



PLAN 2020 CITYCORPS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT FOR BROADER ENGAGEMENT WITH INDY GREENWAYS



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OCTOBER 2014



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## COVER PHOTOS:

### TOP ROW (left to right):

Walkers taking part in the Atlanta Beltline's Walk with a Doc Program.  
Photo used with the permission of the Atlanta Beltline, Inc.

Summer camp bike tour of the Monon Trail in Indianapolis. Photo by  
Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

### MIDDLE ROW (left to right)

Aerobics on the Beltline along the Atlanta Beltline. Photo used with the  
permission of the Atlanta Beltline, Inc.

Girl scout on the Fall Creek Greenway. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams  
Design Group.

National Ride to Work Day rest stop along the Monon Trail. Photo by  
Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

### BOTTOM ROW (left to right)

Sculpture along the Central Canal Towpath. Photo by Taylor Siefker  
Williams Design Group.

The Louisville Loop. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.



## PROBLEM AND NEED STATEMENT

Indianapolis recently completed the Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan, a bold initiative that outlined a system of over 250 miles of trail and greenway development throughout the city. The plan examines the physical connections needed to integrate the greenway network with the city’s proposed transit system, bicycle network, redeveloping neighborhoods, and cultural facilities. It outlines development standards and recommendations that promote physical connectivity. It provides the framework—the skeletal structure for a system that is truly integrated into the City.

What the Full Circle Plan doesn’t do, however, is equally explore the social connectivity programs that tie residents to using the greenways. Today, Indy Greenways is part of a passive recreation and transportation network with limited programmatic elements. From the master planning process, we know that its users are primarily walkers, cyclists, and others that use the system solely for passive recreation or transportation.

## NEED STATEMENT

How can the greenways become an asset for a broader population beyond the known user groups? For the elderly? For those with physical or other disabilities? For families and children? What programming options can broaden engagement? And, are there partnerships or revenue streams available as part of this programming?

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan provided data about user demographics for the greenways. This Fellowship used that data to identify potential demographic groups (most notably the elderly, families and children, and those with disabilities) and identify program opportunities and partnerships that can help those demographic users engage in greenway activity. Interviews and research was conducted with agencies or organizations that deal with these particular demographic groups to discuss potential barriers and programming opportunities. The study included soft programming (activities along the greenways), hard programming (physical amenities such as benches) and revenue generating programs (commercial or business activities that raise awareness of the greenways while generating revenue).

Several case studies were also developed that illustrate how programming (or some aspect of programming) has been successfully implemented in other cities. The Atlanta Beltline provided the most in-depth case study for programming aspects, but additional information was researched for the High Line in New York, 21st Century Parks in Louisville, and the Celebration Fall Creek program recently held along the Fall Creek Greenway. These case studies helped to formulate program ideas, potential revenue, and lessons learned for successful implementation.

Programming ideas were generated across the demographics and organized into four categories:

- Health, fitness, and wellbeing
- Cultural enrichment and community engagement
- Education and awareness
- Commercial engagement

By categorizing potential programs into these groups, the programming ideas can be better aligned with their purpose and potential partners. Over fifty different types of programming were identified and each program idea included an evaluation of target group, partnership potential, and revenue potential. Potential partnerships were identified and explored.

The study also identifies three common denominators found on successfully-programmed greenways corridors:

- Organizational structure and charge
- Role of partnerships
- Role of fundraising

Each of these three areas is explored in more detail and the case studies are used to reflect different approaches and different levels of success based upon these three areas.

In the end, this study concludes that there are many programming opportunities available on the greenways, and many potential partners that are looking for opportunities if their mission can be aligned with the programming. It also concludes that efforts to program the greenways must take into consideration an understanding of the three common denominators and how they play into the overall goal of implementing the master plan. The Atlanta Beltline provides a great example of how programming is used as part of their strategy to generate interest which, in turn, attracts greater investment in their infrastructure. Similar programming strategies may prove successful on Indy Greenways.

# PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT FOR BROADER ENGAGEMENT WITH INDY GREENWAYS



Walkers along the Central Canal Towpath, a popular greenway for runners and walkers. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

## INTRODUCTION

The completion of the Full Circle Plan is a huge advancement of the greenways system in Indianapolis. Perhaps one of the greatest things that it does is address the lack of physical access and connectivity and it lays out a plan for over 122 miles of new greenways and trails throughout the entire city. With this plan, the city has put into place a long-term vision for the development of the greenway infrastructure and an implementation plan to lead it through the process.

The plan also tells us some things about its use and who is engaged with the greenway system. From the user preference surveys, we know that the system is used predominantly by well educated individuals (over 50% with at least a bachelor's degree) with an average income in excess of \$50,000 per year. We also know that only 2% of users are older than 65 and only 14% of users are older than 55. These statistics alone illustrate that even though the greenways serve over 3 million users per year, they are being used by very specific user groups---predominantly young, affluent bicyclists and walkers. These statistics also highlight the population groups that aren't engaged with the system.

The system in place (and the system that is planned) focuses on providing passive recreation and transportation, but is limited in its identification of programmatic needs for other residents. For instance:

- What programs, services or needs can attract and provide for elderly users?
- What programs and services are needed for users with physical disabilities?
- What programs and services can be offered to attract disadvantaged populations to the greenways?



The “Walk with a Doc” program is popular on the Atlanta Beltline. Participants are invited to walk with a local healthcare official and discuss fitness strategies and get tips for staying fit and avoiding exercise injuries. Photo courtesy of Atlanta Beltline Inc.

The answers to questions such as these can have a huge impact on the community and can shape issues such as health, aging in place, and quality of life in the neighborhoods through which the greenways pass. These answers also can help determine how “important” the greenways are to a community and ultimately impact the priority given to the development of new segments.

Many cities are developing greenway and trail systems that provide more than just physical infrastructure. Through creative programming, partnerships, and services, these systems are helping provide a social connectivity and culture to their greenways that goes beyond the traditional passive applications. In some cases, these programs may lead to new untapped revenue streams for the city to implement more greenways. In other ways, they provide further services for the greenways already in use. In both cases, examining this side of the greenways planning increases the value of investment made in the system and helps build a larger engagement for the system.

This study seeks to look at Indy Greenways through the “social programming” lens and find ways that the greenways can become more useful and applicable to a larger audience of residents. What

programmatic elements can be developed to enhance resident use and engage a broader spectrum of the population? How can the greenways serve the larger elderly, disabled, or disadvantaged populations? How can the greenways conversation be reframed to address the residents' emotional connectivity to the system? And once this conversation is reframed, are there revenue streams from those programmatic elements that help bring added revenue streams to the design, construction and maintenance of the system?



This study identifies new social programming for the system and potential revenue that could result from that programming. Through the use of case studies, local interviews and best practice examples, this study identifies social programmatic needs, how they can apply to Indy Greenways, and what can be expected in terms of return on the programmatic investment. It examines potential programming ideas for Indianapolis and best-practice administration of the programs.

*"Aerobics along the Beltline" is another popular program on the Atlanta Beltline. Atlanta Beltline Inc. and the Atlanta Beltline Partnership partner with local fitness centers, yoga studios, and other health-related businesses offer fitness programs at different areas along Beltline corridor. Photo courtesy of Atlanta Beltline, Inc.*

This exploration will include:

- Identification of programming for the greenways that will engage local residents
- Identification of potential partners and partnerships to administer, fund, or oversee the programming
- Identification of potential return on the investment in these programs.

In the end, the Full Circle Plan provides the planning framework for the system. This proposal goes further in examining the elements of creating social infrastructure that helps engage community use of the greenways in a more active manner.

## WHY DO WE CARE ABOUT PROGRAMMING THE GREENWAYS?

It's sometimes difficult to frame the importance of the programming side of the greenways. In a growing system, emphasis is often placed on getting the facilities constructed with less emphasis on what happens once the facility is built. Many communities have made a priority of getting trails built with the programming element being something that can be developed later. This seems to be particularly true with large, complex systems such as Indy Greenways.

For many communities, it may be a lack of resources necessary to do both implementation and programming. In many cases, it may be a perceived "lack of demand" for programming. Too often, though, it's simply not understood how powerful a tool programming can be in generating the demand for further development.

In Indianapolis, for example, it was documented during the recent master planning process that only 2% of users were over the age of 65. On the surface, this means that this particular demographic really isn't interested in using the greenways. "That's not necessarily true" said David Sander, Director of Lifelong Living and Community Initiatives at the Central Indiana Council on Aging. He went on to say that his group, and groups such as his, are looking for opportunities similar to what the greenways provide. But for seniors, there are needs that may be different than the needs of other types of users. Most seniors aren't going to be commuting or taking a morning jog so the numbers on their use skew low. But if there are specific activities for seniors along the greenways, things such as organized walks or events geared towards them, their use would likely grow. In his experience, there is a demand for these types of program elements, but the opportunities haven't been there.

Another interesting example has to do with lower income children. While the master planning process didn't specifically collect data for young children using the greenways, there is a connection between children and increasing use on the greenways. According to Ron Gifford, the Executive Director of Jump IN for Healthy Kids, an organization focused on reducing the obesity rate in children in Indianapolis, there is a greater programmatic need for this particular demographic. For many middle class families, daily activities may include participation in many private programs---kids may be part of an organized soccer league, they may attend after-school care at a YMCA, or they may take part in any number of activities sponsored by private entities. These options aren't necessarily available to lower-income families. Their programming comes in the forms of parks and greenways---affordable public facilities. From Jump IN's perspective, not only is there a need for more parks and greenways, but a need for equitable engagement within these facilities. Their research shows that when they are able to get kids engaged in meaningful fitness exercises, the parents also follow.

As communities across the country begin to develop larger, more complex greenway systems, many are recognizing the connection between programming and creating more demand for implementation.

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Programming is being used more and more to generate “buzz,” attract new user groups to the system, foster economic development, and entice millennials to live in areas along the system. All of these things create more desire for programming, greater demand for completing the trail system, generates political support for prioritizing greenways development, and in many cases, can lead to further private and public revenue streams.

