comes on to cross the north approach of Scott Road. This eliminates the need for a push button at this location.

- 3) **Numerous Questions about Transportation Plan and Pufferbelly Trail:** Thank you for your willingness to receive comments from the general public regarding the NIRCC transportation plan and its provisions for Pufferbelly Dupont to Carroll Road.

Our personal comments are lengthy, and we apologize for that--but it is nice to have a chance to document some widespread concerns. Many of us have felt that even though our viewpoints have been expressed in numerous forums and formats over many years, our issues have either been answered with boilerplate replies taken from the rails to trails websites or dismissed as irrelevant.

Part of the difficulty for regular citizens is knowing which among the endless related agencies and organizations actually has the power to make decisions *and* under which category any project that is of interest to us applies. Thank you for considering these questions. The Transportation Plan includes a great deal of useful information and we are grateful to NIRCC for seeking public comment.

3A. Question: What is the step-by-step process that resulted in NIRCC including *this specific segment* as a priority 1 in the Transportation Plan--specifically which individuals, agencies, and boards have made relevant decisions over the past 7-10 years and what are the dates of these relevant decisions?

Response: The bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts were initiated in the late 1990's and were incorporated as a component of the NIRCC Transportation Plan with the development of the 2025 Transportation Plan adopted in May 2000. In 2002, NIRCC organized the Northeastern Indiana Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Forum, a group comprised of governmental parks, planning and highway agencies, advocacy groups, and special project organizations, to develop a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan. The Forum met for several years reviewing data and mapping both on and off road bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The 2030 Transportation Plan was adopted in April 2005 and contained a more detailed bicycle and pedestrian plan that was illustrative in nature as funding was not secured for complete implementation. The section of the Pufferbelly Trail between Dupont Road and Carroll Road was included.

In 2006 a regional planning charrette was held to expand the planning effort within the region and help solidify critical trail corridors for interconnectivity within the region. Also in 2006 the Indiana Department of Natural Resources in partnership with the Indiana Department of Transportation published the *Hoosiers on the Move, The Indiana State Trails, Greenways and Bikeways Plan*. This plan identified a State "Priority Visionary Trail" from Quabache State Park in Wells County to Pokagon State Park in Steuben County, utilizing the Pufferbelly Trail in Northern Allen County.

The 2030-II Transportation Plan adopted in April 2009, and the 2035 Transportation Plan have continued to support the inclusion of the Pufferbelly Trail between Dupont Road and Carroll Road.

3B. Question: At which specific points in this process should the concerns of the property owners adjacent to this specific project have been included in the various presentations, applications, and testimonials before the relevant agencies? Given the almost total opposition by adjacent property owners since the project was first discussed, why were these opinions not

included? At which times in the history of this specific segment would the opinions of those opposed to the project have made a difference?

Response: NIRCC documents all public comments made during public comment periods and open houses. Responses are prepared by the respective agencies having jurisdiction over the subject matter of the comment. The comments and responses are presented to the Urban Transportation Advisory Board for their consideration in the decision-making process. The comments and responses are documented in the Transportation Plan and/or Transportation Improvement Program, as appropriate based on the specific comment period.

3C. **Question:** We have read with interest in this plan about all of the "open" meetings of groups such as INDOT, MPO, UTAB, and NIRCC--but unless those affected by the decisions of these groups are aware of the way an issue is categorized, for example "Transportation Improvement" rather than "Recreational Trail," how is the general public supposed to be aware of opportunities for input?

We consider ourselves to be relatively well-informed about public affairs, yet it has only been in the last year and a half that we have even heard of MPO and UTAB. We are not sure how we could have been able to register our comments with agencies we did not know existed, even though they have been discussing building a trail (transportation project?) close enough to our kitchen table that walkers can see what we're eating. What do the trails partners see as their obligation to share with these decision-making groups that they have heard much opposition to their master plans?

Response: NIRCC has open comment periods at least once a year for input on the Transportation Improvement Program, and more frequently during the development of a transportation plan (currently on a four year update cycle). NIRCC issues notices of the comment periods and public meetings to all interested parties. A simple request to NIRCC staff via the website, email, phone call or in person will get your name and email address on the notification list. In addition, public comment periods are advertised in the legal notice section of the News-Sentinel and Journal Gazette. NIRCC issues press releases to numerous media outlets providing the comment periods and public meeting times, dates and locations. The media publishes articles and makes public announcements regarding the opportunities to comment. In addition, NIRCC sends notices to all known Neighborhood Association Presidents and Community representatives notifying them of the public comment periods and meetings. These representatives are requested to notify their association boards and members.

