

INDIANAPOLIS
GREENWAYS
PARTNERSHIP



2020 Annual Report

**A report to the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership on
the organizational activities of 2020**

January 8, 2021

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Acknowledgements

Indianapolis Greenways Partnership

The Parks Alliance of Indianapolis (formerly the Indianapolis Parks Foundation)

Lori Hazlett, President

Molley Miller, Fund Development Manager

Jenny Cash, Vice President- Development and Public Relations

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Indy Parks

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Jump In For Healthy Kids:

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Megan McKinney Cooper- Communications Director

CICOA Aging and In-home Solutions

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Marion County Department of Public Health

Megan Rowe- Cardiovascular Program Manager, Chronic Disease Programs

Stacie Hurrle, Diabetes Health Educator

Eskenazi Health

Leroy Lewis III- Community Relations and Health Promotion

Courtney Fehrenbacher- Integrated Communications Coordinator, Public Affairs & Communicat.

Walk With A Doc Physicians:

Carrie A Leathers, M.D.- Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine and Pediatrics

Daniel G. Pino, M.D.- Adult Medicine, Pediatrics

Juan Carlos Venis, MD, MPH- Assistant Professor of Clinical Family Medicine

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Introduction

We are pleased to provide our annual report on the activities of the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership.

2020 was certainly a unique year. Coming off our 12-month pilot project in mid-2019, there was significant momentum for the continuation of the Greenways Partnership's programming. The grant-funded pilot program had established a sound organizational foundation for the Partnership, an established group of Community Partners, a list of potential program partners, and a blueprint for ongoing programming activities. More importantly, the pilot program helped to provide a basis for the continuation of greenway programming.

In many ways, 2020 was a frustrating year with ongoing shelter-in-place restrictions and cancelled events. It would be easy to cast this year's efforts aside in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic; instead, **2020 was a year of growth, resilience, and success for the Greenways Partnership.**

The Indianapolis Greenways Partnership is built upon the concept of testing and measuring ideas. This was the premise of the grant-funded 12 month pilot program, and it is the basic tenet of the organization in 2020. After looking back on the challenges faced, responses received, and the outcomes for the year, 2020 was actually a fascinating case study, and there is more success to be found than one would initially think.

We are pleased to provide this report to our Partners, Community Partners, and Program Partners as a record of our achievements in 2020, and a basis for what comes next with the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership!

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Executive Summary- 2020 Overview

We kicked off our 2020 programming with the second annual **Winter Solstice Walk** on December 21, 2019 along the Pennsy Trail in Irvington. After the success of the first Solstice Walk, the Indianapolis Parks Foundation made this program one of their annual events. Nearly 100 participants joined us on a cold, December Friday evening for a half-mile walk on the trail. The event began around outdoor warming stations at Coal Yard Coffee and proceeded to the east. A tent with craft beverages, art, and other vendors was set up at the end of the walk for participants to enjoy. The new line of **Pennsy Trail shirts and sweatshirts** was released in late Fall 2019 and made available for purchase at the **Solstice Walk**. By all accounts, the Solstice Walk was a huge success.

As 2020 began, we received the first early warnings of the approaching COVID-19 Pandemic. The initial program of 2020 was scheduled to be our **Winter Family Hike on the White River Greenway** on January 11. This program, led by Indy Parks and their Land Stewardship division, was postponed due to weather until January 18, and then was postponed again due to weather until March 14 and rebranded as a **Spring Family Hike**. Timing put this program in the middle of the growing pandemic and local lockdowns. Ultimately, this program was cancelled in its entirety.

No programming was planned for February as the world watched the rising case numbers of COVID-19 and Marion County began initiating strict restrictions on public gatherings. As restrictions intensified and businesses began working remotely, any immediate program planning was paused as we tried to understand and predict the full impact of the pandemic

Throughout 2019, the Partnership had been working extensively with **Eskenazi Health** as a potential community partner for the organization. We were pleased to welcome Eskenazi Health as an official partner of the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership in 2020. Eskenazi joined with a specific focus on helping to plan and grow our **Walk with a Doc** program. Previously, Eskenazi Health was involved with the early development of this program through the work of Dr. Carrie Leathers. During 2019, she facilitated five walks engaging with over 80 participants and talking with people about how walking can develop healthy habits and lead to better health and well-being. Through **Eskenazi Health's** partnership, two additional physicians, Dr. Juan Carlos Venis and Dr. Daniel Pino, joined the program to facilitate walks and expand upon what was already developed for the program. In addition to the three physicians, **Eskenazi Health** developed a plan for additional planning resources and promotion of the program. During planning sessions in early 2020, monthly walks were planned beginning in April and running through October. **Walk with a Doc** sessions in 2020 were coordinated on greenways near Eskenazi Health Center locations and scheduled in tandem with other **Eskenazi Health** events, broadening the potential reach for the program. Many of the walks were also coordinated near facilities where **CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions** provides services, creating even greater opportunities for getting more residents involved, and helping to expand the missions of our other community partners.

