



THE

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City wins \$2.2 mil for Indianapolis Ave. gateway project

BY ROD ROSE
The Lebanon Reporter

LEBANON — A \$2.2 million grant will help Lebanon improve Indianapolis Avenue from the Boone County Fairgrounds to Hendricks Drive.

Indianapolis Avenue's renovation will be based on the Lebanon Gateway & Corridor Master Plan, a program to renovate the city's major highway entrances.

Mayor Huck Lewis said the grant was confirmed Jan. 29. The funds can be used for design, construction or, really, anything, to improve the appearance and design of Indianapolis Avenue, Lewis said. Lebanon's funding is among \$198 million in federal stimulus money distributed by the Indiana Department of

Transportation to 14 Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

Also known as MPOs, the groups help local governments coordinate road, rail and other transportation improvements. Boone County belongs to the Indianapolis MPO.

"There will be ample time" for public comment on the Indianapolis Avenue project, Lewis said.

It will likely be six months before a design for the project is ready, Lewis said. Lebanon hired American Structure Point, an Indianapolis-based architecture firm, to draft plans for the project.

The gateway master plan included a concept for a roundabout that would combine Indianapolis Avenue's intersections with Walnut Street and Spencer Avenue. The project is not guaranteed, however.

"We'll have to figure out how to get that funded, since INDOT normally doesn't give money to work on their roads," Lewis said.

The \$2.2 million grant is not related to a city proposal to convert the Family Chevrolet dealership

into a public safety building, he said. Nor does it include a plan to build a trail head at Indianapolis Avenue and the Copeland-Neese Road, adjacent to the southwest corner of the Boone County Fairgrounds.

Lebanon must contribute 20 percent of the grant, Lewis said. Because he expects all of the money will be spent, that means the city will have to raise \$440,000.

With other grants, Lebanon has about \$3.3 million to renovate

Indianapolis Avenue,

Lewis said. Those funds include a \$244,750 Safe

Routes to School grant to build side-

walks along Hendricks Drive

near Hattie B. Stokes Elementary School.

Lebanon must contribute about \$61,000 for that

project that includes a path, curb ramps, drainage and bicycle parking.

Lebanon has received \$240,000

from the Indiana Department of Transportation to extend the Gateway Trail from Copeland-Neese Road to the fairgrounds' Indianapolis Avenue entrance.

Those funds were part of \$20 million in Transportation

Enhancement Funds awarded by INDOT. Lebanon must also match 20 percent of that award, which Lewis announced in November.

The Gateway Trail will eventually run from a former Penn Central Railroad line that intersects with Copeland-Neese Road, west to Indianapolis Avenue, along that street to Hendricks Drive, then to Abner Longley Park.

The DNR gave the city \$78,000, in August 2009, to extend the Farm Heritage Trail from Patterson Street to Dead End Road, on the city's west side. That project will link with the Farm Heritage Trail, a hiking-biking path that runs from north of Thorntown to Hazelrigg Road. The Friends of Boone County Trails is buying a railroad bed from Hazelrigg Road to Dead End Road.

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HUCK LEWIS
Lebanon Mayor