



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **August 29, 2017**

#### **U.S. transportation head mum on South Shore project odds**

South Bend Tribune

Jeff Parrott

8/29/17

SOUTH BEND — After two hours of listening behind closed doors to local leaders' pitch for federal money to double-track the South Shore Line, the nation's top transportation official declined to talk specifically about the project publicly Tuesday. "That is an application that is in progress and I will not talk more about it," U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao told reporters after emerging from the meeting at the South Bend International Airport. "But suffice it to say, the bipartisan nature and the public-private partnership aspects of any project would be ones that are important to us. Once again, Indiana appears to be leading the way." Standing behind her at the podium were Sen. Todd Young, R-Indiana, Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb, Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-Jimtown and Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Merrillville. Chao said her decision to bring several high-level staff members with her on the visit indicates its importance. The project, which would reduce from two and half hours to 90 minutes the rail commute from South Bend to Chicago, would cost an estimated \$290 million and can't happen without the federal money. Chao is married to Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. A reporter asked Young, who coordinated the event, what her visit might mean for the project's funding odds. "I think it's essential," Young said. "One of the things that's looked at, at the federal level, is how much local support, state-level support you have as well, and the composition of that support. Support has been nonpartisan as well, going back a number of years." Young said he thought Chao Tuesday had obtained "some more insight" into how "forward-leaning" the state has been in transportation funding. "The intensity, the enthusiasm that surrounds the South Shore Project...is something that I think you just cannot capture unless you have the opportunity to visit with the various stakeholders," he said. [http://www.southbendtribune.com/news/local/u-s-transportation-head-mum-on-south-shore-project-odds/article\\_3e38d751-e5d5-50d9-9ff9-0eecee6d976c.html](http://www.southbendtribune.com/news/local/u-s-transportation-head-mum-on-south-shore-project-odds/article_3e38d751-e5d5-50d9-9ff9-0eecee6d976c.html)

#### **South Bend's Portage Avenue bridge to close for 10 weeks**

South Bend Tribune

Jeff Parrott

8/26/17

SOUTH BEND — Part of a major street connecting the city's northwest side to its core will soon close for an estimated two and a half months so that the county can replace an aging bridge. At St. Joseph County's request, the city Sept. 13 will temporarily close the Portage Avenue bridge over an abandoned railroad corridor. The bridge scored a 50.2 sufficiency rating in its last inspection on a scale from 1 to 100, with 100 being entirely sufficient, said county engineer Jessica Clark. The bridge, built in 1970 to carry traffic over the rail line, is in good condition

structurally but its deck and some of its components are in fair to poor condition, Clark said. The county has hired contractor Rieth-Riley Construction Co. to do the work for about \$914,000 in local bridge fund money. Because the city doesn't want heavy traffic cutting through residential areas, it's asking southbound Portage Avenue drivers destined for downtown not to drive through the Keller Park neighborhood, using Riverside Drive as an alternate route south, said Jitin Kain, the city's deputy public works director. Instead, the city wants motorists to take Portage Avenue north to Lathrop Drive, west to Bendix Drive, south to Lincoln Way West, and east on Lincoln Way. Travel on the bridge recently has been reduced to two lanes — one in each direction — while utility companies relocate their lines in preparation for the bridge replacement project. Meanwhile, the related "Coal Line Trail" project is about a year behind its originally announced schedule because of funding prioritization by the Indiana Department of Transportation, said Tim Corcoran, city planning director. [http://www.southbendtribune.com/news/local/south-bend-s-portage-avenue-bridge-to-close-for-weeks/article\\_cdd19095-2e79-50d0-8db8-b7f867ac7c59.html](http://www.southbendtribune.com/news/local/south-bend-s-portage-avenue-bridge-to-close-for-weeks/article_cdd19095-2e79-50d0-8db8-b7f867ac7c59.html)

### **Road improvements coming to Haynie's Corner**

14 News WFIE  
Kate O'Rourke  
8/25/17

EVANSVILLE, IN (WFIE) - A major road improvement project is planned for Downtown Evansville's Haynie's Corner. Haynie's Corner will look completely different a few years from now. The \$2.2 million plan is one of the few urban projects that the Indiana Department of Transportation is heading. Road improvements in Haynie's Corner are expected to make the Downtown Evansville district more beautiful. With brick pavement and a tree-lined boulevard, the city hopes to make Haynie's Corner more pedestrian friendly. Department of Metropolitan Development Executive Director Kelley Coures tells us the main elements, like a new roundabout, are designed with safety in mind. The roundabout will replace the intersection where Jefferson Street and Parrett Street meet Second Street at very odd angles. It's confusing for drivers to figure out whose turn it is to go. Coures tells us the new roundabout should eliminate that confusion. The city owns the triangle of land there, and it will be carved out. The intersection will become a round area. Coures tells us it will be brick lined with a center island. "In that center island then fanning out in a circle, traffic will move around the circle with exits and entrances to each of these streets that come to this confluence here," says Coures. Coures tells us some local business were worried about their customers navigating through the construction. Work is not expected to begin until late 2019 or early 2020. "So everybody has more of a chance to make sure their customers know how to reach them when the street might be closed. The city engineer will keep transportation, traffic moving so everybody has access to parking, everybody has access to where they need to go," says Coures. He tells us construction should take 18 months to complete. <http://www.14news.com/story/36221052/road-improvements-coming-to-haynies-corner>

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