



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **March 18, 2014**

#### **Designation Could Mean Illiana Savings**

Inside INdiana Business

3/17/14

Indianapolis, Ind. -- The Illiana Corridor achieved another important milestone today with the U.S. Department of Transportation declaring the project eligible to apply for a low-cost federal loan that could finance up to a third of the cost of construction. The loan, if approved, would be provided through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) at a reduced interest rate, representing a potential savings of as much as 20 percent on the project. "Today's announcement will help to ensure that Illinois and Indiana can get the best deal on Illiana Corridor," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann L. Schneider. "Receiving the green light to proceed with an application for TIFIA funding is just more proof that the widespread support for our innovative public-private partnership continues to build." "The Illiana Corridor project is creditworthy and a good candidate for TIFIA because it improves interstate commerce," said Indiana Public Finance Director Kendra York. "Today's formal invitation is an important step in securing the lowest cost financing that will result in lower pricing from the private developer teams for both states." Today's announcement means the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) are approved to negotiate with the U.S. DOT on the terms of the loan. Both states, in turn, would make the financing available to the shortlisted developer teams that are proposing to build and operate the proposed expressway. In addition to the ongoing work to select a development team, both IDOT and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) are wrapping up the final Environmental Impact Statement for approval later this spring. [Designation Could Mean Illiana Savings - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

#### **Lawmakers look at new ways to fund future, existing roads**

NWI Times

Dan Carden

3/16/14

With demand for gasoline at historic lows due to consistently high prices and greater declines ahead under a new federal requirement that cars and light trucks have double the fuel efficiency by 2025, Indiana lawmakers have begun looking at alternatives to the gasoline tax for funding construction and maintenance of the state's highways. Legislation sponsored by state Rep. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso, that appeared headed for passage at press time, requires the Indiana Department of Transportation oversee a two-year, independent study of six possible road-funding options to replace or supplement the gas tax. They are: a charge based on how much damage a vehicle causes to the state's transportation infrastructure, a flat fee for all vehicles, increases to existing vehicle and fuel taxes, tolls, a fee based on a vehicle's weight and the number of annual miles traveled in the state and any other funding mechanism INDOT believes is appropriate.

“Across America the infrastructure is declining. Since the 1950s, when the interstate system was built, our bridges and highways have been struggling,” Soliday said. “Every state is struggling with how we pay for this, and the task is large.” State gas taxes and other vehicle fees bring in about \$515 million a year. Hoosier lawmakers agreed in 2013 to supplement that with an additional \$210 million a year by diverting 1 percent of state sales revenue to state and local road projects, reducing the money available for other state spending, primarily education. [Lawmakers look at new ways to fund future, existing roads](#)

### **Region remains a top priority for state transportation agency**

NWI Times

Dan Carden

3/16/14

While much of what the Indiana Department of Transportation is doing for Northwest Indiana’s future is tied to the Illiana Expressway and Cline Avenue Bridge, the region still figures prominently in the agency’s plans for improving the state’s overall transportation network. Northwest Indiana is second only to the Indianapolis area for the amount of INDOT money spent on road projects since 2006 — \$450 million. Those funds — a good chunk of which came from the 75-year lease of the Indiana Toll Road — have been used to widen the Borman Expressway, rebuild Hammond’s Nine-Span Bridge and resurface state highways in Lake and Porter counties. On deck is the widening of Interstate 65 between Merrillville and Lowell. State lawmakers also are considering making Interstate 65 three lanes in both directions across the entire state. INDOT’s LaPorte District, which covers all of Northwest Indiana, is responsible for maintaining 560 miles of Interstate highway, 824 state-owned bridges, 618 traffic signals and 58,600 road signs, in addition to plowing snow that this winter more often was measured in feet than inches. Karl Browning, INDOT’s commissioner, said the region “is a big recipient of transportation funds and will continue to be an important customer of INDOT as we strive to serve all Hoosiers.” The agency has set a goal of having 92.5 percent of all roads it manages in fair or better condition by focusing on pavement preservation and other preventative maintenance. Though that goal may be more difficult to reach this year as numerous freeze-thaw cycles throughout winter produced a higher than usual number of potholes. Nevertheless, Republican Gov. Mike Pence — who regularly declares that “roads mean jobs” — believes Browning and INDOT are up to the task. [http://www.nwitimes.com/news/special-section/now/region-remains-a-top-priority-for-state-transportation-agency/article\\_28a900ea-122d-5692-827e-4d2d4af78e5b.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/special-section/now/region-remains-a-top-priority-for-state-transportation-agency/article_28a900ea-122d-5692-827e-4d2d4af78e5b.html)