Ultimately, if getting the greenways built is a priority for the community, programming has to be a major consideration of the equation. Programming plays into this goal by engaging a larger group of residents, providing opportunities for integrating the greenways into their personal experiences, their neighborhoods, and their communities. By providing meaningful experiences and interactions with the greenways, use goes up. Demand rises. Priority increases. The challenge is finding ways to leverage these things into new revenue streams for greenway development.

## PURPOSE OF THIS FELLOWSHIP

Greenways can be more than just passive recreation or transportation corridors. They can be the heart of a community---a structure for programming that makes the greenways have a greater meaning to a broader spectrum of residents and users. This proposal advances the goals of the 2020 plan by identifying how greenways can become a larger asset for cultural activity, resident interaction, and a defining element of how residents connect with the greenways and why residents love Indianapolis. More specifically, the purpose of this exploration is to:

- Identify programs and services that will help “activate” the greenways and turn them into centers of community activity
- Identify the needs of potential user groups that aren’t currently engaged with the greenways in their communities
- Identify partners and potential partnerships to administer, facilitate, or fund potential programming or implementation.

The Indy Greenways Master Plan outlines a bold and big undertaking for the City. Programming is a key element that helps broaden community engagement and build awareness for the greenways system, ultimately building more support and a greater demand for implementation of the plan. In other cities, we see that support and demand equate to priority and financial leveraging. Ultimately, programming can be a tool that helps bring new urgency and priority to completing the Indy Greenways system.

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# METHODOLOGY FOR THIS STUDY

The Plan 2020 CityCorps Fellowship program provided a means for a quick, intense exploration of this issue. By no means can this be a complete set of research, nor does it provide every answer and justification needed for a “complete exploration.” There was a methodology established used to generate the ideas presented herein:

- **Service Providers/Potential Partners.** Background information was gathered on many of the demographic areas outside of the users documented in the greenways master planning process---notably the elderly, children and families, and residents with different levels of disabilities. This work included online research as well as conducting interviews with many organizations that provide services to these demographics and could be potential partners. These organizations include the Central Indiana Council on Aging, the University of Indianapolis Center for Aging and Community, Jump IN for Healthy Kids, the Mayors Advisory Council on Disabilities, and Indy Parks Program Development. An interview was also conducted with Destination Fall Creek, one of the local neighborhood development groups which has facilitated programming recently on the greenways.
- **Case Study Programs.** The second tier was taking a look at how some other communities have dealt with the programming of their trail systems and establishing case studies for their results. For some of these case studies, the author relied on past experience with similar organizations. For some, online research provided the information necessary. For the study’s major case study, the Atlanta Beltline, it included meetings with the leadership of both Atlanta Beltline, Inc.. (the implementing agency) and the Atlanta Beltline Partnership (the programming, funding, and fundraising agency), a tour of the facility, and follow up conference calls specific to programming. For purposes of this study, the Atlanta Beltline provides the overall case study, but several case studies are used to demonstrate or highlight specific issues regarding programming, implementation structures, or potential partners. The case studies used in this study include the Atlanta Beltline, the High Line in New York, The Parklands at Floyds Fork in Louisville, Kentucky, and Destination Fall Creek in Indianapolis.
- **Author Experience.** The final note that needs to be made regarding this study is that the author was one of the primary authors of the recently adopted Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan, so the full resources of that plan and its background materials help to frame the understanding of Indianapolis’ system and challenges. It’s also important to note that the author, with over twenty years of experience in greenways planning and development, brought experience and information to the project from his past professional work in cities such as Louisville, Kentucky and southern Indiana.

Combined, these tools were used to examine programming issues and opportunities for Indy Greenways.

# WHAT IS PROGRAMMING?

One of the first things needed is an understanding of what is meant by the term “programming.” Programming is a difficult word to understand with different meanings to different individuals in different contexts. For purposes of this specific discussion, programming is discussed in terms of soft programming, hard programming, and revenue generating programs. Soft Programming

## SOFT PROGRAMMING



*Soft programming* refers to events, functions, or other planned activities for the public that occur along the greenways or in spaces adjacent to the greenways. Examples of these types of programs might include an organized 5K or 10K walk, a bike tour, nature walks, or other similar events. These events may be free or require a fee.

## HARD PROGRAMMING



*Hard programming* refers to physical elements, enhancements, or infrastructure needed to accommodate particular user groups or activities along the greenways. These types of program elements typically include some level of infrastructure or some physical amenity that allows certain uses (or users) on the greenways. For example, the number of benches or the number of restrooms along a greenway may determine whether certain user groups will use the trail. Research shows that for elderly users, benches are required every half mile. Without benches, elderly users may not be able to use the greenways because there are limited opportunities to rest. Similarly, families may be reluctant to use greenway segments that don't have restrooms facilities, or disabled users may feel reluctant to use a trail not equipped with audio warning devices which aid their navigation.

## REVENUE GENERATING PROGRAMS



*Revenue generating programs* refer to business functions intended to generate revenue but not necessarily provide an organized activity or function along the greenways. These types of programs may include retail sales, fundraising or other similar activities that raise money for the greenways.

All three programming types are intertwined and will be discussed.

## WHAT PROGRAMS CURRENTLY EXIST ON INDY GREENWAYS?

Indy Parks has a robust programming arm that provides all kinds of different services at many of its park facilities---ranging from day camps, to dance lessons, to nature hikes. To date, the city does not have a formal programming charge for the existing greenways. Indy Parks works with a variety of different groups on specific programs along the greenways, most notably the Lilly Day of Service, Reconnecting to Our Waterways, or adopting a section of the greenway for maintenance. But social



The recent “Celebration Fall Creek” organized by Destination Fall Creek and their partners, created an activity and information fair along the entire stretch of the Fall Creek Greenway in Indianapolis. Local businesses and neighborhood organizations set up along the greenway to share information and raise awareness of their neighborhoods and businesses. This station, set up by the Binford Farmers Market, provided food samples from many of the vendors of the market. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

programming is limited. There isn’t a city-organized program of activities on the greenways.

What we have seen most recently is that social programs along the greenways are generated more by local groups that will use the greenways as the structure for their program.

### CELEBRATION FALL CREEK

In September of 2014, a program called “Celebration Fall Creek” was conducted along the entire stretch of Fall Creek Greenway in Indianapolis. The event was organized by Destination Fall Creek (DFC), “a task force that emerged from the Mid-North Quality of Life Plan. (It is a) group of residents from the six surrounding neighborhoods that, with the Mid-North Quality of Life Plan, envision Fall Creek as a place to come to, a destination for (their) community.”<sup>1</sup> Their mission is “Transforming Fall Creek into a recreational, residential and commercial destination with access to art, nature and beauty for every citizen, every day.”

While focused along the entire corridor, local agencies and businesses were invited to set up tents and exhibits along the greenway in their sections of town that shared information about their organizations and programs.

1 Destination Fall Creek Website: <http://dfcindy.org>

On the southern end, attendees could learn about the Ivy Tech Culinary School or take part in the Mapleton-Fall Creek Delaware Street Gateway Party. Participants could ride north to the Millersville neighborhood and learn more about the Fall Creek Watershed Partnership, or ride even further north to Skiles Test and the BRAG (Binford Redevelopment and Growth) area to learn more about BRAG and sample fare from the Binford Farmers Market. The one-day program was an activity fair that encouraged residents to explore the Fall Creek Greenway while learning more about the neighborhoods through which it passed and the organizations working to impact those areas. According to organizer Doug Day, the intent of the



day-long program was to celebrate all of the unique areas along the Fall Creek corridor.

But the program didn't achieve the success that organizers envisioned. According to Day, the event didn't garner any media attention which limited its promotion to a greater audience. Limited funding was also an issue. Both of these things resulted in numbers less than they had hoped. When asked if there was any other factor that he felt limited the success of the program, he noted overall organization. He feels the program would have had greater success if there had been an overall organizer for the event. He contends that promotion, dollars, and leadership are needed for any programming to be successful.<sup>2</sup>

Successful or not, Celebration Fall Creek was a grass-roots programming effort, organized at the neighborhood level and fulfilled through community partnerships. While its purpose was to generate awareness of efforts being undertaken by partners and organizations along the corridor, it generated awareness for the greenway in the process.

### OTHER GRASS-ROOTS PROGRAMS

Another example of the types of grass-roots programming currently being

Indiana Landmarks sponsors and facilitates special tours of some of Indianapolis' historic corridors, such as this bike tour of the historic Kessler Park and Boulevard system in Indianapolis. These types of events help to highlight the significant sites and landscapes along the greenway system. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

2 Interview with Doug Day, Destination Fall Creek. October 28, 2014.

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*Like any environment, the greenways can be a frightening experience, especially for the elderly and those with disabilities. Not understanding how the system works, where it connects, or how to access it can be intimidating. Even the rush of users, speeding bikes, and dogs on leashes--all these things can play into the perception that the greenways aren't safe for the elderly or disabled.*

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done was reported in the October 23, 2014 Indianapolis Star. The Indy Dads Group is a local group of men that have formed a network to provide opportunities to bring together dads with different experiences and backgrounds. It was formed after some of its members met with a similar group at a conference in New York. According to the Star story, "The group allows dads to form a network of other parents they can contact when they need help, an ear to listen, or a play date. Mostly though, it's a social outlet for dads, with or without kids." One of their members explained in the story that "in a culture that often depicts a 'dead-beat dad,' these guys are striving to be the opposite." He goes on to explain that "our philosophy is simple. Better parents make better communities and dads are part of this."<sup>3</sup> Their story was highlighted because of their recent walk on the Monon Trail. It highlighted how the group used the Monon as one of their programmed activities. The article provides another example of how the greenways can provide the structure for all different types of groups.

There are other examples as well. The Indy Runners group uses the Central Canal Towpath every week for training. "The Pedal and Park" program, funded by the Indianapolis MPO, uses the Boulevard Station site at 38th and the Monon for their bicycle parking and education during the Indiana State Fair each August. The Indianapolis Landmarks Foundation offers periodic tours of portions of the Fall Creek Greenway as part of the Kessler bicycle tours.