The following **Walk With a Doc** programs were scheduled for 2020:

- April- **Walk With a Doc on the White River Greenway**
- May 22- **Walk With a Doc on the Monon Trail (with Nora Commons)**
- June 27- **Walk With a Doc on the Pleasant Run Greenway**
- July 25- **Walk With a Doc on the White River Greenway**
- August 22- **Walk With a Doc on the Eagle Creek Greenway**
- September 26- **Walk With a Doc on the Grassy Creek Greenway**
- October 24- **Walk with a Doc on the Pogues Run Greenway**

Despite the excitement generated by Eskenazi's partnership and the schedule of monthly walks developed, all of these walks ultimately shared the fate of many of our 2020 programs and were cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. By late spring, it became apparent that the COVID-19 public restrictions were going to remain active for longer than expected, impacting all subsequent programs of 2020. Like many organizations, the COVID-19 Pandemic forced us to re-evaluate how to fulfill our mission and to seek new ways to continue our important work in a time when residents were being advised to stay at home. Our mission of encouraging and providing opportunities to activate Indy Greenways remained intact as we adapted during the changing environment to stay responsive to the health of the community at large. In early spring, **Indy Parks** and the **City of Indianapolis** cancelled all of their programming. With guidance from **Indy Parks** and our healthcare partners, our two programs scheduled for March, our **Spring Family Hike** and our **Walk With a Doc on the White River Greenway** were both cancelled, and our upcoming **Walk With a Doc** Programs were also cancelled. We are fortunate to have the **Marion County Department of Public Health** and **Eskenazi Health** as two of our community partners and we followed their lead and guidance on determining the appropriate approach for programming.

Like many organizations, the Greenways Partnership needed to pivot to the new reality of remote work and restrictions on the types of activities the organization could facilitate. Facing an unknown duration of limited programs, the Partnership had to quickly define the best way to change course and make the most of this uncertain situation.



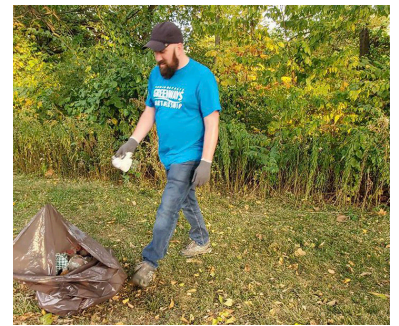
Images from the **2019 Winter Solstice Parade of Lights** along the Pennsy Greenway in Irvington.



INDIANAPOLIS GREENWAYS

CLEAN-UP

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Images from the **Indy Greenways Fall Clean-up** held on October 1-10, 2020. Participants chose their greenway of choice and spent time collecting trash. This was one of the Partnership's virtual/self-guided programs that was developed in response to the Covid epidemic.

We recognized that there was a need to stay visible and relevant during an extended period where programming was not occurring. However, we also recognized that this situation provided an opportunity to focus on building the organization's resiliency.

With these two objectives in mind, the following priorities were set for Greenways Partnership during the stay-at-home period:

- 1. Communications:** Focus on retaining the synergies and momentum achieved over the last two years with our community partners. This included maintaining the working relationship with community partners, devising additional communications with community partners while we were separated, and continuing to develop programs even during a period when events could not occur.
- 2. Visibility:** Increase the Partnership's visibility through its online and social presence, including improvements to the website and the development of new social media content that allowed the Partnership to remain in current newsfeeds. Significant energy was placed upon expanding the current Greenways Partnership audience and reach.
- 3. Virtual Programming:** Pivot towards online, virtual, or individual programming that could be executed without formal in-person groups. Programming options were explored that did not require group gatherings on the greenways.
- 4. COVID-19 Preparedness:** Use the down time to develop strict COVID-19 practices and guidelines that could be implemented once in-person programming resumed on Indy Greenways.

These new strategies were introduced at the quarterly Community Partners meeting in April, and were used to help guide program planning through the rest of 2020.

Throughout the summer, we continued to follow the guidance of **Indy Parks, Eskenazi Health,** and the **Marion County Department of Public Health.** Per their recommendations, the Greenways Partnership facilitated no in-person programming on the Greenways. Instead, the focus shifted entirely to achieving the four priorities established for the stay-at-home period.

