



Transportation Times

Adams-Allen-DeKalb-Wells

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Decatur, Indiana Downtown Parking Study

NIRCC recently completed a downtown parking study for the City of Decatur, Indiana. The primary objective of the study was to ensure there was sufficient and convenient parking available now and in the future to promote downtown development and activity. The study provided the City with a comprehensive downtown parking study and information to help support decisions regarding parking management and the development of future public parking facilities. To help facilitate this study NIRCC received assistance from City of Decatur staff as well as students from Ivy Tech in Fort Wayne.

The downtown area of Decatur is alive with activity and continues to improve its amenities for both residents and visitors. Proposed public revitalization projects will further enhance the downtown area; encouraging more activities and attracting more people. All of this presents the City with a challenge to ensure current and future parking needs can be satisfied. The study's focus was on the downtown area of Decatur, an area that is commonly referred to as the Central Business District (CBD). A Central Business District represents the commercial and business center of the community. Decatur's CBD contains a mix of commercial, retail, and government land use along with some residential apartments in the core area and single family homes on the fringe.

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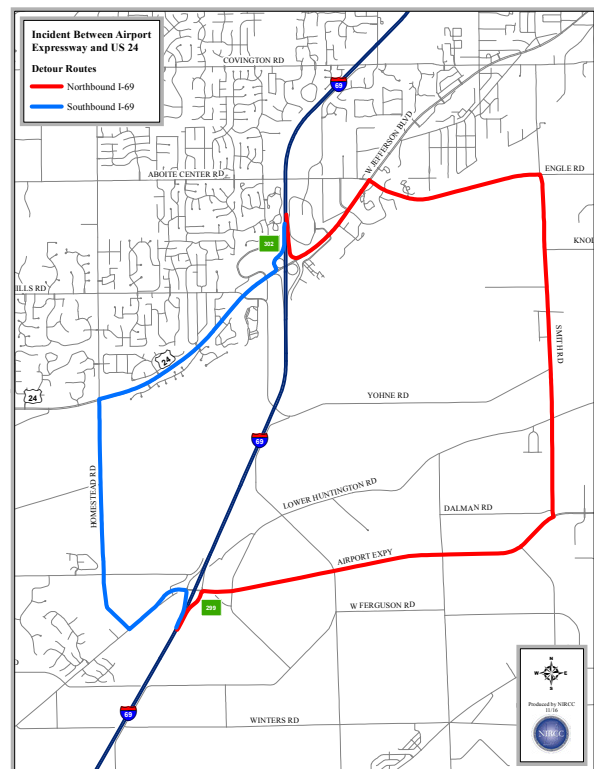
Federal Highway Administration (Non-voting member)

Emergency Interstate Detour Route Plan



NIRCC recently completed updating the Allen County Emergency Interstate Detour Route plan. The purpose of this plan is to help local agencies with traffic flow in the event of I-69 or I-469 is closed or restricted. Each segment of interstate in the county has a narrative for each direction of travel and a map showing the corresponding routes. The two most significant changes made during this update were the inclusions of the new interchange at Union Chapel Road and I-69 and rerouting traffic to use Coverdale Road from I-469.

In addition to adding a new interchange and roadway to the plan there was also a sign inventory conducted. Staff utilized the latest mobile data collection technology to do a complete inventory of all the detour route signs. The existing signs were given a GPS location and several pictures were taken showing the signs location and current condition. Staff then analyzed the pictures of each sign to verify that all necessary information was present. These items were the route direction, a sign designating it as an emergency detour, a placard for what interstate it was detouring, and a directional arrow.



After the analysis was completed a list was compiled of signs that were missing information or locations that needed to be added. There were several signs that had been knocked down over time and needed to be replaced. The completed

list was then presented to INDOT who ordered signs that would be installed by the local agencies in the county. Over a couple of months all of the signs on the list were installed and then added into the inventory. NIRCC will be updating this inventory every 3 years.

NIRCC also worked with local agencies in DeKalb County for the creation of the DeKalb County Emergency Interstate Detour Route plan. The plan for DeKalb includes the four interchanges along I-69. There were no existing signs on the routes so in cooperation with INDOT and local agencies all new signs were installed. After receiving confirmation from the local agencies of the signs being installed, NIRCC then inventoried all the signs. The detour sign inventory for DeKalb County will also be updated every 3 years.

