

CHAPTER 6 : IMPLEMENTATION



The Active Transportation Plan provides a vision for the future and a list of recommended physical and programmatic improvements for the region. Throughout the planning process, communities and residents have been engaged and are excited to see the vision and recommendations implemented. This will require commitment, partnerships, funding, and continued community support. A clear, action-oriented implementation strategy will be necessary to continue the momentum of the plan. The implementation strategy is an outline of the actions and priorities necessary to see the vision of this plan realized.

Early Action Steps

The following early action steps are designed to initiate plan implementation, sustain momentum from the planning process, and set the foundation for future progress. The following early action items, which represent a mix of policy, procedures, capital projects, and programs, provide early opportunities to engage community partners and establish strong and lasting relationships on which successful implementation efforts will depend.

Step 1: Adopt the Plan

This is an important step that should not be overlooked. The Michiana Area Council of Governments will adopt this plan as the bicycle and pedestrian component of the Michiana on the Move: 2040 Transportation Plan. This plan is the primary document guiding future capital investments and transportation decisions, which will now include active transportation. When projects are being considered for federal funding, the priorities identified in this plan will impact the decision to provide funding to particular projects.

Step 2: Adopt a Complete Streets Policy

A “Complete Street” is a street that is designed and maintained to accommodate all street users, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists. Across the country, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and communities have adopted Complete Streets Policies to integrate all modes of transportation into roadway funding, design, construction, operations, and maintenance where feasible. The Michiana Area Council of Governments should draft a Complete Street Policy for project utilizing federal funds to consider all street users. The other communities in the region should also consider adopting a Complete Streets Policy in order to have the most impact for active transportation users.

Step 3: Establish an Active Transportation Committee

The Michiana Active Transportation Committee (MATC) would be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Active Transportation Plan. This committee would be comprised of representatives from local government, elected officials, schools, neighborhoods, advocacy groups, businesses, health organizations, and tourism organizations. The MATC would meet periodically to discuss implementation progress, discuss related issues, and share resources and tools throughout the region.



Step 4: Establish Baseline Counts and Measurements

Continual monitoring of implementation progress is essential to the success of the Plan. Baseline measurements of key data like bicycling and walking activities, crash rates, miles of facilities, program participation numbers, and travel mode share provide a point of comparison to determine the impact infrastructure projects and supporting programs. The Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) should consider incorporating bicycle and pedestrian counts within their existing traffic counting program. The program should consider the use of both manual and automatic counts. MACOG should work with the MATC to develop this program by identifying potential count locations and selecting potential automatic counting technologies.

Step 5: Create an Active Transportation Design Guideline

Having a well-designed, safe, and consistent active transportation network will encourage people to walk and bike more frequently. Across the country and world, experts have designed and built many types of infrastructures to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. Using their expertise, our region can develop a common guideline to use when designing active transportation infrastructure. Using this guide across the region, will help to make sure infrastructure is safe and consistent for all users. This guide should address the differences between the urban, small-town, and rural character in the region.

Step 6: Create an Active Transportation Educational Program

Building high-quality active transportation facilities is only one part of creating a safe and convenient active transportation network. A program aimed at educating community members on safe and courteous walking, bicycling, and driving habits for children and adults would help keep everyone safe when traveling. Through working with the MATC, the region can work

together to develop a consistent message that is delivered in fun and engaging ways. This would include a campaign website, television and radio ads, school education programs, community outreach, and adult classes.

Step 7: Develop a Regional Bikeways Signage and Wayfinding Plan

Signed bicycle routes provide a quick and relatively inexpensive way to expand the regional active transportation network. Our region currently has over 628 miles of signed routes and looks to add 176 miles more. Creating a common bikeway sign will help residents and visitors explore the region on bike more confidently. The signs will give rides knowledge about where they are going, what destinations are nearby, and that the route is common for other cyclists. The MATC can work with local partners to develop a system for identify signed routes using best practice guides across the country. Communities can implement the signs for existing or future signed routes, making the network more connected and accessible.