Virtual Programs

The Partnership and its Community Partners began to realign programs with virtual platforms. **Eskenazi Health** developed the first two virtual **Walk With a Doc** programs. On July 18, the first **(Virtual) Walk With a Doc on the Fall Creek Greenway** was released through Facebook Live with Dr. Juan Carlos Venis. The second **(Virtual) Walk With a Doc on the Pleasant Run Greenway** was released on August 8, 2020 through Facebook Live with Dr. Carrie Leathers. Both of these programs are saved on the Greenways Partnership's website and remain active for viewing.

The Arts Council of Indianapolis, in conjunction with **Keep Indianapolis Beautiful's Art & Seek** program, developed a version of the program that highlights public art on or near different Indy Greenways. The **Art & Seek on Indy Greenways** was a virtual extension of the community-wide virtual program where residents were encouraged to seek out and find different temporary art installations. Additionally, the **Arts Council,** along with **Bike Indy,** taped and produced a **Virtual Bike Tour of Art on the White River Greenway,** scheduled to be released in late 2020 or early 2021. **The Arts Council** also assembled a **9 Artworks/9 Greenways** self-guided tour of art along the greenways that was released in December.

The Parks Alliance of Indianapolis (formerly the Indianapolis Parks Foundation) developed a series of **Trail Tours at Four** Facebook Live events that explored different greenways in Indianapolis. Nine different “tours” were held during the second half of 2020 with five additional tours already scheduled for 2021.

Throughout the summer and fall, we continued to promote our **retail sales program** through our online store. During summer months, there was a push for the sale of Penssy Trail t-shirts while the transition to fall saw a shift to Penssy Trail sweatshirts. A new Greenways Partnership shirt was added to the online store in October. To date, 2020 sales on the online store equaled \$384 (17 shirts) earning approximately \$217 for future funding through the **Parks Alliance of Indianapolis**.

In all, fourteen (14) different virtual programs were prepared and facilitated from July to December of 2020, allowing the partnership to continue providing programmed events despite the stay-at-home orders.

The Return of In-person programming.

During late summer, some community organizations began to return to very limited in-person programming. The Indianapolis Greenways Partnership assisted with promoting three different bike rides of **Indy Parks’ Circle City Cycling Club** and two of **Nine13 Sports’ Explore Indy Bike Rides**. No in-person programming was facilitated by the Greenways Partnership during this time.

As restrictions began to be lifted in late summer and early fall, the Greenways Partnership developed four new programs for the fall season including two in-person programs and two self-guided, individual participation programs. All programs aligned with the design parameters established by our health partners and were facilitated utilizing the new program guidelines developed by the Partnership.

The first return to in-person programming was held on September 12, 2020. The program, **Explore Indy Greenways - Johnson Road Trail/Fall Creek Greenway Family Bike Ride**, was a tour of the new Johnson Road Trail combined with a repeat of the Fall Creek Family Bike Ride facilitated as part of the 2019 Pack the Parks programming. Eight people participated in this 10-mile bike ride on the northeast side of the City.

The second in-person program was the **Greenways 101 for Families and Kids (Bikes)** - an introduction for kids on how to use the greenways and a demonstration ride. This event was held on the Fall Creek Greenway, but, unfortunately, did not have any participants.

Both of these in-person programs strictly followed the new COVID-19 restrictions that were developed and put in place for in-person programming.

Even though clearance for in-person programming had been given, it was understood that there might still be hesitation from the community. Two additional programs were developed for the fall that provided an opportunity for residents to be active on the greenways as individuals or families without having to be part of a larger group. The programs provided self-guided activities that participants could explore at their own time and pace.

On September 1, 2020, we initiated the **Indy Greenways Bicentennial Challenge**, a virtual program encouraging users to explore and record their experiences on all nine of Indy Greenways. Once registered, participants would document their experiences on social media. Once all



Images from *Explore Indy Greenways - Johnson Road Trail/Fall Creek Greenway Family Bike Ride*, our first return to in-person programming, held on September 12, 2020.



TRAIL TOUR AT FOUR



JUL 31, 2020 - AUG 14, 2020

(Virtual) Walk With a Doc on the Fall Creek Greenway

Online Event

In late summer, the Greenways Partnership and its Community Partners began to pivot our programs to a virtual platform. Examples include the Arts Council of Indianapolis' **Art and Seek on the Indy Greenways**, the Parks Alliance of Indianapolis' **Trail Tour at Four**, and Eskenazi Health's **Virtual Walk With a Doc** programs.

nine greenways were documented, recipients received one of the new Greenways Partnership shirts. To add clout to this program, it was submitted and ultimately **designated as an official Bicentennial program**. To date, there are 25 people registered and undertaking the challenge. The challenge runs from September 1 to December 31, 2020.

