

Circa

Indianapolis, Indiana

QUICK FACTS

Location

617 N. College Avenue,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Status

Opened in August 2014

Type of Project

Multifamily

Site Size

3.1 acres (1.2 ha)

Building Size

265 units; 295,000 square feet
(27,400 sq m) across six buildings

Rental Rates

\$950–\$2,500

Project Cost

\$31 million

Developer

Milhaus

Architect

Blackline Studio

Lender

Regions Bank

Equity Partner

Undisclosed

Bike Amenities

Bike storage, workroom, bike
washing station, bike share

Nearby Bicycle Infrastructure

Adjacent to the Indianapolis
Cultural Trail

Health Features

Fitness center, swimming pool,
outdoor patio

CIRCA is a 265-unit multifamily development that opened in downtown Indianapolis in 2014. The project is adjacent to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, a popular bike and pedestrian path that links vibrant downtown districts. The project's trailside location and the inclusion of bike-friendly amenities have contributed to the marketability of its units.



“The Indianapolis Cultural Trail adds tremendous value to Circa and has been the most transformative infrastructure investment in downtown Indianapolis in the last five to ten years.” >> Jake D. Dietrich, director of development, Milhaus

Context for Development

Circa's units are spread across six buildings that are directly adjacent to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, an eight-mile (13 km) path that connects shops, art galleries, restaurants, and residential areas.

Milhaus, Circa's developer, recognizes the Indianapolis Cultural Trail's status as a transportation corridor that is increasing the vitality of the local area. Jake D. Dietrich, Milhaus's director of development, notes, "The Indianapolis Cultural Trail adds tremendous value to Circa and has been the most transformative infrastructure investment in downtown Indianapolis in the last five to ten years."

Milhaus decided to include bicycle-friendly features in its development to attract what Dietrich calls "a growing market segment of tenants demanding active lifestyles and urban living."

Circa's design is intended to make it easy for residents to get anywhere in Indianapolis on a bicycle. Dietrich explained that Circa's bike-friendly amenities give it an advantage over market competitors and can make the difference between whether or not someone leases a unit, since many in the area view biking as either their primary mode of transportation or a leisure activity that is central to their lifestyle.

Milhaus believes that the relatively low-cost investment the firm has made to offer features that support bicycling has paid off, saying that "the upfront capital expenditures in bike amenities are quickly recouped by the leases that they have a direct impact on securing."

Active Transportation-Friendly Features

Reflecting its location next to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Circa includes a number of features to appeal to bicycle owners, including the following:

- >> **Bicycle storage.** Included on the first floor of each of Circa's buildings, all storage rooms have dedicated entrances directly from the outside, which are secured by key fob entry. In total, there are 150 indoor, wall-mounted bike racks.
- >> **Complimentary bike-share service.** Residents and visitors can check out bikes, helmets, and locks for use in the local area.
- >> **Bike workroom.** Called the "Maker's Room," this area includes a work stand, bike-related tools, air pumps, and other supplies. The Maker's Room has a nine-foot-wide (2.7 m) garage door to allow residents to easily enter with bicycles.
- >> **Bike washing station.** There is a dedicated area with hoses, scrub brushes, and buckets to wash dirty bikes.

Facing page: Circa provides access for residents to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, a popular path that links various downtown districts. (© 2015 by Zach Dobson)

Development Lessons

Indianapolis's downtown population grew by more than 37 percent between 2005 and 2015, and the rate of bicycle commuting in the city grew by over 101 percent between 2000 and 2014. Circa's location on the Indianapolis Cultural Trail and inclusion of bike-friendly amenities both reflect these changing circumstances and support citywide investments in bicycle infrastructure.

Further reflecting the growing popularity of active transportation in Indianapolis, Milhaus is currently developing four new multifamily residential properties close to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail.

Tadd Miller, chief executive officer of Milhaus, believes that the Indianapolis Cultural Trail and surrounding residential properties are mutually supportive, saying that "developments add users to the trail and the trail increases the quality of life at nearby developments."

Miller explains that each increase in the number of pedestrians or bicyclists on the Indianapolis Cultural Trail is also an increase in the visibility of Circa and other trail-oriented development projects. Likewise, increasing the number of residents along the trail increases use of the trail, as walking or bicycling becomes an engrained part of residents' daily lives.



Bicycle storage is included on the first floor of each of Circa's buildings. (© 2015 by Zach Dobson)