



# U.S. 31 PROGRESSES

## FREEWAY COMPLETION REMAINS HIGH PRIORITY

Indianapolis is a lot closer than it used to be. And your Chamber played an important role in making that happen, helping lead advocacy efforts to get U.S. 31 improved for more than 25 years. Fortunately, the Chamber's past leaders had the vision to see what an important connection the road could be for our region.

The SJC Chamber was one of the founding members of the U.S. 31 Coalition in 1990. The coalition is an advocacy group that was formed to make sure the roadway was getting the attention it deserved with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Indiana General Assembly and the governor.

Now, some 26 years and more than \$750 million later, major improvements have been completed on three major sections of the roadway, from South Bend to Plymouth, around Kokomo and through Hamilton County. The trip to Indiana's Capitol city is much shorter and safer.

But the job is not finished yet. In fact, though the Chamber is thrilled with the progress that's been made, the roadway is still well short of the original goal of a limited-access highway. Seven stoplights, two railroad crossings, 100

intersections and 200 driveways are yet to be dealt with. One of those stoplights should disappear later this year (SR 28), but no plans are in place to address any of the others.

The leaders in Indianapolis have promised to "finish what they started, and maintain what they have." The challenge may be their definition of "finished" as opposed to our definition of "finished." Though the more urban areas have been addressed, great work remains to be done in Tipton, Miami, Fulton and Marshall counties.

Indiana currently has no plan for how to deal with road funding long term. This year, your Chamber urged the legislature to consider a long-term fix, but the state legislators punted again as Senate Bill 333 did not provide the solution to the funding needs.

In the meantime, the SJC Chamber's efforts on U.S. 31 are more important than ever as efforts will be made to make sure that the roadway doesn't get lost among other statewide transportation opportunities and that INDOT commits to continuing to chip away at those remaining projects that need to be addressed. For more information, visit [us31coalition.com](http://us31coalition.com).

### GOAL: US 31 Freeway from Indianapolis to South Bend