The second self-directed program was **Indy Greenway Fall Clean-up**, a virtual program that encouraged trail users to take along a garbage bag on one of their visits and clean up a portion of a greenway. This program was a concentrated, week-long effort from October 1-10, 2020 that was co-hosted by **Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB)**. Participants received a Greenways Partnership shirt, gloves, and trash bags, and then documented their cleanup on social media. We then published the photos and tracked progress for inclusion in KIB's overall tracking of cleanup activities in the City. Nearly 30 people registered and participated in the program removing nearly 20 bags of trash and debris from the trail. More significant dumping identified by participants was removed by Department of Public Works (DPW) crews during the process.

In addition to these four Partnership-initiated programs, the Community Partners continued to develop and facilitate their virtual or in-person programs in the fall. In September, the **Parks Alliance of Indianapolis** facilitated three additional **Park Tours at Four** Facebook Live events, **Indy Parks' Circle City Cycling Club** facilitated two additional bike rides, and **Nine13Sports** facilitated an additional **Explore Indy Bike Tour**.

Similarly, in October, the **Parks Alliance of Indianapolis** facilitated an additional **Trail Tours at Four** Facebook Live event, and the **Arts Council of Indianapolis** and **Keep Indianapolis Beautiful** released the **Art & Seek on Indy Greenways**, a companion program to the city-wide Art & Seek program happening across the City.

In November, the **Parks Alliance of Indianapolis** facilitated a final **Trail Tours at Four** Facebook Live event for 2020.

The now-annual **Winter Solstice Walk** was scheduled for Friday, December 18, 2020. At the time of this writing, the event planning was underway, but recent spikes in the COVID-19 numbers and new restrictions on group gatherings in Marion Count have put this final program of the year at risk.

Despite the extraordinary circumstances we encountered in 2020, the efforts made continued to strengthen the Greenways Partnership as an organization by building its partnerships and providing meaningful programs throughout the year. *In all, the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership planned 26 programs in 2020 (with three additional programs facilitated by Nine13Sports). Of those 29 programs, 18 were forced to be cancelled, resulting in 11 programs facilitated throughout the year. In addition, our mid-year pivot to virtual programming resulted in 14 virtual programs*



planned and facilitated during the year. Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Greenways Partnership ultimately facilitated 25 of 43 planned programs (in-person and virtual). Overall, these results seem remarkable, especially in terms of the significant challenges in 2020.

Communications

Methods for communication became even more crucial to the success of the Partnership's efforts in 2020. With the majority of the year spent under stay-at-home orders, maintaining strong lines of communication became even more vital. It was recognized early on that success in 2020 would require staying visible and relevant in a time when gatherings were restricted.

Community Partner Meetings. Community Partners remained the backbone of the organization. They served as the advisory board, developed programming ideas, in some cases facilitated programs and helped ensure that overall project objectives were being met. They also provided input and guidance to meaningfully engage residents and event participants. Four quarterly meetings were held in 2020 (see Appendix 2 for meeting notes from each of these meetings). While the first meeting in January was held in person, the remaining three meetings were held virtually. 2020 meetings were held on:

- January 24, 2020 (Meeting 8) at the English Foundation Building
- April 24, 2020 (Meeting 9) via Go To Meeting Virtual Video Conferencing
- July 17, 2020 (Meeting 10) via Go To Meeting Virtual Video Conferencing
- October 30, 2020 (Meeting 11) via Go To Meeting Virtual Video Conferencing

Community Partner Newsletter. At the January meeting, one of our Community Partners suggested that there was a need for interim communication between meetings. Specifically, it was noted that partners wanted to be updated on progress being made by other partners or on specific programs that they could then help promote.

We learned many things during the one-year programming pilot project, not the least of which included getting to know our partner organizations a little better and seeing where overlaps in each organization offer potential for collaboration. An example of this type of opportunity occurred early in 2020 with **CICOA Aging and In-home Solutions** and **Eskenazi Health**. In the early stages of planning for the 2020 season of **Walk With a Doc**, greenway program locations for the walks were coordinated with Eskenazi clinics and the locations of CICOA-served facilities. The idea was that the programs could serve as an extension of the services each organization provides to their base clientele. It was noted that this level of ongoing coordination required more communication than could be provided at the quarterly meetings.

A new Community Partner Newsletter was developed and released in April to help with communication during the gaps between formal meetings. Each newsletter included information about the program planning for the Partnership, as a whole, with additional information included about the individual efforts and program planning underway with each partner organization. Newsletters were released in April, May, and August of 2020. In addition, a new **Community Partners Portal** was established on the website to provide a place for Community Partners to quickly find the most up-to-date information on program planning efforts. Copies of the 2020 Community Partner newsletters are included in Appendix 3.

