



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

August 20, 2013

Hamburg Pike in Jeffersonville a costly construction project

Braden Lammers
News and Tribune
8/20/13

JEFFERSONVILLE — With another time extension on the table, delays in the Hamburg Pike road-widening project are testing the patience of business owners and Jeffersonville officials. Even with a possible completion date of later this month — the most recent missed date was July 12 — project costs are adding up and business is being disrupted along the thoroughfare. Frank Harley, owner of Harley's Hardwoodz BBQ, estimated he's lost \$15,000 to \$20,000 annually while the road construction has been ongoing. He said his sales dropped nearly 40 percent in the first year and has remained down 20 percent in the second year of construction. In a 2012 report by the News and Tribune, Qik-Lube Owner Jerry Bott said sales had dropped 30 percent while the construction work was taking place. Judy Fuchs, office manager at Qik-Lube, said while there has been some improvement, sales are still down about 10 percent. "It's not as bad as last year," Fuchs said. "People just refused to go down the street." Harley agreed things are getting better, but his business has felt the brunt of the closure and he was not particularly optimistic about business picking up once the road is finally completed. "Most people still don't come down that road because they've retrained themselves to go other ways," he said. "I'm hoping that'll happen but I don't know," he said of the customers returning. "I am very frustrated about it." Harley said once the construction began, he lost a significant amount of business he was getting from the U.S. Census Bureau and Clark Memorial Hospital. At one time he said he was selling 40 to 50 dinners per week to census bureau employees, which has since disappeared. The lunch business from the hospital also stopped. [Hamburg Pike in Jeffersonville a costly construction project » Recent Local News » News and Tribune](#)

Changes to I-69 extension to save at least \$100M

John Russell
The Indianapolis Star
8/19/13

Fewer businesses and homes than originally planned will be razed to make way for the I-69 extension from Bloomington to Martinsville, a design change that is expected to save taxpayers at least \$100 million. The Indiana Department of Transportation said Monday that the 21-mile stretch of highway has received federal approval. The state agency also released some new details about the project. The federal approval of that segment is the latest step in an ambitious project begun more than a decade ago to connect Evansville to Indianapolis. State officials have described the project as a key to the future economic vitality of southwestern Indiana. The price tag for the section of the interstate between Bloomington and Martinsville is now estimated at \$394 million, including costs for design, construction and land purchases. An estimate released

last fall put the cost at \$500 million to \$546 million. Costs related to the I-69 project have been an issue. Funds to finish the extension are uncertain. Nearly \$4 billion in Major Moves funds from the Indiana Toll Road lease is spent or allocated. Gas tax collections are falling. Tax hikes appear unlikely. The Bloomington-to-Martinsville stretch will not carry tolls, INDOT says, but will use public money “to attract low-cost private-sector financing.” Some project expenditures have raised eyebrows. An Indianapolis Star investigation this year revealed that INDOT paid some property owners along I-69 in Southern Indiana many times what state appraisers said the land was worth. Although a review by Federal Highway Administration officials said the state followed federal guidelines, government watchdog groups questioned whether the state overspent in its rush to build the freeway.

[Changes to I-69 extension to save at least \\$100M | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

If Indiana mass transit is a high priority, taxpayers need answers

Thomas Heller
The News-Sentinel
8/19/13

An Indianapolis newspaper recently offered some careful rethinking on why the state legislature hesitated this past session to authorize Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard — and mayors from neighboring suburban cities — to place a ballot before voters for a \$1.3 billion mass transit plan for Marion and Hamilton counties. While conceding the particular transit system is underfunded and its skeletal transit service must be improved to enable more people to access employment opportunities throughout its city, the newspaper wondered whether achieving that objective requires lavishing large sums of new taxpayer money building one or more gleaming new billion-dollar mass transit lines in from the suburbs. Most important, the newspaper ventured into previously forbidden territory, raising questions about the wisdom and potential effect of the proposal’s various components. It wondered about the financing source (a higher local income tax); it wondered if gleaming new mass-transit lines are the highest priority for its city; and it wondered if such lines might simply hasten a population shift to outlying suburban areas. These are essential questions deserving a full public discussion in other cities throughout the state. Few such voices of conscience were raised last year as the mass-transit bandwagon rolled into the Statehouse. So finally we have begun the process of understanding and illuminating the mechanism underlying mass-transit proposals, the fundamentals of their system design and function. And we are posing questions against the backdrop of pressing fiscal realities. For example (though unstated so far), the most basic of municipal services (public safety and law enforcement) will consume upwards of 90 percent of the typical city-county budget. It would seem there is not money for much else. <http://www.news-sentinel.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130819/EDITORIAL/130819687>

