



Governor Eric Holcomb
State of Indiana

Commissioner Joe McGuinness
Indiana Department of
Transportation

Mayor Joe Hogsett
City of Indianapolis

Anna Gremling, Executive
Director
Indianapolis MPO

RE: ReThink 65/70 Campaign

March 08, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

The Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (INASLA) is providing this letter of support of the ReThink 65/70 Rebuild It Right Campaign. INASLA represents over 400 practicing professionals throughout the state, all with a deep understanding of public health, safety, and welfare. As part of that professional expertise, we understand and agree with the Indiana Department of Transportation's (INDOT) plan to tear down the 50-year old Interstate 65/70 Inner Loop given the significant impact to the safety of the traveling public. However, INASLA feels that this is a once in a generation opportunity to leverage significant previous investment in public amenities, to build upon established visions of our state capital, and to systemically solve transportation concerns. To that end, INASLA encourages INDOT and the State to reconsider its current course of action to rebuild the 65/70 loop.

INDOT's current plans to tear-down and rebuild its 50-year old infrastructure and widen the freeways that cut through the north, east, and ultimately, south sides of downtown **are not fiscally responsible**. These plans ignore significant investment the City has made in connecting people to this community, including the internationally renowned Cultural Trail, White River State Park, the Indianapolis Canal, as well as countless other public spaces. These investments have had a dramatic economic impact on the City, while also engaging countless anchor institutions, stakeholders, and the public in the process. A systemic approach, as proposed by the ReThink 65/70 Coalition, not only will more fully engage the community, but save money by fully considering lifecycle cost, property utilization, community recruitment and retention, and ensuring a more inclusive approach to mobility.

At this time INDOT's 65/70 plan is in direct conflict with what has made cities successful throughout history. From Alexander Ralston's 1821 platting plan, which gave Indiana the iconic Monument Circle, to George Kessler's Park and Boulevard System plan, which shaped the City around public spaces, Indianapolis has led the State (and Nation) through its exemplary design of its civic infrastructure. In concert with the investments mentioned above, an expert-led study that considers these previous investments as well as a deep understanding of the role of place in making cities successful must be part of this process. **We can amplify our impact to the region by better understanding that Indiana is not just a crossroads.**

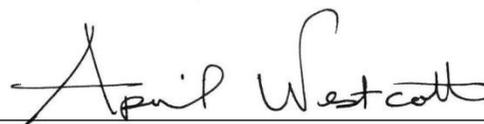
While the 65/70 infrastructure's age and condition must be addressed for the safety of the traveling public, the various layers of public space and

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their systemic impact to the health, safety, and welfare must be considered. In this way, **INDOT is not simply solving a transportation concern, but a community health one as well.** The design of transportation infrastructure over the last several decades has directly contributed to sprawl, and thereby impacted every facet of community health. While economic growth has been a driver of this model, the rise of health epidemics, social mobility barriers, and environmental damage costs much also be counted. When such an opportunity arises as this, it is incumbent upon our State leadership to more fully consider alternatives that address these other components.

INASLA joins other professional designers of the built environment, urging INDOT and other Indiana leaders to rethink the current 65/70 reconstruction plan. INDOT has a long history of working with local communities throughout the state. That engagement has led to changing investment tactics and exploring solutions that fit the context of the community. Given the significance of this investment and its potential impact, INASLA strongly encourages our state decision makers to consider the aforementioned concerns by more fully engaging all stakeholders and ReThink the 65/70 plan. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "April Westcott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

April Westcott, ASLA

President

Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects

American Society of Landscape Architects: Indiana Chapter
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*The members and associates of the **Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects** believe in contributing to our communities and profession as leaders in the field of landscape architecture. To lead, to educate and to participate in the careful stewardship, wise planning and artful design of our cultural and natural environments.*