But to date, no organized programming is being conducted on the greenways and no structure exists for generating revenue from this type of programming. Indy Parks has begun to explore opportunities based upon some of the recommendations that came out of the Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan, but those efforts are in their infancy.<sup>4</sup>

## PROGRAMMING NEEDS FOR THE ELDERLY, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN, AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

As previously noted, there was a user survey conducted as part of the recent Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan planning process to assess user demographic and behaviors on Indy Greenways. One of the interesting things discovered in the results of that survey was that only 2% of users were older than 65 and only 14% of users are older than 55. The average user was between the ages of 25-45 and most used the greenways for bicycling and walking. Only 35% of users indicated that they used the greenways with their families, and during subsequent meetings with the Mayor's Advisory Council on Disabilities, council members expressed reservations about their ability to use the current greenway system. While Indianapolis has developed a reputation for having a significant greenway system, this data illustrates that there are very specific demographics using the greenways.

So, what then are the needs that aren't being served to those other user groups?

David Sander, Director of Lifelong Living and Community Initiatives at the Central Indiana Council on Aging, feels that there is an intimidation factor at

3 "Babies on Board for Walk with Local Dads," Indianapolis Star. October 23, 2014.

4 Interview with Joenne Pope, School Outreach & Daycamp Manager, Indy Parks. October 20, 2014.

play here. He explained that the greenways, like any environment that seniors aren't familiar with, can be a frightening experience. Not understanding how the system works, where it connects, or how they can access it can be intimidating. Even the rush of users, speeding bikes, and dogs on leashes---all these things can play into the perception that the greenways aren't safe for the elderly.

Sharon Baggett, PhD, from the University of Indianapolis Center for Aging and Community, agreed. The elderly may avoid the greenways altogether if there is fear and intimidation. In her experience, the fear of the unknown is often limiting. Trail amenities such as reliable mapping, wayfinding signage, distance markers, and other visual cues can help lend to a better understanding of the greenway.

Interestingly, the same types of sentiments were expressed by the members of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Disabilities during that early meeting. For those with limited mobility, limited sight, or limited hearing, the first experience on a greenway can be frightening. It can also be dangerous as they share the facility with those that may not understand their disability.

In both scenarios, awareness and education are key. One of the most effective ways to promote increased use of the greenways is to provide an orientation to how the greenway works, what it is used for, how to use the facility, and what should be expected along the trails. Basic education is key.

Another way to address the awareness and education issues, according to Sander, is to give seniors a reason to be on the greenways. Programs such as health fairs, nature walks, cultural attractions, or other programs that get them out using the trails, help to reduce their intimidation. And, he noted, it helps when seniors see other seniors using the trail.

Baggett agreed and reinforced that it's important to demonstrate that the greenways are "age and ability friendly." She noted that there need to be experiences that are fun for seniors along the greenways.

Ron Gifford, Executive Director of Jump IN for Healthy Kids, thinks the same thing applies for children and families. Currently, Indy Greenways are mostly used for passive recreation--walking or riding bikes. He explained that there needs to be other things to make kids want to come out and be active on the greenways---"riding the trail with Mom and Dad is only cool for so long." He suggested that the greenways need outdoor discovery areas, adjacent playgrounds, and maybe even fitness stations for users (something that Baggett also suggested for seniors). The idea, he stated, is for there to be reasons for kids and families to be active along the greenways.

In all four of these meetings and interviews, it was reiterated that it is especially important to have the appropriate hard programming elements in place for these groups. Without benches, water fountains, restrooms, signage, or other assistance devices, all of these groups face some sort of limitation or barrier to using the greenways.

While each user group mentioned here---the elderly, children and families, and those with disabilities---likely have broad-reaching needs for their use of the greenways, there are some basic programming needs that these groups have in common:

- The need for education and awareness programs
- The need for programs that promote activity
- The desire to create reasons to be on the greenways, whether it be for health and fitness or for some educational or cultural experience
- The need for hard program amenities along the greenways

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*Indy Greenways are mostly used for passive recreation---walking or riding bikes. There needs to be other things to make kids want to come out and be active on the greenways---"riding the trail with Mom and Dad is only cool for so long."*

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## CASE STUDY: THE ATLANTA BELTLINE

The Atlanta Beltline is a 22-mile trail, transit, and redevelopment project being undertaken by the city of Atlanta. Initiated in 2006, the project is redeveloping a former railroad corridor around downtown Atlanta. “It’s the most comprehensive transportation and redevelopment effort ever undertaken by the City of Atlanta and among the largest, most wide-ranging urban redevelopment program currently underway in the United States.” The project includes development of the a shared-use path and transit line in the former rail corridor as well as park and housing redevelopment within



One of the many works of art along the Atlanta Beltline.  
Photo by Taylor Siefker  
Williams Design Group.

a designated half mile tax allocation district on each side of the corridor.<sup>1</sup> The overall program is a 25-year plan and Atlanta Beltline Inc. has been working to acquire the corridor and its adjacent properties, complete the environmental work for the route, complete the planning on its segments, and oversee construction on the initial projects designated in the corridor. To date, only a portion of the shared-use path has been constructed, but a significant amount of redevelopment, especially housing, has been occurring in response to the planned Beltline. Since 2006, there has been over \$400 million in public and private investment in the project and that investment has leveraged over \$1.5 billion in redevelopment along the corridor.<sup>2</sup>

Planning and implementation of the Beltline is overseen by Atlanta Beltline, Inc.(ABI). Their staff of forty oversees all implementation from environmental work, planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the constructed portions of the trail. A separate non-profit, the Atlanta Beltline Partnership (ABP), oversees fundraising and programming for the Beltline. While the city of Atlanta will ultimately take ownership of the Beltline, its development is totally under the control of ABI for two years after construction is complete.

1 Atlanta Beltline Inc. 2013 Annual Report.

2 Atlanta Beltline Inc. and Atlanta Beltline Partnership interview. September 30, 2014

Obviously, with a program the size of the Beltline, the tax allocation district and major private donors are the primary sources of money for the project. But just because programming doesn't generate the large sums of money needed for the project, Beltline planners will tell you it still has a significant impact on their work implementing the project. If you live in Atlanta or follow the Beltline on the web or social media, you will see a constant stream of programs offered on the Beltline and that is strategic. Significant resources have been invested to engraining the Beltline into the everyday lives of residents in Atlanta. From the onset, ABI has recognized that to get donors to contribute, they have to understand the vision for the Beltline. Potential donors must also be able to see that residents use, demand, and depend on



the system. As that support builds, so too does the political support expand. ABI and ABP has worked diligently to build the social infrastructure of the Beltline in order to educate and bring awareness to the project.

How do they do it? ABI and ABP promote use of the Beltline for social programming. They have built partnerships with key civic groups in Atlanta that are contributing resources to the Beltline. They have formed partnerships and study groups such as the Health Steering Committee to help determine how the Beltline can play a role in bettering the health of Atlanta residents. And they have encouraged use of the Beltline for neighborhood-level programming. They continue to educate through a speakers bureau, give tours of the uncompleted Beltline, and conduct programming on future segments of the line---segments not yet built.

If the financial figures in leveraged resources isn't telling enough of the success of the Atlanta Beltline, consider this. With only 77% of the Beltline corridor under its control, ABI is finding it increasingly difficult to secure and acquire the remaining properties. Speculative buying is driving up the prices on the adjacent properties in advance of implementation, indicative of the confidence that Atlanta residents have in the ultimate successful implementation of the Beltline and the significant social and economic impact its implementation will have.

New housing development along the Atlanta Beltline. According to Atlanta Beltline Inc., approximately \$400 million has been invested in private and public dollars, and that money has leveraged over \$1.5 billion in redevelopment along the corridor. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.





Participants in a Fall Creek Bike tour learn more about the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan and hear speakers talk about the historic Taggart Memorial in Riverside Park. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

## PROGRAMMING ELEMENTS

Although the problem and need statement calls out the elderly, children and families, and the disabled as specific user groups to engage, the most successful programming must be broader and reach across the demographics, including those groups already engaged in the greenways. If we examine programming on an issue basis, we can identify opportunities for the specific groups identified in this study but do so in an inclusive way. By identifying issues as opposed to demographics, we can also begin to see how programming can align with the missions of potential partners and the goals of the study.

Five different areas/issues of programming have been identified for further exploration. Example program ideas, potential partners, and potential for revenue generation is explored for each of the target demographics within the overall programming areas.



# HEALTH, FITNESS & WELLBEING



The areas of health, fitness, and wellbeing offer one of the most comprehensive types of programming that can be offered on the greenways. There is already considerable interest in this area and the greenways provide opportunities for residents to bike, jog, and walk contributing to residents' fitness and health. Organized programming can expand both the comprehensive nature of health and fitness as well the offerings to a larger demographic. Health, fitness and wellbeing programs also align with numerous potential partner organizations.



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The health statistics for Indiana and Indianapolis are well documented: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity rates have skyrocketed, leading to increased development of longer-term illnesses and disease. Indiana has the eighth highest percentage of obese children---one in three Hoosier kids are obese, a rate that has nearly doubled in the last thirty years.<sup>1</sup> Researchers have linked inactivity and sedentary lifestyles to obesity and the onset of many diseases<sup>2</sup>: Inactivity doesn't just affect children. It plays a role in retaining health and vitality as people age, and is particularly important with those who have physical disabilities. Greenways provide the infrastructure to support efforts in leading active lifestyles. Health, fitness and well being programs align well with numerous potential partner organizations that deal with public health.

Indianapolis' greenways provide opportunities for passive recreation and fitness activities. Here, members of the Indy Runners club train on a stretch of the Central Canal Towpath. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

1 Jump IN for Healthy Kids Website: Facts and Stats, <http://jumpinforhealthykids.org/Facts-Stats/>.

2 Frank, Lawrence D., Peter O. Engelke, and Thomas L. Schmid. Health and Community Design- The Impact of the Built Environment on Physical Activity, Island Press, 2003.