Website Update. The stay-at-home orders in mid-2020 provided an opportunity to re-evaluate and upgrade some of our basic communication tools. In early 2020, the format/ platform of the website was completely updated, giving a refreshed look and improving connectivity and



In April, we developed and released a new Community Partner Newsletter to help communicate during the gaps between our formal meetings.



The Indianapolis Greenways Partnership Bicentennial Challenge was one of the programs in 2020 that allowed people to participate at their own discretion instead of at a group event. This summer, the Bicentennial Challenge was designated as one of Indianapolis official Bicentennial celebration events.

intuitiveness. The upgraded format provided an improved program listing page with links to the Indy Parks registration system, a blog feature that allowed for news and original content to be connected to our social media platforms, and a more intuitive layout for ease of navigation for users. In addition, as mentioned above, new areas were created for communication with Community Partners and links. The unfortunate conditions of 2020 and restrictions on program gatherings provided an opportunity to give some much-needed improvements to our main online communications system. The revised website can be found at www.greenwayspartnership.com.

Social Media Presence. Our social media presence was identified as one of the top priorities in staying visible during the stay-at-home orders. In early spring, we began a concerted effort developing original program-related content for all forms of social media as a way of staying relevant even when we were not able to provide programmed events. Content on associated topics, such as Art on the Greenways or health-related topics, were generated more consistently. In addition, we coordinated with Community partners and national organizations to provide additional content for the greenways audience (an example of this being the national **Walk With a Doc** program's virtual walk with Dr. Sanjay Gupta). The goal throughout 2020 was to remain highly visible despite no active programming on the greenways. Programs such as the **Bicentennial Challenge** and the **Indy Greenways Fall Cleanup** provided hash tag posting requirements, further generating participation opportunities and content to share.

The results of creating a stronger social media presence were significant. Efforts in 2020 **nearly doubled** our Facebook audience increasing followers from 228 at the beginning of 2020 to 412 on December 1, 2020. Throughout the year, the 31 Facebook-posted events reached 21.4k people and generated 843 responses.

In addition to content creation, we also worked with Community Partners throughout 2020 on expanding the greenways audience base via posts and shares on their own social media accounts.

Presentations. In 2020, we also continued to take advantage of invitations and opportunities to attend conferences and give presentations about our pilot project and our ongoing work. This year, we made presentations to the following groups:

- On February 12, the outcomes of the 12-month-pilot program were presented to the **Indiana Parks and Recreation Association** at their 2020 Annual Conference in Muncie,
- On March 13, an overview of the Greenways Partnership was virtually presented to the **Reconnecting To Our Waterways** steering committee.
- On August 7, an overview of the Greenways Partnership was virtually presented to the **National Walk Bike Places** national conference in Indianapolis. The presentation "Make New Friends: Leveraging Partnerships for Greater Community Impact" examined three case studies on the roles community partners can play in the success of an organization.
- Also in August, an update of our work was presented to the **Indianapolis Greenways Development Committee**.

The Greenways Partnership continues to seek ways to share the results and outcomes of our work with other groups.

Partnership Development

Partnership development is one of the most critical tasks completed by the Greenways Partnership, whether it's fostering lasting and meaningful partnerships or developing new community partners. Community Partners are identified based upon how their missions overlap with the target user groups for programming or specific expertise with potential target audiences and/or subject matter. The intent of the community partner's role is to help provide guidance, assistance, and direction to program development. Partner's specific roles included:

- Identifying needs and requirements for target group participation.
- Identifying program needs for their specific target group.
- Assisting in the development of program elements.
- Assisting in the communication and promotion of program events.
- Providing support for greenway programs.
- Assisting in the development and facilitation of programs.

During our one-year pilot project from 2018-19, the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership had four Community Partners whose partnership continued through 2020:

- **The Arts Council of Indianapolis-** The Arts Council of Indianapolis “fosters meaningful engagement in the arts by nurturing a culture where artists and arts organizations can thrive.” With this mission in mind, and with a desire to provide a programming focus on public art along Indy Greenways, the Arts Council was a key community partner in identifying and facilitating public art programmed events along the greenways and raising the credibility of the programming.
- **Jump IN for Healthy Kids-** Jump IN is a “community-wide effort to empower kids in Central Indiana to live healthier lives!” Their mission is “to create healthy places, neighborhoods, and communities where families have real opportunities to make healthy choices that promote their health, vitality and well-being, including access to affordable, healthy food and meaningful opportunities to play and be active.” With their focus on kids and families, Jump IN helped to develop programs that furthered their mission while providing meaningful family engagements along the greenways.
- **CICOA Aging and In-home Solutions-** “Unbiased experts connecting older adults, people with disabilities and family caregivers in Central Indiana with home and community-based services,” CICOA provides services for active seniors living independently and their engagement helped to identify opportunities to engage senior communities with greenway programming.
- **Marion County Department of Health (MCDH) -** The mission of the Marion County Department of Health is “to promote physical, mental, and environmental health, prevent and protect against disease, injury, and disability.” The partnership with the MCDH occurred late in the 12-month pilot project, but having them as part of the ongoing partnership is critical given the extent of our Health, Fitness and Wellbeing as part of programming.