Community Development Updates and Labor Standards Administration

Did you know that NIRCC is available to assist communities within Adams, Allen, DeKalb, and Wells Counties with community and economic development activities? We can assist communities with projects receiving funding through a myriad of sources such as grants and loans from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), the State Revolving Fund (SRF), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and other State, Federal, and private programs. The NIRCC community development team has the capabilities to assist with project development and to provide grant writing, grant administration, and labor standards administration services. Information regarding available funding opportunities and the community development services provided by the NIRCC community development team is available by contacting Matt Vondran at Matt.Vondran@co.allen.in.us or Kyle Quandt at Kyle.Quandt@co.allen.in.us or calling (260) 449-7309.



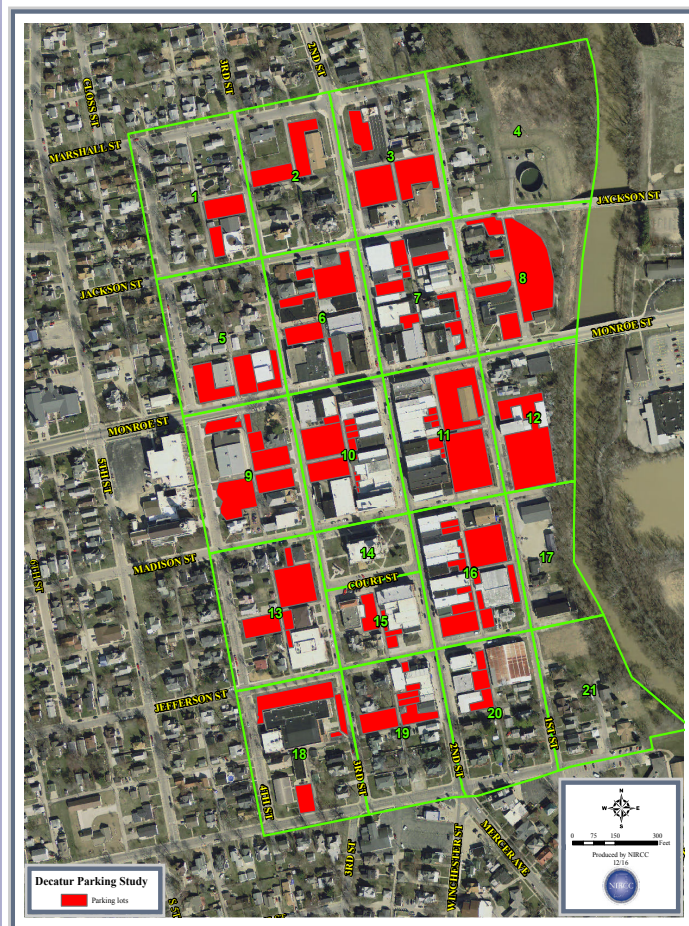
Labor Standards Administration

With the new construction season getting underway, Labor Standards Administration can be a popular topic. Federally funded projects are most often required to follow rules and regulations of the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA) which requires labor on these construction projects to be paid the prevailing Federal wage. NIRCC has over 17 years of experience assisting communities with following the DBRA requirements by doing the heavy lifting and tedious payroll reviews. Projects we have recently provided Labor Standards Administration (LSA) for include sanitary sewer related projects (WWTP improvements and construction, sewer extensions and rehabilitation, and septic elimination) for the City of Bluffton, the Town of Huntertown, and the Allen County Regional Water and Sewer District, that are being funded through the State Revolving Fund (SRF). Please contact NIRCC if you are in need of LSA services at 260-449-7309.

Decatur Parking Study Continued...

The study area is bounded on the east by the St Mary's River, Fourth Street to the west, Marshall Street to the north, and Adams Street to the south. In order to identify meaningful supply and demand relationships and aid in data collection, the study area was divided into 21 smaller units representing each City block within the CBD (see map on next page). In general, the centerline of the road system was used as the block boundaries; this accommodated the assignment of on-street parking to the adjacent block. Using a simple coding system, each block was assigned a number to assist with tracking parking data and identifying areas of the CBD that currently experience surpluses or deficits of parking spaces. This process also aided in assessing new development and its potential impact on parking conditions.