## HEALTH, FITNESS & WELLBEING PROGRAMMING

Below is a sampling of program opportunities along the greenways. Some of these are based upon successful programming on other trail systems while others were identified during the potential partner interviews for this study. This is just a sampling of potential opportunities:

- **Walk with a Doc-** Program that facilitates a prescribed walk with a health care professional. During this program, participants can ask questions, discuss techniques, or work through other physical hindrances to walking or active living. In many cases, this program has proved extremely popular for the elderly, but its application is not limited. While these programs don't necessarily generate revenue, there are strong partnership opportunities associated with this program.

**Target Group(s):** Elderly, those with disabilities, families and children

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Health Fairs-** Programs such as health fairs or similar activities that provide information or services have been successful in other communities, especially with the elderly and with families. The greenways provide areas where these types of activities can occur in different parts of the system. While these programs don't necessarily generate revenue, there are strong partnership opportunities associated with this program.

**Target Group(s):** Elderly, those with disabilities, families and children

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Fitness runs/walks-** The greenways provide an opportunity for organized fitness events such as 5K or 10K walks and runs. These types of events do offer a revenue potential and there are many potential partnering organizations. While these types of events generally attract specific groups, the elderly or young children can be accommodated through age-specific categories.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Moderate

- **Group walks-** The greenways provide an opportunity for specific walking events and groups. These types of events might encourage a broader participation and could be done seasonally to generate outdoor programming throughout the year. Revenue potential for this type of group is low, but partnership opportunities are high.

**Target Group(s):** Elderly, but could apply to family and children as well.

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low



## HEALTH, FITNESS & WELLBEING PROGRAMMING (cont.)

- **Yoga/Aerobics/Fitness on the Greenways-** Develop programs with local fitness centers or fitness providers to develop fitness classes/events along portions of the greenways.

**Target Group(s):** Adults, including the elderly. Special programs could be tailored towards those with certain disabilities.

**Partnership Potential:** Moderate

**Revenue Potential:** Moderate

- **Bike to Work Day Activities-** Work with local advocacy groups to promote special events on the greenways.

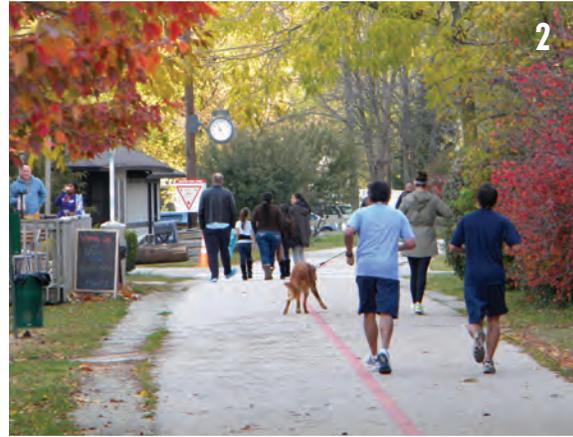
**Target Group(s)** Cyclists

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low



## HEALTH, FITNESS & WELLBEING PROGRAMMING



Indy Greenways provides many opportunities for health, fitness and wellbeing programs. 1) The greenways provide commuter routes and training for bicycle events. 2) Joggers, walkers, and canines use the Monon Trail in Broad Ripple, a popular area for passive recreation. 3) The Atlanta Beltline's Walk with a Doc program attracts residents of all ages and abilities. 4) The trails provide scenic bicycle facilities for all ages. Image 3 courtesy of Atlanta Beltline, Inc. All other photos by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.



# CULTURAL ENRICHMENT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Cultural enrichment and community engagement programs are activities which promote the unique neighborhoods and environs along the greenways and engage emerging local neighborhoods as stewards of the greenways. These programs provide promotion of the greenways, their connections to local neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and engage local residents in the protection and maintenance of the greenways.



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Often, it is neighborhoods and special user groups that make the most significant impact on facilities like Indy Greenways. Communities use the greenways to promote their neighborhoods and the greenways often become one of the strongest assets for attracting people to do business or live in a particular neighborhood. Neighborhood connections also foster greater sense of ownership in the system and builds stewards for the system's care. The growing emergence of neighborhoods in Indianapolis and their documented desire for greenway connections make these types of programs especially important.<sup>1</sup>

The Indiana School for the Deaf trailhead along the Monon Trail incorporates American Sign Language into a crafted art piece for the trailhead. The trailhead and the sculptural piece provides an interesting place to rest for users and provides an opportunity for users to learn more about the adjacent school for the deaf campus and programs. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

<sup>1</sup> Indy Greenways Full Circle Master Plan, Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation/Department of Public Works, Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group. 2014.



## CULTURAL ENRICHMENT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Below is a sampling of educational program opportunities along the greenways. Some of these are based upon successful programming on other trail systems while others were identified during the potential partner interviews for this study. This is just a sampling of potential opportunities:

- **Neighborhood Narratives-** Encourage local neighborhoods along the greenways to develop narrative histories of their neighborhoods and guides to commercial areas within their neighborhoods. Work with Indy Parks on developing promotions and wayfinding that gets greenways users to interact in the local neighborhoods.

**Target Group(s):** Neighborhood groups

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Festivals and Celebrations-** Encourage neighborhoods along the greenways to include the trail in their local celebrations and festivals. Find additional ways in which the greenways can help promote unique festivals.

**Target Group(s):** Neighborhood groups, all ages

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Moderate

- **Art on the Greenways-** Develop a program that incorporates unique art into the greenway system and allow the greenways to become a long canvas for showcasing unique pieces of artwork.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Art/Painting/Photography Courses on the Greenways-** Using potential partnerships with local universities and schools, develop a series of art classes that use the greenways as a backdrop for creative art education.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** Moderate

**Revenue Potential:** Moderate

- **Individual Trail Celebrations-** Develop individual trail celebrations along the individual greenways, similar to the recent Celebrate Fall Creek program that highlights the unique history and setting of the greenways. Develop programs for these celebrations that bring people out to the trails.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low



## CULTURAL ENRICHMENT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (cont.)

- **Volunteer Corps-** Develop groups of volunteers dedicated to the greenways and develop maintenance and care protocols to guide them in providing basic maintenance services on the greenways. Expand the corps by creating a volunteer counsel and facilitating periodic meetings for groups from different trail segments to discuss issues they are seeing on their trails and the best way to mitigate the challenges.

**Target Group(s):** Neighborhood groups, all ages

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Adopt-a-Greenway Program-** Develop an adopt-a-greenways program that engages and encourages local neighborhoods to interact with the trail. Program could include litter removal and neighborhood patrols.

**Target Group(s):** Neighborhood groups, local businesses

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Unique Environs-** Find ways to highlight the unique areas along the greenways. For example, there are designated prairie areas---how are these maintained, what happens during prescribed burns, and what are their purpose? Find ways to utilize staff and local resources in telling these unique stories.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** Low

**Revenue Potential:** Low



## CULTURAL ENRICHMENT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (cont.)



Cultural enrichment and community engagement programs can take on many forms in creating a more meaningful, cultural experience along the greenways. Examples of possibilities include 1) tours of unique areas and natural areas along the greenways such as the Central Canal Towpath, 2) community celebrations such as the “Discover the Loop” events in Louisville, 3) art works placed along the greenways like this sculpture along the Atlanta Beltline, or 4) other unique community events and activities along the trail. Like the recent “Celebration Fall Creek” event. Photos by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.



# EDUCATION & AWARENESS



Educational programming is perhaps one of the easiest types of programming to facilitate. While many of these types of programs aren't viewed as significant revenue generators for the community, they can dramatically shape the perception people have of the greenway system. These types of programs help to elevate awareness of the greenways and create personal investment and attachments from many different user groups.



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Education and awareness are two of the leading issues in building a successful and well-used greenway system. Programs that educate and promote awareness help to bring understanding and appreciation to the greenways. Often, it is these types of programs that help foster life-long passion and reverence for these types of facilities. Education and awareness programs also help instill a sense of importance and purpose.

Education and awareness programs can build user groups with a strong sense of ownership of the greenways. Awareness also builds life-long advocates and increases potential giving to the greenways or its programs. During the recent greenways master planning process, a Greenways Day at the Market was held during lunchtime at City Market to make people aware of the project and to provide information on its recommendations. Programs such as these are a good model for future awareness-focused programs. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.



## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Below is a sampling of educational program opportunities along the greenways. Some of these are based upon successful programming on other trail systems while others were identified during the potential partner interviews for this study. This is just a sampling of potential opportunities:

- **Greenways Passport Book-** How many greenways have you visited? Geared towards children and based upon the National Park Systems Passport to America's Park program, this program would provide school-aged children with greenway "passport books" and would encourage them to visit all the different greenways within the city and get their passbooks stamped at each greenway.

**Target Group(s):** Children and families

**Partnership Potential:** Low

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Girl Scout/Boy Scout Greenways Badge-** Working with the Girl and Boy Scout programs, the city could develop a specific greenways badge that helps to educate scouts about the history, purpose, and function of greenways.

**Target Group(s):** Children and families

**Partnership Potential:** Low

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Organized Tours of the Greenways-** Working with partner organizations, provide unique tours to the different greenways to discuss their history and how they became part of the greenways system. There is a vast history to many of the greenways and these tours could provide awareness opportunities for all ages. These could be done in the form of bike tours, walking tours, or a combination of both. Consideration could also be given to using shuttle stops to make the program applicable to the elderly and those with disabilities.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** Moderate

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Self-guided Tours-** A self-guided tour of the greenways could be developed and distributed by the city. These tours could be printed, online, or mobile applications that help users navigate the greenways and discover unique areas along their routes. Encourage local neighborhoods along the greenways to develop "neighborhood narratives" that explain the neighborhoods along the routes.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** Low

**Revenue Potential:** Low



## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS (cont.)

- **Greenways 101-** For those who don't use the greenways every day, getting out onto the busy trails can be a bit intimidating. This is especially true for the elderly and disabled. This program would create a series of instructional courses on how to use the greenways, its rules, and what to expect when out on the trails. In addition to general orientation, specific sessions could be geared to elderly users or those with different types of disabilities. The goal is to de-mystify the greenways for new users.

