Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission  
PNC Center  
101 West Washington Street  
Suite 1500 E  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of IUPUI, I write to endorse Indianapolis Power and Light’s request for approval to expand electrical service in support of the all-electric car share program being planned for the city.

As a major central Indiana employer and urban university serving for more than 30,000 students, IUPUI is supportive of new transportation options that will increase accessibility to campus and improve air quality by reducing auto emissions. Because we are located at the heart of the city, we are also eager to help bolster the city’s reputation as a progressive community dedicated to furthering its sustainability and mobility goals.

IUPUI currently has just under 20,000 parking spaces, 18,133 of which are on our campus and 1,750 located just north of campus with shuttle transportation. Monday through Thursday, the spaces on campus are filled by about 10 in the morning. Of our total campus population, 95% use an automobile to reach campus and 87% on average drive alone. Our master plan estimates a need for 6,000 new parking spaces and recommends that they be in structures, not surface lots. The recommendation in 2008 was for six new parking garages to be built. It costs IUPUI about $14–$18 million to build a new parking structure.

With more students than ever living on or near campus now, electric vehicle car sharing is a welcome addition to the options available for them to avoid the expense of owning, maintaining, and parking private vehicles as well as the expense to IUPUI of building parking garages to accommodate them. Surveys of our commuters show 45% would consider alternatives to driving private vehicles. An advantage of the electric car share program is that it makes it easier for students, staff, and faculty to travel to, from, and around campus as well as to downtown and other areas where they may have internships; jobs; or clinical practice settings. Short-term needs to leave campus like those—or even to go off campus to have access to dining, cultural, and recreational amenities—often result in people losing a parking space on campus. International students, staff, and faculty—as well as others who are from urban areas where there are more options for public transportation—often find it difficult to cope with the prevailing car culture in Indianapolis.
Research also shows that 25-34 year olds—the age of many lawyers, doctors, dentists, and other young professionals—choose cities rather than jobs, and many look for transportation options that support the urban lifestyle they seek. Transportation options like electric vehicles are thus an important amenity in bringing talented people to IUPUI and to the city.

IUPUI is also the home of the Richard G. Lugar Center for Renewable Energy, where faculty are working on innovations related to electric vehicles. Dr. Afshin Izadian, for example, has invented a new class of power inverter that is cheaper, lighter and therefore more efficient than current models. Power inverters are at the heart of several renewable energy technologies because they are used to generate AC power efficiently.

Sustainability is both a research area at IUPUI as well as a strategy for efficient operations. In addition to promoting the electric car sharing programs, we are looking to increase the use of alternative fuels in the IUPUI motor pool’s fleet.

In addition to the benefits for IUPUI, we believe that the IPL’s ability to expand will serve the general public by providing new opportunities for economic development, a better quality of life, and a positive impact on the environment. I hope the IURC will agree to allow the expansion that IPL is seeking.

Sincerely,

Charles R. Bantz
Chancellor

CRB:ks