



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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Locals face tax decisions for roads funding

Indianapolis Business Journal
Hayleigh Colombo
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Cities and counties are set to receive millions of dollars for their road and street projects, but elected officials are facing tough decisions about whether to raise local vehicle taxes to keep the dollars flowing. A \$1.2 billion, short-term road-funding plan passed by the General Assembly includes nearly \$900 million in mostly one-time cash for local projects. But some of that money is available only if local governments match it. For cash-strapped cities and counties, that could be difficult, although the bill gives cities new opportunities to impose vehicle taxes and gives counties the opportunity to raise those taxes. The bill is awaiting Gov. Mike Pence's signature. Officials say the opportunity is welcome. "We never anticipated they were going to raise a tax and just give us money to spend for roads," said David Bottorff, executive director of the Association of Indiana Counties. "We'd always anticipated there'd be a shared commitment." Indiana House Republicans initially championed a road-funding proposal that included a statewide gas-tax hike to provide more long-term funding for state highway projects, but reluctance from Pence and Republican senators won out. <http://www.ibj.com/articles/57727-locals-face-tax-decisions-for-roads-funding>

Indy referendum important to Muncie

The Star Press
Seth Slabaugh
3/19/16

He is eagerly awaiting the outcome of a proposed referendum asking Indianapolis voters whether local income taxes should be increased to fund the city's bus rapid transit (BRT) system. If passed, it would set in motion a series of follow-up referendums in other counties -- including, potentially, Delaware -- that could dramatically change the commuting process for Hoosiers. Indianapolis already has obtained a \$75 million federal grant for a battery operated all-electric BRT project (high-speed bus system) from Broad Ripple to the University of Indianapolis via downtown. But if the Red Line, as it's known, is to be built out to Westfield/Carmel north of Indianapolis and to Greenfield south of Indianapolis, and if other lines are to be completed, voters in Marion, Hamilton and Johnson counties must approve an income tax hike. If those referendums pass, Delaware and Madison counties would be eligible to conduct referendums on whether to increase their local income taxes to connect to the Indy system. "With robust transportation down there (Indianapolis), we can look to improve commuter buses from Muncie to Anderson and Indianapolis," Hollands said. In 2014, the state Legislature passed a mass transit bill that gives voters in Delaware, Hamilton, Hancock, Johnson, Madison and Marion counties the

option of approving an income tax increase to help cover the cost of expanded public transportation in their counties. In signing the bill, Gov. Mike Pence said, "Our capital city is a world-class destination and needs a world-class transit system."

<http://www.thestarpress.com/story/news/local/2016/03/19/indy-referendum-important-muncie/82011708/>

Business Insider: Lawmakers get serious about road funding

Indianapolis Star
John Ketzenberger
3/18/16

On its surface, the two-bill road funding package that cleared the General Assembly this month is what most expected before the session started. It reallocates and spends about \$1 billion for state and local road projects. It does not increase the gas tax, and it does not borrow any money to fix roads and bridges. Politicians, in short, have something to campaign on this year without denting the state's financial situation. Delve a little deeper into the legislation, though, and it is clear lawmakers are looking ahead. By nearly unanimous votes, they laid the groundwork for major changes in the way Indiana raises revenue for transportation and how it spends that money. It's safe to say the most interesting Statehouse meetings this summer will involve the newly created Funding Indiana's Roads for a Stronger, Safer Tomorrow task force. The FIRSST task force must "develop a long-term plan for state highway and major bridge needs, including sustainable funding mechanisms for the various components of the plan." And it's supposed to be ready when the General Assembly reconvenes in January. What's already been done, however, merits some attention. First up is Senate Bill 67, which Sen. Brandt Hershman, R-Buck Creek, first described in November. It's a clever way to give local governments their own money back and call it an increase in road funding. Indiana has held nearly 50 percent of all local option income taxes collected for local governments in a trust as a hedge against inflation. That's especially important since the cycle between collecting the taxes and redistributing them to local governments is about 18 months. <http://www.indystar.com/story/money/2016/03/18/business-insider-lawmakers-get-serious-road-funding/81838334/>

Holmans Lane widening in Jeffersonville on the way?

News and Tribune
Elizabeth Beilman
3/18/16

As the 10th Street widening project transitions into the next phase, city leaders are already talking about another road widening. Jeffersonville Mayor Mike Moore has begun planning expansion of Holmans Lane, a one-mile stretch of road between Allison Lane and Veterans Parkway. He's spoken with department heads, and council members have started mulling over numbers. "They both need to be widened," he said of the two major arteries. "There's way too much traffic on too small of a roadway." It's all preliminary at this point, but his plan is to widen the road enough to add a center turning lane as well as bicycle and pedestrian walkways on either sides of Holmans. A future city administration could decide to re-stripe the road to five lanes, with one center turning lane, without adding any pavement. Moore said the project would cost between \$7 million and \$8 million. "We will have more public meetings to make sure this is what the community wants," the mayor said. "I know lots of people want bike lanes, but I also recognize there's a whole lot of traffic on there." Construction of 10th Street widening is targeted for 2017, and Moore wants Holmans construction to happen then, too. He proposed the latter be funded solely through city money. "Any time you get involved with using state dollars, the project takes so much longer," Moore said. "I just don't think we can wait for everything the state would require." Umbaugh will have a report ready in a few weeks detailing projected tax increment finance, or TIF, revenue — the primary source of spending money for the redevelopment commission. <http://www.newsandtribune.com/news/holmans-lane-in-jeffersonville-widening-on->

the-way/article_2c327ff4-ec90-11e5-9f4e-6b46b955d7a2.html

Aggressive Toll Road Timeline Nears Kick-Off

Inside INdiana Business

Dan McGowan

3/17/16

With a start time now in place, the director of infrastructure for the company operating the Indiana Toll Road says he knows a lot of eyes will be focused on the \$200 million overhaul of 73 miles of the highway. ITR Concession Co.'s Zach Hurst says the project crams 15-20 years' worth of capital expenditure into a two-year period. Construction will begin April 4th and involve repaving, plaza upgrades, overpass renovations and safety improvements. The project's nickname is the 80/90 PUSH, which stands for Pavement Upgrade for a Superior Highway. Goshen-based Rieth-Riley Construction Co., who originally built the road more than 60 years ago, will lead the development. ITRCC says, in the long-term, the investment will reduce the amount of future maintenance, improve travel conditions and lower vehicle operating costs, install improved technology and displays to boost safety. The work is expected to create 400 construction jobs and generate an \$800 million in economic activity. In all, 53 bridges will be redone. A high-tech feature of the project is the installation of fiber optic lines, which will be capable of transporting data for future Intelligent Transportation Systems that will assist in identification and response to roadway conditions and help provide real-time traffic information.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/31495876/aggressive-toll-road-timeline-nears-kick-off>

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