



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **May 31, 2016**

#### **Are you willing to pay more in the state's gas tax to help fix Indiana roads?**

WTTV

Matt Smith

5/30/16

This summer, Indiana lawmakers are promising a sweeping study tasked with finding solutions to fix state and local roadways for the long-term. "We've come to a consensus that we need to get an answer," Senate President Pro Tem David Long (R-Fort Wayne) said. As part of more than 40 study committees announced last week, leading Republicans in the general assembly said infrastructure will be the top priority. Last session, a long-term solution proposed by House Republicans was sent to the wayside that included raising the gas and cigarette tax. Indiana's gas tax hasn't been raised in more than a decade. House Speaker Brian Bosma (R-Indianapolis) will push a comprehensive plan again. "It is my hope we can change the discussion a little bit from road expenditures being an expense to an investment," Bosma said last week. "It surely is a fundamental core economic development function of state government, and it's a conservative Republican principle to invest in infrastructure so the private sector can thrive." The House plan stalled in the Senate after concerns from Republicans about raising taxes, alongside deep reservations from Gov. Mike Pence. When asked about discussing a gas tax hike again, Long said all options must be on the table. <http://cbs4indy.com/2016/05/30/are-you-willing-to-pay-more-in-the-states-gas-tax-to-help-fix-indiana-roads/>

#### **Valparaiso sets public hearing on wheel tax plan**

Post-Tribune

James D. Wolfe Jr.

5/26/16

Valparaiso residents who own a motorized vehicle may soon be paying a tax on it, from \$25 a year for passenger vehicles to \$40 for larger vehicles. Mayor Jon Costas introduced a wheel tax ordinance for first reading at the City Council's May 23 meeting. A public hearing on the issue is planned for the June 13 meeting. The tax would take advantage of the new state law allowing local governments to tax vehicles to raise money for road improvements. Besides passenger vehicles having the \$25 tax, motorcycles, recreational vehicles and trailers would be taxed at \$12.50 annually. Buses, semitrailers, trucks and tractors would be taxed at \$40 annually. Council attorney Ethan Lowe that the school would be exempt for paying taxes on their vehicles. Municipalities get Local Road and Street Fund money from Indiana's gas tax, but "that amount hasn't changed for decades," Costas said. The more efficient cars use less gas to tax, he said. He said that the city doesn't have enough money to maintain its roads, much less make improvements. Citing Director of Public Works Director Matt Evans' presentation to the Council on March 14, Costas said the city budgets roughly \$1.8 million for road improvement, and Campbell Street's requirement for an \$800,000 reconstruction would use most of that. Evans has

estimated it will take \$3 million to \$3.5 million just to maintain city roads at proper levels. The wheel tax would raise about \$1 million more, Costas said.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/post-tribune/news/ct-ptb-valparaiso-wheel-tax-st-0528-20160526-story.html>

### **State grant funds can't be used for Eisenhower Bridge**

The Herald Bulletin

Ken de la Bastide

5/26/16

The good news is Madison County can apply for \$1 million in matching state funds for road and bridge repairs. The bad news Thursday is the state's matching funds can't be used as part of Madison County's matching funds for the \$14.5 million federal grant to replace the Eisenhower Bridge in Anderson. Chuck Leser, county engineer, said the intent was to apply for \$1 million from the state in 2016 and 2017 to use as matching funds on the Eisenhower Bridge project. Leser said county officials were hoping to double the local funds to provide most of the \$4.5 million in matching funds for the bridge project. During an Indiana Department of Transportation meeting to provide guidelines for the state's Community Crossroads grant program, Kathy Eaton-McKalip, director of the Local Project Assistance program, said the state matching funds can't be utilized on federal aid programs. The Indiana General Assembly passed legislation this year providing an estimated \$150 million in each of the next two years for local road and bridge projects. The state has returned \$3.6 million to Madison County and \$2.9 million to the city of Anderson in 2016 that was being held in a local option income tax reserve fund by the state. Local units of government are required to use 75 percent of the funds on road work with the remaining 25 percent to be spent at their discretion. The Madison County Council voted to spend \$2.7 million road work. Anderson will spend \$2.1 million on the city streets. Leser said the county will apply with the state for \$1 million for paving projects in 2016. Eaton-McKalip explained to a packed house at INDOT's Greenfield District offices that half of the state matching funds are designated to go to counties with populations of less than 50,000. In this area, that includes Henry and Tipton counties.

[http://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/state-grant-funds-can-t-be-used-for-eisenhower-bridge/article\\_e0217d6-2398-11e6-9ddd-6b617130de33.html](http://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/state-grant-funds-can-t-be-used-for-eisenhower-bridge/article_e0217d6-2398-11e6-9ddd-6b617130de33.html)

### **Double the Money, Double the Work**

My Wabash Valley

Sadie All

5/26/16

Rugged roads in downtown Vincennes had the city turning to INDOT for some financial assistance. Half of the money for a future paving project is already a done deal. But the other half is going to take a little legwork. Vincennes was among the communities receiving money from the state. And there's an opportunity for more. Indiana's first city hopes a department of transportation grant will pave the way to better streets. "This corner that you're looking at now is probably the busiest corner in the city of Vincennes for local resident, commercial vehicle traffic," Mark Grundman said. The streets of Vincennes sport some wear and tear. Now the city is putting repair plans into overdrive. The state recently released local option income tax money to many communities. Vincennes received a little over \$1 million. With a dollar for dollar match grant from INDOT, city mayor Joe Yochum wants to double the impact. "As dollars get tighter and tighter and budgets get tighter with the tax caps and things it's tougher and tougher to find dollars to do paving. So when the state released this money we were more than happy to take ours and invest it in paving," he said. Two focus areas with the most need are 7th Street from Main to College and Main Street from 7th to 22nd. The city will know if they receive the grant by August. It already meets a couple of the criteria, like having a payment preservation plan in place that tracks street work progression and half of the state's money for the dollar for dollar grant is designated to cities with a population of 50 thousand or less. <http://www.mywabashvalley.com/news/double-the->

[money-double-the-work](#)

---

[www.buildindianacouncil.org](http://www.buildindianacouncil.org)