



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

January 19, 2017

The 'Crossroads of America' for the Next Generation

Inside Indiana Business

Brian Bosma, Speaker of the Indiana House, R-88

1/18/2017

As legislators return to the Indiana Statehouse, passing an honestly balanced budget which responsibly funds critical priorities like education and public safety will be our top goal. But there is another priority this year which is critical for every Hoosier: adopting a long-term, sustainable funding plan for Indiana's road infrastructure. Few government policies touch so many aspects of Hoosiers' daily lives. Indiana's roads and bridges connect our homes, schools, offices, factories and farms, and are indispensable arteries for our manufacturing- and logistics-based economy. If transportation infrastructure is not placed on a fiscally sustainable path, Indiana's current long-term economic competitiveness will be undermined. We can't honestly call ourselves the Crossroads of America with infrastructure inadequate to meet Indiana's 21st-century economic realities. To maintain our current roadways, finish the projects we have already started (like I-69) and build new road capacity for the next generation, the legislative task force charged with studying road funding this summer confirmed that our state highway system requires an average of \$1.2 billion in additional annual funding over the next 20 years.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/34287356/the-crossroads-of-america-for-the-next-generation>

Business Leaders: Bridges and I-69 Impact Exceeding Expectations

Inside Indiana Business

Kylie Veleta

1/18/2017

Indiana transportation leaders say two major road projects in the state are already making a mark on their respective regional economies. Mapped out on paper in 2012, the Ohio River Bridges project connecting southern Indiana and Louisville is now complete and making waves in the region, says a local business leader. Additionally, I-69 continues its march northward from Evansville, further connecting the southern part of the state. Both projects were highlighted during the Indiana Logistics Summit, led by Conexus Indiana, in late 2016 when hundreds of industry leaders throughout the country convened in Indianapolis. The \$2.3 billion Ohio River Bridges Project included construction of a Downtown Crossing bridge connecting Jeffersonville, Indiana to downtown Louisville and the East End Crossing bridge, eight miles upstream in New Albany. A 2014 economic impact study conducted by the Indiana Finance Authority says the project will generate \$87 billion in economic impact in the next 30 years. The report also projects the creation of 15,000 jobs and \$29 billion in personal income added to the region. Bringing additional change to southern Indiana's transportation landscape is the ongoing construction of I-69. Work began on Section 1 in 2008, and the interstate has progressed northward from Evansville and is now open

to traffic through Section 4 in Bloomington.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/34287068/business-leaders-bridges-and-i-69-impact-exceeding-expectations>

Overpass/underpass would solve traffic problems in Dunlap

Goshen News

1/18/2017

The Elkhart County Commissioners are moving forward with long-term planning for an underpass or overpass in Dunlap to ease traffic congestion created by train traffic at C.R. 13. We couldn't be happier. It has been a dream of many people in Elkhart County to have bridges or underpasses built at all the major rail crossings. That is not likely to ever occur because of the very high price of such structures, but taxpayers should support a continual progression toward that goal. In Dunlap, the issue involves not only delays to the general motoring public, but also to Concord school buses. For several years, Concord officials have wanted an overpass or underpass bus drivers could use so they aren't delayed. And, we should note, safety will be greatly enhanced for school children riding the buses as their bus won't be on a potential collision course with a train. It's too early to tell just how much this project will cost taxpayers. The exact location for the bridge or underpass has to be determined and that will reveal how many homes and businesses need to be taken to build the structure and its approaches. As a comparison, the recently completed Prairie Street bridge in Elkhart over the Norfolk Southern Railroad cost \$10 million, and many more millions were spent on property acquisition, planning and engineering. We don't think the commissioners and County Council should ever write a blank check for a project, but if it is at all possible to finance an underpass or overpass at the railroad in Dunlap, the commissioners and County Council should make it happen.

http://www.goshennews.com/opinion/overpass-underpass-would-solve-traffic-problems-in-dunlap/article_0d6476ff-c24d-5422-a960-c044473ede7d.html

Keep traffic moving without tax increase

Indianapolis Star

Justin Stevens, Indiana director of Americans for Prosperity

1/18/2017

One of the major issues confronting the Indiana General Assembly is how to pay for much-needed roadwork and maintenance to our infrastructure. But whereas taxpayers in other states often have to cough up more of their hard-earned money to pay for it, the good news for Hoosiers is that the funds are already available. But some officials would prefer the state to raise more taxes to cover roadwork. Lawmakers recently proposed raising the gas tax another 10 cents over the current 18 cents. Even worse, this tax would be indexed to inflation, resulting in increases year after year moving forward. In addition, lawmakers proposed a new \$15 fee per vehicle and tolling on existing interstates. Before any tax hikes are discussed, politicians should find ways to make the best use of the money they've already collected. Indiana legislators are wisely looking for a less burdensome way to fund necessary infrastructure. In recent years there have been calls to allocate all gas tax revenue and most gas sales tax revenue toward actual road-related work, as opposed to the plethora of other uses to which it's now devoted. This will ensure that the money drivers fork over already isn't misused or wasted. Better yet, it will deny legislators an excuse to drive up gas taxes. This is absolutely the right approach. Legislators' priority ought to be finding a way to keep traffic moving without sending a higher tax bill back to you and me.