Eskenazi Health Joins the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership. At the beginning of 2020, we were pleased to announce that Eskenazi Health joined the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership as one of our community partners, with a specific focus on helping to plan and grow the **Walk**

with a Doc program. During the 2018-2019 pilot year, Eskenazi Health was involved with the early development of this program through the work of Dr. Carrie Leathers. Throughout 2019, she facilitated five walks engaging with over 80 participants and talking with people about how walking can develop healthy habits and lead to better health and well-being. Through Eskenazi Health's partnership, two additional physicians, Dr. Juan Carlos Venis and Dr. Daniel Pino, joined the program to facilitate walks and expand upon what was already developed for the program. In addition to the three physicians, Eskenazi Health also brought additional planning resources and promotional efforts to the program. Walks were planned monthly for 2020 beginning in April and running through October. Many of the walk locations in 2020 were coordinated on greenways near Eskenazi Health Center locations and 2020 were coordinated on greenways near Eskenazi Health Center locations and scheduled in tandem with other **Eskenazi Health** events, broadening the potential reach for the program. Many of the walks were also coordinated near facilities where **CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions** provides services, creating even greater opportunities for getting more residents involved, and helping to expand the missions of our other community partners. We were extremely excited to welcome Eskenazi Health to the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership!

Reconnecting to Our Waterways (ROW). Throughout 2020, there were discussions about the potential overlap of programs and facilities with Reconnecting to Our Waterways (ROW), an initiative of Indianapolis neighborhoods and residents, private and public organizations, and civic leaders, that operates from a collective impact model to highlight and improve the conditions around Indianapolis' waterways. Due to the nature of programming by the Indy Greenways system, there are many areas where the goals of Reconnecting to our Waterways and the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership share common space. Throughout late 2019 into 2020, there have been ongoing discussions concerning potential programming and/or partnering opportunities. In May 2020, the Greenways Partnership was formally invited to sit on ROW's steering committee. In response, an invitation was extended for ROW's Executive Director to join the Greenways Partnership Community Partner meeting in October. Discussions are ongoing regarding partnership opportunities available between the two organizations.

Other Potential Partners. We continue to identify and meet with potential partners to explore opportunities for longer-term relationships. This year, there have been several programs coordinated with **Keep Indianapolis Beautiful** and the Partnership has been contacted by **Visit Indy** and **Bike Indiana** about establishing partnerships. We will continue to explore those relationships and engage in further conversations into 2021.

Awards and Recognitions

The Greenways Partnership was pleased to receive several recognitions in 2020 for ongoing work.

American Planning Association, Indiana Chapter- Best Practice- Achievement in Planning Award. In March, the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership was recognized by the American Planning Association, Indiana Chapter with their **Best Practice- Achievement in Planning Award** for work on the 12-month pilot project. The award recognizes best practices "for a specific planning tool, practice, program, project, or process that emphasizes results and demonstrates how innovative and state-of-the-art planning methods and practices help to create communities of lasting value." Criteria used to evaluate the effort included:

- **Originality and innovation** — how the project presents a visionary approach or innovative concept to address specific needs.

- **Implementation and Transferability** — what steps have been taken to build momentum and public support and the potential as a model for application by others.
- **Engagement** — how various public interests were involved and the extent of that involvement, including those who historically have been left out of the planning process, and demonstration of public and private support.
- **Effectiveness and results** — how the results have made a difference in the lives of the people affected and the potential for long-term benefit.

Originally scheduled to be presented on March 17 at APA-IN's spring conference in Bloomington, the award was presented virtually due to cancellation. A special video presentation of APA-IN's 2020 Awards can be viewed at <https://www.greenwayspartnership.com/post/greenways-partnership-work-recognized-as-best-practice>.

Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (INASLA) Honor Award in Communications. In August, the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership and its pilot program was recognized by the Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (INASLA) with an **Honor Award in Communications**. The award "Recognizes achievements in communicating landscape architecture information, technology, theory, or practice to those within or outside the profession." The Honor Award is the highest award given per category.

