

# Transportation

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## Transportation

The Transportation Plan describes Morgan County's existing transportation system and provides an assessment of key issues. The key issues were determined through public input, discussion with stakeholders, and consideration of future land use. The purpose of the Plan is to provide a direction for future planning, guiding the County towards achieving their long-term goals and objectives.

## Supporting Documents

Several supporting documents were reviewed in the process of creating this Plan. The documents are listed below:

- ◆ Mooresville Transportation Plan (2007)
- ◆ Morgan County Transportation Plan (2007)
- ◆ INDOT Long Range Transportation Plan (2006)
- ◆ Indianapolis Regional Pedestrian Plan (2006)
- ◆ Indianapolis Regional Transportation Plan (2005)
- ◆ Comprehensive Operational Analysis of IndyGo (2005)
- ◆ Central Indiana Regional Mass Transit Service Plan (2000)
- ◆ Martinsville Comprehensive Plan (2008 Draft)
- ◆ Mooresville Comprehensive Plan (2008 Draft)
- ◆ White River Whetzel Trace Greenway Plan (2008 Draft)
- ◆ Morgan County SR-37 / SR-144 Corridor Plan (2008 Draft)

## Contributing Factors

In order to conduct a proper transportation assessment for Morgan County, several factors

must be considered. These include previous transportation reports, concurrent reports, public input, and consideration of future INDOT projects. These factors are explained in greater detail below.

## Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Transportation in Morgan County has been previously assessed in 2007 with funding by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). At this time, two separate Transportation Plans were developed for Morgan County and Mooresville. The MPO is responsible for transportation planning in a region called the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The MPA encompasses all of Marion County and parts of the surrounding counties of Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Shelby, Morgan, and Johnson. In Morgan County, the MPA includes Mooresville and extends up to two miles from the corporate limits of the Town.

A recommended transportation plan was given in each of the MPO Plans, based on the anticipated transportation needs for the next 20 years. Since the recommendations were developed in 2007, the information is recent and helped guide this Plan. However, this Plan separates itself from the MPO Plans by placing a greater emphasis on priorities for the entire county and on impacts related to I-69. It also includes more up-to-date public and stakeholder input.

## Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)

INDOT plans the future investment strategy into the state highway system by means of a report called the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRP). This document was most recently updated in 2006 and plans ahead to 2030. Several projects in Morgan County are outlined in the LRP. These important projects are explained in greater detail in this Plan.

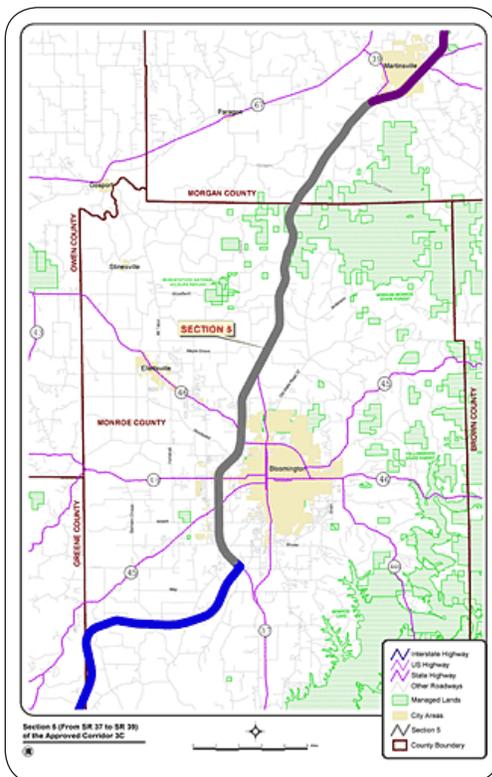
## Interstate 69

The construction of I-69 through Morgan County will affect future traffic flow and land use. The planning of I-69 was implemented by splitting the corridor into six sections and conducting Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for each section. The Tier 2 EISs determine the alignment of the roadway, as well as the location of interchanges.