### **Highway dept. preps for rebuild**

Pharos-Tribune

Mitchell Kirk

3/16/14

The Cass County Highway Department is preparing for a multi-million-dollar road reconstruction project connecting two industrial thoroughfares near Clymers. The project will consist of reconstructing the roughly three and a half miles of 400 South between Ind. 25 and Ind. 29. It will take place through three to four phases and include new pavement, a wider road surface and drainage improvements. Phase one will be the portion of 400 South from Ind. 25 to just east of 400 West, which includes the town of Clymers. It is estimated to cost about \$2.2 million. The total project is estimated to cost about \$10 million. Funding for the improvements comes from a match grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation. Much of the highway department’s 20 percent contribution comes from state funds paid to the county through the relinquishment of roads after the completion of the new Ind. 25 Hoosier Heartland Highway. Bid letting for the first phase is set for July 2015, with construction expected to start late in the year. Cass County Highway Superintendent Jeff Smith said a rough timeline for the project estimates the entire project concluding in 2018. [Highway dept. preps for rebuild » Local News » Pharos-Tribune](#)

## **INDOT awards bridge contract for Old US 421**

Greensburg Daily News

3/14/14

GREENSBURG —The Indiana Department of Transportation recently awarded a \$1.5 million bridge contract to Dave O'Mara Contractor Inc. of North Vernon to replace the 1935 twin arch structure along Old U.S. 421 at Clifty Creek in Adams Township. Decatur County, the Local Public Agency sponsor, is responsible for a portion of the costs. A preconstruction meeting has been scheduled with the contractor and the county to take place at INDOT Seymour District offices later this month. A timetable for construction may be known at that time. Plans call for Old U.S. 421 to close at the bridge site for 120 days. The contract completion date is Nov. 21, 2014. The new 3-span bridge will be a 185-foot continuous composite pre-stressed concrete I-beam structure that will accommodate two 12-foot lanes. The Federal Highway Administration funds 80 percent of LPA project costs. Decatur County—as the sponsoring LPA—pays 20 percent in matching funds. INDOT administers federal monies and assures compliance with FHWA standards. O'Mara's bid was the lowest of six submitted by area contractors. [INDOT awards bridge contract for Old US 421 » News » Greensburg Daily News, Greensburg, IN](#)

## **Mass transit bill clears Indiana legislature, heads to governor**

Indianapolis Star

Tony Cook

3/13/14

After a long and winding road, a measure that would clear the way for an expanded mass transit system in Central Indiana won support from both chambers of the Indiana General Assembly during the final hours of the 2014 legislative session. Senate Bill 176, which would allow six counties to have voter referendums on whether to fund mass transit projects primarily through income taxes, now goes to Gov. Mike Pence. The House voted 65-34 for the measure while the Senate voted 32-16. The bill represents a major victory for transit supporters – Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard among them – who have been trying to pass transit legislation for at least three years. Still, the compromises required to get the measure through the legislature may complicate the ability of local officials to sell a mass transit plan to the public. As originally written, the bill would have required large businesses in Central Indiana to contribute 10 percent of the transit system's operating costs through a new corporate income tax. That provision created a tricky dynamic. Some senators felt the corporations should have "skin in the game" because business groups such as the Indiana Chamber of Commerce have pushed for an expanded mass transit system for years to help transport workers and spur economic development. [Mass transit bill clears Indiana legislature, heads to governor](#)

## **Downtown bridge officials say first full construction season will be a busy one**

The Courier-Journal

Charlie White

3/13/14

As towers continue rising from the Ohio River for the new Interstate 65 bridge, workers on both sides of the river are building approaches to the downtown bridge and trying to untangle Spaghetti Junction. It has been eight months since Walsh Construction and other contractors began work on the span that's expected to be completed in December 2016. The new eventually will carry northbound traffic while southbound I-65 drivers will use a renovated John F. Kennedy Memorial Bridge. The downtown crossing is part of the \$2.3 billion bi-state Ohio River Bridges Project that also includes a new eastern bridge eight miles upriver that will connect the Gene Snyder Freeway in Kentucky with the Lee Hamilton Highway in Southern Indiana. This month

marks the start of the first full construction season, one that project officials say will bring more detours, lane closures and the shutdown of the Clark Memorial Bridge from late May into July. [Downtown bridge officials say first full construction season will be a busy one | The Courier-Journal | courier-journal.com](#)

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