NIRCC, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is comprised of representatives from local governments. The Urban Transportation Advisory Board includes representatives from State and Local Government Officials. These include the Cities of Fort Wayne and New Haven, Allen County, Citilink, Airport Authority and Indiana Department of Transportation. NIRCC works with these state and local agencies when developing transportation plan, identifying needs and developing viable solutions. These agencies sponsor the projects, and their respective boards, councils and elected officials must also support the projects. Comments can also be made to these agencies as the projects are approved through their procedures that also accommodate public participation and input.

3D. **Question:** We would like to know what the specific guidelines are that govern the trail plans presented to NIRCC, including but not limited to:

- a. **Question:** How is input from adjacent property owners sought, documented, and shared with relevant agencies? Without a personal contact in another neighborhood we would have had no way of knowing that "our" project was listed as a transportation issue or that this NIRCC opportunity for open comments was available. Dawn Ritchie did say last week that she would make certain my name was added to the "official" notification list. Of course at this point it is too late to make a difference. We are grateful for this gesture, but wonder if the concerns of adjacent property owners **ever** matter in the grand scheme of things.

Response: As previously stated, NIRCC documents all public comments made during public comment periods and open houses. Responses are prepared by the respective agencies having jurisdiction over the subject matter of the comment. The comments and responses are presented to the Urban Transportation Advisory Board for their consideration in the decision-making process. The comments and responses are documented in the Transportation Plan and/or Transportation Improvement Program, as appropriate based on the specific comment period.

- b. **Question:** What do the trail guidelines list as the minimum setback governing the proximity of public trails to private homes and outdoor living spaces? Most of the homes along the rail corridor in question were built prior to any hint of an Indianapolis group deciding that backyards in the three LaCabreah neighborhoods and Woodmont were a good place to squeeze in a trail. Virtually all adjacent property owners were under the impression that the full 100' rail corridor existed *beyond* their property lines, with the neighborhood associations owning half of it. In reality, especially in our small villa neighborhood, the developers laid out the lots and built on their half of that 100' corridor, leaving virtually no buffer.

Response: There are currently no required setbacks. Local governmental entities are sensitive to privacy concerns and use vegetative screening to mitigate impacts.

- c. **Question:** What specific restrictions are in place in the guidelines that safeguard natural habitats and wildlife and prevent the removal of trees, and what are the stated replacement guidelines when natural areas are destroyed during trail construction?

Response: When federal funds are used to construct a project, an environmental assessment based on federal guidelines is required to be prepared and approved prior to full project development. When federal funds are not used, applicable state codes and local ordinances govern the environmental impacts and any required mitigation. Permitting agencies, such as the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, may impose replacement guidelines for trees that are a certain width or larger.

- d. **Question:** Per Indiana code IC 8-4.5-6-6, what do the local trail construction guidelines list as the required decorative fencing in urban areas? A small group working to negotiate on behalf of the affected neighborhoods were told that decorative fencing will not be provided as part of the trail construction.

Response: Indiana Code IC 8-4.5-6-6 was passed by the State Legislature for a State Recreational Trails Program, which was never funded by the State Legislature. The funds being utilized for the Pufferbelly Trail between Dupont and Carroll Roads will not utilize any state funding; therefore, this Indiana Code does not apply. The City of Fort Wayne and Fort Wayne Trails, Incorporated will work with the neighborhood to plant a vegetative buffer where a buffer no longer exists after trail construction.

- e. **Question:** What trail policies and procedures exist that limit access to trails through private property, prohibit nighttime use, and prohibit public trail parking in residential neighborhoods? While there has been much hoop-la about property values near trails increasing, adjacent property owners have asked for and not received any documentation to that effect specific to our area. Even though a recent news story quoted a 3% value added and listed one anecdote, there was no indication of where these values had increased and how close to the actual trails these properties were. Home owners a block away can, of course, be considered "near" trails, but bear none of the responsibility and invasion of privacy that adjacent owners have and do not have to convince potential buyers that their privacy and safety won't be compromised.

Response: These issues are specific to the individual entity having jurisdiction over the trail. In general, public access is not allowed through private property. There is no nighttime use prohibition on trails outside of public parks or parking prohibitions on public streets. NIRCC believes trails add value to private and public property, but understands that many factors are involved in the value of property. NIRCC does not attempt to establish a specific value increase. The City of Fort Wayne and Fort Wayne Trails, Incorporated will share information on studies done throughout the country that show increase in property values for residential homes located adjacent to trails. Dawn Ritchie will provide you copies of these studies/articles at your next meeting.

- f. **Question:** What security plans are listed in trails guidelines for monitoring the trails, especially in secluded areas that are not visible from city streets and county roads where regular patrols can take place?

Response: Security along trails is the responsibility of law enforcement agencies similar to parks and other public places. Volunteer Greenway Rangers, who have been trained by the Fort Wayne Police Department, will also assist law enforcement in monitoring the trails and helping address security or safety issues.

- g. **Question:** What is the stated schedule for routine maintenance of trails?