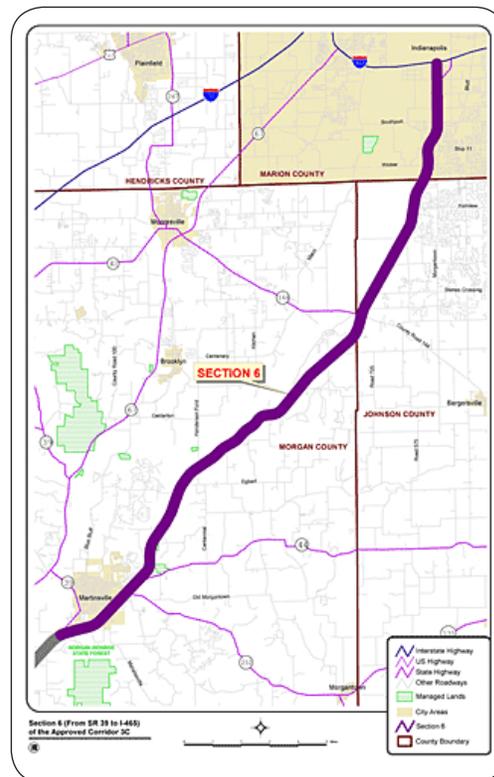
Two of the I-69 planning sections take place in Morgan County. The north section, Section 6, follows SR-37 from the northern end of the County to the southern end of Martinsville. The next section, Section 5, continues south on SR-37 from Martinsville to Monroe County.

The EIS's for both sections are still in the draft phase. Although the studies for both sections are not finalized, there are alternatives which have been presented to the public. These alternatives do not vary in alignment, but they do propose different interchange locations. The alignment in both sections follows the existing route of SR-37.

I-69 related impacts and issues are reviewed in detail in the SR-37 / SR-144 Corridor Plan.



INDOT Section 5



INDOT Section 6

## Road and Street System

### Inventory

The Federal Highway Administration has established a functional classification system to group roads based on their intended use. The categories of the classification system include the following: principal arterials, minor arterials, urban collectors, major collectors, minor collectors, and local streets. Each category was created based on how the road addresses both the flow of traffic and access to land.

#### Principal Arterial

Principal arterial streets are intended for high traffic with minimal access to land. These types of roads are meant for long trips and high travel speeds. Examples include I-70, SR-37, and SR-144.

#### Minor Arterial

Minor arterial streets connect with principal arterial streets, allowing a lower level of traffic mobility but more access to land. These types of roads are meant for moderate trips. They provide intra-community connectivity in urban areas and inter-regional connectivity in rural areas. Examples include SR-67 south of Bethany and SR-252 southeast of Martinsville.

#### Urban Collector

Urban collectors both circulate traffic and provide land access in residential, commercial and industrial areas. Unlike arterial streets, urban collectors can enter residential neighborhoods to link travelers with their destination area. Examples include St. Clair Street in Mooresville and South Street in Martinsville.

#### Major Collector

Major collectors are rural roads that serve large towns not served by higher classified roads, and other

important intracounty generators of traffic such as consolidated schools, county parks, and agricultural areas. Examples include SR-44 and Mahalassville Road.

