



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

August 1, 2017

SIDC requests additional funding from county first time in decades

Greene County Daily World
Sabrina Stockrahm
7/31/17

The Southern Indiana Development Commission asked for a slight increase in annual funds as the Greene County Commissioners prepare to submit budgets. Executive Director Greg Jones said for the past 44 years, SIDC's annual budget request was a fee of 25 cents per person in the county. But, with the extra projects SIDC has taken on, the organization is requesting an additional \$2,500 from each of the counties in its five-county coverage area. "In the transportation realm, our program has really been growing. We are in talks with the Lt. Governor's Office about expanding our urban and rural planning program that's transportation based. That's where we do traffic counts, but we also assist our communities with Community Crossing (grants)," Jones said. In the 12 years since SIDC started assisting with Community Crossings, Jones said the organization has been helping with the local match for its counties. "Right now, the running total is we've provided \$110,000 in local matches out of our own coffers for the different counties in order to keep that program up and running -- and it's been seen as a vital program," Jones explained. At first, he said the program was not used very often, but with changes at the state level, SIDC foresees the program being used even more. He said an emphasis on data collection for asset management will affect what SIDC does to assist the counties. "This year, I am making an additional request because we have been making that local match on the transportation program. I'd like for the counties to start picking that up. It's grown from \$3,000 that we were picking up and now it's about \$13,000. That's gotten a little bit tough for us to do," Jones said. "We are fortunate enough that we are in a time frame where counties are starting to see a relief in their road funding. <http://www.gcdailyworld.com/story/2432029.html>

Final miles of I-69 expected to take years, \$1.5 billion to complete

Indianapolis Business Journal
Susan Orr
7/29/17

As the state moves closer to starting work on the final stretch of the Interstate 69 extension, one thing is clear: It's going to take many years and lots of money to complete the last 26 miles of the Evansville-to-Indianapolis project. In his recently released \$5.1 billion Next Level Roads Plan, Gov. Eric Holcomb included \$554.3 million in state funding for the Martinsville-to-Indianapolis stretch of I-69, known as Section 6. That marks the first time specific dollar amounts have been attached to Section 6—a significant milestone. "This is a big step for Section 6. This basically means it's a new level of certainty for the people along this corridor," said Indiana Department of Transportation spokesman LaMar Holliday.

The governor's plan accounts for only about a third of the \$1.5 billion price tag for Section 6, which will upgrade State Road 37 to interstate standards in Morgan, Johnson and Marion counties from Martinsville to I-465. INDOT said it expects work on Section 6 to continue past 2022, and that it is still weighing its options for funding the rest of the project. But INDOT and others say the initial funding gets Section 6 off to a good start. In March, the state released plans that show locations for Section 6 interchanges. Now, the preliminary funding information provides another piece of the puzzle, said Martinsville Mayor Shannon Kohl. "It gives us more of a way to get a game plan together, for sure," Kohl said. "Now we feel like we have more of a map of how things are going to go." Section 6 passes through Martinsville, and four of the section's 10 interchanges will be inside or just outside that city's limits. The city is working with property owners who are likely to be affected by construction, Kohl said. Having some numbers and dates helps clarify particulars. Construction on Section 1, from Evansville to Oakland City, began in 2008. Four sections are now complete, and the new road is open to traffic for 95 miles—from Evansville to Bloomington. Section 5, a 21-mile stretch from Bloomington to Martinsville, is currently projected to open late next summer. Its completion date has been delayed four times; the original target was October 2016. <https://www.ijb.com/articles/64795-final-miles-of-i-69-will-take-years-15b-to-complete>

Local governments seeking \$3 million from state for roads

The Herald Bulletin
Ken de la Bastide
7/28/17

ANDERSON — Local units of government have applied for nearly \$3 million for road projects through the Community Crossroads grant program administered by the Indiana Department of Transportation. The state implemented the program to provide additional funding to counties, cities and towns through a matching grant fund program to improve the roadway infrastructure. The awards are expected by the end of August. Last year, Anderson and Madison County both received the maximum grant amount of \$1 million; the town of Pendleton received \$245,000. Chuck Leser, Madison County's highway engineer, said the county has applied for \$1 million for four paving projects. Leser said the county's 2017 paving projects total more than \$2 million with the remainder coming from the wheel tax and other state funding. The work includes Indiana 67 from Ind. 236 to Chesterfield; Layton Road from Ind. 13 to Anderson; County Road 100 West from Anderson to Ind. 128 and 100 West from U.S. 36 to Interstate 69. "These are major roads," Leser said. "They're at the point where they need to be paved." Mike Spyers, Anderson city engineer, said the city has applied for \$1 million for 20 different repaving projects around the city. Mayor Thomas Broderick Jr. previously indicated the city was looking at a repaving project on 53rd Street. The town of Pendleton is requesting \$447,715 for five different projects, Town Manager Tim McClintick said. McClintick said the town is providing \$282,570 in matching funds. "It's a fantastic program," he said of the Community Crossroads funding. McClintick said the town received \$245,000 last year for paving work. Elwood Mayor Todd Jones said the city didn't apply for funding in 2016, but is requesting \$300,000 from the state this year. "Last year we didn't have a road management plan in place," Jones said. "We hired an engineering firm to develop a plan so we could apply for the state funding. http://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/local_news/locals-seeking-million-from-state-for-roads/article_4724e39c-7326-11e7-a00f-bfad9cf64a31.html