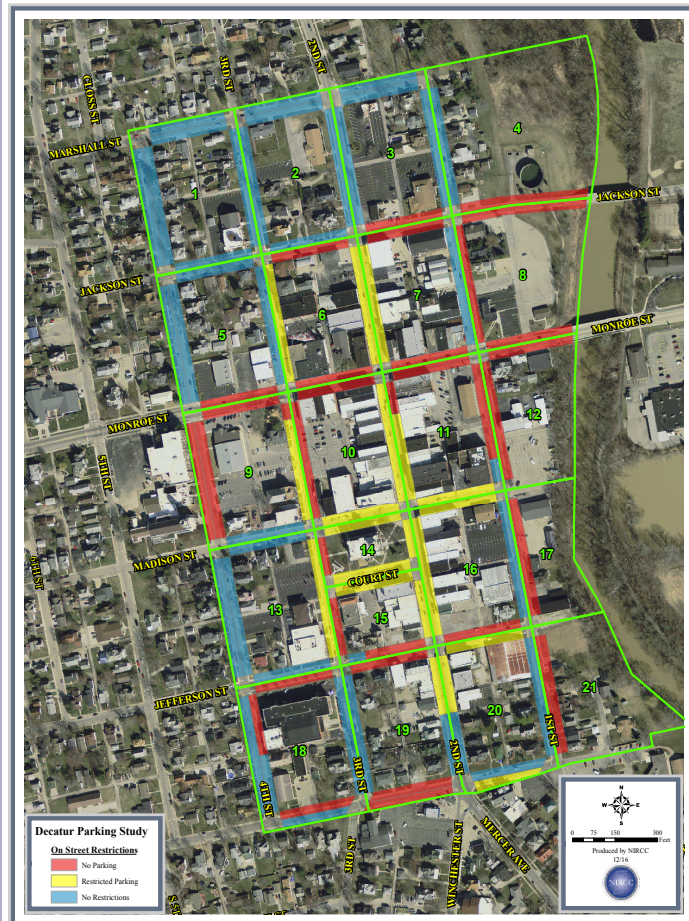
The parking supply in Decatur consists of two types of parking; on-street parking (curb side parking) and off-street parking (parking lots). On-street parking is available to anyone regardless of trip purpose, but generally has time limitations. The off-street parking includes public parking lots which are available to the general public regardless of trip purpose (some may have restrictions) or private parking lots which are only available to specific users. These distinctions are



important when determining a downtown’s available parking supply and subsequent peak period surplus or deficiencies. For this study, data was collected for all on-street parking spaces and off-street surface parking lots. Special attention was placed on distinguishing lots that were private from those allowing unrestricted public parking. Parking restrictions were noted as well.

NIRCC organized the data collection effort for the study using City of Decatur staff and students from Ivy Tech Community College. The first task was to get an accurate inventory of parking spaces. To do this NIRCC used a combination of the “Decatur Downtown Plan” to record on-street restrictions, the most recent aerial photography to inventory and estimate the number of spaces in parking lots and along streets, and field checks to verify counts and estimations.

Once completed, the inventory documented the number and type of parking spaces for each off-street parking lot and the number of on-street parking spaces for each section of roadway within the study area. Within the study area, there are a total of 1,688 parking spaces. The off-street parking lots account for 1,108 of these

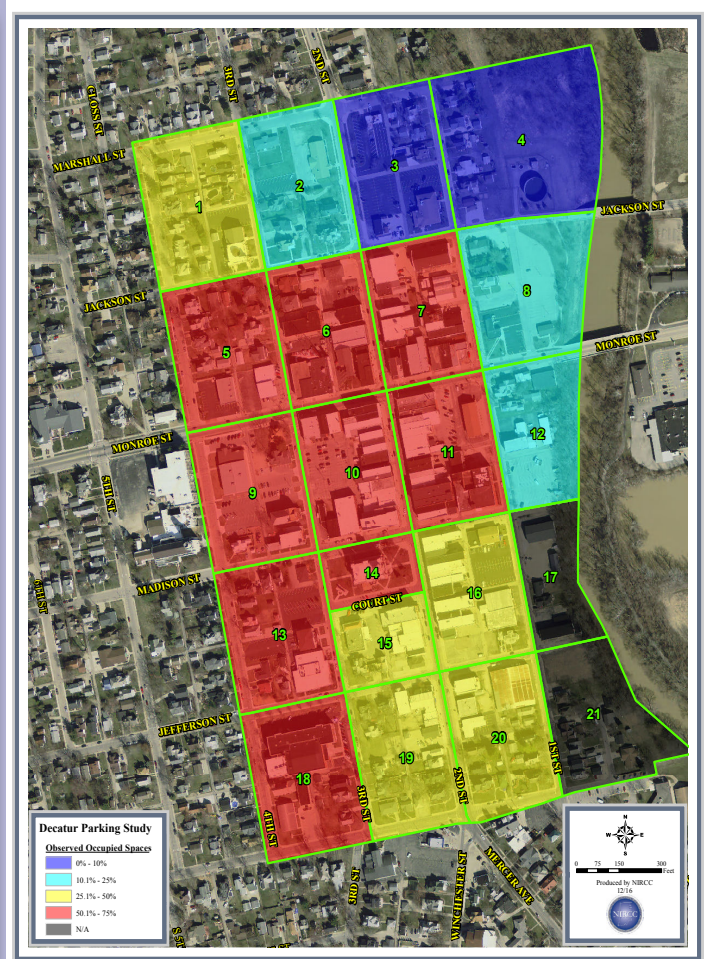


spaces and on-street parking spaces account for 580.