Step 8: Seek Funding for High Priority Projects

The Active Transportation Plan identified a variety of projects to improve bicycling and walking within in the region. A few of these projects will have the most significant impact in the region, meeting the goals of the region and the needs of our communities. Funding for transportation projects can be very competitive and the project development time is significant. With this in consideration, it is important for the MATC to identify potential traditional and innovative funding sources for high priority projects.

Appendix A identifies priority level for all projects. High priority projects were either quickly implementable, or considered critical to be started early. Low priority projects were viewed as long-term projects that would enhance the overall network, but were not considered a vital connection.

Funding Sources

Funding active transportation projects will require a diverse and creative approach. Multiple funding sources are necessary to implement the recommended network and program improvements in this plan.

Federal Sources

This last year, Congress passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The FAST Act is a five-year bill, replacing the most recent Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). The FAST Act slightly increases funding and changes some policies from the previous bill. Overall, funding for active transportation has improved under the FAST Act.

Active transportation projects remain eligible activities in the larger Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) programs. Traditional funding for active transportation came from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). In the FAST Act, the name changed to the Surface Transportation Block Grant Set-aside Program. The funding for this category increased from \$820 million to \$835 million in 2016 and 2017 and to \$850 million in 2018, 2019, 2020. Additionally, nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply for funds.



The IUSB Bike and Pedestrian Bridge, designed by DLZ, used CMAQ funding for construction.

FAST Act retains the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) which funds projects that reduce fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. Eligible projects are listed within the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). In Indiana, active transportation related projects including installing pedestrian signals, crosswalk warning signs, beacons, markings, and refuge islands. Unfortunately, HSIP funds can no longer be used for non-infrastructure activities, such as promotion, education, or enforcement. However, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, under their Section 405 National Priority Safety Programs, allows for projects covering non-infrastructure activities.

There are also several funding programs not part of the FAST Act. These include the Department of Transportation's Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants Program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). Additionally, funding may come from the Federal Transit Administration Capital Funds (FTA), Federal Transit Administration Capital Funds (ATI), the Recreational Trails Program, and the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

State Sources

The State of Indiana offers many funding sources for active transportation. Major programs include the Indiana Heritage Trust Program, the Placed Based Investment Fund, INDOT Common Paths Initiatives, and the state Recreation Trails Program (RTP). Grants from the Indiana Department of Health are available for the creation of bike and pedestrian plans.

The Indiana Heritage Trust Program was instituted to protect natural resources using funds generated through the sale of personalized environmental license plates. Greenways are eligible under the Division of Outdoor Recreation section of the program. The Division's mission is to increase these opportunities for

underserved regions and populations, regardless of their location in rural or urban settings. All projects must maintain state interest through conservation easements or similar agreements. The facilities must also be assumed by local interests, other division, or agencies. Greenways that make use of abandoned rail lines or other rights-of-way previously used for private/public transportation are eligible projects. From 1993 to 2015, the program generated more than \$35 million in license plate revenue to fund conservation and recreation projects across Indiana.

The Placed Based Investment Fund, administered by the Indiana Office of Tourism Development and the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, is a competitive matching grant program that supports collaborative community and economic development programs. Awarded funds, which range from \$25,000 to \$50,000, support projects that build upon unique community assets to strengthen the sense and quality of place and promote increased tourism activity and community investment. Local governments, visitor bureaus, public and private schools, and community foundations are eligible to apply.

INDOT's Common Paths Initiative is a program that strives to create safe, efficient, and accessible transportation for all users. The Small Communities Sidewalk Program (SCSP) is a part of this initiative which sets aside funding each fiscal year to construct new sidewalks or upgrade existing sidewalks to ADA compliance.

The Indiana State Department of Health has provided funding for Indiana communities to prepare a community-wide bicycle and pedestrian master plan. The grant is administered through the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity and invests in partnerships and activities that work towards improving the health of all Indiana residents. The adoption of bicycle and pedestrian master plan by Indiana communities is seen as an effective way to invest in changes to policy and the built environment that support healthy community outcomes.