<http://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/2017/01/18/keep-traffic-moving-without-tax-increase/96724228/>

YEARS IN THE MAKING: Former Gov. Mitch Daniels visits Lewis and Clark Bridge in Southern Indiana for first time Wednesday

Jeffersonville News and Tribune

Elizabeth Beilman
1/18/2017

Many of the roads and bridges projects around Indiana in the last decade were funded through the private lease of the Indiana Toll Road in 2006. The deal dumped \$3.9 billion into the state's pockets, kick starting among other projects the Ohio River Bridges. It's something former Ind. Gov. Mitch Daniels remembers well. "There were a lot of indelible moments from the last job, but right up near the top was Friday afternoon, five of us in a windowless room to open the bids on the Indiana Toll Road, hoping that there might be a bid for as much as 2-and-a-half billion — all the things we could do for Indiana if that happened," Daniels said. About \$400 million of the cash sum was directly invested to the bridges project, which today includes the new Lewis and Clark Bridge and Abraham Lincoln Bridge. Daniels said that deposit kept project costs and tolls down, "and was the trigger to make it possible." How to fund infrastructure across the state is a dilemma on the desks of Indiana lawmakers again, as Gov. Eric Holcomb proposes a tax hike that has been met with some opposition. "It's time for Chapter Two. Indiana built infrastructure like no state in America for the last 10 years," Daniels commented. "But now, we've got more to take care of than we did. You can never stop. It's probably time for a new chapter." Indiana may not have another "giant rabbit in the hat" like the Indiana Toll Road lease, Daniels said. But building and maintaining infrastructure is something he believes the state must do.

http://www.newsandtribune.com/news/years-in-the-making-former-gov-mitch-daniels-visits-lewis/article_a108f04e-ddc9-11e6-894c-e3800596c8a9.html

County road, bridge repairs are on a roll

Shelbyville News
John Walker
1/18/2017

Shelby County Highway Department workers paved more than 71 miles of county roads last year. "That's our highest in 10 years," county highway superintendent Kem Anderson told the Shelby County Council. Add to the road pavings upgrades to 24 culverts and work on five bridges either finished or underway and it was a banner year for the county, he said. Council members complimented the highway department's efforts at their meeting Tuesday evening. Early in 2016, the Shelby County Commissioners had their engineering adviser, USI Consultants Inc. of Indianapolis, inspect the county's bridges and create a priority list, placing the worst first in terms of those which needed replacement or repair. USI did the same with the county's roads. The inspections were needed to qualify for state highway funds. "This is stuff that would not have been completed otherwise," County Councilman Terry Smith (R - 3rd District) said.

http://www.shelbynews.com/news/article_599b672a-ab16-563c-a812-40bce5311fbb.html

Pence: Trump will help mayors with infrastructure needs

Indianapolis Star
Maureen Groppe
1/17/2017

When Vice President-elect Mike Pence told his boss he was on his way to talk to more than 300 mayors Tuesday, President-elect Trump asked Pence to deliver a message. "He said, 'Tell them we're going to do an infrastructure bill, and it's going to be big,'" Pence told the local officials gathered for the U.S. Conference of Mayors annual winter meeting. Infrastructure is the group's top priority and Trump proposed during the campaign to spend \$550 billion over the next decade to upgrade the nation's crumbling roads, bridges and waterways. But it's not clear how Trump would pay for it. Still, the mayors were not as concerned about the method of financing the infrastructure program as they are that Trump will end the tax break for municipal bonds in order to pay for a promised lowering of tax rates. "If we want to fix our infrastructure, we want to at least not go backwards with the money available, which is what that change would do," said Jim

Brainard, mayor of Carmel, Ind., and a member of the group's leadership. "The administration is going to be a friend to America's mayors," Pence promised Tuesday. Pence said Trump believes the federal government can play a pivotal role in helping cities thrive.

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/2017/01/17/pence-trump-help-mayors-infrastructure-needs/96687584/>

Also <http://www.thebraziltimes.com/story/2377872.html>

www.buildindianacouncil.org