



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Joe Hogsett, Indy DPW break ground on Nickel Plate Trail

INDIANAPOLIS – Today, Mayor Joe Hogsett joined city, state and neighborhood leaders to help break ground on Marion County’s portion of the Nickel Plate Trail. The trail links the largest metropolitan region in the State of Indiana to some of the best amenities that Central Indiana has to offer to create a multi-county, regional 17.85-mile trail.

The Nickel Plate Trail will convert the Nickel Plate Railroad bed to a multi-modal trail from 42nd & the Monon Trail, east to the existing Nickel Plate, north to 96th Street. The project includes multi-use spur connections at 62nd Street east to Eastwood Middle School and on 86th west to Sahm Park. The Nickel Plate Trail will provide important connections between the places where people live and work.

“This once-in-a-generation project will be a jewel for communities along the path, spurring development along the way,” Mayor Joe Hogsett said. “Nearly 100,000 residents live within a mile of the project, along with employment sites accounting for more than 30,000 jobs within half a mile – a number that will certainly grow in the years to come.”

Multiple studies, regional plans and more have called for this critical connector not only for the Indianapolis area, but the Central Indiana region as a whole.

“I couldn’t have imagined a better outcome for House District 87 when, in 2020, I reached out to colleagues in the Statehouse to form the bi-partisan Legislative Trails Caucus. The Legislative Trails Caucus paved the way for this moment by successfully securing funding for the Next Level Trails Program, a competitive grant program designed to grow our trails network in Indiana,” said State Rep Carey Hamilton, co-chair of the bipartisan Indiana Legislative Trails Caucus. “Once this state funding became available, our community came together, in partnership with the City of Indianapolis, to create a compelling application for the Nickel Plate Trail. As we have seen across the state, trails deliver quality of life, economic development and public health benefits to the communities they serve, and I am excited to see how our community benefits from this investment for decades to come.”

“Today’s groundbreaking of the Nickel Plate Trail is critical to the Castleton Revitalization Plan and enhances the vibrancy of our Northeast Indianapolis Community,” said City-County Councilor Dan Boots. “It will spur economic development and improve the area’s walkability and connectivity to the greater community, and I am thrilled to welcome the expansion of the Nickel Plate Trail to District 3.”

Binford Redevelopment and Growth (BRAG), a not-for-profit neighborhood organization, said it is already seeing an impact to the area.

“We’re currently seeing reinvestment in properties along the future trail path, including right here where we are standing this morning,” said BRAG President Kevin Senninger. “From our trail cleanups in 2021, the initial public presentation of the Trail’s design in 2022, to our conversations with neighbors at this year’s Farmers Market, residents and business owners alike have been anticipating this day for some time.”

“This \$14.8 million investment into the Nickel Plate Trail further demonstrates our commitment to safety for cyclists and pedestrians,” Indy DPW Director Brandon Herget said. “Additionally, infrastructure investments like this will encourage development in our neighborhoods.”

The City of Indianapolis was awarded \$5 million for the IDNR Next Level Trails program, received thousands in local donations and was awarded \$1.2 million in READi funds to help fund the design of the Nickel Plate Trail Bridge over Keystone Avenue. 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 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.

The bulk of the trail is built on the railroad for which it was named. The Nickel Plate Railroad, built in the mid to 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.

Combined with the Midland Trace and Monon trails, the Nickel Plate Trail will create a 41-mile loop spanning multiple counties.

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Additional quotes and statements available for use:

“Trails and greenways have tremendous potential to catalyze development and growth in neighborhoods and communities that they connect. They serve as dynamic centers of recreation, fitness, commerce, learning, socialization while providing multi-modal transportation options throughout our city and beyond. The transformative growth of development and economic opportunity is evident in previous projects such as the Monon Trail and the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, two catalytic projects that have transformed the way we interact with our city.”

The Nickel Plate Trail project is a once in a generation opportunity to bring social, economic, and healthy living opportunities to multiple Indiana communities. It creates safe multi-modal transit options for tens of thousands of Hoosiers. CICF fully supports the completion of this significant network connection to over 300 acres of parks, local schools, public libraries, and multiple communities."

Jennifer Bartenbach, CEO, Central Indiana Community Foundation

"We are thrilled to celebrate the groundbreaking of the Nickel Plate Trail, that will ultimately connect to our campus at the State Fairgrounds. The State Fairgrounds has been connecting Hoosiers throughout the community since founded in 1892. What an exciting day celebrating the future."

Anna F. Whelchel, Chief Marketing & Sales Officer, Indiana State Fair Commission

"Through support from Governor Holcomb's Next Level Trails program, we're preserving historic routes like the Nickle Plate across the state and leveraging them as important connections across Indiana communities. We're proud to support the construction of this new connection and look forward to its completion," said Dan Bortner, director of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, which is providing the city of Indianapolis with \$5 million in support through the Next Level Trails initiative to build 10.3 miles of trail."

Dan Bortner, Director, Indiana Department of Natural Resources

"I was honored to help secure state funding for this transformative project, and I'm extremely grateful for the partnerships with local leaders in our community. They're tireless work to approve local funding helped make this project a reality.

This new trail will enhance the quality of life for residents of Senate District 30, and I am excited for the generations of Hoosiers who will enjoy it for decades to come. The Nickel Plate Project will also bring many new economic development opportunities to our district and improve the environment. I will continue advocating for transformative projects in Senate District 30 and across the state, including more trails for all Hoosiers, improved infrastructure, and enhanced safety for cyclists and pedestrians."

State Senator Fady Qaddoura

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