Local Sources

Even when using external sources of funds, project will often need a local match to receive a grant. Additionally, projects can be done as part of normal local programs or using local development guidelines. The following accounts serve as the local source of revenue to implement various transportation projects:

- Local Road and Street Account (LR&S)
- Motor Vehicle Highway Account (MVHA)
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Local Option Highway User Tax (Wheel Tax)
- Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT)

Other tools include establishing an Capital Improvement Plan Set-Aside. This creates a dedicated set-aside that can be used to implement bikeways, trails, and other projects to improve conditions. Additionally, local governments can adopt local ordinances imposing an impact fee on new development in order to fund infrastructure improvements. This could include parks and recreational facilities.

Northern Indiana and Northeastern Indiana both received an Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) Regional Cities competition grant for \$42 million over the next two years. The program includes projects that promote economic growth in the region. Many of the projects proposed include active transportation elements. Using a combination of local, state, and private funds, several key projects could get built using the Regional Cities funds.

There are several nonprofits and community organizations that can help fund and support active transportation. These organizations include the Indiana Trails Fund, the Indiana Greenways Foundation, the Trust for Public Land, and the People for Bikes Community Grants Program. Local businesses and hospitals may also provide some support for bike infrastructure.

Evaluation

An important component of the planning process is to understand how to measure the success of the plan. Evaluating consists of monitoring plan progress; documenting outcomes, trends, and attitudes; and periodically revisiting the plan to realign recommendations with the changing values and needs of our communities. The following evaluation action and programs support an accountable and transparent implementation process and create feedback loops through which future needs, issues, and opportunities can be identified.

Performance Measures and the Transportation Academy

In early 2016, MACOG was one of seven regions to be selected in a yearlong transportation academy created by the national nonprofit Transportation for America in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration. This program will educate teams of local business, civic, elected leaders, and transportation professionals at the early stages of performance measure development, prepare participants to act on opportunities within their communities, and plug them into a dynamic national network of like-minded leaders throughout the county. Through this process, MACOG will be developing performance measures for the Michiana on the Move: 2040 Transportation Plan which will also address active transportation goals. This process will be valuable in ensuring that our region can more carefully measure the impacts of all transportation spending decisions to ensure that every dollar is aligned with the public's goals and brings the greatest return possible for citizens.



Public bike counter in the City of Vancouver

Biennial Bicycling and Walking Progress Report

Every two years, MATC should publish a report summarizing the implementation progress of the Active Transportation Plan. This report will highlight completed projects, share stories of successful programs, and use data collected over time to quantify the impact of the plan on health, transportation, equity, and economic activity.

Communicating the success of the plan will depend on data gathering and analysis. Over time, the data collect can show the impact of recommendations of this plan. Table 6.1 contains a list of data that should be collected over time to monitor the impact of this plan and used in the Progress Report.

Table 6.1 - List of Data to collect for Progress Report

Data	Source
Journey to work (mode share)	American Community Survey (ACS), US Census Bureau
Bicycle and pedestrian crash data	Indiana's Automated Reporting Information Exchange System (ARIES)
Miles of active transportation facilities	MACOG GIS
Bicycle Level of Service	MACOG GIS
Bicycle and pedestrian activity	Manual and automated counts
Residents' perception, attitudes and behaviors	Online surveys
Economic impact	Property values, sales tax revenue
Number of education and encouragement programs and participants	Partnering organizations
Network coverage (percent of population within ¼ and ½ mile of active transportation facilities)	MACOG GIS, US Census Bureau
Equity (percent of environmental justice populations within ¼ and ½ miles of active transportation facilities)	MACOG GIS, US Census Bureau
Average Annualized Daily Traffic on bikeway corridors	MACOG GIS
Complete Street Policy Adoptions/Ranking	Smart Growth America
# of Bike Friendly Communities	League of American Bicyclists
# of Walk Friendly Communities	Walk Friendly Communities
# of Bike Friendly Businesses/Universities	League of American Bicyclists
# of bicycle parking and other amenities	MACOG GIS, City GIS

