



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **February 20, 2014**

#### **Indiana 245 offers hope for county**

Spencer County Journal  
2/20/14

The Indiana Department of Transportation's decision to renew construction efforts on Indiana 245 is a step in the right direction. What a disappointing sight it is to pass by the abandoned dirt lanes that should have been the new Highway 245 – the time, money and labor wasted on a project destined to become reclaimed by weeds, saplings and erosion. It will be at least another two years before progress on the road resumes, but when it's complete, many will reap the rewards. Though it would be easy to finger-point and assess blame as to why it has taken four years to get the project back on track, that is in the past and should serve as a lesson learned. INDOT had shown prior to the work in Lamar shutting down that the agency was committed to improving road conditions on the winding thoroughfare, having completed in 2009 similar upgrades on 245 north of Santa Claus. The work was, and is, imperative to safety. The hills and curves on that road, both north and south of Santa Claus – with twists and turns making navigation feel more like a Gran Turismo race course – had claimed many vehicles. The lightest of rainfalls often caused unsuspecting drivers, who may be unfamiliar with the sharp angles, to slide into ditches as they traversed the slaloms. How many vehicles were victims of the once-treacherous Kaetzels Bottoms between Dale and Santa Claus before it was realigned? [Indiana 245 offers hope for county | SpencerCountyJournal.com](http://SpencerCountyJournal.com)

#### **Big holes to fill**

The Journal Gazette  
2/20/14

Potholes? Be patient and prepare to watch your tax dollars at work. Fort Wayne City Council voted Tuesday to give initial approval to a \$30 million, eight-year loan to cover road construction projects. They are a visible, welcome result of the decision last year to raise the city's income tax rate from 1 percent to 1.35 percent as part of tax increases and spending cuts creating about \$13.5 million in new revenue. About \$3 million will go toward city parks, \$2.8 million will go to hiring new police and firefighters and the rest to streets and roads. A public hearing on the bond is set for Tuesday, with final approval expected after the hearing. Proceeds will fuel a five-year plan to address a backlog of street projects totaling more than \$50 million. Declining revenue from gasoline tax – the result of more fuel-efficient vehicles – and the effects of the statewide property tax caps have left Fort Wayne and other communities struggling to cover the cost of services residents should expect. The Indiana General Assembly eagerly pushed the circuit-breaker tax caps and has been slow to address the gas tax issue, leaving local government officials to handle the tough job of raising taxes. Fortunately, Mayor Tom Henry's administration and the Republican-controlled City Council were willing to take the heat, even without knowing a brutal winter was ahead. Residents should have even greater appreciation for Henry's and the

council's courage in addressing the city's responsibility to repair and maintain streets. [Big holes to fill | The Journal Gazette](#)

### **State Selects Team For I-69 Section**

Inside INdiana Business

2/19/14

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. - The Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) Board this morning made the preliminary selection of I-69 Development Partners, a team led by Isolux Infrastructure Netherlands B.V. to design, build, finance, operate and maintain I-69 Section 5 from Bloomington to Martinsville. Isolux has partnered with the local resources of contractors E&B Paving of Anderson, Force Construction Company of Columbus and Gradex Inc. of Indianapolis to preserve and upgrade the existing State Road 37 to interstate standards. The preferred proposal would design and build the project for \$325 million. Construction will begin later this year and the 21 new miles of interstate is scheduled to open by the end of 2016, several years ahead of schedule. The contract will limit the length and duration of lane closures to help maintain traffic flow for existing S.R. 37 traffic. "I am firmly committed to finishing what we started with I-69 from Evansville to Indianapolis so products and people will be able to move even more freely, and towns will be open to commerce and opportunity for more Hoosiers," said Governor Mike Pence. "The private sector can harness a different character of innovation to find greater efficiencies, and this project will continue Indiana's strong track record of partnering to deliver quality projects on budget and ahead of schedule." Indiana is a national leader in leveraging private capital and innovations to deliver transportation infrastructure sooner than expected and at the lowest possible cost to taxpayers.

