



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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We can fund roads without raising taxes

Journal Review
John Pickerill
10/17/16

Most people living in rural Montgomery County would agree that their roads are in desperate need of repair. The challenge is finding the money to repair them. This year the Indiana General Assembly did give counties a one-time appropriation out of the state's surplus, but everyone can agree that is not a long term solution. So what is? One simple solution would be the General Assembly to actually dedicate sales tax from gasoline sales to road maintenance, not just some of it but all 7 percent of it. And another way is for the General Assembly to make sure local roads get their fair share of the state/local split of the \$0.18-per-gallon gasoline tax revenue. The best thing about these two solutions is they do not require a tax increase to make our county roads better. First let's talk about giving local government more of the state's \$0.18-per-gallon gasoline tax. Gas tax generated \$542 million in tax revenue in 2015, according to the State Auditor's Office. That money all goes to roads, but only 40 percent goes to county and city roads. The other 60 percent goes to the State Highway Department. When you consider that the State Highway Department is only responsible for 12,000 miles of roads in Indiana, and that counties, cities and towns are responsible for 84,000 miles, it's obvious the local governments are getting shortchanged. http://www.journalreview.com/opinion/article_b5c11d9c-94ac-11e6-affb-3fa37f316d5f.html

Briggs: Chicago workers don't want to live in Gary. A train project could change that.

Indianapolis Star
James Briggs
10/14/16

Time for some word association: Chicago's best suburb. Go. What came to mind? Maybe Buffalo Grove? Wheaton? Hinsdale? I know what you didn't consider: any city in Indiana. Almost no one who lands a job in Chicago says: "Hey, I'm going to move my family to Gary." That's largely because of Gary's decades-long decline as a steel city. But it's also Indiana's fault. The state has flat-out failed to capitalize on its proximity to one of the world's greatest cities. People often discuss economic development like it's magic. But there are at least a couple reliable (if not easy) ways to build wealth in a state: increase educational attainment and become more urban. Let's talk about urbanization. Indiana is what it is — a rural state with few big cities and a lot of farmland. Yet, much of Northwest Indiana is tantalizingly close to a market with a gross metropolitan product of more than \$600 billion. Indiana has a chance to begin — and it really is just a beginning — chasing that wealth. There's a proposal to build a second track along 25 miles of the South Shore Line, the commuter train route that connects several Northwest Indiana cities

to Chicago. The South Shore Line has one track between Gary and Michigan City, which means trains frequently stop for oncoming traffic. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, which operates the train line, says adding a second track would dramatically cut travel times to Chicago's Loop and allow for more frequent service. In Michigan City, for instance, a second track could shave as much as 40 minutes off the trip, cutting it to one hour each way. <http://www.indystar.com/story/money/2016/10/14/briggs-chicago-workers-dont-want-live-gary-train-project-could-change/91911592/>

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