



## Mayor Joe Hogsett, Rethink Coalition Announce \$2 Million USDOT Grant Award

*Planning study to evaluate reconnection of neighborhoods divided by I-65/I-70 Inner Loop*

**INDIANAPOLIS** – Today Mayor Joe Hogsett, Congressman André Carson, Rethink Coalition, and the Indy Chamber announced a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). The award will fund a planning study around the southeast leg of the I-65/I-70 Downtown Inner Loop near the Fletcher Place and Fountain Square neighborhoods, examining how to create more livable, reconnected communities around the interstate while maintaining interstate commerce and regional travel.

"This federally funded study will help guide our community as it looks at ways we can reunite neighborhoods divided by the original interstate program," said Mayor Joe Hogsett. "Thanks to USDOT, INDOT, and our community partners, this announcement begins a process that could have lasting benefit for generations of Indianapolis residents."

This planning study is focused on Virginia and Fletcher Avenue bridges over the I-65/I-70 interstate and ties in between Washington Street interchange and the South Split. The outcome of the study will identify design alternatives for capping areas over this recessed interstate section, to create new space for community development and restoration of the local street network. An interstate [cap](#) is a type of deck bridge built on top of a roadway to create new acreage for development.

Neighborhoods and adjoining areas historically affected by interstate impacts will be central participants to a robust community conversation with researchers, community leaders, residents, and stakeholders. They will envision different capping and bridging options that best support community needs such as workforce housing, entrepreneurship, open space, and greenways that enhance quality of life. This will be done in collaborative partnership with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), which owns and manages the interstate system, to ensure that interstate commerce and regional connectivity is maintained.

"Congress has kicked off the 'infrastructure decade' thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which is already bringing unprecedented investments back home to Indiana," said Congressman Carson. "This grant is just the beginning. Over the coming months and years, our state will receive billions of dollars to make important improvements to bridges, streets, and highways that will make our communities better connected and better prepared for a 21st century economy."

Created through President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, this federal grant program is the first of its kind, dedicated to reconnecting American communities to economic opportunities. In Indianapolis, this funding will help plan for the possibility of restoring affordable housing and small commercial space lost to the original interstate construction, creating balanced economic investment, and allowing residents to strengthen relationships to all parts of the community.



“Rethink Coalition is thrilled to work with the City and so many other great partners on this project, made possible by the USDOT,” said Brenda Freije, Rethink Coalition CEO and President. “The effort will build on two recent studies of the Inner Loop that examine how we can create more livable, reconnected communities, provide just and balanced development opportunities, and improve the overall environment in and around the highway, while maintaining equal or better interstate travel flow. This collaborative effort can be a model for working together to catalyze transformational change for Indianapolis and across Indiana.”

The \$2 million grant award will be matched with \$250,000 of in-kind services from the Indy Chamber and the Rethink Coalition, who will serve as the project manager of the study. A further \$500,000 in matching funds will be contributed from the City of Indianapolis. Other key partners include INDOT, who will participate in the study and provide guidance, as well as the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and Develop Indy. This collaboration and successful grant award potentially position the project for future implementation partnerships with USDOT.

“This federal investment in our downtown is more than just a road project. It’s the product of a partnership between neighborhoods, the City, INDOT, Rethink, and the Indy Chamber that has the potential to transform our capital city for decades to come,” said Taylor Hughes, vice president of policy and strategy, Indy Chamber. “The commitment to pragmatic collaboration has distinguished Hoosiers in the past, and we believe this bold vision continues that legacy and benefits the whole city, the region, and the state.”

For information on DPW infrastructure projects, please visit [indy.gov/DPW](http://indy.gov/DPW).

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