

PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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CITY CELEBRATES COMPLETION OF “PROJECT OPEN MARKET” *Market Street Reopens; Project Opens Up Near-Eastside for Development*

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard joined city and neighborhood leaders downtown this morning in a ribbon cutting ceremony on Market Street; marking the reopening of the street and signifying the completion of Project Open Market.

Project Open Market has been a city initiative to spur investment and create economic opportunity by removing the old I-65/70 interstate ramps on the Near-Eastside and building a new interchange along Washington Street to usher drivers into the heart of downtown.

“Gone are the days when the concrete interstate ramps divided the Near-Eastside from the downtown area,” said Mayor Greg Ballard. “Not only are we creating more residential and commercial opportunities by opening up this area, we’re also creating a safer, more pedestrian-friendly neighborhood.”

The price tag for Project Open Market is approximately \$22 million, financed mostly through federal grant dollars. The project has been years in the making and would not have been possible without the work of the Congressional delegation of Senators Evan Bayh and Richard Lugar and the late Representative Julia Carson, along with former Mayor Bart Peterson.

“This would be a proud day for my grandmother, Congresswoman Julia Carson, who worked hard to secure the federal funding that supported this project,” said Congressman André Carson. “While a ribbon has been cut marking the completion of Project Open Market, it’s only the beginning of even greater things to come for the Near-Eastside of downtown. We’re going to see a rebirth, with more private investment and an influx of new business—all due to an open, accessible Market Street.”

Originally built in the ‘70s to accommodate traffic around the former Market Square Arena, the old I-65/70 interstate ramps served as a barrier between the Near-Eastside and the central business district.

“From our vantage point, the city is reconnected and we’re excited about the future,” said Patrick Dubach, President of the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association. “The interstate ramps cut off our neighborhoods before. Now, we’re actually a part of the downtown landscape and we can show others how attractive this area can be to work and live.”

(more)

“Project Open Market” Completion/Addl

City leaders see that emerging landscape as the next chapter for the city. “We are excited to better connect with the nearby businesses and neighbors and look forward to continued economic development in the area,” said Tamara Zahn, President of Indianapolis Downtown, Inc. “Significant recent additions such as Flanner and Buchanan, Harrison Business College and several new residential properties, plus more than \$50 million in new projects, will further enhance the area.”

Work began on Project Open Market in the spring of 2008. Highlights of the work include:

- The construction of a new interstate exchange along Washington Street:
 - A new southbound entrance ramp to I-65/70
 - A new northbound exit ramp from I-65/70
- The removal of the old I-65/70 ramps:
 - The Market Street entrance ramp (also known locally as the “Ski Ramp”) to southbound I-65/70
 - The Market Street exit ramp from northbound I-65/70
 - The Ohio Street entrance ramp to southbound I-65/70
- The widening of Washington Street
- The realignment of Southeastern Avenue at Washington Street
- The improved appearance of the CSX railroad overpass/underpass on Market Street with painting, lighting and a decorative screening
- The separation of the sanitary and storm water sewers under Southeastern Avenue, and Shelby, Washington and Market Streets
- The improvement of or installation of new landscaping, sidewalks, crosswalks, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramps and street lighting on Market and Washington Streets.

“It’s rare that we get the opportunity to do a project of this magnitude in terms of size, scope and cost,” says Department of Public Works Director David Sherman. “We’re proud that our work on this project, particularly the removal of the interstate ramps, has been the key step in helping this area reach its economic potential.”

Project Open Market impacted the busiest segment of interstate in downtown Indianapolis, one of the busiest east/west traffic arteries in Indianapolis and was constructed over and under the busiest railroad segment in Indianapolis.

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