



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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NWI embraces transportation's three Rs: Roads, rails and runways

NWI Times
Andrew Steele
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Northwest Indiana will see well over \$1 billion in transportation infrastructure expansion and improvements in the next five years if plans for its roads, rails and bridges proceed as expected. Recent actions in Region cities and towns, as well as in Indianapolis and Washington, D.C., have the potential to bring a degree of change to the areas roads and rails not seen for decades. The most visible would be expansion and modernization of commuter rail, with the South Shore Line's West Lake Corridor from Hammond to Dyer and its Double Track project from Gary to Michigan City. Another infrastructure landmark will be the new Cline Avenue bridge, under construction by a private consortium that will operate it as a toll bridge. And state and local officials hope they have shored up road and bridge funding for the foreseeable future after creation of a 25-year road plan and the Community Crossing matching grant program for municipalities and counties. The existing South Shore Line would offer faster and safer service with the \$312 million Double Track effort to add a second set of tracks between Gary and Michigan City. And commuter rail service will extend southward for the first time in its century-plus service in northern Indiana with the \$665 million West Lake Corridor rail line through Hammond and Munster to Dyer's northern edge. http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/nwi-embraces-transportation-s-three-rs-roads-rails-and-runways/article_567592cb-028e-54f5-87ad-897b94b66915.html

How bridges are inspected in Indiana

WISH-TV
Elizabeth Choi
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INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) — According to the Federal Highway Administration, Indiana's bridges exceed the national average for safety, with 95 percent in fair or better condition. The Indiana Department of Transportation is required to inspect its 5,600 bridges every two years. "We're going to do a visual inspection and look for the general soundness of the structure and make sure there is nothing loose, deteriorating, falling, that type of thing," said INDOT Director of Bridge Management Anne Rearick. Even though INDOT schedules inspections every two years, you can report concerns by calling its customer service line at 855-463-6848 or by clicking here. According to INDOT's Director of Bridge Design Jeremy Hunter, bridges in Indiana are constructed in a similar way to the pedestrian bridge that collapsed in Miami, killing six people. Although INDOT isn't required to inspect most of the state's pedestrian bridges, it does inspect the one at Dandy Trail near Eagle Creek because it runs above Interstate 74. Technology called Accelerated Bridge Construction is what was used in Miami. Many bridges in the Hoosier state are also constructed that way, according to Hunter. "The Accelerated Bridge Construction has

kind of become common practice around the country over the last 10-15 years," said Hunter. Using the Accelerated Bridge Construction design, some or all components of the bridge are prefabricated off-site. Hunter says here in Indiana, they only prefabricate components. "There are scenarios where portions of the bridge are fabricated off-site and most of our bridges, at least a portion of them, are fabricated off-site and then brought into the construction site and assembled here," he said. Accelerated Bridge Construction is used to reduce the amount of time roads would be closed or blocked due to construction. <http://wishtv.com/2018/03/16/how-bridges-are-inspected-in-indiana/>

Swarens: Indy's pothole nightmare may preview bad things to come

Indianapolis Star

Tim Swarens

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The pothole that killed my wife's car was an unidentified assassin. After gutting the vehicle's exhaust system, it slipped back into a thicket of potholes that for months made West Washington as rough a ride as the country dirt roads of my long ago youth. The \$1,100 repair estimate finally pushed us into trading an 11-year-old Ford for a new made-in-Indiana Honda. So maybe potholes are good for the economy. Or not. This column, however, is not another gripe about Indy's pothole nightmare. "I read the news today, oh boy. Ten thousand holes in Indy's streets this year..." Instead, I'm here to pose a frightening question: What if this pothole season is a preview of Indy's new normal? That dark thought popped into my mind after leaving a recent meeting with Mayor Joe Hogsett's fiscal team. City Systems Engineer Kathy Davis, Controller Fady Qaddoura and Chief of Staff Thomas Cook presented a rash of financial data that boils down to two ugly conclusions: One, the gap between the city's needs and its revenues remains as deep and wide as the craters on North Capitol. Two, nothing is likely to change that fact in the next few years. On street maintenance alone, there's a \$60 million to \$90 million gulf between what's budgeted and what's needed to repair roads. That shortfall has piled up year after year. Even in a year when the city has pumped a one-time shot of \$14 million from reserves into pothole repair and the 2017 state gas tax increase is expected to bring in an additional \$15 million, Indy will still defer tens of millions of dollars in needed street maintenance. You know what happens when maintenance is deferred? My wife's mechanic will be happy to explain. And road maintenance is only one budget category where needs don't match revenue. There's also the sidewalk funding gap, the streetlights funding gap, the parks funding gap, the abandoned properties funding gap. Indy has a lot of broken and neglected amenities. What the city doesn't have is a lot of money to fix and maintain those amenities. So why not just raise taxes? It's not that simple. If you live in Indy, you already pay the second highest county income tax in the region (only Morgan County is higher). The Hamilton County rate is half that of Marion's.

<https://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/columnists/tim-swarens/2018/03/16/swarens-indys-pothole-nightmare-may-preview-bad-things-come/425493002/>

What you need to know about the I-65/I-70 north split controversy

Indianapolis Star

Amy Bartner

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The half-century-old highway system spidering through north Downtown Indianapolis is about to either be rebuilt in accordance with today's standards, or re-imagined as a new way to move traffic through the city. Last week, a coalition formed to demand the Indiana Department of Transportation radically rethink how I-65 and I-70 cross through Downtown, either to move the split underground or eliminate it altogether. It's a move that will impact the city's neighborhood connectivity for the next 50 years, and leaders of the coalition, Rethink 65/70, want to exhaust all options before rebuilding. Here's what you need to know about what's happening with the north split: Where is the north split? It's where I-65 and I-70 meet on the city's north side, south of 16th

Street, east of College Avenue, stretching south through Fletcher Place. The decaying network of highways and 32 bridges transport more than 200,000 cars daily. Why does anything need to happen with it at all? This chunk of highway has reached the end of its life, INDOT spokesman Andy Dietrick said. Plans to repair or replace the split began in fall 2017 as roads deteriorated, potentially posing safety risks. When was the split created? Although planning began in the 1950s, the north split — called a "land-gulping operation" in a 1974 Indianapolis Star article — wasn't complete until 1976. A police officer at the time said the maze of interstate roads was a "disaster area" after there were a number of crashes and a fatality after its completion. What does INDOT plan to do? INDOT proposed its \$250 million construction and planning project in the fall, initially with the scope of rehabilitating the existing infrastructure, on the same footprint, Dietrick said. New highway technology and increased traffic patterns, though, mean INDOT would have to replace the structure to meet current standards. This could include widening roads, adding more lanes, widening the bridges, reconstructing the interchange, re-configuring ramps and adding 25-foot concrete walls known as "mechanically stabilized earth" walls.

<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/2018/03/16/what-you-need-know-65-70-north-split-controversy/424852002/>

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