The next task conducted was a parking occupancy survey to determine how many cars are currently utilizing the on-street and off-street parking facilities. Using prepared maps, the data collection team performed a field check, counting the number of occupied spaces for all of the identified parking lots and on-street parking spaces. The occupancy survey was performed on four separate weekdays; twice during the morning hours and twice during the afternoon. The maximum occupancy recorded of the four surveyed time-periods was used to denote the typical occupancy for the respective lot or on-street parking section. The on-street parking space occupancy was recorded using the same method.

The table below shows the study area (both on and off-street) parking occupancy by block. At the time of the survey, there were 1,688 parking spaces within the study area. The maximum observed occupancy was 775, or 46% of all available parking spaces. It is important to acknowledge there are a number of private lots used by fraternal organizations and churches that were mostly empty when surveyed for occupancy. Including these spaces skews the occupancy rate for some blocks. NIRCC observed that blocks in the core of the CBD had the highest usage.

Downtown Parking Occupancy			
Block	Available Spaces	Occupancy Spaces	Percent Occupied
1	106	31	29%
2	89	22	25%
3	146	14	10%
4	13	1	8%
5	102	73	72%
6	59	41	69%
7	62	40	65%
8	97	18	19%
9	123	66	54%
10	112	72	64%
11	108	70	65%
12	68	8	12%
13	121	81	67%
14	42	25	60%
15	63	27	43%
16	141	63	45%
17	0	0	0%
18	95	72	76%
19	71	28	39%
20	70	23	33%
21	0	0	0%
Total	1,688	775	46%



In analyzing the results of this study, it's important to discuss the concept of “practical capacity” using the parking occupancy data for surpluses and deficits. Practical capacity represents the occupancy level where once breached, motorists have difficulty finding a convenient parking space and must circulate or “cruise” before finding a parking space. Practical capacity is generally set at 85% occupancy. With the exception of special events, attempts should be made to provide a sufficient number of parking spaces to remain under practical capacity. When practical capacity is exceeded, drivers are required to search longer and farther for available parking, resulting in the driver spending more time searching for an available space. This leads to driver frustration, additional travel, downtown congestion and potential safety concerns. These outcomes discourage downtown trips, especially for drivers who wish to remain parked for only a short period of time (shoppers, diners, infrequent visitors, etc.).

After removing the private lots used by fraternal organizations and churches and applying the “practical capacity” to the remaining number of spaces, the

overall downtown surplus/deficit was calculated. There was an overall surplus of 489 spaces with ranges from a low of 9% utilization in Block 4 to a high of 96% utilization in Block 18. While these numbers show that the City of Decatur doesn't have any blocks currently showing a deficit of available parking and the study area as a whole has an adequate amount of parking, individual blocks may be close to reaching capacity. The data also shows that on-street parking in the CBD core area is heavily utilized, and usage becomes sparser in the CBD fringe area. The CBD blocks support office/employment activity in which employees arrive early and consume the most convenient spaces, often occupying 2-hour curb side spaces. Some employee-oriented parking activity is "spilling over" into residential neighborhoods as well. The nature of parking demand begins to change as shoppers, visitors, and lunchtime diners begin to arrive. These individuals search for the most convenient parking because of their short duration of stay or their unfamiliarity with the area. Because employees occupy the most conveniently located spaces and because infrequent visitors are unfamiliar with or unwilling to use less conveniently located on-street spaces in other areas they perceive that there is a shortage in parking spaces.

In addition to collecting parking inventory and occupancy data, NIRCC employed two complementary methods for assessing parking needs in downtown Decatur. The first method used was a business assessment and questionnaire type survey, and the second approach evaluated parking needs based on business type land utilization. These methods followed guidelines established by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) for estimating parking generation and parking needs.

Decatur summer staff served as a data collection team to conduct a business assessment and questionnaire within the study area. The data collection team went door to door to all businesses within the study area to determine their customer and employee parking needs, and locations currently used for these parking needs. Data was also collected to identify the name of the business, type of business, business hours, peak hours of operation, estimated number of customers per day, typical duration of customer visits and any comments regarding parking needs. If a location had multiple ten-

ants, information was collected for each business. This assessment provided a solid business perspective of the parking situation and the comments offered useful insight on the business owner's perception of parking needs in downtown Decatur.

