



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Indianapolis Celebrates Completion of Nickel Plate Trail

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indianapolis Department of Public Works is proud to announce the official opening of the Nickel Plate Trail in Indianapolis, a \$14.9 million investment in the city's growing trail network. The celebration marked the completion of a project more than a decade in the making. What began as a vision to transform a historic rail corridor into a safe space for residents has now become one of the city's most exciting trail additions.

"The Nickel Plate Trail is set to become a huge public asset in Indianapolis—one that I have no doubt will soon be just as revered as the Monon Trail or the urban Indianapolis Cultural Trail," said Mayor Joe Hogsett. "The level of investment and partnership we have seen for this project across Marion and Hamilton County is the sort that comes only once in a generation."

Partnership at all levels was paramount to make this project a reality. Through partners at the state level, the City of Indianapolis was awarded \$5 million for the Indiana DNR Next Level Trails program and was awarded \$1.2 million in READi funds.

"After years of collaboration with dedicated community partners to secure state and local funding, I'm thrilled to celebrate the completion of this transformative project. In recent months, I've watched this trail come alive with bike commuters, recreational cyclists, multigenerational families, and walkers of all ages," said Carey Hamilton, Indiana State Representative for District 87. "This investment will deliver quality of life and economic development benefits that will serve our community for generations to come."

Construction began in 2023, and the completed project will connect the Indiana State Fairgrounds, Fall Creek Trail, Monon Trail, Castleton, and Hamilton County, creating a continuous north-south corridor for pedestrians and cyclists. The project includes multi-use spur connections at 62nd Street east to Eastwood Middle School and on 86th

Street west to Sahm Park. A small segment near I-465 will be completed and opened in 2026 in coordination with INDOT's Clear Path 465 project.

"Effective partnerships between local and state leaders are essential to building stronger communities and a better Indiana," said Fady Qaddoura, Indiana State Senator for District 30. "The vision and teamwork behind the Nickel Plate Trail exemplify what we can achieve when we work together, and I'm proud to have played a part in bringing this effort to life."

The Nickel Plate Trail enhances mobility and accessibility across Indianapolis by providing residents with more ways to travel without a vehicle. High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK signals) will help make motorists aware of trail users crossing intersections.

"This trail connects neighborhoods, supports nearby businesses, and gives residents a safe and beautiful place to walk, ride, and enjoy the outdoors.

The Nickel Plate Trail belongs to everyone, bringing people together," said Councilor Dan Boots. "For our small businesses, this trail brings new energy and opportunity. Already, we are seeing economic development taking root along its edges, including new storefronts, increased foot traffic, and renewed investment that benefits the entire Allisonville-Keystone corridor."

In addition to improving connectivity, the Nickel Plate Trail offers residents a new space to get active outdoors and enjoy nature. This connection also makes it easier to reach neighborhoods, schools, and local businesses.

"We're excited about the positive impacts the trail will have on the quality of life of Indianapolis residents and serve as a catalyst for quality, sustainable growth throughout our community," said BRAG Board of Directors President Kevin Senninger. "This milestone reinforces the value of collaborations among the city, local businesses, residents and neighborhood organizations like BRAG to maintain and enhance this transformative addition to northeast Indianapolis."

The 10-foot-wide, asphalt, multi-use trail was constructed with support from a \$5 million grant from Indiana DNR announced in April 2022.

"Across Indiana, we see communities coming together to support strong trail connections like this new connection through Indianapolis' section of the Nickel Plate Trail," said Chris Smith, DNR deputy director. "DNR is proud to support communities as they build trails that connect people to each other and Indiana's great outdoors."

The Nickel Plate Trail will also serve as a link to safe multi-modal network connections and state landmarks such as Fort Benjamin Harrison State Park, Connor Prairie, the White River Greenway and Downtown Indianapolis. Much of the trail is

built on the railroad for which it was named. The Nickel Plate Railroad, built in the late 1800s, once connected Central Indiana communities to large industrial metropolitan cities from Chicago to New York and Cleveland to St. Louis.

By the late 1990s, all freight lines were replaced by passenger tourist trains that serviced the Indiana State Fair.

The Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF) of Indianapolis has been transformative in shaping the Greenway and Trail network within the City and provided a \$1.75 million donation as a part of the Connected Communities Initiative, made possible by a grant by Lilly Endowment Inc.

“The Nickel Plate Trail is a prime example of how multiple municipalities, partners, counties, and communities can come together to make big things happen, and be further connected through the process,” said Jennifer Bartenbach, Chief Executive Officer for the Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF).

With the help of funding through the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (IMPO), Indy DPW will construct two pedestrian bridges along the trail over major thoroughfares in the coming years. One will be built over Keystone Avenue with construction set to begin in 2026. Construction on the bridge over 82nd Street is scheduled to start in 2028.

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