



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

**October 11, 2016**

### **Indiana, Illinois continue work on Illiana Expressway plan fixes**

NWI Times  
Andrew Steele  
10/11/16

The Indiana and Illinois departments of transportation anticipate completing revisions to their Illiana Expressway plan this fall, hoping to overcome a federal court's objections to their original effort. A late April agreement between the two states aimed to keep the Illiana project alive, with Indiana hiring an engineer to correct flaws in the Illiana's environmental impact statement. In a Friday filing in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, an Illinois Department of Transportation engineer declared that "IDOT is working cooperatively with INDOT to perform the work necessary to address the issues decided by the Court." The declaration, by IDOT's Region One engineer John Fortmann, stated that the agencies intend to submit a preliminary draft of a new environmental statement to the Federal Highway Administration this fall. Last year, a federal judge rejected the statement, which details the potential demographic, economic and environmental impact of the Illiana Expressway project. The Illiana Expressway would be a 47-mile toll highway running between Interstate 65 in south Lake County and Interstate 55 in Will County, Illinois. The project's cost is estimated at \$1.5 billion.

[http://www.nwitimes.com/business/transportation/indiana-illinois-continue-work-on-illiana-expressway-plan-fixes/article\\_d2c587ea-320b-520e-a9a5-dcf109a1f94d.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/business/transportation/indiana-illinois-continue-work-on-illiana-expressway-plan-fixes/article_d2c587ea-320b-520e-a9a5-dcf109a1f94d.html)

### **City to utilize funding for Home Ave. reconstruction, roundabout**

Kokomo Tribune  
George Myers  
10/11/16

The Kokomo Board of Public Works last week approved a grant agreement for multiple road projects, including a potential roundabout at the intersection of Home Avenue and Hoffer Street. During its weekly meeting Wednesday, the board approved an agreement between the city and the Indiana Department of Transportation for the administration of Community Crossings grant funding, the state's road and bridge matching grant fund. Overall, the city received \$1 million in matching grants, as announced in August. The city will use the money to help fund three road projects – Washington Street reconstruction between Mulberry and Monroe streets; Home Avenue reconstruction between Apperson Way and Hoffer Street; and a roundabout at the intersection of Home Avenue and Hoffer Street, according to city engineer Carey Stranahan. Stranahan said the city is still finishing the Home Avenue reconstruction project's design, but it will include a road diet similar to the Washington Street reconstruction project, including lane reductions and an effort to make the roadway more pedestrian-friendly.

[http://www.kokomotribune.com/news/local\\_news/city-to-utilize-funding-for-home-ave-reconstruction-roundabout/article\\_5ac23900-8b40-11e6-b717-dbe7da1091da.html](http://www.kokomotribune.com/news/local_news/city-to-utilize-funding-for-home-ave-reconstruction-roundabout/article_5ac23900-8b40-11e6-b717-dbe7da1091da.html)

### **A new trail, better bridges and roads**

The Herald-Tribune  
Debbie Blank  
10/10/16

Batesville and Franklin County are the big area winners that gained some of the \$80 million in federal transportation funding being awarded to 64 cities, towns and counties in rural portions of Indiana to invest in local road and bridge improvements as well as sidewalk and trail projects. "Combined with local funds, almost \$135 million is being invested in infrastructure," noted a news release from the Indiana Department of Transportation, which is administering the projects. The city of Batesville was awarded \$990,000 for trails. Mayor Mike Bettice reported, "We were quite pleased" upon getting the news. Coupled with the recent \$1 million grant for the Merkel Road upgrade and routine repavings, he noted, "It's awfully nice we have a couple things we can work on for the future. We all have so many tax dollars go to the state ... finally we get some of that money back we can use to make Batesville a better place." Bettice and city director of operations Tim Macyauski applied for a grant to extend the city's trail system from The Plex to the Southeastern Indiana YMCA and were successful. After he took office in January, the mayor recalled, "I stumbled upon a book that had the (Batesville Parks and Recreation Department) five-year master plan." One goal was to increase the trail system. "The grant was specifically for these kinds of projects. We said, 'Let's give this a shot.'" After filing the paperwork, the city officials made a presentation to INDOT leaders at the Seymour office.

[http://www.batesvilleheraldtribune.com/news/local\\_news/a-new-trail-better-bridges-and-roads/article\\_4ebca678-f867-58eb-84a3-7875dfe4484a.html](http://www.batesvilleheraldtribune.com/news/local_news/a-new-trail-better-bridges-and-roads/article_4ebca678-f867-58eb-84a3-7875dfe4484a.html)

### **Paving the way for more public-private partnerships?**

Indianapolis Business Journal  
Hayleigh Colombo  
10/8/16

The controversial 2006 lease of the Indiana Toll Road paved the way for highway projects funded by public-private partnerships in Indiana—including the relatively smooth and nearly finished building of a bridge over the Ohio River at Louisville and the beleaguered construction of a 21-mile stretch of Interstate 69 from Bloomington to Martinsville. Indiana's next governor—whose road-funding agenda will likely shape discussions at next year's budget session of the Indiana General Assembly—will have a major role in crafting future deals to fund projects and maintain the state's infrastructure. The question is whether the state will continue embracing deals between private entities and the state as a funding mechanism for those projects. Neither of the major-party candidates—Republican Eric Holcomb nor Democrat John Gregg—reject so-called P3s. Both think the deals have their place, but they differ on when they should be used. Holcomb said they're appropriate "whenever possible." The current lieutenant governor, Holcomb served as former Gov. Mitch Daniels' chief of staff and has touted his own involvement in the Major Moves road funding project that was paid for with proceeds of the toll road lease. "These partnerships save the state's valuable financial resources and give the private sector a vested interest in the timely and efficient completion of necessary projects," Holcomb told IBJ. Meanwhile, Gregg plans to be much pickier. He is "not philosophically opposed to public-private partnerships, but will consider them only on a case-by-case basis," according to his spokesman, Jeff Harris. <http://www.ibj.com/articles/60723-paving-the-way-for-more-public-private-partnerships>

### **Gary's rapid service bus plan stalled**

NWI Times  
Andrew Steele  
10/7/16

GARY — The Gary Public Transportation Corp. Board of Directors deferred a decision on the final plan for its “Broadway rapid” bus service Thursday, asking staff to provide a specific recommendation regarding the service. The plan, in the works for more than a year, would cut travel times and increase bus frequency between the Adam Benjamin Metro Center in Gary and Methodist Hospitals Southlake in Merrillville. The plan calls for a repaved Broadway in the city with bypass lanes at bus stops, new shelters at the stops, and investment in the GPTC’s bus fleet. Total capital costs are estimated at \$9.5 million, much of it expected to be borne by the Indiana Department of Transportation for the road work. Operating costs are estimated at \$1.25 million per year. A federal grant of \$3.1 million will help cover those costs in the service’s early years. There are two potential “alignments” for the rapid service. A staff recommendation will be presented to the board in November, with an analysis of the extra costs associated with them. “This is one of the more important steps of the whole process,” David Wright, GPTC’s planning and marketing director, said of the alignment selection.

[http://www.nwitimes.com/business/local/gary-s-rapid-service-bus-plan-stalled/article\\_882513f2-b81d-5701-b4ed-94686daf3a53.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/business/local/gary-s-rapid-service-bus-plan-stalled/article_882513f2-b81d-5701-b4ed-94686daf3a53.html)

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