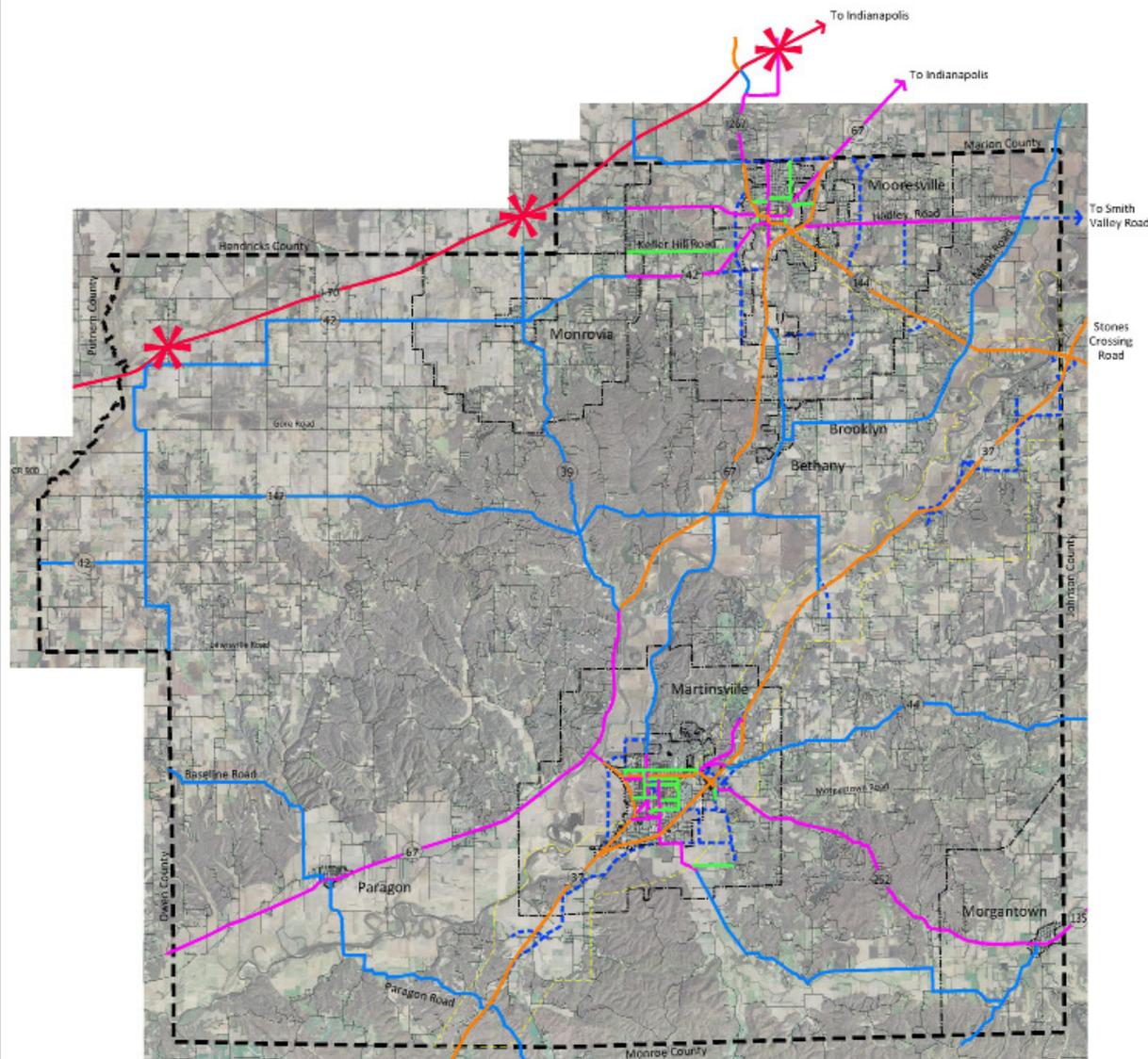
#### Minor Collector

Minor collectors are rural roads, spaced at intervals, that guarantee all smaller developed areas are a short distance from a collector road. Examples include Bunker Hill Road near Mooresville and Old Morgantown Road near Martinsville.

#### Local Street

Local streets offer the lowest level of movement and provide direct access to abutting land. They include roads or streets that are not higher classified as arterials or collectors.

A map of the existing road network within Morgan County is displayed on the next page. The various arterial and collector streets have been designated using color coding.

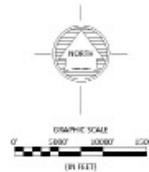


Legend	
---	Corporation Limits
- - - -	Two Mile Fringe
- - - -	SR 37 / 144 Corridor Overlay
- - - -	Future Roads
---	Interstate
---	Major Arterial
---	Minor Arterial
---	Urban Collector
---	Major Collector

See existing Morgan County Transportation Map for a complete map of road classifications.

# Transportation Map

Morgan County Comprehensive Plan



## Analysis of Priority Issues

Through the Steering Committee meetings conducted in Morgan County, the following transportation issues were designated as priorities.