Next, information on building size was obtained from Adams County property tax records. This information was joined with the questionnaire data to provide a complete depiction of each business. The building size, or square footage, is an integral piece of data necessary to accurately calculate peak parking needs based on the ITE parking generation methodology. Parking demand factors were then assigned for the land use and/or the business type. These factors have been derived for a variety of land uses including industrial, residential, lodging, recreational, medical, retail, office services and institutional. The primary uses in downtown Decatur are office, service, retail and residential. The factors are based on rates obtained from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), "Parking Generation" - 4th Edition. The factors are extremely useful for estimating current parking demands, and demands for existing and future developments.

There are several noteworthy changes in downtown Decatur that will have an impact on parking. A new parking lot is proposed at the northwest corner of North 1st Street and Madison Street. This lot is expected to provide approximately 60 spaces within Block 11. A parking lot that has been fenced in and unused on North 2nd Street in Block 6 has been purchased by a neighboring business and will have approximately 35 new parking spaces available. A street-scape project has also been designed for Madison Street from N 1st Street to N 2nd Street. This project will eliminate approximately three on-street parking spaces.

The table on the next page shows comparisons of Generated Needs and Survey Needs versus what is available according to Practical Capacity. In this table Practical Capacity has taken into account several changes that will be occurring in Decatur, therefore the numbers are different from the previous Practical Capacity we have been talking about. Under Generated Needs, this table combines the generated parking needs (based on business type and square footage) for existing downtown businesses and the additional potential needs based on

Downtown Surplus/Deficit							
Blocks	Practical Capacity	Generated Needs			Survey Needs		
		Needs	Percent	Surplus / Deficit	Needs	Percent	Surplus / Deficit
1	61	27	45%	34	5	8%	56
2	57	0	0%	57	5	9%	52
3	45	4	13%	41	19	42%	26
4	11	3	25%	8	0	0%	11
5	87	31	36%	56	36	41%	51
6	80 ²	185	231%	-105	199	249%	-119
7	52	163	314%	-111	81	156%	-29
8	82	32	39%	50	24	29%	58
9	98	37	38%	61	112	114%	-14
10	95	255	268%	-160	110	116%	-15
11	138 ²	190	137%	-52	99	72%	39
12	58	3	5%	55	0	0%	58
13	103	33	32%	70	82	80%	21
14	36	56	156%	-20	56	156%	-20
15	54	103	191%	-49	100	185%	-46
16	76 ¹	135	178%	-59	98	129%	-22
17	0	0	0%	0	6	0%	-6
18	68	71	105%	-3	84	124%	-16
19	60	43	71%	17	31	52%	29
20	54	61	112%	-7	51	94%	3
21	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0
Totals	1,315	1,434	109%	-119	1,198	91%	117

1 Removed on-street parking on W Madison St(3 spaces for streetscape project)
2 Added spaces for proposed newly available lots(30 in Block 6, 46 in Block 11)

vacant buildings and unoccupied storefronts becoming occupied. The table also shows the needs identified by the current business owners from the survey data. The comparison of generated and survey results for existing businesses reveals similar parking needs, however the business owners do identify slightly higher needs than the generated values.

Within each block you can see the resulting parking surpluses or deficits. The practical capacity, generated needs, surveyed needs, surpluses and deficits are based on the specific blocks where the business and parking facilities are located. It is important to keep in mind that the parking spaces on lots owned by fraternal organizations and churches that restrict parking to members only are not included in the practical capacities. Also, the generated parking needs include the needs for restaurants and bars, though their peak periods for parking needs are not commensurate with normal weekday business hours. This is worth mentioning since restaurants and bars tend to have some of the highest parking rates and their peak periods occur after 5:00pm.

