



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

June 13, 2017

Valparaiso to revisit wheel tax in 2018

Post-Tribune
James D. Wolf Jr
6/13/17

Valparaiso's City Council won't consider repealing or reducing the wheel tax it passed last year until about February, based on discussion at Monday's Council meeting. The city will have an idea in February how much money it is getting from the tax, which charges residents \$25 per licensed car and light truck and \$12.50 a year for motorcycles, trailers and recreational vehicles, Mayor Jon Costas said Monday. Costas was responding to a request by Robert Cotton, D-2nd, to have a vote on whether an ordinance for repeal or reduction should be put on the June 23 agenda. Cotton repeated points made during a discussion of the tax at the May 22 Council meeting that the recent increases in the state gas tax and BMV fees the Indiana Legislature could give the city enough money. With those and recent increases in city service costs, people are "hurting on fees," Cotton said. "(Paying) \$25 on top of \$15 for a limited income with multiple cars is a heavy burden," he said. Costas said that by getting rid of the wheel tax, they could be pushing needed road repairs on to the next generation. City Public Works Director Matt Evans has estimated that Valparaiso needs \$3.6 million annually for roads. To reach that, the city is using the wheel tax to have matching funds to be eligible for the state's Community Crossings grant, which the Legislature created about the same time as the ability for municipalities to enact the wheel tax. Costas said after Monday's meeting that it's unknown how much the gas tax increase or whether the BMV increase would provide enough funding to affect the wheel tax. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/post-tribune/news/ct-ptb-valparaiso-wheel-tax-st-0614-20170613-story.html>

Repairing Indiana's roads and bridges

The Herald-Tribune
State Senator Jean Leising
6/11/17

The Indiana General Assembly passed legislation last year to create a program to help cities, counties and towns across our state improve their roads and bridges – the Community Crossings Matching Grant Program. Through the program, the Indiana Department of Transportation matches up to \$1 million when localities invest in road and bridge repairs. Counties with populations below 50,000 and cities and towns with populations below 10,000 are matched 75 percent, while counties with populations of at least 50,000 and cities and towns with populations of at least 10,000 are matched 50 percent. Each county in Senate District 42 – Decatur, Fayette, Franklin, Henry, Ripley, Rush and Shelby counties – has a population below 50,000, meaning they are eligible for a three-to-one match on local road and bridge repairs, if approved. Monetary awards are based on need, traffic counts, safety, current infrastructure plans, and regional and economic importance. In 2016 alone, the program provided Indiana communities across the state

with a total of \$146.5 million to enhance roads and bridges. I encourage the counties of Senate District 42 to learn more about this program and take advantage of the support it provides. The following eligibility guidelines were released by INDOT.

http://www.batesvilleheraldtribune.com/opinion/repairing-indiana-s-roads-and-bridges/article_2d8b1d52-0111-5127-91dc-ca018f383d46.html

Carmel City Council approves \$2M more for road repaving

Current in Carmel

Adam Aasen

6/9/17

The Carmel City Council unanimously approved an extra \$2 million for road repaving at its June 5 meeting. Carmel Mayor Jim Brainard said the city is expected to receive approximately \$2.2 million in its Motor Vehicle Highway Fund as a result of the gas tax recently approved by the state legislature for infrastructure improvements. Brainard said Carmel should spend the money to keep the roads in good condition before they start to deteriorate. "If you go back to the Great Recession, we delayed paving some years," Brainard said. "We are doing better than other areas, but we still aren't back to where we were, and so we need to catch up. It won't affect taxes. The funding won't catch up to the MVH tax coming in until seven or eight months, but that's OK, we have sufficient funds." Brainard said the list of roads to be repaved is not yet available. Dave Huffman, director of the streets department, will assemble the list. Brainard said he doesn't want political pressure for certain roads to be included. This will bring the City of Carmel's total expenditures on paving to around \$6 million in 2017, the highest in the city's history. Brainard said it's appropriate because the city has grown. He said the city can do regular repaving work instead of pulling out jackhammers and fixing problems to the base, which can be expensive and cause long road closures. "What could be a \$10,000 repair could turn into a \$1 million repair if water gets in," he said. City councilor Ron Carter said Carmel will spend more on road repaving than the entire city of Indianapolis. "I think it's an interesting comparison with the number of street miles we have and the number of street miles that Indianapolis has," Carter said.

<http://currentincarmel.com/carmel-city-council-approves-2m-more-for-road-repaving>

Mass transit plan on table

Daily Journal

Annie Goeller

6/8/17

A long discussed plan to create a new mass transit route in central Indiana has been approved in Marion County, but hasn't yet been voted on locally. Now, a central Indiana transportation group is planning to fan out in northern Johnson County to find out what residents think about mass transit, whether they would use it and what type would be best for their community. Residents of at least one township in the county could be asked to vote on a possible funding option for a mass transit plan as soon as next year. The Red Line, a rapid transit bus route from Hamilton to Johnson counties, has been discussed for years. Last year, voters in Marion County approved an increase to their income tax rate to help fund the route, and voters in Hamilton and Johnson counties could also be asked to approve a similar referendum in 2018 or 2020. The rapid transit bus route would pass through Hamilton, Marion and Johnson counties, with dedicated lanes and a limited number of stops from Carmel to Greenwood. The proposed bus line will run through Greenwood with three stops in Pleasant Township, where more than 57,000 people live. In Indianapolis, the vote was citywide, but in other areas, voters in townships along the route would consider a 0.25 percent income tax increase. Residents in Pleasant Township, which includes areas of Greenwood, Whiteland and New Whiteland, would pay the tax increase. Before that, Indy Connect, which has been planning the mass transit project, will be asking local residents to respond to a survey about their thoughts and preferences for mass transit.

http://www.dailyjournal.net/2017/06/09/mass_transit_plan_on_table/

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