Response: The City of Fort Wayne has an active trail maintenance program through the Parks Department and Board of Public Works. These departments work together to maintain the trail system under their jurisdictions.

h. **Question:** What are the specific timelines and funding plans for trail upkeep and repairs after construction is complete?

Response: The City of Fort Wayne has an active trail maintenance program through the Parks Department and Board of Public Works. While trails generally need very little maintenance, the City of Fort Wayne has a good history of trail maintenance.

3E. **Question:** How much money has been budgeted for each of the specific items listed above, and where is the money coming from to build this trail? To date, only the \$150,000 DNR grant is listed.

Response: The Pufferbelly Trail between Dupont Road and the City limits will be maintained by the City of Fort Wayne Public Works Division. The segment between the City limits and Carroll Road will be maintained by the Allen County Highway Department. Both departments have the necessary funding to maintain the trail within their maintenance budgets.

The Pufferbelly Trail between Dupont Road and the City limits will be funded with Legacy Funds and with donations. The Pufferbelly Trail between the City limits and Carroll Road will be funded with the \$150,000 Federal Recreational Trails Program grant and donations.

3F. **Question:** What guidelines and safeguards does NIRCC itself have in place to insure that any new trail construction it lists as a priority 1 does in fact enhance the quality of transportation in the northeast Indiana region? The common phrase for this segment of trail among neighbors is "The Trail to Nowhere." Most of us would rather use trails along Dupont to get to the library or shopping than bike to Pokagon, and since much of the property north of Carroll Road is not owned by trail entities, this really will be the "trail to nowhere."

Response: The Pufferbelly Trail currently provides connectivity to numerous land uses including residential, commercial, recreational and public parks. The extension north of Dupont Road will enhance the connectivity to additional developments. Fort Wayne Trails, Inc, Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne will be acquiring much of the corridor from Washington Center Road to Payton County Park and between Shoaff and Fitch Roads in 2013. The trail section just north of Carroll Road will be constructed in the near future with the assistance of the Thomas Development Team. Also, the City of Fort Wayne hopes to construct the segment from Wallen Road to Washington Center Road in the next 1 – 2 years.

3G. **Question:** Why aren't the parallel to Pufferbelly trails proposed along Lima Road enough for the connectivity that "passionate about trails" folks are so eager to have? If prior construction practices are followed, virtually all of the 50' rail corridor will be needed for construction, tearing out most of the "natural" setting that seems to appeal to people who want this trail. We like the

natural setting also, which is why we built our homes where we did. Since we qualify as "older" adults, it is doubtful that we will live long enough to see any replacement trees grow to maturity, and we have environmental concerns about letting the invasive honeysuckle continue to grow so that we can maintain some semblance of privacy in our tiny villa backyard.

Response: At this time there is no commitment from the Indiana Department of Transportation to improve Lima Road north of Dupont Road that would accommodate a parallel trail. Based upon the current usage of the Pufferbelly Trail, it is evident that its alignment and location is very popular.

3H. **Question:** The Plan indicates that a "pedestrian bridge" would tie the proposed north Pufferbelly segment to what is already in place, yet the City engineer and trails officials have stated that the connecting piece will be an at-grade tunnel. When was this change made from what is stated in the Plan, and with what public input? The City traffic engineer proposes elevating Dupont Road to accommodate an at-grade connecting tunnel for trail users wishing to cross Dupont, with construction scheduled for completion in conjunction with the widening of Dupont Road. This expensive option would increase problems in snow and ice conditions along the raised roadway and for cars trying to get out of their neighborhoods onto Dupont--already a difficult to manage task.

Response: A decision was made early in the project development process that based on the anticipated amount of pedestrian traffic, a grade separation should be provided for safe passage at Dupont Road. As the preliminary engineering work progressed on the Dupont Road project, it became evident that the most cost effective manner to provide the grade separated crossing, was to slightly elevate Dupont Road and build the trail under the road. All subsequent public meetings presented the trail passing under Dupont Road. Neighborhood access to Dupont Road will be addressed as part of the construction project.

3I. **Question:** In addition, safety and sanitation issues related to a tunnel-- an isolated enclosed space that is accessible at all hours of the night and day-- are obvious. There are no engineering solutions to feces, urine, discarded one-pot meth labs, and assault. If we must endure this trail, a pedestrian bridge would be a much better solution. Why has this idea been abandoned?

Response: The proposed design of the trail passage under Dupont Road will not create an isolated enclosed space. Natural and electrical lighting, coupled with a relatively flat and direct trail access under the road will provide a safe and open design. We are perplexed at the insinuation that feces, urine and one-pot meth labs will be problematic. The trail system does not have a problem with these issues. A pedestrian bridge would be more costly, require the acquisition of additional property and be difficult to meet ADA design standards.