Summit to weigh impact of possibly losing Amtrak

Chris Morisse Vizza
Journal and Courier
8/18/13

An Oct. 1 deadline looms while the state continues to evaluate its position on funding Amtrak’s Hoosier State passenger rail line. To highlight the importance of rail as a transportation option, Greater Lafayette Commerce will host a statewide summit on Wednesday to focus on the impact of losing the service. “This summit will bring together interested parties so the best course of action for Indiana can be determined and actions taken,” Commerce president and CEO Joe Seaman said in a press release. At stake is daily passenger rail service from Indianapolis to Chicago, including stops in Lafayette, Crawfordsville, Rensselaer and Dyer. The Hoosier State provides four-day-a-week service, which complements the three-day-a-week long-distance Cardinal route. Federal funding for Amtrak routes shorter than 750 miles, including the 196-mile Hoosier State, will cease in six weeks. The Indiana Department of Transportation has been

reluctant to take on the \$3 million a year cost of operating the route despite lobbying from communities between the state capital and the third largest city in the nation. For nearly a year, community leaders have emphasized the positive role that passenger rail plays in attracting new businesses, creating jobs, and providing mobility for university faculty and students. Local legislators earlier this year added language to the state budget allowing INDOT to spend money on passenger rail if it so chooses. But in May, INDOT Chief of Staff Troy Woodruff told Hoosier State supporters the service did not present a good business case to warrant a state subsidy of \$80.08 per passenger without local investment.

<http://www.jconline.com/article/20130818/NEWS02/308180029/Summit-to-weigh-impact-of-possibly-losing-Amtrak>

Indy Unveils \$350 Million Infrastructure Project

Inside INdiana Business

8/15/13

Indianapolis, Ind. -- Today Mayor Greg Ballard joined Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Lori Miser at the Keenan Stahl Boys and Girls Club on the City's south side to announce new infrastructure investments in neighborhoods around the city. The plan, a \$135 million bond combined with other existing transportation funds, will lead to a three-year investment plan totaling more than \$350 million in sidewalk, street, trail and bridge improvements. "Sidewalks are one of the primary pathways connecting Indy's families to schools, churches, and other important community centers," said Mayor Ballard. "This new initiative will improve our neighborhoods, increase safety, and continue making the transformational investments that make Indy a great place to call home." Mayor Ballard and community leaders made today's announcement near the Keenan Stahl Boys and Girls Club on Indy's South side. Residents in the area have long needed sidewalks to increase safety and connectivity. If this plan is approved by the City-County Council, construction of sidewalks in this neighborhood could begin next year. The City proposes to issue a bond for approximately \$135 million based on a projected \$7 million increase in state transportation funding. The bond proceeds will be matched with traditional city, state and federal funding sources to provide an estimated \$350 million in neighborhood improvements. This bond will be introduced to the City-County Council Monday, August 19, 2014. The measure will be co-authored by City-County Council President Maggie Lewis and Council Minority Leader Michael McQuillen. If approved, the Department of Public Works will direct this investment toward projects that increase safety and create accessible transportation options to connect people to the City's great places—whether they walk, bike, drive or use IndyGo. [Indy Unveils \\$350 Million Infrastructure Project - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