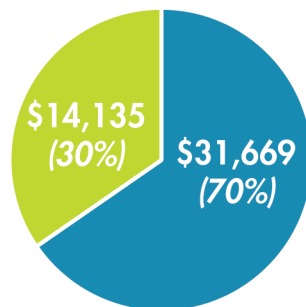
In its award announcement, INASLA noted that "the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership and its efforts with the Indianapolis Greenways Pilot Programming Project provided the first greenway programming effort in Indianapolis, the first known and documented programming plan on any greenway system, and one of only a few known efforts in the country. While several similar greenway and trail systems provide some level of programming, this effort was one of the few that provided the metrics, documentation, and outcomes for a wide variety of programs, and is the first to provide its outcomes to the general public. The Greenways Partnership program has demonstrated the local demand for program experiences on Indy Greenways, and the documented work provides a blueprint that will be used for years to come for future programming in Indianapolis."

Recognition from such prestigious groups is further validation of the great work completed during the pilot project as well as ongoing work resulting from the pilot project. Congratulations to all of our partners for these recognitions!

2020 Operations & Finances

With the grant for the 12-month-pilot project complete, **Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group (TSWDG)** continued to operate the Greenways Partnership on behalf of the **Indianapolis Parks Foundation** and the **City of Indianapolis**. TSWDG oversaw and facilitated the ongoing operations and administration of the Greenways Partnership organization and structure in 2020. With limited funding available, this effort was intended to provide some level of basic staff hours for maintaining the presence and function of the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership through 2020. Operational costs and labor were provided by **Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group** and **the Indianapolis Parks Foundation**.

The total 2020 operational costs for the Greenways Partnership through December 15, 2020 was \$45,804.00, equaling 551 labor hours. This total amount is based upon labor hours and expenses billed to the Partnership.



2020 Funding (January 1- December 15, 2020)

Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group - **\$31,669**
Indianapolis Parks Foundation - **\$14,135**
TOTAL 2020 OPERATIONAL COST - **\$45,804**

Of this total, and based upon the reduced labor rates, Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group provided for \$31,669 of the 2020 operational costs.

The Indianapolis Parks Foundation provided \$14,135 towards the ongoing operations and maintenance of the Partnership. This equates to 12 hours per month plus expenses. Specifically, the Parks Foundation's contractual fee included the following task items during 2020:

- Coordinating and facilitating ongoing partnership development and activities on behalf of the Partnership;
- Facilitating ongoing correspondence, meetings, and meeting notes for community partner meetings;
- Developing and maintaining ongoing communication between the Partnership and its Community Partners;
- Development, coordination, and maintenance of online social media and website, including costs for ongoing domain registration; and
- Assisting Community Partners with their ongoing program development planning.

A SUMMARY of 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INDIANAPOLIS GREENWAYS PARTNERSHIP

Sustained the operation and organization of the Partnership despite ten months of restrictions on the very types of events we are charged to create and facilitate.



43
Total Programs Planned

14
Virtual Programs

29
Total In-Person Planned*

*11 of which were able to be facilitated

31 Posted Facebook Events

21.4k
People Reached



843
Event Responses

ESKENAZI HEALTH

Eskenazi Health joined the Greenways Partnership, growing our Community Partners to five. In addition, we bolstered our relationship with four additional potential Community Partners.

228 to 412
Facebook Audience



Nearly doubled the Facebook audience from the beginning of 2020 to December 1, 2020



Completed a **full upgrade** of our website



INDIANAPOLIS
GREENWAYS
PARTNERSHIP



Developed **15 virtual and/or self-guided** programs throughout 2020

2020 IN SUMMARY

Every experience is an opportunity to learn. From the inception of the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership, we have treated the idea of programming on the greenways as a living, breathing laboratory exploring not only proof of concept in the idea behind the programming, but also in testing each idea against the reality of providing those programs. In the 2014 City Corps Fellowship, we evaluated the concept against case studies of proven outcomes, specifically in the case of the Atlanta Beltline. Our experience in that exploration provided the impetus to further explore the possibilities in Indianapolis. Once funded, the 12-month-pilot program gave us the ability to test our assumptions, to identify the staying capacity of programs, to evaluate successes and misses, and to weigh our perceptions against the desires and interests of the communities. The pilot program allowed us to document our activities, identify things that worked and did not work, and evaluate the outcomes of the investments and efforts made for 2020.

2020 was a year of limited funding, limited opportunities, and limited chances in achieving the overall goal of attracting more users to the greenways and demonstrating a broader set of uses for a greater audience. However, 2020 has also provided lessons and proof of concept.

Stepping back and taking a longer view, we learned a lot about additional opportunities and different types of programs necessitated by a pivot of the physical context in which all of the programming occurs. We documented a second set of financial numbers in the administration of the organization, and we used our limitations wisely to increase our presence and find creative programming ideas we had never before considered. Despite the overwhelming constraints and limits faced, the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership was still impactful in ways that were core to its mission. That is testament to the power in the organization's original ideas!

