



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

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October 19, 2016

Mr. Michael A. Terry  
President and CEO  
Indianapolis Public Transportation Corp.  
1501 W. Washington Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46222

**RE: Environmental Review Approval for the IndyGo Red Line Bus Rapid Transit Project – Phase 1, Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana**

Dear Mr. Terry:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has evaluated environmental review documents submitted by the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo) for the proposed Red Line Bus Rapid Transit Project – Phase 1 in Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana. FTA finds that the project meets the criteria for a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) categorical exclusion in accordance with 23 C.F.R. § 771.118(d).

The proposed Project by IndyGo is intending to reintroduce transit in a historic transit corridor by creating a 35-mile bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor with 49 stations operating from Westfield in Hamilton County south to Greenwood in Johnson County. The purpose of the Project is to improve regional connectivity and mobility by providing high quality, high capacity, and cost effective premium transit service which provides faster, more reliable, and comfortable passenger experience in comparison to the current local bus service.

The proposed Project will be completed in three phases. Phase 1 is a 13.1-mile long initial operating segment which includes 28 stations in Marion County from 66th Street (just north of Broad Ripple) through Downtown Indianapolis to the University of Indianapolis at Hanna Avenue. In accordance with the Project's purpose and need, 59% of the project is proposed to operate on dedicated transit lanes, either center- or curb-running exclusive transit lanes or dedicated business access transit (BAT) lanes, in order to improve travel speeds and provide frequent, reliable service. [BAT lanes are designated specifically for use by buses as well as vehicles entering and exiting businesses.] Specifically, buses will utilize dedicated lanes on the northern portion of the corridor, from Broad Ripple through downtown. The Project would require minor curb realignments near stations and at intersections, though lane widths would be maintained to accommodate traffic flow. The Project would remove or limit some existing left turns but would include new U-turn locations to ensure drivers can still access all businesses and other destinations.

The environmental records reviewed by FTA consisted of a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) checklist dated July 22, 2016, and additional supporting information. Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the implementing regulations at 36 C.F.R. § 800, FTA and IndyGo have been working with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology (DHPA, the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office) and consulting

parties on Section 106 concurrence. FTA provided the draft environmental documentation including the Phase 1 DCE and Cultural Historical Survey Reports to DHPA on July 22, 2016 and on July 25, 2016 to the other consulting parties. This documentation showed a preliminary finding that the Red Line project would have no effect on cultural or historic properties along the project corridor. On August 1, 2016, the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office expressed concern with this preliminary finding because the report included a description and rendering of a potential station rather than details regarding the actual station concept. On August 5, 2016 FTA shared additional information about the station design and selection process, including the recent selection of a preferred station concept. Phone calls between FTA, IndyGo, and the Consulting Parties also occurred, and on September 7, 2016, a Section 106 consulting party meeting was held to present findings from these surveys and to receive comments.

The Historical Survey Report indicated that portions of the Phase 1 corridor include streets where the former streetcar operated. The first electric streetcar came to Indianapolis in 1890, and over 340 electric streetcars were active by 1898, utilizing more than 100 miles of track. However, the introduction of the automobile brought too much competition for the electric streetcar, and by 1953, the last streetcar in Indianapolis ceased service (IndyGo 2011).

Based on discussions at the September 7th meeting, it was agreed upon to move the Section 106 process forward by drafting a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for Phase 1 of the Red Line BRT project. This was based on assuming adverse effects, particularly for the streetcar tracks.

Therefore, the MOA serves to provide assurance that the requirements of Section 106 will be met and, to adhere to 23 C.F.R. § 771.133, the approval of the DCE constitutes adoption of findings and determinations that are contained therein.

This NEPA determination applies only to the proposed project as described in the DCE checklist (Phase 1) and supporting materials. Any changes to the proposed project which could result in significant environmental impacts not outlined in the DCE checklist, including the disclosure of new information or previously unidentified environmental concerns, will require re-evaluation of this proposed project.

This confirmation of a categorical exclusion does not provide FTA commitment that future Federal funds will be approved for this proposed project. Any costs incurred under FTA pre-award authority must meet all Federal requirements prior to those costs being incurred in order to retain eligibility of those costs for future FTA grant assistance.

If you have further questions regarding this determination, please contact Susan Orona, Community Planner, at 312-353-3888 or [susan.orona@dot.gov](mailto:susan.orona@dot.gov).

Sincerely,



Jay M. Clavarella  
Director, Office of Planning & Program Development

cc: Susan Orona, FTA  
Mark Assam, FTA  
Athena Medero, FTA  
Justin Stuehrenberg, IndyGo