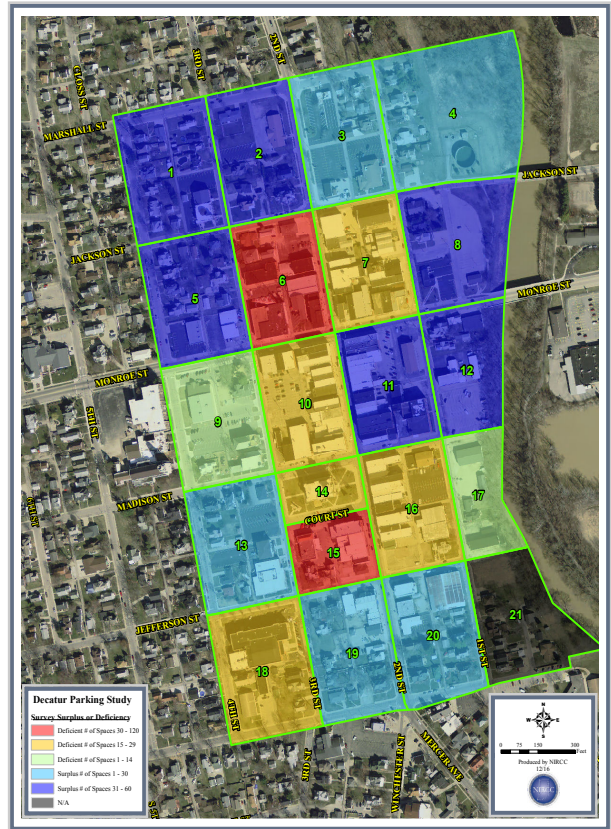
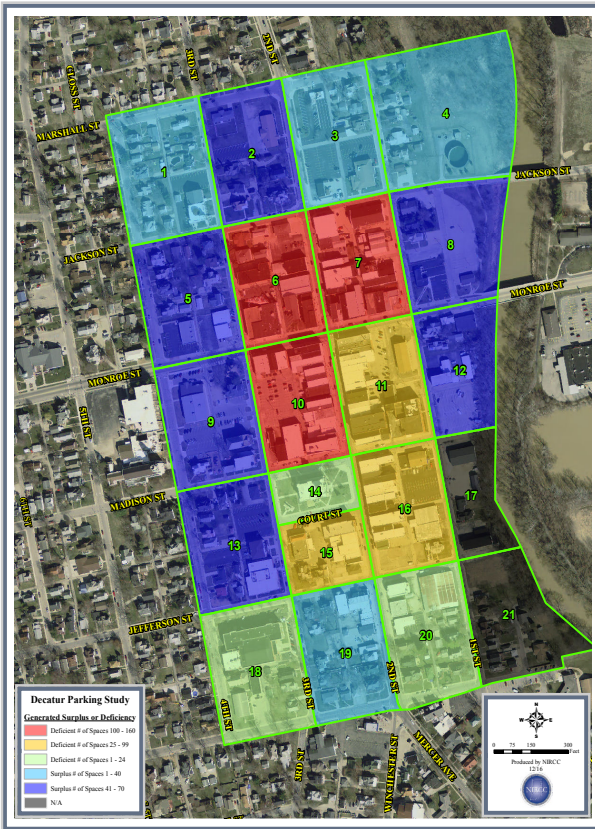
From this analysis you can see that with the total potential for the number of parking spaces needed within the study area, at full building occupancy, the result would be a system-wide deficiency of approximately 120 spaces. While full building occupancy in downtown Decatur is a desirable goal, it is unlikely

due to normal business transitions, and the analysis was based on parking needs for peak period of the individual business types that exhibit some variation throughout the day. The peak periods for banks, hair salons, restaurants and government offices vary. However, knowing the potential need for parking based on full occupancy is useful for determining a reasonable parking inventory. It is also important to remember that the analysis is based on practical capacity set at 85% of the actual total inventory, which will be approximately 1,550 spaces. Comparing the actual capacity against the total potential need would leave approximately 115 spaces unoccupied. It is also important to realize that the current parking need as identified by the business owners results in surpluses of practical capacity of 117 spaces and actual capacity of 352 spaces.

In summary, it is safe to conclude that from a system-wide perspective, the current parking supply in downtown Decatur is adequate to meet current parking needs although there are several areas that experience parking supply deficits based on current needs estimates. It is uncertain if parking surpluses in one block or sector of the study area can absorb the deficits generated in others. The maps on the next page illustrate a block by block analysis of surplus/deficit conditions if new potential parking changes occur as planned. However, it is important to look at each block of the downtown in relation to the existing parking conditions and its development potential.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of the parking lots and other peripheral parking facilities, it is recommended that the City of Decatur adhere to policies and management strategies that: 1) increase the attractiveness of parking facilities; 2) provide information on the location and availability of public parking; 3) provide sufficient long-term employee parking and discourage employee use of time restricted parking spaces; 4) reduce the need for extensive parking search patterns; and 5) achieve these objectives in a cost effective manner.

The parking inventory and analysis does not indicate a significant parking problem currently exists in downtown Decatur; however there are a number of specific blocks or locations where deficiencies do exist as indicated by their practical parking capacities. The



analysis does indicate, that typically, adjacent blocks do have unused capacity and currently exhibit parking surpluses.

