



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

September 19, 2017

Lowell council paves the way for more road projects

NWI Times
Melanie Csepiga
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LOWELL — While uncertain whether the town will be successful in getting a state grant like the \$1 million grant received last year for funding road improvements, the Town Council is paving the way for more projects. Town Manager Jeff Sheridan told the Town Council there's more competition for less money for the 2018 Community Crossings grants from the Indiana Department of Transportation. He said there were 1,000 applications for part of a \$200 million pot when the town was awarded a grant last year. Now, he said, there are 2,000 applications vying for \$150 million. "It's much, much more competitive with less money to go around," he said. Sheridan said the town will learn within 30 days whether Lowell will receive a second grant, and its value. Given that, Town Council President Leann Angerman, R-2nd, said she doesn't want to waste time. "We should know by the time Belaire starts whether we get 2018 Community Crossing money. Then, we could do Meadowbrook," she said. The Belaire project, the third and last phase of the 2017 Community Crossings grant projects, engineer Craig Hendrix of SEH, of Munster, said, is to be completed with it by the end of the year. He said he expects very competitive bids. http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/lowell-council-paves-the-way-for-more-road-projects/article_e4a488c8-37c1-5dfd-b90c-a3df2f580dd7.html

New tax, fees expected to reduce deficient bridges

Greensburg Daily News
Roger Schneider
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GOSHEN -- The influx of cash from the state's gas tax and vehicle registration increases is expected to help restore many of Indiana's deficient bridges to top-notch condition. The state has 19,245 bridges, according to the Federal Highway Transportation Administration's National Bridge Inventory. Of those, 1,525, or 7.9 percent, were rated as structurally deficient in 2016. That total includes bridges on federal highways. According to the National Bridge Inventory compiled by the Federal Highway Administration, a bridge with a "structurally deficient" rating "... has one or more structural defects that require attention. This status does not indicate the severity of the defect, but rather that a defect is present." In some cases, the defects would only become a public safety hazard if heavy traffic or overweight loads traveled over the bridges, officials explained. In other situations, bridges need repairs -- and soon -- to avoid major infrastructure failure. But help is on the way, lawmakers say. The General Assembly raised the state's gas tax 10 cents per gallon to 28 cents beginning July 1 and also raised vehicle registration fees by \$15 beginning in January. In addition, owners of electric cars will be charged \$150 annually and those who own hybrid vehicles will be charged a \$50 fee. All those changes

will fund the state's \$4.7 billion, five-year Next Level Roads initiative, announced by Gov. Eric Holcomb in August. http://www.greensburgdailynews.com/news/local_news/new-tax-fees-expected-to-reduce-deficient-bridges/article_7948a372-7dd4-57fc-88a7-081834dd6319.html

Expert claims time is right for Indiana to invest in high-speed rail

Newsbug.com

Dan Carden, NWI Times

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INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana would be perfectly positioned to benefit from investor eagerness for high-speed rail projects if it acts now to identify funding, ridership and public-private partnership. That's the message Alexander Metcalf, president of Transportation Economics and Management Systems, Inc., delivered Friday to a gathering of high-speed rail proponents as part of a pitch for his company to develop the strategic plan. He estimated that an investment of \$1.2 billion to \$1.8 billion could produce trains crisscrossing Indiana at 110 miles per hour carrying passengers from Chicago through Northwest Indiana and south to Indianapolis and Kentucky, as well as into Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and points beyond. "Indiana really is a great place for a high-speed train because there's plenty of places to go from Indiana," Metcalf said. "It's flat, there's no mountains ... so you could really get your train up to maximum speed and do really good things with it." He noted that Amtrak ridership in Indiana, and across the country, has grown dramatically in the past decade despite few service improvements, as travelers seek alternatives to the long security lines and frequent delays associated with air travel. "If you go over 100 mph in America (by train), you become competitive with the automobile, you become competitive with air, you can make enough money to cover your operating costs," Metcalf said.

http://www.newsbug.info/news/national/indiana/expert-claims-time-is-right-for-indiana-to-invest-in/article_0b77a35e-94c8-55f3-8bf5-b4e45ac5d6e2.html

Study on IndyGo ridership released on verge of tax hike, budget

FOX59

Russ McQuaid

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INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.-- There are approximately 800,000 people in Marion County, and a small percentage of them ride IndyGo buses. "Twenty-six thousand folks do use transit and half of them use it to get to work every day," said Matt Nowlin of IUPUI's Polis Center, which conducted a study of ridership statistics provided by IndyGo. The study determined that the 77 percent of IndyGo riders fall into two categories: working age or young persons of color who most often take the bus to full time or part time work in Center Township, on the east side or along the Meridian Street corridor. Younger riders also travel to college or for social reasons. Overall, IndyGo's planned build out of its system and change from a spoke-and-hub delivery model to routes based on grids should improve access to service six percent across the city by 2021. That's after IndyGo launches the Red Line down the spine of the city from Broad Ripple to the University of Indianapolis and builds the Purple and Blue Lines to traverse the metro area from east to west. IndyGo officials are unveiling their proposed 2018 budget to city county councilors. The plan calls for spending \$94 million for operating costs and \$113 million for capital improvements including the construction of the Red Line slated to begin in January. Both figures are huge increases over 2017 and made possible by a dedicated transit tax which was approved by voters in 2016 and will take effect Oct. 1. "That income tax in Marion County is going to generate about \$54 million in 2018," said IndyGo Spokesman Bryan Luellen. "That's going to be split between capital expenses and operational expenses so we're going to be running some more frequent service, we're going to be adding staff so that we can ramp up to the 2019 opening of the Red Line."

<http://fox59.com/2017/09/14/study-on-indygo-ridership-released-on-verge-of-tax-hike-budget/>

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