**Target Group(s):** All ages, with specific focus programs for the elderly and those with disabilities

**Partnership Potential:** Moderate

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Greenways Scavenger Hunt/Geo-Caching-** There are many unique areas and interesting finds along the greenways. This program would encourage children and families to explore the greenways to find specific areas or objects along their routes.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** Low

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Historic/Cultural Tours-** Given the vastness of the greenways, a series of tours could be developed that helps explain the greenways, their history, and their unique settings in Indianapolis.

**Target Group(s):** All ages, but likely targeted to adults and seniors

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Moderate

- **Specialty Walks-** There are numerous unique specialty walks that could be applied to the greenways. Specific programs such as nature walks, seasonal walks, bird watching/wildlife walks, or visits to unique areas along the greenways could be included in such programming. These types of programs can be done in conjunction with local partners or even be conducted by Indy parks staff.

**Target Group(s):** All ages, but could be particularly attractive to seniors or those with disabilities

**Partnership Potential:** Moderate

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Lecture Series/Speaker Bureau-** Develop a speaker series that explores greenways or greenway-related issues. These types of events, while not likely to actually be on a greenway, provide another level of awareness and education.

**Target Group(s):** All ages, but likely more appealing to adults

**Partnership Potential:** Moderate

**Revenue Potential:** Low



## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS (cont.)

- **Enrichment and Interpretive Stations along the Trail-** Further develop the interpretive storytelling component of the greenways by developing and installing additional interpretive signage along the trails.

**Target Group(s):** All ages, with design attention paid to accommodating those with disabilities

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Walk and Talks-** Similar to the Walk with a Doc program, this program could invite different types of professionals to take a walk on one of the greenways and discuss their professions.

**Target Group(s):** All ages, but likely appealing to children and families.

**Partnership Potential:** High

**Revenue Potential:** Low

- **Tour of the Future System-** Develop a bus tour of what the Indianapolis greenways will be like when construction is complete. Tour the neighborhoods and destinations along the routes and see what is in store.

**Target Group(s):** All ages

**Partnership Potential:** Low

**Revenue Potential:** Low



## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS (cont.)



Potential education and awareness programs for Indy Greenways include 1) tours and lectures along the greenways or about unique greenway features, 2) bike tours of the greenways, including the use of the greenways in summer day camp or after school care programs, 3) partnerships with the Boys and Girl Scouts on the creation of a greenways badge program, tour maps, passport book, scavenger hunts, or other discovery programs, and 4) the further incorporation of interpretive and educational signage along the greenways. Photos by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.





# COMMERCIAL ENGAGEMENT

A final type of programming that needs to be considered is commercial engagement programs---specifically programs and activities which promote the greenways and raise awareness (and funds) through revenue generation. These programs could include retail sales of greenways-related items, specific fundraising programs or other similar activities.



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Commercial engagement helps to bring further awareness to the greenway system and helps to reinforce the brand. It also provides a potential revenue stream across all age groups and demographics.

We usually don't associate these types of programs with public-owned property or public agencies. Most often, city agencies aren't equipped to provide the types of services or overhead support needed to facilitate such programs. There is also political care to be taken given that the base of the endeavor is a publicly owned facility. But these types of programs are proving to be successful in raising awareness, creating identity, and providing some level of revenue generation.

Commercial and financial engagement is essential in any programming effort to help generate revenue. These programs can take many forms---philanthropic giving, memberships, retail sales, or fundraisers. While the level of revenue may vary, these programs help to build the brand and raise awareness of the greenways system, often leading to greater financial giving. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.



## COMMERCIAL ENGAGEMENT

### Retail Sales

In recent years, we have started to see a generational shift that perhaps is most evident in downtown Indianapolis. As baby boomers age and the millennials come of age, there is a push for downtown living and being part of a vibrant, active community. With that has come a push for all things local, whether in restaurants, apparel, or other soft goods. Many communities have begun to try to capitalize on the movement. The Atlanta Beltline, for instance, operates an on-line store that sells t-shirts, maps, and other Beltline-related goods. Their program is in its infancy, but-to-date sales have reached \$5,000.<sup>1</sup> More importantly, though, is that those sales result in materials that promote and reinforce the identity of the Beltline. The High Line, as well, has a retail store that sells everything from t-shirts to specific art pieces from local artists.

There are indications in Indianapolis that this could be successful. The People for Urban Progress (PUP) has had success selling repurposed materials and memorabilia. In addition, many local clothiers have begun producing “local-pride tees” apparel with variations of the Indianapolis name, flag, catch phrases or the like.

Indy Greenways is well positioned to be able to generate this type of retail revenue given the popularity of the greenways, the fact that they own the trademark to the greenway logos, and the growing bicycle culture in Indianapolis. Retail sales could include shirts, water bottles, hats, maps, note cards, books, or other greenway-related goods.

### Membership Programs/Cards

Membership and rewards programs are increasingly becoming popular in all facets in life. Throughout the recent Indy Greenways Master Plan planning process, many residents expressed an interest in these types of volunteer programs to benefit the greenway system. Typically, these types of cards are purchased by residents and in return, the resident receives discounts on local goods and services from bike shops, restaurants, or other retailers throughout the city. They provide an opportunity to fundraise at the individual resident level.

The Atlanta Beltline offers a membership program with nine different membership types. Costs range from \$35 (basic membership) to \$10,000 (Vision Champions) and the number of benefits depends on the level of giving. At its basic level, members are recognized in the Beltline’s Annual Report, receive discounts at restaurants and retailers throughout Atlanta, have special access to member-only events, and receive the Beltline’s quarterly newsletter. ABP also uses the program as a means of promoting other types of programming on the Beltline. To date in 2014, the Beltline has over 700 members and has raised nearly \$110,000 through its membership program.<sup>2</sup>

### Donor Recognition

On several greenway systems, donors are encouraged to purchase a bench or similar amenity along the greenway. This a great way to raise funds, especially for hard programming needs. Indianapolis currently has a limited program, but many other communities use this method for enhancing capital improvements on their trail system.

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1 Atlanta Beltline Inc. and Atlanta Beltline Partnership interview. September 30, 2014.

2 Atlanta Beltline Inc. and Atlanta Beltline Partnership interview. September 30, 2014.

## COMMERCIAL ENGAGEMENT (cont.)



### Special Fundraisers

A final area worth consideration is special fundraisers. As the new greenways are developed, there are opportunities to build upon the history of many of the new corridors. In 2014, the Atlanta Beltline undertook a special fundraiser in which they cut and sold sections of the existing rail in one of the portions of the trail that was under development. It was promoted as “owning a part of Beltline history” and the program generated nearly \$73,000 in revenue<sup>3</sup> Similar programs have been developed across the country. In High Point, North Carolina, residents could purchase a “square foot” of greenway, complete with the deed for the portion their contribution constructed. The Cardinal Greenway in east-central Indiana has a program to purchase bricks around their historic depot along the trail<sup>4</sup>

There are opportunities for similar types of promotions throughout the planned greenways in Indianapolis.

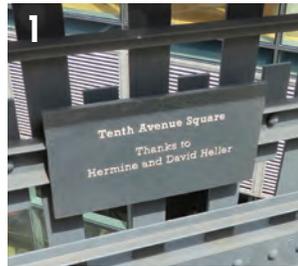
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3 Little, Charles E. Greenways for America, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

4 Cardinal Greenway Website: <http://cardinalgreenways.org/volunteer-donate/other-ways-to-give/>



## COMMERCIAL ENGAGEMENT



Commercial engagement can take many forms. 1) Philanthropic giving programs can help implement parts of the greenways. They often include smaller donations such as benches, or larger facilities, such as this plaza along the High Line in New York. 2) Commercial partnerships can be formed that bring an influx of spending to a program such as partnering with vendors at special events. 3) Retail sales can be a part of the program strategy, especially since Indy Greenways owns the trademarks on their logos. This image is the from the Indy Bike Hub, one of the outlets for the popular I Bike Indy shirts. 4) Partnerships can be fostered with organizations to provide facilities along the greenways, similar to the Pacer Bikeshare along the Cultural Trail. All photos by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.



## CASE STUDY: THE HIGH LINE

The High Line in New York is arguably one of the highest profile greenway projects in America. It doesn't look like what we think of when we hear the word "greenway" in Indianapolis, but by its very definition---a linear park---it is very much a new urban greenway. You also would not sense its greenway qualities by looking at its programming. What you see are programs such as nature walks, stargazing on the High Line, holiday concerts, mid-day teas, neighborhood tours and numerous community



The High Line in New York is arguably one of the highest profile greenway projects in America. It doesn't look like what we think of when we hear the word "greenway" in Indianapolis, but by its very definition---a linear park---it is very much a new urban greenway. Photo copyrighted by the Urban Land Institute. Used with permission.

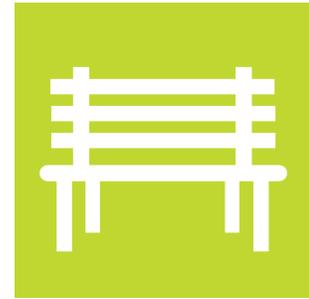
festivals. In fact, you likely won't find the words "trail" or "greenway" anywhere in the information about the High Line.

The High Line got its start in the 1930s as an elevated train line on Manhattan's west side. It was unique because instead of being constructed over the street, it was built mid-block and cut across many neighborhoods. The rise of the trucking industry ultimately led to the decline of the High Line and in the 1980s, it was abandoned. Through strong local advocacy, the structures were left in place and in the early 2000s design work was commissioned to turn the infrastructure into an elevated linear park.

The High Line has very much been treated like a new, wonderful backyard for the communities through which it passes. Some might say it's the new Main Street. In either case, it is a new public space that has been embraced by the local neighborhoods. There is a conservancy that is responsible for 98% of the maintenance and upkeep on the facility so fundraising and programming are important to their ongoing efforts. Programming helps to build a sense of ownership and engage residents with ongoing functions on the High Line. An aggressive retail campaign helps to build local interest, provide funding to the conservancy, and fund the work of several local artists.