Research completed by the Urban Land Institute suggest that short-term parkers are willing to walk 400 feet from their vehicle to their destination, long-term parkers, typically employees, are willing to walk 800 feet, and special event parkers are willing to walk up to 1,500 feet. It is also known that our willingness to walk is directly dependent on real or probable costs and the level of safety and comfort of the walking experience. This should hold true for downtown Decatur in that residents and visitors can be persuaded to walk further distances through improvements that enhance the pedestrian environment.

With this in mind, it is recommended that Decatur continues to promote sidewalk and trail development to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to the downtown area. The more opportunities residents and visitors have to safely walk and bike to downtown destinations, the demand for parking spaces will be diminished. Improving the cycling and walking experience using streetscape improvements, which Decatur is already doing, with wide sidewalks, landscaping and

the integration of art in the downtown contributes to a positive pedestrian experience.

While conducting this analysis NIRCC found several other ways Decatur may be able to help address their parking needs as well. The need for strict enforcement of time restrictions for on-street parking is one. Another consideration would be to identify specific spaces or create a parking permit program for businesses that experience problems with employee parking shortages. Posting signs identifying which parking lots are open for public parking and installing signs directing visitors (way-finding) from the primary roadways to open lots may increase parking efficiency as well. Way-finding is an important consideration to assist visitors unfamiliar with the downtown area to navigate to parking areas and locations of interest. Additional way-finding may be needed to facilitate navigation within the city. As redevelopment occurs and building occupancy rates increase, it may become necessary to utilize existing parking spaces that are underutilized by churches and fraternal organizations by exploring potential leases or purchase agreements. Also, as redevelopment occurs, the City of Decatur should assess parking needs and take advantage of opportunities to increase the number of parking spaces in the downtown area.

Pedal, Paddle, and Play Event June 10th! - Northeast Indiana Water Trails



The Northeast Indiana Water Trails (NEIWTs), housed under NIRCC, is hosting its second annual fundraiser, the 3Rivers Federal Credit Union Pedal, Paddle, and Play on June 10, 2017 in Downtown Fort Wayne. This annual event encourages participants to explore the water trails and river greenway to learn from area experts about river ecology, sustainability, and our role in protecting this vital resource. The event runs from 12 – 4pm with an after party from 4-8pm including food trucks, Hall’s bar service, and live entertainment from four local bands. The proceeds from the event will supplement the cost of the NEIWTs website, and installing informational signage about the water trails at boat access sites in NE Indiana. The event is sponsored by the following:



Since the inception of the Northeast Indiana Water Trails the group has had an impact on its mission to



increase recreation opportunities on our waterways by promoting boat access, water safety and stewardship, and the development of regional water trails that will empower our citizens to become more active and unified. The NEIWTs has encouraged river recreation by offering a water proof water trail map of the navigable rivers in the Western Lake Erie Basin in Indiana, is in the process of developing a website that will provide valuable information to those looking to paddle all navigable rivers in NE Indiana, and worked with state and local government to facilitate the transfer of land for a new boat access site on the St. Joseph River. Momentum on the rivers continues to grow in NE Indiana, and NEIWTs continues to be a force behind it.

Transportation Improvement Plan



TIP Update...

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is in the process of being updated. The 2018-2021 TIP will be presented at the May Urban Transportation Advisory

Board (UTAB) meeting for approval. After receiving approval from UTAB the TIP will then be forwarded to the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for approval. Anticipated approval from INDOT and FHWA is in June. Currently the Draft 2018-2021 TIP can be viewed at NIRCC.com. The next newsletter will include additional information on the 2018-2021 TIP.



Upcoming Transportation Projects

A number of local road and trail projects will be going to construction in the near future. This section of the Transportation Times will highlight and summarize several of these projects that are in process and have been programmed through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and will be ready for construction soon. To see a complete listing of our TIP projects visit our website at www.nircc.com.

Minnich Road & Tillman Road Roundabout

This project is currently scheduled for letting (bid opening) in January 2018. The design will involve the construction of a single lane roundabout. Construction on Tillman Road will extend from approximately 565 feet west to 540 feet east of the existing intersection. Construction on Minnich Road will extend from approximately 415 feet south to 525 feet north of the existing intersection.

As you can see from the picture showing the overlaid roundabout alignment, the intersection will be shifted



southwest of the existing intersection to minimize impact to the northeast and northwest residential properties. The project will include curb and gutter which will require a closed storm sewer system. There will also be open ditches adjacent to the project to perpetuate



existing offsite conditions.

