



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

July 5, 2016

State begins 'Major Moves' on I-69, Exit 210 in Noblesville

Current in Noblesville
7/5/16

On June 22, Noblesville Mayor John Ditslear joined Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, Senator Jim Merritt and the Indiana Dept. of Transportation, along with other local leaders to kick off construction on a \$92 million project to modernize I-69 in Hamilton and Madison counties. The project, as part of the Governor's Major Moves 2020 program, will widen 15 miles of I-69 from Ind. 37 in Fishers to Ind. 38 in Pendleton. The project also will reconfigure I-69's Exit 210 at Campus/Southeastern Parkway in Noblesville into a double-crossover diamond. "Here in the Crossroads of America, we know that roads mean jobs," Pence said. "Along this section of I-69, we've seen tremendous economic development, and it is vital that we modernize this portion of the highway to ensure continued economic growth. My administration has invested nearly \$3 billion in roads and bridges across Indiana since I became governor, and I firmly believe that by continuing to invest in infrastructure, we can make Indiana the best place in America to start a business, grow a business and create jobs." Following Independence Day, Milestone Contractors will shift traffic to begin widening I-69 and build new ramps at Exit 210. <http://currentnoblesville.com/state-begins-major-moves-on-i-69-exit-210-in-noblesville>

BOHANON & STYRING: If mass transit is so efficient, why the subsidies?

Indianapolis Business Journal
Cecil Bohanon and Bill Styring
7/2/16

A public transportation income tax is on the Marion County ballot in November. Similar tax hikes for Clay and Washington townships in Hamilton County (Carmel and Westfield) might not be far behind. The objective is to build a Red Line bus rapid transit connecting Westfield through Indianapolis, as well as fund other improvements. Which got us to thinking about why transit projects always require large infusions of taxpayer cash to stay afloat. You wouldn't think so. At first glance, your private automobile is a rather irrational asset. It sits idle 95 percent of the time. When sitting there, it is doing nothing in your garage or a parking lot. It takes up costly storage space. It pouts at unexpected times and requires costly intervention by a mechanic. Mass transit ought to have a lot going for it. Mass transit in central Indiana once was a thriving private-sector business. Before about 1930, the Indianapolis Traction and Terminal Co. profitably operated electric streetcars throughout the city. A dozen interurban lines ran short-haul intercity trips. For the most part, these private companies asked little of government. Passenger fares paid the cost, plus a profit. <http://www.ibj.com/articles/59214-bohanon-styring-if-mass-transit-is-so-efficient-why-the-subsidies>

Ballot issue to test appetite for transit taxes

The Star Press
Andrea Neal
6/30/16

A David versus Goliath battle is taking shape here as citizens prepare to vote this fall on a controversial tax increase to upgrade public transit. On one side: the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, IndyGo bus officials and hired guns touting the benefits of an all-electric rapid bus line that would eventually link Westfield in Hamilton County to Greenwood in Johnson County via downtown Indianapolis. On the other: a rag-tag group of citizens who've done their own cost-benefits analysis and are persuaded the project will do more harm than good. They say the plan was designed expressly to leverage federal transit funds without consideration of what would be best for Indianapolis. It will be the first referendum held under Senate Bill 176, passed in 2014, which authorized six central Indiana counties to place on their ballots "local public questions" for funding a regional mass transit initiative. The counties are Marion, Hamilton, Hancock, Johnson, Delaware and Madison. Indy voters are being asked to raise their local option income tax by 0.25 percent to fund the Marion County part of the plan. Estimated cost? At least \$400 million for physical structure and equipment and \$108 million a year in operating expenses. The plan calls for extended service hours and shorter wait times and establishes three rapid bus corridors. Most controversial is the Red Line, which will run on a dedicated traffic lane through historic neighborhoods flanked by ticket kiosks and 60-foot loading platforms.

<http://www.thestarpress.com/story/opinion/columnists/2016/06/30/ballot-issue-test-appetite-transit-taxes/86555252/>

Pence, Bevin sign agreement for I-69 bridge

Indianapolis Star
Zach Evans, Evansville Courier & Press
6/30/16

It's still years away from spanning the Ohio River, but an agreement signed by Indiana Gov. Mike Pence and Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin Thursday is the first step in rebooting plans for an Interstate 69 bridge from Evansville to Henderson. The states agreed to spend a combined \$17 million for an environmental and design study to figure out how the two states can pay for the bridge and where it will run. Indiana and Kentucky have been through this whole process before — a multimillion-dollar study with design plans and several contentious public input meetings all took place in the 2000s. The study was commissioned in 2001 and a preliminary report in 2004 put the cost at \$1.4 billion — a price tag that essentially killed the bridge portion of the project. In 2014, lobbying and advocacy group BridgeLink developed an alternative route and design for the bridge, which put the cost in the \$850 million range by shaving off the number of proposed lanes. At a ceremony on the Ellis Park parking lot in Kentucky, an eager and unscripted Bevin said now is the "time we fill this hole." "When I heard about it, I said, 'Why would we not take advantage of straightening out what has the ability to be an extraordinary powerhouse,'" he said. It's still months until the state issues a request for proposals to select a firm for the study. And then it will take at least three years to complete a preliminary design and an environmental review. Pence hopes to expedite the process.

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/2016/06/30/pence-bevin-states-work-together--69-bridge/86572570/> Also, <http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/32347807/indiana-kentucky-plan-new-i-69-bridge>

www.buildindianacouncil.org