Despite the unique and difficult circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Greenways Partnership proved to be resilient and found much success in 2020. ***A summary of 2020 Accomplishments include:***

- Sustained the operation and organization of the Partnership despite ten months of restrictions on the very types of events we are charged to create and facilitate.
- Gained Eskenazi Health as a Community Partner, growing the Community Partners to five.
- Bolstered the Partnership's relationship with four additional potential Community Partners.
- Completed a full upgrade of the Partnership's website.
- Planned for 29 total in-person programs in 2020, 11 of which were successfully facilitated.
- Developed 15 virtual and/or self-guided programs throughout 2020.
- Increased the organization's Facebook audience from 228 followers at the beginning of 2020 to 412 followers by December 1, 2020.
- Posted 31 events on Facebook in 2020 that reached a total of 21.4k people and generated 843 event responses.
- Presented the Partnership's work at one national conference, one state conference, and to two local partner groups.
- Received two major awards recognizing the significance of the Partnership's efforts during the 12-month pilot project.

2020 was certainly a unique year!



2020 in pictures...some of the lasting images from the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership from 2020.

SO WHERE DO WE GO IN 2021?

The Partnership will likely face another year with limited funding options. How do we keep our core capacity in place and continue to build upon the foundation created?

There are several objectives that need to be considered for 2021:

- Continue to establish a sustainable organization dedicated to greenway programming.
 - Work to find a sustainable line of financial support to help offset the ongoing administration and operation of the Partnership.
 - Work to ensure the continuation of our Legacy Programs (***Walk With a Doc*** for example) with Community Partners, reducing the amount of funding needed from the Greenways Partnership.
 - Continue to expand the list of Community Partners that bring value to the Partnership and can expand program opportunities
 - Continue to develop Legacy Programs with each of the Community Partners.
 - Align programming with updated mission of the **Parks Alliance**, with greater focus on the Riverside Park area.
 - Continue to build awareness and expand the Partnership's audience.
- Incorporate lessons learned from the pandemic in 2020 into the Partnership's planned future programming to broaden program experiences and build upon the number of virtual programs offered.
 - Continue to promote legacy projects facilitated by Community Partners.
 - Continue to develop a mix of in-person and virtual and/or self-initiated programming that promotes use of the greenways for groups and individuals.
 - Continue to enforce safe standards for preventing the spread of COVID-19.
 - Find ways to continue to knit our programming into the community's broader planned programming (similar to how the ***Bicentennial Challenge*** was designated an official Bicentennial event)
- Initiate the next level of potential program development.
 - Identify broader community initiatives that can involve the Greenways Partnership organization and program activities (similar to ROW, Riverside Regional Park)
 - Encourage bigger thinking about the size and impact of potential programs.
 - Strengthen potential service to low economic areas.
 - Focus on providing "inclusiveness" in the development of our programming.

2021 promises to be an even more challenging year than 2020 as resources continue to be reduced. The uncertainty of the conditions of the pandemic provides even greater challenge. Our hope is to continue to provide a strong organization and to continue to implement the quality programming that has become our benchmark.

INDIANAPOLIS GREENWAYS PARTNERSHIP



Conclusion

It would be easy to look at 2020 and see much disappointment. The COVID-19 Pandemic forcing the cancellation of many great events planned for 2020 runs contrary to the idealistic views of the Greenways Partnership leading groups of people on new adventures. It would be easy to cast aside the Partnership's 2020 efforts as another example of the many things cancelled or sidelined due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. But that would not be the true story of 2020.

2020 was challenging and frustrating, but looking back reveals that it has been a good year with positive takeaways despite the challenges.

2020 was a year of growth---growth in the number of partners, growth in our targeted audience base, and growth in the types of programs that were offered through a virtual format. It was a year of growth in solidifying our legacy programs, even if many were ultimately cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

2020 was a year of resiliency---resiliency in holding the organization together and strengthening the partnerships in place. It was the year that demonstrated just how strong of an organization we had in place, how resilient the organization could be in adapting to the unforeseen and a year of building upon the existing tools and mechanisms that were already developed, lending to greater sustainability for the organization.

2020 was a year of success. We were not able to show the same level of active participants in physical programming like the pilot project, and we will likely never know the true number of residents reached through our increased efforts, virtual programs, and online content development. The numbers reflecting the level of outreach and engagement are likely much larger than they would seem at first glance, and that, after all, is what this organization was founded for---actively engaging residents and demonstrating ways in which Indy Greenways can become a larger part of their lives.

We can easily recognize what was lost in 2020, what was different than before, and what we missed out due to the pandemic. But the true success of the Indianapolis Greenways Partnership lies in how we adapted to meet the challenges of 2020---how we found ways to grow, be resilient and find success even in the most difficult of times.