The applicable design standards used for the roundabout design are taken from the INDOT Indiana Design Manual and the Federal Highway Roundabout Design Guide. Key design criteria applied to the project include storm water runoff being collected in ditches, yard inlets and curb inlets and conveyed through a combination of ditches and an enclosed storm sewer system. Storm water discharge for the project is anticipated to continue to discharge to the Scharpenberg Legal Drain. Roadway lighting will also be part of this project.

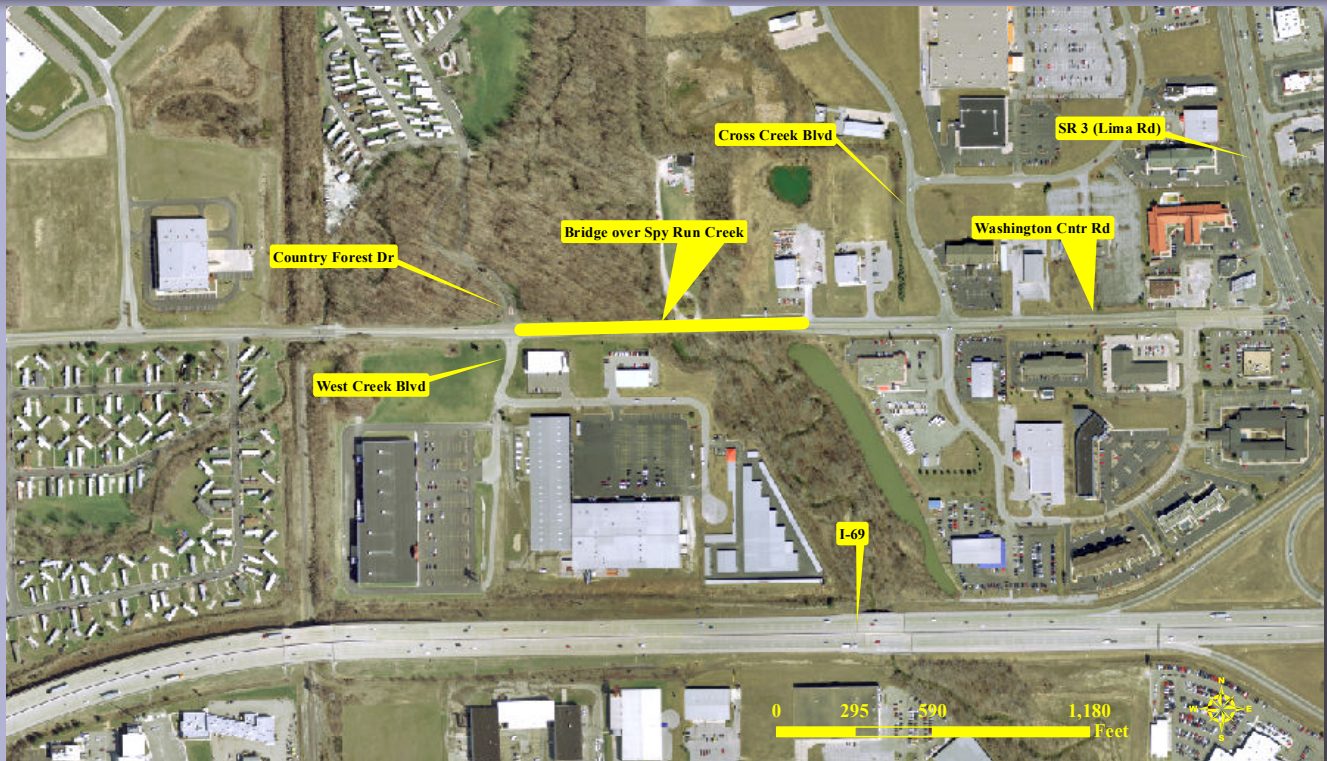
Washington Center Road Bridge #95

This project is scheduled to let (bids are opened on this date) on November 15, 2017. The primary objective of this project is to replace the existing bridge on Washington Center Road that crosses Spy Run Creek. This bridge is approximately 2300 feet west of the

Lima Road (State Road 3) intersection.

The existing structure has been deemed structurally deficient and the load rating is very poor. The existing bridge can only accommodate two lanes of traffic (one lane in each direction). The new bridge will be much wider and be able to accommodate 4 lanes of traffic (two lanes in each direction). The larger roadway width will tie into the intersections east (Cross Creek Boulevard) and west (West Creek Boulevard) of the bridge which have already been widened due to the presence of turn lanes.

In addition a sidewalk will be constructed on the north side of the roadway and will be carried across the bridge, allowing pedestrians to safely travel over Spy Run Creek. A curb and gutter will be added with underground storm sewer system to address the drainage on the roadway. It is anticipated the project will be completed by the Fall of 2018.



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