



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **July 14, 2015**

#### **Bloomington people say I-69 work wrecks roads**

Journal Gazette  
7/12/15

BLOOMINGTON – Some south Monroe County residents say contractors building a section of the Interstate 69 extension are ripping up their rural, two-lane roads by using them to take heavy machinery and materials to construction sites. John Moore said he busted a tire and wore out a new set of ball joints in about six months because the roads are in such bad shape. “Any road we travel is rough to get to Bloomington,” he told The Herald-Times. Moore and neighbor Rita Lawrence said one road they use to get home was practically reduced to rubble. It was several days before a sign was put up warning drivers of a “rough road,” they said. The road has since been graded and covered with gravel. Crews are building the I-69 extension’s Section 4, which stretches about 27 miles from Naval Surface Activity Crane in Greene County to Indiana 37 south of Bloomington. Contractors are responsible for working with local governments to determine the best routes to haul equipment and materials, INDOT spokesman Will Wingfield said in an email. “They enter into agreements with the local governments to take financial responsibility or to repair damage relating to construction traffic,” he said. Bill Williams, director of the county’s highway department, said most of the contractors have insurance bonds that allow the county to file a claim if roads are damaged. In the case of Victor Pike – the road Moore and Lawrence use – there was no such agreement, but Williams said contractor E.S. Wagner Co. of Oregon, Ohio, has given the county \$300,000 to resurface the road. [Bloomington people say I-69 work wrecks roads | Indiana | Journal Gazette](#)

#### **Something's got to give: Indiana, nation face problems with infrastructure**

Kokomo Tribune  
Josh Sigler  
7/12/15

Though nothing is eminent, Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight can envision the scenario. It’s a fantasy, as it stands right now, but a passenger train system connecting Kokomo to Indianapolis — through the center of U.S. 31 — shouldn’t seem so far-fetched. “It’s not the best option in all urbanized areas, but we need to look at things like that to move people around, get the congestion off the streets and create less wear and tear and the need to build and widen roads,” Goodnight said. “That doesn’t mean everyone will ride a train into Indianapolis. But in the bottlenecks, they have to look at those things. And yes, there is the upfront initial cost. But the long term costs each year goes down. Once you put the infrastructure such as a rail in, the savings catches up pretty quickly.” It could be the wave of the future, because something has to give. Government officials at all levels are concerned about the state of our infrastructure — roads, bridges and the like — and how repairs will be paid for moving forward as the conventional methods become increasingly outdated. But to understand how the entire system works — and more importantly, why it’s broken — it’s imperative to examine the situation from the federal level

on down. [Something's got to give: Indiana, nation face problems with infrastructure - Kokomo Tribune: News](#)

### **Hamilton County crafting tax-funded transit plan**

Indianapolis Business Journal

Lindsey Erdody

7/11/15

Hamilton County leaders are getting a clearer picture of what a public transit bus system could look like and, according to a new study, the annual operating cost could range from \$10 million to nearly \$25 million. Elected officials are wary to support a massive transit project, arguing public dollars shouldn't be spent on a system that might fail to attract riders. But business and economic development representatives are welcoming the idea as some employees struggle to find transportation to and from work. "We think we put together a pretty sound system," said Mike Hollibaugh, director of community services for Carmel. The preliminary proposal assumes Hamilton and Marion County voters approve a referendum in November 2016 to impose an income tax that would cost the average household anywhere from \$82 to \$206 a year. It also depends on completion of the \$100 million Red Line, which would run from Greenwood through Indianapolis and Carmel and end in Westfield. That route would be part of a \$1.2 billion rapid-transit electric bus system known as IndyConnect. [Hamilton County crafting tax-funded transit plan | 2015-07-11 | Indianapolis Business Journal | IBJ.com](#)

### **EDITORIAL: Find a new approach to funding roadwork**

NWI Times

7/11/15

If you're swerving all over the road to avoid potholes, you aren't alone. That describes the political situation in Congress, where a long-term solution for highway funding remains elusive. For that matter, it's the same in Indiana. Major Moves, funded by the long-term lease of the Indiana Toll Road. That windfall is gone, or nearly so. True, Indiana's new budget includes an extra \$200 million for highway work, but that isn't enough to meet the state's needs. Every four years, the American Society of Civil Engineers issues a report card on America's infrastructure. In its latest, from 2013, Indiana was given a C+ for bridges and a C- for roads. Of the 5,612 bridges maintained by the state, 4,091 are considered deficient. Bringing all the state's bridges up to par would cost an estimated \$3.5 billion. The Indiana Department of Transportation has said the state is falling behind in maintenance and new construction because funding isn't keeping pace. At the federal level, the gas tax no longer raises enough money to maintain roads. Look around you on the highway, and the reason should become obvious. Newer cars get better gas mileage, meaning fewer trips to the gas pump and less money collected for road repairs. [EDITORIAL: Find a new approach to funding roadwork](#)

### **St. Joe County struggles to find long term solution for damaged bridges and roads**

FOX28

Veronica Jean Seltzer

7/10/15

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY - If you're like many people you're probably tired of driving on pot hole ridden roads and damaged bridges. Over the past several years, federal transportation spending has decreased. Many roads and bridges in our area are suffering. St. Joseph County officials recently voted down a tax hike to pay for bridge repairs. A special interest group called Transportation For America classifies about ten bridges in St. Joe County as structurally deficient, meaning they're okay to drive on, but need work. Now, officials are trying to find a long term way

to keep them safe. Andy Kostielney, County Commissioner District 1: "We don't have enough money to support the infrastructure we have," County Commissioner Andy Kostielney said. It's a problem across the country, particularly in Indiana and Michigan. "...There are services that need to be provided and roads is one of them, but it's challenging because materials go up every year, but our needs don't dwindle," Kostielney said. That can make for a bumpy and dangerous ride. Data from 2013 shows about 4,000 of almost 20,000 Indiana bridges are damaged. 17% of the state's roads are in disrepair. Earlier this week the St. Joe County Council voted no to a property tax hike to pay for those repairs. "We just felt that'd have to be a last resort and we weren't quite to that point yet," Kostielney said. While the County voted no to a tax hike, they did agree to channel some existing taxes into bridge repair. "We're gonna shift some taxes away from our general fund into bridges where we know we've got a need," Kostielney said. <http://www.fox28.com/story/29523826/2015/07/10/st-joe-county-struggles-to-find-long-term-solution-for-damaged-bridges-and-roads>

### **Potential new Interstate 65 interchange suggested**

NWI Times  
Chas Reilly  
7/10/15

HOBART | The potential need for a new interchange at 73rd Avenue and Interstate 65 is among the focuses of a traffic study approved Friday by the Redevelopment Commission. Hobart officials understand that area is in Merrillville, but they want to account for it in the study. City Engineer Phil Gralik said it could be a vital interchange for the future of Hobart, and it could provide benefits to the city to address traffic problems. The Redevelopment Commission decided to hire Butler, Fairman & Seufert to complete the study, which will cost \$32,500. Jake Dammarell, of Butler, Fairman & Seufert, said multiple entities, including Merrillville, the Indiana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, will be involved in information gathering about the interchange. Denarie Kane, Hobart's director of development, said potential development opportunities in the southwest area of the city prompted Hobart to pursue the study. Redevelopment Commission President Carla Houck said the panel needs to be "as forward looking" as possible. Dammarell said the study could help Hobart obtain federal funding or other grants for road projects. [Potential new Interstate 65 interchange suggested](#)