# HARD PROGRAMMING NEEDS



It is important to understand that each of these soft programs described previously also have hard programming that will be required in order for the programs to be successful. For instance, the Greenways Passport Book program can only work if someone has created the passbooks and stamps and if there are available stamping stations placed along the greenways. It is also important that there is a distribution network in place for making sure that kids get the passbooks in their hands, whether it is through local



schools or distributed in a centralized greenway office along the trail. These hard programming needs, in many cases, will determine whether a program can even exist along the greenways so any programming effort must concurrently evaluate both the soft and hard programming required for each project.

In many ways, the hard programming elements can be the determining factor on whether certain demographics can even use the greenways. For example, it is well documented that the inclusion of benches will ultimately determine whether the elderly or those with certain disabilities can use a greenway. And that is the case with several amenities along the trail, according to Sharon A. Baggett, PhD., from the University of Indianapolis' Center for Aging and Community and an avid Indy Greenways user. Amenities such as benches, water fountains, reliable signage, and restrooms are all key ingredients in whether certain demographic groups, especially the elderly, will consider using the greenways<sup>1</sup>.

Hard programming needs, like benches, water fountains, restrooms, and other facilities can greatly expand the types and numbers of users that can use the greenway system. While sometimes not thought of in the same manner as social programming, these amenities are often necessary for successful social programs, especially for the elderly, families and children, and those with disabilities. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Sharon Baggett, PhD., University of Indianapolis Center for Aging and Community- September 15, 2014.



## HARD PROGRAMMING NEEDS (cont.)

As soft programming opportunities are explored for the greenways, there is also a need to evaluate the hard programming needs. Throughout many of the conversations held in conjunction with this study, many hard programming needs were identified.

- **Benches.** The location of benches, or lack thereof, can be one of the largest barriers that prevent the elderly from using the greenways. Even for organized events, it is essential that there be some provision for resting. This isn't unique to the elderly. The need for opportunities to rest also applies to those with disabilities as well as families and other users along the trail. Inclusion of benches along the greenways is essential to the success of any soft programming that occurs
- **Providing areas for shade.** Providing areas for shade is also important, particularly for the elderly. Consideration should be given to the placement of resting areas where some level of shade can be accommodated.
- **Restrooms.** Restrooms are a similar requirement for successful programming, especially for families or those with small children. Lack of appropriate restroom facilities may limit use of the greenways. It may also drive trail users into local neighborhoods to use facilities creating ill will between local businesses and the greenways. The new Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan includes a new standard for restroom development along the greenways. At a minimum, restrooms should be developed at every major trailhead, but a consistent spacing of facilities should be examined to identify the appropriate spacing of restroom facilities elsewhere along the trails.
- **Water Fountains-** Water fountains are also important to have at given intervals along the greenways. These provide the means for hydration during physical activities or on warm days. While this is important for those using the greenways for fitness activities, it is also important in attracting other groups such as the elderly or those with small children. The new Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan includes a design standard for water fountains along the greenways. However, the potential spacing still needs to be examined.
- **Fitness Stations-** In discussions with groups and professionals that provide services to the elderly, kids and families, and those with disabilities, all mentioned the idea of creating fitness stations along the greenways that can be used for age or ability-appropriate fitness. These types of facilities can help to promote healthy and active living appropriate to the user group.
- **Signage-** Signage along the greenways is also important. Milemarkers assist with the calculation of distances for health purposes and wayfinding helps to provide orientation to the individual greenways or the overall system. We often think these types of amenities are nice additions to the trails but not necessarily essential. But things like signage are bigger issues than one may think. Again, in a conversation with Sharon Baggett, PhD. of the University of Indianapolis' Center for Aging and Community, she explained that one of the largest impediments to senior use of systems such as Indy Greenways is the fear of the unknown, not knowing where the greenway goes, how far certain things are, or where it connects to other destinations. Things like signage help to remove that barrier and give some sense of confidence in how to use the system<sup>2</sup>.

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2 Interview with Sharon Baggett, PhD., University of Indianapolis Center for Aging and Community-September 15, 2014.



## HARD PROGRAMMING NEEDS (cont.)

- **Infrastructure for the Disabled-** All of Indianapolis' greenways are designed to meet the landmark American with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards for public facilities. These standards ensure that the design of such facilities provide barrier-free and universal access and use for public facilities. Meeting these federal standards ensure that those with disabilities are not prevented from using the facility. It doesn't necessarily mean that the facility incorporates amenities to encourage those with disabilities to use the trails. During the master planning process for the recent master plan update, a meeting was held with the Mayor's Advisory Council on Disabilities and members discussed potential amenities that could be added along the greenways to assist users with disabilities. Suggestions included the use of audio signage and interpretive boards to assist the legally blind, the spacing of benches and their relationships to other amenities for those with trouble walking, and the use of visual enhancements for deaf users. While no new standard was developed in response to that meeting, it provided an insight into the types of enhancements that could be added to make the greenways a less intimidating experience for those with disabilities.
- **More Trails-** During a conversation with Ron Gifford, CEO of Jump IN for Healthy Kids, he noted that the best programming that could be done is to get the greenway system constructed, especially in underserved, low-income neighborhoods. The physical trail provides a great recreational program for children, and getting the trails constructed should be viewed as a major objective of any programming effort on the greenways.
- **Centralized Greenways Office-** In the late 1990s, Indy Greenways staffed a full-time greenways office in Broad Ripple along the Monon Trail. The greenways office included full-time staff, greenway information, maps, and other information to promote the greenways and to provide orientation for users. That office no longer exists and there is no centralized location that serves greenway users. A centralized greenways office would greatly benefit the overall system.

As a final note on hard programming, it's important to note that the soft programming potential on the greenways needs to be thought through in all physical design of future greenway development. As an example, we typically design trailheads to accommodate individual users parking and accessing the trail at a given location. If certain programming is developed that will use the trailhead as a staging area or a place where programming is conducted, is there sufficient space to accommodate the users? Can the trailhead accommodate shuttle busses if the program involves partners providing group transportation to the site? And, is there a way that the hard programming can accommodate the soft programming without interrupting the normal use of the trail?



## HARD PROGRAMMING NEEDS (cont.)



Hard programming opportunities include 1) new water fountains. 2) Existing structures along the greenways, like Boulevard Station at 38th Street along the Monon Trail, can be re-purposed for uses such as a greenways office, restrooms, retail sales, or other uses that enhance the greenway experience. 3) Access and trailheads are important to provide places where people can enter the greenway. Access points and trailheads, like this one along Fall Creek Greenway, should include parking, benches, and maps to provide orientation for users. 4) Providing wayfinding and directional signage, like this one along the Louisville Loop, are important to help users understand the greenway. Photo 1 courtesy of Liz Mooney, ASLA. Photos 2-4 by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.





## POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

There are numerous partnership opportunities for programming on Indy Greenways. The key is aligning the programming with the mission or causes of the potential partner.

### HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS

One of the obvious correlations that can be made is between the health and fitness programs and the healthcare industry. Indianapolis' healthcare facilities have made significant investments throughout the community. For example, In 2013, Indiana University Health, one of Indianapolis' largest healthcare providers, *"invested over \$500 million in community benefit, and almost \$700 million in community investments<sup>1</sup>"* on efforts that *"make measurable advances toward positive health outcomes and increased quality of life for people living in our communities.<sup>2</sup>"* There is similar significant community investments by the city's other healthcare institutions.

Healthcare institutions have a vested interest in the betterment of the

- 1 IU Health Website.
- 2 IU Health Website.

Partnerships are necessary at all levels of programming as many programs are a successful blending of resources. Photo of Ohio River Greenway ribbon cutting celebration in Clarksville, Indiana by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

health of the community and can be both program partners as well as financial partners. Sometimes, though, these institutions can lend their leverage of other partners in significant investments. In October of 2014, Eskenazi Health, through Health & Hospital Corporation of Marion County, announced that they had received a \$31,575 grant from the Environmental Solutions for Communities grant program from Wells Fargo and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for improvements to an area along White River and Fall Creek.<sup>3</sup> This is a great example of how a partnership with a healthcare institution can lead to larger investments in the greenway system.

The potential partnership benefits with the local healthcare providers presents a significant opportunity for partnership on programming. Potential healthcare institution partners in Marion County include:

- Indiana University Health
- Community Health Network
- St. Francis Health Network
- St Vincent Health network
- Eskenazi Health

## CORPORATE GIVING

Indianapolis is also home to several health insurance companies and health-related industries that also make significant contributions to programs that foster more healthful living and quality of life. One example is Wellpoint. Through their charitable giving program, the Wellpoint Foundation has provided more than \$146 million through their Healthy Generations program since 2000 to communities and partners that fall within their targeted mission objectives. Of all funding in this particular program, nearly 57% went to foster active lifestyles<sup>4</sup>.

Eli Lilly & Company also has a record of contributions to the Indianapolis community and the parks and greenways system. In 2012, the Indianapolis Parks Foundation(IPF) announced that the Lilly Endowment had awarded the nonprofit organization a grant of \$10 million, the largest single gift in IPF's 20-year history, to be used to renovate and upgrade Indy Parks properties throughout Marion County. The grant also included funding to support programming partnerships throughout the city<sup>5</sup>. Lilly's investment also includes volunteer efforts. The company has also organized and facilitated numerous days of service which have included company employees working to make the greenways better.

Both of these examples illustrate how private corporations can provide critical partnerships when their missions are aligned with local efforts. Several institutions have their headquarters in Indianapolis and have programs to reinvest in the city through financial contributions or services. Potential corporate partnerships are a source of programming dollars and support that should be explored.

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3 "Wells Fargo Environmental Solutions Grant will support Green Corridor Extension Project," Eskenazi Health website: <http://www.eskenazihealth.edu/Modules/News/10-22-14>.

