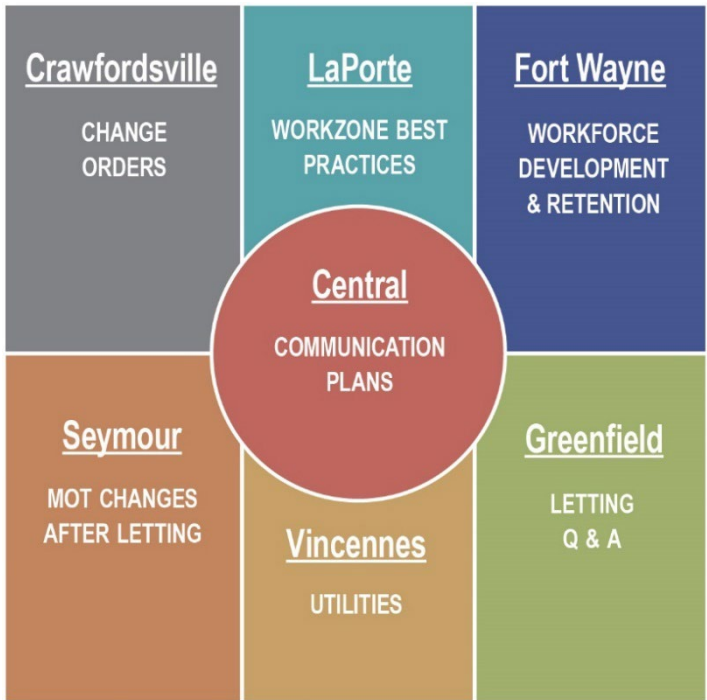




October 2024

What is ITT Working on in 2024?



Countdown to December Event

This has been a fantastic year so far, as indicated by our teams updates in this newsletter. This month marks our last push on 2024 initiatives and preparing for our big statewide event in December.

The December event, to be highlighted in our next newsletter early next year, is our opportunity to put our hard work into action. Each district will present what they have learned and gathered from their continued efforts.

Another important aspect of our December meeting is to set aside time to network, partner, and celebrate the great work we have all accomplished, both with the ITT initiatives and our industry wide program success.

If you are one of the 600 attending this year, we look forward to reflecting on the past year and moving ahead into 2025.

Upcoming Events for INDOT, ACEC, and ICI Partners

Please visit IndianaTransportationTeam.org to for more information.

- Vincennes Patoka Lake State Park Fall Gathering – October 26, 2024
- Greenfield District Meeting – October 29, 2024
- Seymour District Meeting – November 6, 2024
- Statewide ITT Partnering Conference — Dec. 19, 2024

What is ITT?

Established in 2019, the Indiana Transportation Team (ITT) is a collaboration between INDOT, ACEC Indiana, and Indiana Constructors Inc. that aims to improve trust, communication, collaboration, and service to Hoosier taxpayers as we deliver the best roads possible. For more on ITT please visit IndianaTransportationTeam.org.

Who Leads ITT?

ITT has leadership in each of INDOT's 6 Districts, as well as the Central Office and a Statewide Steering Committee. [Click here](#) to see the leaders in each area and their contact information if you wish to reach out and get involved!

ITT District Highlights

Crawfordsville District:

An estimated 150 contractors and officials attended the Crawfordsville District fall gathering on September 19. The district group is now reviewing data regarding its assignment to focus on Change Orders.

Fort Wayne District:

Subcommittees from the Fort Wayne District reported on their three assigned topics at the group's Oct. 1 meeting. These topics are industry attraction and recruiting, development and retention -- including opportunities for young professionals -- and plans to visit INDOT and construction sites, and events, including some existing activities such as National Engineer's Week, Feb. 16-22, 2025.

Greenfield District:

The ITT Greenfield District fall meeting was centered on the Contractor Quality Assurance process, including a focus on education and contractors sharing how a bid is assembled. The group also hosted a social event at an Aug. 1 Indianapolis Indians game.



Photo Credit: Indiana Constructors, Inc. photo/Andria Hine.

LaPorte District:

The LaPorte District is focused on developing a workflow diagram to develop good practices for maintenance of traffic and plan details. The district regional meeting was held on June 27 at Purdue University Northwest. The district also hosted a social outing on August 7th at a South Bend Cubs baseball game.



Seymour District:

The group held its meeting on July 16th at the Upland Tap in Columbus. Seymour is working on maintenance of traffic reviews and comments prior to contract letting. This effort includes stage 2 constructability review comments from contractors.

Vincennes District:

The Southwest Indiana Transportation Team, consisting of ICI, ACEC, INDOT, and other involved parties, hosted its first Utility Summit in the Vincennes District on Sept. 20. This event saw the participation of INDOT personnel, consultants, contractors, and various utility representatives. The goals of this event were to grow relationships between the utilities and other parties interested in public rights-of-way, and to understand the challenges facing our industries.

The morning was structured around small-group discussion led by area engineers, who facilitated the topics of finer details and specific challenges. The afternoon included a panel discussion of challenges that Build America Buy America (BABA) poses in project delivery. This structure enabled open forum discussion among participants, as well as detailed conversation about particulars in specific projects.

From the small-group discussions, five major themes emerged as the most pressing issues facing the industry:

- The importance of early and continuous communication through design
- Coordination between utilities when multiple relocations are involved with a project
- The difficulty of interpreting each other's plans, as road plans are distinct from those of telecommunications, electric, and others.
- The impact of schedule and scope changes on utility relocation timelines
- The need for greater involvement of utilities in the design process



Ultimately, the common denominator is communication, and this is one challenge that is endemic to the industry at large. Feedback from the event indicates that opportunities to meet face-to-face in lower stress environments, such as the Utility Summit, aid in developing relationships across industries. This pays dividends when schedules and budgets are tightened. Developing relationships drives a willingness to achieve positive outcomes in high-stakes situations.

The larger group session focused on BABA, its impacts on utilities, and the secondary impacts to delivery of public projects. All construction components are classified under three possible categories: steel and iron, manufactured products, and construction materials. All utility relocations that are eligible for reimbursement must comply with BABA standards on INDOT projects using federal funds. Even if the utility chooses to forego reimbursement, it is still obligated to meet the requirements of BABA. No individual project waivers are being accepted by FHWA. To date, only two projects nationwide have been awarded waivers, and the review timeline is more than a year.

This poses major challenges to project delivery, as the most common non-compliant materials are also the most common materials such as bolts and gas fittings. Further, the total allowable non-compliance under each waiver is shared between the utility and INDOT's contractor. Lastly, the expiration of the manufactured product waiver will greatly challenge electric transmission relocations. Ultimately, the best solution is to maintain compliance and communicate risk early in design to avoid relocation where possible.

The September Utility Summit proved that relationship and trust building with utilities is a two-way street. If we are to move past the adversarial mindset of "utility conflicts," which serves to only hamper project delivery, then we must embrace a "design conflict" mentality. We must recognize that impacting utilities in design has a real cost to the communities we serve. We must look at our shared role in the community: We build the roads and bridges that get people home, and the utilities service those homes. We form an ecosystem that is mutually sustainable. Such a shift in mentality will drive relational partnerships that encourage cooperation, which gets projects delivered.