- ◆ Proposed I-69
- ◆ SR-144: East-west connectivity
- ◆ Henderson Ford/Centennial Road/Pennington Road Corridor

### Interstate 69

The impacts of I-69 on Morgan County are analyzed in the Morgan County SR-37 / SR-144 Corridor Plan. The Corridor Plan was written concurrently with this Plan and is included in Section X. The Corridor Plan provides specific recommendations at a smaller scale level. Recommendations are given for several issues, including land use, access management, infrastructure and utilities, the environment, and aesthetics.

### State Road 144: East-West Connectivity

SR-144 links Mooresville to SR-37 and the eastern part of Morgan County. As a principal arterial street, the road receives heavy traffic, which has increased over the past few years. In order to improve the east-west connectivity between the northern part of the County and SR-37, the widening of SR-144 has been proposed. Improvements to other east-west roads, such as Hadley Road, have been discussed as an alternative.

The need for better east-west connectivity has been reemphasized during the summer of 2008. During this time, severe flooding took place in the county that damaged SR-144. The road had to be closed for several weeks for rehabilitation, providing added traffic to alternate streets.

### Option 1: State Road 144 Widening

Since SR-144 is already the major source of east-west connectivity from Mooresville to SR-37, the priority should be to invest in improvements to SR-144 rather than alternate east-west roads. In addition, the proposed route for I-69 is along SR-37 with an interchange proposed at SR-144. The I-69 interchange could further increase traffic on SR-144, and promote future development in the area.

The widening of SR-144 is already under construction between SR-67 and Johnson Road. When completed, this 0.8-mile section will be three lanes, and transition back to two lanes east of Johnson Road. The widening of SR-144 east of Johnson Road to SR-37 has been listed as a proposed future project in the INDOT LRP. The widening of this section is tentatively planned to take place between 2026 and 2030, with the road going from two lanes to four lanes. INDOT also anticipates changing the designation of Johnson County Road 144 to SR-144, which would fill the space in SR-144 between SR-37 and SR-135. INDOT shows the widening of this section of roadway in the LRP between 2026 and 2030.



SR 144

### Option 2: Improvements to Alternate East-West Roads

There are alternative east-west roads, such as Hadley Road and Landersdale Road, which could be improved to provide alternate access to SR-37. However, both

of these roads end at Mann Road, so extending one of them to SR-37 would require a road extension with a bridge over White River. In the case of Hadley Road, the extension over White River could tie into Smith Valley Road in Johnson County for a highly effective route.

Extending either Hadley Road or Landersdale Road would be costly and therefore should be considered a long-term goal in case traffic significantly increases. The County could start planning for the project by preserving a future corridor for either road extension. The preservation of a corridor could include limiting development and obtaining right-of-way.

### **Henderson Ford Road/Centennial Road/ Pennington Road Corridor**

Most of the alternatives for I-69 propose an interchange at Henderson Ford Road, which runs north-south between Watson Road (east of Brooklyn) and Egbert Road (northeast of Martinsville). Near the proposed interchange, the alternatives show a realignment of Henderson Ford Road to connect with Centennial Road. Since Centennial Road goes as far south as Old Morgantown Road, the realignment would provide a key north-south corridor between Watson Road and Old Morgantown Road.

The County could further improve this north-south corridor by conducting two road extensions. The first is extending Henderson Ford Road north to connect with Pennington Road. Pennington Road continues north and ends at its intersection with SR-144. By conducting a second extension of Pennington Road north to Landersdale Road and Hadley Road, the County could establish a connection between I-69 and the residential areas east of Mooresville.

Interstate 69 improvements and the County's two road extensions could develop Henderson Ford Road/Centennial Road/Pennington Road into a significant north-south thoroughfare. Given that several

existing road connections to SR-37 will be eliminated with I-69, the corridor will provide residents with an alternate connection. In order to start establishing the corridor, the County should clearly define the road route and secure right-of-way. At the same time, the County should also promote upkeep of the three existing roads and start creating policies for the corridor. A couple examples of policies include limiting curb-cuts through a drive permit process and requiring traffic projections for developments to determine whether turn lanes are required.

