

GATEWAY IDENTIFICATION FORM – DRAFT
(Additional Pages May Be Attached If Needed)

Sector: SE

(Please list as two digit abbreviation, e.g. RC =
Regional Center)

(Please use the naming convention –Sector identifier plus an
ascending numeral.)

Proposal Number: _____

Location Of The Proposed Gateway Project:

North entrance to town of Acton

Northwest corner of Acton Road/Southport Road intersection

Significance/Rationale For The Gateway (Why Is This A Good Location? What Is Important About This Location?)

Acton has a significant history and this particular site is the centerpiece of that history.

Acton is the oldest platted town in Marion County. Although incorporated into Indianapolis, the core of Acton has kept its identity. Many residents date back multiple generations. Some businesses have remained throughout the years. Modern retailers and franchise establishments have not yet penetrated the core. There is and will continue to be development pressure around the core. There is a published history for the town of Acton.

The subject site is commonly referred to as the Acton Camp Ground. This approximately 27-acre site, located on the Northwest corner of the Acton Road/Southport Road intersection at the north edge of town, has a very rich history. The gateway could be located on a small piece of the overall site, possibly near the intersection. At one time the Acton Camp Ground housed 110 cabins and a hotel and drew as many as 10,000 visitors per event to a Methodist church camp. The adjacent rail line accommodated 5 stops a day at the Acton Camp Ground. It is reported that Abe Lincoln made a campaign stop at the site. The Camp Ground is also reported to have housed POWs during the Civil War. There is a published history of the Acton Camp Ground, and this, as well as the history of the Town of Acton, can be obtained by contacting the Franklin Township Civic League at 862-1774.

The location is ideal since it is at the north edge of Acton in close proximity to the Acton Road interchange at I-74. Most of the traffic to and from Acton is to the north.

Critical Issues (Adverse Or Positive Impacts To Infrastructure, Commercial Businesses, Neighbors, Future Development, Etc.)

Plans are already in the works to maintain the entire 27-acre site as a park.

Being an undeveloped site, utility and infrastructure conflicts are not a concern.

Concept Or Theme Of The Proposed Gateway Project (Optional):

There was a recent grass roots effort in Acton and all of Franklin Township to raise funds to purchase the site. There is quite a bit of interest in the site, and a common theme among the local community is to preserve the 27 acres as a historic asset. For example, any amenities such as play equipment may resemble facilities used during the site's glory days. Any gateway would have to match the historic theme of the overall site. Monuments or storyboards might be appropriate. It may be possible for the gateway to focus on the history of the town of Acton. This would mesh nicely with an Acton Camp Ground historic theme for the overall site.

Type Or Scale Of The Proposed Gateway Project (Optional):

To be determined, but it is not site constrained.

Current Site Ownership (Does Site Need To Be Acquired?):

Indy Parks currently owns the site. As previously mentioned, fundraising by locals was initiated about 1 year ago to raise money to purchase the site outright or provide a match for Indy Parks. Since that time the Indianapolis Parks Foundation purchased the site and transferred ownership to Indy Parks.

Indy Parks plans to begin master planning for the Acton Camp Ground in 2005, and heavy involvement from the local community is anticipated. As owner of the site, Indy Parks will provide all maintenance.

Audience (To Whom Will The Gateway Appeal?):

Primarily the town of Acton and Franklin Township; however, since the site is also located on the City's proposed pedestrian and bike trail system, there is potential for a larger audience.

Please List Interested Groups/Agencies (Public And Private) And Describe Neighborhood Support/Buy-In:

Indianapolis Parks Foundation

Indy Parks

Town of Acton and Franklin Township. In particular, Cathy Burton, President of MCANA, President of the Franklin Township Civic League and an Acton resident, has been instrumental in 1) identifying the site, 2) commencing discussions with the previous site owner about the potential for purchase, 3) spearheading the fundraising effort among the local community and 4) working with the Indianapolis Parks Foundation and the Mayor's Office during the Foundation's purchase of the site.

Mayor Peterson made the ultimate decision to steer the Indianapolis Parks Foundation funds toward the purchase of the Acton Camp Ground.

Please Describe The Gateway's Relationship To Other Community Plans And Initiatives:

Site is located on the City's proposed pedestrian and bike trail system.

Please Outline An Implementation Strategy And Describe The Next Steps (What Needs To Occur In Order To Implement The Project?):

This potential gateway should be fast-tracked so that it can be included in the master planning of the entire Acton Camp Ground site to be undertaken by Indy Parks in 2005. Community interest in this site is extremely high. Land acquisition is not required. Only coordination between the Gateway Initiative, Indy Parks and the local community is needed.

Likely Funding Sources And Other Items Not Covered Elsewhere:

Indianapolis Parks Foundation.

The local fundraising effort did not stop with the Foundation's purchase of the site. It may be possible for a portion of the local funds to be used for the gateway.

Indiana Historic Preservation Foundation.