South Shore ready to seek federal money for projects

Post-Tribune
Tim Zorn
7/28/17

Local and state governments have pledged their financial backing for the South Shore Line's biggest projects in decades. Soon the decisions – whether to build the 9-mile West Lake extension from Hammond to Dyer and the 25-mile double-track project from Gary into Michigan City - will be up to a federal agency. Michael Noland, the South Shore's president and general

manager, sounded confident at Friday's Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District meeting. Based on preliminary evaluations, Noland told the NICTD board, he expects "medium-high" ratings on both projects from the Federal Transit Administration. Last year, he said, every project with a "medium" rating and higher received FTA approval. West Lake would be the South Shore's first expansion in more than a century, and NICTD says adding a second set of tracks to Michigan City would improve the railroad's speed and reliability. FTA funding, if approved, would pay 50 percent of each project's cost. NICTD will formally submit its projects for FTA ratings in September. The results could be announced in mid-October, Noland said. And by late December or early January, he said, NICTD could begin acquiring properties for the projects, if the FTA grants favorable ratings and preliminary environmental approval. Munster resident Julie O'Connor, of Concerned Families of the West Lake Corridor Project, asked why NICTD would begin buying homes before receiving the FTA's final funding approval.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/post-tribune/news/ct-ptb-shouth-shore-funding-st-0731-20170730-story.html>

Franklin Street bridge repairs sought

The News-Dispatch

Jon Gard

7/28/17

MICHIGAN CITY — County officials plan to repair the 85 year old Franklin Street drawbridge over Trail Creek, but have not declared an emergency to expedite funding. County Engineer Jay Sullivan approached the La Porte County Council this week about an appropriation to make repairs. He said an electrical conduit that runs under the creek bed had deteriorated and should be replaced soon to ensure the bridge will continue to work. Discussion with the county Board of Commissioners last week focused on whether the repair would fit the state's definition of an emergency to allow immediate action. Council members this week said they were not sure this was an emergency, however, because the bridge works, but they urged Sullivan to take action soon if he thought the situation was critical. Sullivan estimated the cost of replacing the conduit at about \$115,000, with the county paying \$80,000 from its major bridge fund and Michigan City paying \$35,000. The engineer said he would return to county officials in August with quotes on replacing the conduit and installing new wiring.

http://www.thenewsdispatch.com/news/article_91c3e425-3ea7-5a8d-95a2-fde8566821fe.html

Letter: U.S. 31 Coalition opposes J-turns

Kokomo Tribune

7/27/17

Recently, the Indiana Department of Transportation proposed installing J-turns at several intersections along the U.S. 31 Corridor, most notably at Indiana 218 in Miami County. The U.S. 31 Coalition — which has supported Govs. Mitch Daniels, Mike Pence and Eric Holcomb since they supported making U.S. 31 a freeway from Indianapolis to South Bend, and for which I serve as vice president — is very much opposed to these type of intersections for the safety issues they present. With a J-turn, a semi would have to make a U-turn, gain speed to be able to merge with oncoming traffic — which would be going 60-70 miles an hour — cross a lane of traffic to get into the "slow" lane, causing oncoming traffic to have to change lanes into the "fast" lane to avoid the semi. A subcommittee of the U.S. 31 Coalition met with INDOT representatives about a month ago and expressed its opinion that J-turns were not something the U.S. 31 Coalition would support. The U.S. 31 Coalition continues to support a U.S. 31 freeway with no at-grade crossings, no at-grade entrances, no at-grade railroad crossings and no stoplights. This is the assurance we had gotten from Govs. Daniels, Pence and Holcomb before these J-turns on U.S. 31 were announced as possibilities. A meeting was held in Marshall County a couple months ago where nearly every person present expressed their opinion that J-turns were not acceptable. A single town board member from a small town in the area evidently told INDOT she was OK with them,

as being better than doing nothing, so INDOT took that as an endorsement to move forward. While the U.S. 31 Coalition understands INDOT's push to complete I-69 in southern Indiana, using the limited financial resources it has available, spending \$2 million-\$4 million on J-turn intersections that are a Band-Aid, and will likely be replaced in a few years, is not an efficient or effective use of those limited resources. At the U.S. 31 Coalition meeting I mentioned above, I suggested they use the money allocated for these unwanted J-turns to conduct the environmental impact studies that would be needed to make U.S. 31 the freeway that three governors have supported. http://www.kokomotribune.com/opinion/letters_to_the_editor/letter-u-s-coalition-opposes-j-turns/article_8bc6293e-72c7-11e7-ba7a-8bdc87922267.html

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