[State Selects Team For I-69 Section - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

### **Transit bill should allow light rail**

Indianapolis Star

Brian J. Farkas / Legislative Representative

2/19/14

The Indiana General Assembly is considering a mass transit bill (SB 176) that is extremely shortsighted for Hoosiers. Consider part of this legislation's synopsis: "Prohibits an eligible county from carrying out a light rail project." Do our legislators think that a viable solution to our transportation woes is to add another lane of pavement to our roads? Do they seriously believe they are addressing our needs by stripping language from a bill that includes a form of mass transit? Why call this mass transit at all? Why not just call it a glorified bus bill? We should be encouraging our lawmakers to insert language back in this bill that would include all forms of mass transit, and, yes, that includes light rail. If we are to stay competitive and attract highly skilled workers into our state, we need to consider solutions that have been successful in other parts of the country. Cities like Charlotte, N.C., and Dallas have enjoyed increased ridership along their light rail lines. If conservative legislatures in these states can find the need for all forms of mass transit, why can't we? Our future hinges on finding viable solutions to our transportation needs in a fiscally sound, environmentally responsible way. We can help resolve this by adding light rail as an option to SB 176. [Transit bill should allow light rail](#)

### **Cline Avenue Bridge views remain mixed**

NWI Times

Keith Benman

2/19/14

A hearing on the proposed Cline Avenue Bridge on Wednesday within 1 mile of the demolished structure showed the same divisions remain when it comes to its planned replacement. Ricky

Novales, 50, a longtime Indiana Harbor resident, looked at renderings of the proposed bridge and said it could be good for East Chicago, even with tolls as planned. "I think it's good the way they are constructing this," he said. "I've never seen a bridge look this good. I think city residents will use it and won't mind the toll." Carlyle Edwards, 57, another East Chicago resident, took a look at the renderings as well and said it's no mystery why the state washed its hands of the condemned bridge. "Politics," he said. "Just look at who controls the Legislature." Edwards questioned how it still can be considered a state route, designated as Ind. 912, now that the right of way has been turned over to a private investment group that wants to build a toll bridge in its place. Local officials remain hopeful the private investment group that owns the former right of way over the Indiana Harbor and Ship Canal will begin construction of a new bridge this year. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission put on Wednesday's hearing at the East Chicago Public Library on Columbus Avenue. NIRPC is taking public comment on including the bridge project in both its short- and long-term transportation plans.

[http://www.nwitimes.com/business/transportation/cline-avenue-bridge-views-remain-mixed/article\\_14bcb9dc-f4e1-552a-8299-f1a4bd01866f.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/business/transportation/cline-avenue-bridge-views-remain-mixed/article_14bcb9dc-f4e1-552a-8299-f1a4bd01866f.html)

### **Illiana hearing draws opponents even as momentum builds**

Post-Tribune  
Carrie Napoleon  
2/18/14

LOWELL — A steady stream of residents numbering in the hundreds filled Lowell Middle School on Tuesday for a chance to see the latest proposed path of the Illiana Expressway and speak out on the record about the project. The vast majority of those attending oppose the highway. Land acquisition could begin as soon as this summer and construction could start by summer 2015 if momentum for the proposed highway continues. The Indiana Department of Transportation and Illinois Department of Transportation are conducting public hearings for the Draft Tier II Environmental Impact Study, one of the final steps necessary before the final environmental study is approved and record of decision is issued by the U.S. Highway Department. Officials from both agencies expect to have the record of decision by the end of May, which would allow officials from both states to move forward with land acquisition and requests for proposals. Jim Earl, INDOT project manager, said neither state is prepared to do so until federal approval is obtained. The latest preferred route for the tollway brings the Interstate 65 interchange about three-tenths of a mile closer to the Indiana 2 interchange. The impact of the road on property owners is becoming more clear. Tweaks in the roadway path since the Tier I study have brought the project right through some homeowners' properties. [Illiana hearing draws opponents even as momentum builds - Post-Tribune](#)

### **Red Mills Bridge project faces another extension**

Shelby News  
Paul Gable  
2/17/14

FAIRLAND - The plan of closing and making improvements to the Red Mills Bridge has been pushed back another year. While the State of Indiana has granted the bid to do work to Shelby County's own Beaty Construction, work of the project has been extended one year, according to Shelby County Commissioner Kevin Nigh, R-Center District. The work was to have begun in February of 2012, and then it was extended to last April, before being pushed to last fall and winter. "Dates always seem to change," Nigh said. The bridge is located on County Road 400 North, just west of the London Road intersection and is used by those who live near Fairland Road, as well as commuters to and from Johnson County. "We know that a lot of people from both Shelby County and Johnson County use that bridge," County Commissioner David Mohr, D-North District said. It is believed that the work, which is part of Phase IV of the Fairland Road project, could take as long as a year. That is due to the fact that not only will the 1927 concrete

arch bridge be replaced, but also there has to be a realignment of London Road there due to the proximity of the road to the new bridge. Mohr said the state is requiring a site distance between the bridge and road of approximately 100 feet. [The Shelbyville News > Archives > News > Red Mills Bridge project faces another extension](#)

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