4 Wellpoint Foundation Website: <http://wellpointcorporateresponsibility.com/cr/foundation/>

5 "Lilly Endowment Awards \$10 Million to Indianapolis Parks Foundation- Three-year grant to upgrade 13 Indy Parks properties, expand programming partnerships," Indianapolis Parks Foundation website: [http://indyparksfoundation.org/site/news/lilly\\_endowment\\_awards\\_10\\_million\\_to\\_ipf](http://indyparksfoundation.org/site/news/lilly_endowment_awards_10_million_to_ipf)

## ADVOCACY GROUPS

There are also many local agencies dealing specifically with different age groups. One such agency dealing specifically with the elderly is the Central Indiana Council on Aging (CICOA), a private, not-for-profit agency that helps seniors and people with a disability remain comfortably and safely at home and out of institutional care. According to Dave Sander, CICOA's Director of Lifelong Living and Community Initiatives, CICOA serves the broad range of elderly care. At one end of that spectrum are elderly who live in nursing homes or retirement communities. At the other end are those whom CICOA assists with aging in place by providing food and other services in homes. But between those two ends exist a group of the population that seeks programming such as those recommended in this study and CICOA is seeking partnerships to provide those services. He feels programs such as fitness walks, walk with a doc, or organized health fairs would be of interest to seniors, and thereby would be of interest to CICOA. These types of programs could be sponsored and promoted through CICOA, and CICOA could assist in bring partnerships and sponsorship dollars to this type of program development. In his words, these types of programs, geared toward seniors, are well aligned with the programming services CICOA wants to provide to seniors, and these types of programs are opportunities they would be interested in exploring.<sup>6</sup>

Jump IN for Healthy Kids is a new organization that is focused on reducing the childhood obesity rates in Indianapolis. The organization was founded by the CEOs of 16 major corporate and healthcare companies with the specific mission of working on “evidence-based best practices that will measurably improve children’s health.”<sup>7</sup> Recognizing the long-term health and quality of life impacts caused by obesity, the organization seeks to develop and promote efforts that improve diets, increase activities and promote healthy nutrition and choices for children and families. They work with churches, schools and other groups to encourage and introduce healthy choices and promote physical activity. Jump IN for Healthy Kids seeks out partnerships that can help further their goals, and there is recognition by the group that the greenways could potentially offer opportunities for partnership with their organization.<sup>8</sup>

Another health advocacy group example is Health by Design. “Health by Design is a diverse and growing coalition, bringing together advocates of community design, transportation and health to support healthy and active living in Central Indiana and beyond.”<sup>9</sup> The goals of Health by Design, like many advocacy groups, are closely aligned with the types of things that greenways offer: increasing walking, biking and public transit options; increasing neighborhood, city and regional connectivity; encouraging land use decision-making that promotes public health; and reducing dependency on automobiles. The group works with local partners in the promotion of activities that further their goals, and many of the organization’s current programming aligns with potential programming on the greenways. Health by Design, provides another example of a potential partner for greenway programming.

There are also advocacy groups for those with disabilities. One such group, the Mayor’s Advisory Council on Disability partners with the Indianapolis Office of Disability Affairs and the Office of the Mayor to further the social, economic, and civic opportunities for those with disabilities in Indianapolis. Their mission is to “promote inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities within the Indianapolis community and advise the Mayor and

6 Interview with Dave Sander, Director of Lifelong Living, Communities and Policy Development, Central Indiana Council on Aging. September 12, 2014.

7 Jump IN for Healthy Kids Website.

8 Interview with Ron Gifford, Executive Director, Jump IN for Healthy Kids. September 9, 2014.

9 Health by Design Website: <http://healthbydesignonline.org/>

City Administration on issues that impact people with disabilities.”<sup>10</sup> This group offers an important partnership opportunity as an advisor on greenway education issues, hard programming needs, and the needs of those with varying disabilities to enable use of the greenways.

There is a huge opportunity for partnerships with local advocacy groups, and advocacy groups are a type of partner that needs to be engaged.

## STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Opportunities exist for partnerships with state and local governmental agencies. The Interview with Dave Sander, Director of Lifelong Living, Communities and Policy Development, Central Indiana Council on Aging. September 12, 2014. Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), for example, has many health-related initiatives that deal with the types of programming that would have cross-over potential with the greenways. ISDH efforts have included examining programs, initiatives, advocacy, and actions that seek to identify ways that urban design and the design of public infrastructure can help promote more active living with residents. They have been a driver of complete streets policies, bicycle advocacy, and a supporter of efforts to expand the greenway system. Groups like this already have an alignment with programming that can be offered on the greenways and collaboration with these types of agencies is an opportunity that should be taken.

## COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS AND PHILANTHROPY

Opportunities also exist for partnerships with local community foundations. The Indianapolis Parks Foundation (IPF) serves to raise funding for critical park improvements and is the long-time fundraising mechanism that benefits Indy Parks. That relationship has proven critical and must continue if the city is to have success implementing the Full Circle Plan. But there are also other community foundations that may be able to provide additional support or resources. The Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF) and its philanthropic efforts were responsible for the implementation of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail- A Legacy of Gene and Marilyn Glick, and that project illustrates the major role that community foundations can play in developing the finances for programming or implementation.

## LOCAL PROGRAMMING PARTNERS

Local programming partners should not be overlooked. In many cases, groups at this level have the greatest impact on program development and program success. These types of groups might include neighborhood development corporations, neighborhood advocacy groups, local business partnerships, schools, church groups, historical societies, service providers, university programs, neighborhood coalitions, and other such groups. While their financial resources may not be as large as other groups, they often have the physical resources and connections that can make or break local programming. As a partner, these entities allow additional resources to be harnessed at the local level and bring local partnerships to the programming. Examples of this type of partnership discussed earlier in this report include Destination Fall Creek’s Celebrate Fall Creek event and the Historic Landmarks Kessler bike tours.

Partnership opportunities exist for the greenway system and many organizations have shown an interest in the same types of programming being suggested for the greenways. The key is developing programs and identifying where there is alignment with key potential partners.

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<sup>10</sup> Mayor’s Advisory Council on Disabilities Home, Website: <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/Mayor/programs/diversity/MACD/Pages/Home.aspx>.



## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementing and sustaining this level of program development can be challenging. When you look at the communities that have been successful, it's easy to identify a few common denominators for that success. More telling, perhaps, and an interesting back check, is that those common denominators are also able to be identified as barriers or challenges in systems where this type of programming is not in place.

Successful programming requires three broad understandings:

- An organizational structure and organizational charge
- Role of Partnerships
- Role of Fundraising

National Bike to Work Day 2013 rest stop at Boulevard Station. During the greenways master planning process, this idea was developed to "tag onto" another, much larger program going on in the community. It provided another level of outreach for the planning process. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CHARGE

People. Simply put. Whether it is a staff person, a committee, a department, or part of an organization, there has to be a dedicated resource of staff or people with a charge to develop and provide these programming services. Establishing program ideas, developing the programs, identifying and meeting with potential partners, raising funds, administering programs, signing people up, facilitating programs on the day of events--- all require the time and resources of people. And those people need to be given the time and resources to focus solely on the program development.

Currently, Indy Parks (under which the greenways fall) has a programming group which oversees the programming for all 470 park properties. But like many city agencies across the country, staffing and resources for a major expansion of programming services are limited. Resources and budgets must be stretched across the many needs of the cities, and often additional funding for staff or programs is not available as other needs are met in the community.

Some communities have looked to alternative models for their funding and greenway development activities. The Atlanta Beltline is a case in point. In 2006, Atlanta Beltline Inc. (ABI), a private entity, was formed specifically to oversee the development and implementation of the Beltline. They oversee all grants, planning, design, construction, and early maintenance for the entire Beltline. Their fundraising and programming partner, the Atlanta Beltline Partnership, a 501(c)(3) organization, oversees all fundraising and programming efforts to support ABI. Together, these organizations have a dedicated charge and timetable (2025) in building support, finding resources, and fully implementing the vision laid out for the Beltline. While the organizations are partners with the City of Atlanta, the separation allows them to focus specifically on the Beltline and keeps them from getting caught up in political or funding battles at the city level. It also streamlines their fundraising because they have a sole purpose and are not trying to raise money for many different causes. Programming for the Beltline is done in conjunction with ongoing planning, design, and fundraising efforts creating an integrated function and series of events that constantly push and define the implementation efforts.

A similar example has been used in Louisville, Kentucky at the Parklands of Floyds Fork. In 2004, 21st Century Parks, a private nonprofit corporation was founded to oversee the development of a major new park in eastern and southeastern Louisville that includes 19 miles of the Louisville Loop. Through partnerships with the City of Louisville, 21st Century Parks oversees all development, implementation, operations and maintenance of the new park including ongoing fundraising and programming within the park.

Both of these are examples of organizational structures for programming and implementation that has have been established as private or quasi-private organizations. The city of Indianapolis currently has entities in place that serve similar functions. The Department of Public Works (DPW) oversees development of new greenways and the Indianapolis Parks Foundation (IPF) oversees charitable giving, fundraising, and partnership investments. But both groups have other charges as well. DPW also is responsible for streets, sewers, snow removal, maintenance, and nay number of other public works. IPF, is responsible for raising funds for all parks. Neither DPW or IPF, in their current structure, has a singular focus on the greenways or greenway programming. If greenway programming, and ultimately the implementation of the Full Circle Plan, is the larger goal, then the organizational structure of how these things are accomplished needs to be reconsidered. Whether that means additional, dedicated staffing, a new city department, or an entirely different model, the staffing and organization structure is a key element of success.



## THE ROLE OF PARTNERSHIPS

A second key ingredient to successful program of this nature is understanding how essential the role of partnerships are. Time and again, we see that the most successful programming elements occur when there are partners at the table that have similar missions and goals. Locally, we can see this in efforts such as Eli Lilly's contributions to the Indianapolis Parks Foundation, creating \$10 million in new investment in Indy Parks facilities. We also see it when portions of the greenways are flooded with Eli Lilly employees on their annual day of service to the community. Hundreds of employees converge on the greenways and parks to remove invasives and take on improvement projects. The simple spike in the number of people doing this work creates positive impact that would be difficult for city maintenance crews to achieve alone. Partnerships are critical.