### **Action Steps**

- ◆ Encourage INDOT to accelerate the scheduled widening of SR-144 between Johnson Road and SR-37.
- ◆ Preserve a corridor for an eastern extension of Hadley Road or Landersdale Road.
- ◆ Set alignment and acquire right-of-way for Henderson Ford Road and Pennington Road extensions. Start to develop policies for Henderson Ford Road/Centennial Road/Pennington Road Corridor by conducting a thoroughfare plan.

## **Railroads**

### **Inventory**

Indiana Southern Railroad has a rail line that travels through Morgan County, as it connects Indianapolis to Evansville. The line goes through Mooresville, Brooklyn, Bethany, Martinsville, and Paragon. Indiana Railroad Company also has a line that travels through the southeast corner of the County. The line passes through Morgantown as it connects Indianapolis to Bloomington.

## Assessment

It is recommended that the County maintain the Indiana Southern Railroad and Indiana Railroad lines and/or corridors for rail use today or commuter rail service in the future.

## Action Steps

Preserve the Indiana Southern Railroad and Indiana Railroad lines and/or corridors.

## Multi-Modal System

### Inventory

The existing streets in older downtown areas like Mooresville, Martinsville, Monrovia, Morgantown, Brooklyn and Paragon have sidewalks for pedestrian use. In addition to these areas, there are also sidewalks or bike paths within recent residential developments. Recreational trails for pedestrian or bike uses are available at certain parks, like Pioneer Park in Mooresville. But there are no existing trails or paths that link cities/towns to other places in the County, except Landersdale Trail which is currently under construction.

Landersdale Trail is a 6-mile long bicycle and pedestrian trail that is currently under construction east of Mooresville. The trail will travel along Mann Road and Landersdale Road, linking Mooresville to both Madison Township in Morgan County and Decatur Township in Marion County. Funding for the project was through a grant with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). The project will connect to the existing Indy Parks Bike Route in Indianapolis.

## Assessment

It is recommended that the County encourage cities/towns to conserve, upgrade and extend their pedestrian facilities within the corporate limits. These internal pedestrian systems should connect

neighborhoods, parks, downtown, businesses, etc. The County can then establish external pedestrian systems such as multi-use trails located within the road right-of-way or in separate right-of-way. The external systems should connect the different cities/towns or provide links to key features of the County.

An example of an external pedestrian system is the White River Whetzel Trace Greenway, which was studied concurrently to this Plan. The vision behind the greenway is to create a multi-use corridor that will parallel the White River, providing a unique recreational facility. The planning has focused on the initial segment, which is over 12 miles long. The segment begins at the Morgan-Johnson County line near Waverly and ends at Henderson Ford Road. Long term extensions of the greenway could extend north towards Mooresville along White Lick Creek and south along the White River or Blue Bluff Road towards Martinsville. The greenway is analyzed in the White River Whetzel Trace Greenway Plan section of this document.

## Action Steps

- ◆ Encourage cities/towns to improve pedestrian facilities within the corporate limits.
- ◆ Develop external multi-use trails, such as the White River Whetzel Trace Greenway.



## **Public Transportation**

### **Inventory**

There are currently no public transportation services in Morgan County.

### **Assessment**

The Comprehensive Operational Analysis of the IndyGo Transit System was a planning document created for the Indianapolis MPO. The Plan was completed in June of 2005 and it recommended improvements to serve future public transportation demand. One of the proposed improvements was an express/local route from Plainfield and Mooresville to the Indianapolis International Airport and downtown Indianapolis. The route was part of IndyGo's short range service plan, which plans ahead for a time period of four to nine years. The Plan did not include any other proposed routes in Morgan County.

### **Action Steps**

- ◆ Encourage Mooresville to schedule a public meeting with IndyGo to confirm interest in public transportation. If public interest is shown, then work with Mooresville and IndyGo to incorporate the express/local route that is recommended in the Comprehensive Operational Analysis Plan.
- ◆ Investigate interest in public transportation in other parts of the County.