INDOT reaches contract deal for south side I-65/465 project

WTHR

8/15/13

INDIANAPOLIS - Plans to improve the I-65/I-465 interchange on the Indianapolis south side are moving forward. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) said Thursday that it has awarded a \$40 million contract to Walsh Construction Company of Crown Point for improvements to the south side I-465 and I-65 interchange area. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has also awarded INDOT with a \$2 million Highways for LIFE grant to research a variety of concrete surfaces on the project, including one developed by Purdue University. The Next Generation Concrete Surface (NGCS) has the potential of significant noise reduction and the ability to maintain friction for increased skid and hydroplaning resistance. A separate contract to be let in 2014 will install noise barriers along residential areas in the locations listed below. A public hearing is planned later this year to provide more details about the proposed mitigation and the construction process. [INDOT reaches contract deal for south side I-65/465 project - 13 WTHR Indianapolis](#)

States Target Hybrids As Gas Tax Revenues Ebb

Jeff Brady

Northeast Indiana Public Radio

8/15/13

Americans are buying less gasoline than they did just a few years back. While many people believe this is a good thing, it does present a problem: Most road construction is paid for with fuel taxes. Less gas tax revenue means less money for roads. One reason gas purchases are down is that more people are driving more efficient cars, such as hybrid and electric vehicles. Now states are looking for solutions, including charging hybrids extra fees or imposing fees based on miles driven. Sara Busch of Havertown, Pa., owns a 2011 Chevrolet Volt. "I'm really a stickler about staying below the speed limit — not to avoid a ticket but to maintain efficiency," she says. Recently, Busch says, she was achieving 94 miles to the gallon. That means she rarely stops at a gas station — good news for her, but not for the federal Highway Trust Fund. For each gallon of gas sold in the U.S., 18.3 cents goes into the fund. Most of that is dedicated to road construction. This system worked well for about five decades — until the most recent recession, when people started driving less. In 2008, the fund ran out of money. Polly Trottenberg, undersecretary for policy at the U.S. Department of Transportation, reminded a congressional subcommittee in July that Congress has been allocating money in recent years to keep the fund solvent.

"By the end of 2014, the Highway Trust Fund will be nearly depleted again and Congress will have transferred, over the course of the recent years, \$54 billion in general funds to keep the program afloat," Trottenberg testified. Some members of Congress have talked about raising the federal gas tax, but there's been no movement on that. [States Target Hybrids As Gas Tax Revenues Ebb | Northeast Indiana Public Radio](#)

Safe, efficient transportation is important in Indiana, Elkhart County

Goshen News

8/15/13

Todd Johnson, an official at the Indiana Department of Transportation, was the guest of the Elkhart Chamber of Commerce Tuesday afternoon for a luncheon at Elcona Country Club. Johnson provided a broad overview of the more than \$1 billion in annual capital state highway improvements currently happening throughout the state. It's encouraging to see the progress INDOT is making, much of it on the back of a controversial \$2.6 billion lease of the Indiana Toll Road, which runs through Elkhart and LaGrange counties' back yards (or front, depending on your perspective). In southern Indiana the extension of I-69 from Indianapolis to Evansville is well underway. In northern Indiana, a 13.4-mile stretch of four-lane, U.S. 31 expressway around Kokomo is set to open by the end of this year. Anyone around these parts who has been stuck in afternoon traffic in the heart of Stoplight City on their way to Indianapolis will be forgiven if they break into a chorus of "Hallelujah!" Another 20-mile stretch of U.S. 31 expressway from South Bend to Plymouth is scheduled to open by December 2014. These major projects will go a long way in improving the ease and safety of travel from the Michigan state line all the way to the Kentucky state line. While we stand to benefit from the U.S. 31 improvement during long trips south, it is a couple lower-scale projects here in Elkhart County that have the potential to have the biggest impact on our lives. Those potential projects include a roundabout at the intersection of Ind. 19 and Ind. 119 just north of Nappanee and a C.R. 29 bridge over U.S. 6 just north of Syracuse. <http://goshennews.com/editorials/x125818374/Safe-efficient-transportation-is-important-in-Indiana-Elkhart-County>