The Atlanta Beltline counts on community partnerships for much of their programming. They partner with Trees Atlanta (equivalent to Keep Indianapolis Beautiful) for tree plantings along the trail, creating a "Beltline arboretum." They partner with the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition to do bike tours of the Beltline. They partner with local artists and art groups for their Art on the Beltline program. They partner with local neighborhoods on urban farming on adjacent parcels and local neighborhood festivals and events. They created a "Health Steering Committee" made up of the region's healthcare and health-related agencies to advise on the development of health and fitness programming for the Beltline. This is just a small, brief sampling of their community programming partnerships. In nearly every programming effort, the organization leverages the staff, resources, and funding of community partnerships. By doing this they are able to "flex their staff" sizes and create bigger and better programming opportunities than what they would be able to do on their own.

There are numerous benefits that result from these partnerships. This approach creates new investment and ownership in the concept and vision of the Beltline. It expands the reach of their message---in many cases the partners are now promoting the efforts (and benefits) of the Atlanta Beltline. It leverages additional staff and funding for programming along the Beltline.

But one of the biggest impacts these partnerships have, according to Rob Brawner, Program Director for the Atlanta Beltline Partnership, is that awareness and education programs are the first piece in greater philanthropic giving to the Beltline.

The most successful partnerships occur when the greenways, and activity or programming for the greenways, can be aligned with the missions or goals of other agencies, and there are many opportunities for that alignment on the Indy Greenways system. The role of partnerships is a key ingredient in creating successful programming of the greenways.



## ROLE OF FUNDRAISING

Nothing can be done without money. Whether it is money to pay the salaries of staff conducting programming or raising the money necessary to facilitate a program. The role of fundraising and finances is a final key ingredient is successful programming.

Competition for funding occurs everywhere. It occurs within city budgets with all of the different competing needs of a city. It happens when philanthropic organizations compete for private donations. It occurs within companies as they balance their giving missions between different organizations. Understanding the many facets of fundraising is a must for successful programming.

There are many different considerations in developing strategies for funding program development of the greenways. Some of these include:

- **Philanthropic giving-** finding private donors whose missions align with what is going to be provided by the greenway programming.
- **Scale of Fundraising Events-** understanding that there are different scales of fundraising, all the way from larger donations by corporations to smaller investments by local residents. For example, the Atlanta Beltline has accepted large donations, but they have also identified a membership program that engages smaller investments (as low as \$35) from local residents and users. They have also found creative fundraising ideas that have taken a commercial engagement to multiple levels of giving.
- **Dedicated funding sources-** identifying potential sources of dedicated funding can also help advance programming. An example of this can be seen in Indy Parks. A portion of the funding they use for programming of Indy Parks comes from a dedicated Special Recreation Fund. Finding a dedicated source of income can help in establishing long-term program development for the system.
- **Partnership Funding-** identifying potential partnership revenue, through staffing, program development, or sponsorship, is another avenue to bring funding to greenway programming.
- **Grant funding-** many organizations have grant programs for certain types of programming activities. Identification of these potential funding sources can provide funding for programming elements.

These are just a few of the financial options that can be considered in finding revenue streams for programming. The important part of this, though, is that fundraising, or identifying funding streams for programming, is a must!

## CASE STUDY: CELEBRATION FALL CREEK

In September of 2014, Destination Fall Creek organized a program called “Celebration Fall Creek” along the entire stretch of Fall Creek Greenway in Indianapolis.

Local agencies and businesses were invited to set up tents and exhibits along the greenway in their sections of town and share information about their organizations and programs. On the southern end, attendees could learn about the Ivy Tech Culinary School or take part in the Mapleton-



One of the “Celebration Fall Creek” stations on the north end of Fall Creek Greenway offered information about local development initiatives and offered samples of fare from their local farmers market. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

Fall Creek Delaware Street Gateway Party. Participants could ride north to the Millersville neighborhood and learn more about the Fall Creek Watershed Partnership, or ride even further north to Skiles Test and the BRAG (Binford Redevelopment and Growth) area to learn more about BRAG and sample fare from the Binford Farmers Market. The one-day program was an activity fair that encouraged residents to explore the Fall Creek Greenway while learning more about the neighborhoods through which it passed and the organizations working to impact those areas. According to organizer Doug Day, the intent of the day-long program was to celebrate all of the unique areas along the Fall Creek corridor.

But the program didn’t achieve the success that organizers envisioned. According to Day, the event didn’t garner any media attention which limited its promotion to a greater audience. Limited funding was also an issue. Both of these things resulted in numbers less that they had hoped. When asked if there was any other factor that he felt limited the success of the program, he noted overall organization. He feels the program would have had greater success if there had been an overall organizer for the event. He contends that promotion, dollars, and leadership are needed for any programming to be successful.





## FINAL THOUGHTS

So we come back to the question why is this important?

It's easy to question the relevance of placing priority or emphasis on programming for greenways. With everything happening in the city, it would be easy to dismiss this type of programming as a casualty to higher priorities.

One of the main priorities of the Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan was expanding the greenways into underserved areas of the city. The plan shifted the priority for future greenway development from the areas already serviced by the greenway system in Center and Washington Townships to the townships where greenway development has lagged. It created a more equitable distribution of greenway development.

In many ways, programming offers the opportunity to expand the user groups of the greenway, providing more reasons for a greater number of people to find meaningful use in the greenway system. Providing this type of programming, too, applies a broader application and service to the greenways---it provides a more equitable distribution of uses for the greenways.

Thousands of residents gather along the Ohio River Greenway in Jeffersonville, Indiana for the annual Thunder Over Louisville pre-derby celebration. The celebration includes food vendors, an air show and fireworks. The greenway corridor is an ideal setting for this event. Photo by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group.

There's also documented research that shows us the positive benefits that come to a community from the development of greenway facilities with robust programming and an engaged user base. No one denies those benefits.

So, perhaps one of the greatest answers to this question is to take a step back and look at a much larger picture of what programming can do for a system. Programming has been an essential piece of the overall strategy for implementing the Atlanta Beltline. We can document the many programmatic elements employed to broaden awareness of the Beltline, increase donations, and raise private revenue for the line's redevelopment.

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*“There can be no more important thing to help guide understanding, build ownership and catalyze investment than proactive programming. It has undoubtedly been the most important factor in building support for the implementation of the Atlanta Beltline. Programming has helped to make the Beltline the place to be in Atlanta and as a result, open the door to significant levels of redevelopment along the corridor and increasing demand for completing the system.”*

*Paul Morris, FASLA, CEO  
Atlanta Beltline, Inc.*

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We can also see how the programming has led to an engaged user base that has created a demand for the system out in front of its development. And we can see the way that programming has helped to have an impact on so many social issues, from housing to open space. More telling, though, are the numbers. Since Atlanta Beltline Inc.'s founding in 2006, there has been over \$400 million in public-private investment in the Beltline and that investment has leveraged over \$1.5 billion in redevelopment along the corridor--and it's only partially built. When you talk with those overseeing the implementation of the Beltline, they will tell you of the significant role their programming strategies have played in their efforts. According to Atlanta Beltline CEO Paul Morris, FASLA,

*“There can be no more important thing to help guide understanding, build ownership and catalyze investment than proactive programming. It has undoubtedly been the most important factor in building support for the implementation of the Atlanta Beltline. Programming has helped to make the Beltline the place to be in Atlanta and as a result, open the door to significant levels of redevelopment along the corridor and increasing demand for completing the system.”*

Throughout the Full Circle Master Plan planning process, we emphasized that the new vision for such a large system was going to require a new thinking about implementation---a new strategy for how the community can fulfill the vision. Programming of the greenways is part of that new strategy.

## RESOURCES

A special thanks to the following individuals and organizations that provided resources for this Fellowship:

Ron Gifford, Chief Executive Officer  
Jump IN for Healthy Kids, Indianapolis, IN

David Sander, Director, Lifelong Living and Community Initiatives  
Central Indiana Council on Aging, Indianapolis, IN

Sharon A. Baggett, PhD., Associate Professor of Aging Studies  
University of Indianapolis Center for Aging and Community, Indianapolis, IN

Lori Bergschneider Taylor, LSW, QMRP  
Molina Healthcare, Long Beach, CA

Joenne Pope, School Outreach & Day Camp Manager  
Indy Parks and Recreation, Indianapolis, IN

Paul F. Morris, FASLA, Chief Executive Officer  
Beth McMillion, Director, Community Planning and Engagement  
Anissa Morgan, Executive Assistant  
Heather Hussey-Coker, Special Projects Coordinator  
Jenny Odom, Communications & Media Relations Manager  
Atlanta Beltline, Inc., Atlanta, GA

Rob Brawner, Interim Executive Director & Program Director  
Atlanta Beltline Partnership, Atlanta, GA

Lori Hazlett, Executive Director  
Indianapolis Parks Foundation, Indianapolis, IN

Scott Siefker, ASLA, AICP  
Amy Williams, AICP  
Liz Mooney, ASLA  
Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group, Indianapolis, IN

Malcolm Cairns, FASLA  
Ball State University Department of Landscape Architecture, Muncie, IN

Tamara Zahn, CityCorps Fellowship Coordinator  
2020 Plan, Indianapolis, IN

Doug Day, "Champion"  
Destination Fall Creek, Indianapolis, IN

Jennifer L. Milliken, AICP  
Director, Urban Land Institute Indiana, Indianapolis, IN





PLAN 2020 CITYCORPS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

## ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP/AUTHOR

The 2020 Plan CityCorps Fellowship Program engages a wide range of individuals from anywhere and any background. Fellows provide targeted ideas, insights, plans or research to advance specific charges, values, goals or strategies that may have emerged in the Plan 2020 process.

**Ron L. Taylor FASLA** is a Registered Landscape Architect and co-founder of Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group, a landscape architecture, urban design, and planning practice with offices in Indianapolis and Louisville. Ron has held several state and national leadership positions with the American Society of Landscape Architects, and was inducted into their Council of Fellows in 2013. Ron has over twenty years experience working on major urban design, transportation, and planning projects including several significant greenway and trail projects. His portfolio includes planning and design work on the Louisville Loop, the Big Four Pedestrian Bridge and Indiana Landings in Jeffersonville, the Ohio River Greenway in southern Indiana, and trail projects in several Indiana communities. Most recently, Ron oversaw Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group's authoring of the Indy Greenways Full Circle Plan, Indianapolis' new master plan of over 250 miles of greenways. Ron resides in Indianapolis.



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