



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **September 29, 2015**

#### **GUEST COMMENTARY: Indiana's transportation infrastructure is in crisis**

NWI Times  
Cam Carter  
9/28/15

One crisis was avoided when the emergency bridge closure on Interstate 65 near Lafayette occurred before the structure failed and put lives in danger. The separate crisis of addressing our state's transportation infrastructure needs remains. A 2014 Blue Ribbon Commission on Infrastructure established priorities for future initiatives. A soon-to-be-released Indiana Department of Transportation study on funding is expected to offer alternatives on how to pay for that essential progress. At the top of the list needs to be adequate and reliable resources to address the current maintenance backlog - roads and bridges - that slows commuters and puts a major dent into Indiana's longstanding logistical advantage. As the Indiana Chamber traveled the state this summer discussing the Indiana Vision 2025 Report Card, infrastructure challenges and concerns were expressed. Superior Infrastructure is one of the four drivers in that long-range economic development plan. The deteriorating state of Indiana's infrastructure is far from superior. [GUEST COMMENTARY: Indiana's transportation infrastructure is in crisis](#)

#### **County preparing for next wave of development**

Journal & Courier  
Chris Morisse Vizza  
9/27/15

Tippecanoe County will celebrate a milestone next year - the completion of a \$9 million, three-year investment to upgrade roads, bridges and drainage systems that were falling into disrepair as gas tax revenues declined during the Great Recession. Most residents may not notice, though, because they're reaping the benefits of driving on smooth roads and safe bridges. The so-called Build Tippecanoe plan worked because county leaders had built up cash reserves that could fund key projects identified by highway executive director Opal Kuhl and surveyor Zach Beasley, councilman Roland Winger said. "They have done a great job of laying things out and then executing the plan," he said. "It isn't glamorous, but the roads and ditches are what carry commerce and agriculture." The council and commissioners decided in 2013 to allocate \$3 million a year in 2014, 2015 and 2016 for infrastructure. That amounts to an annual budget of \$1 million each for roads, bridges and drainage. Some of the drainage money already funded a master plan that opened the door to development of 600 acres of land in the Berlowitz watershed bounded by McCarty Lane, Veterans Memorial Parkway, Haggerty Lane and Weston Woods subdivision, Beasley said. Next year, a portion of this \$1 million will finance drainage plans that will clear the way for the county's next large industrial development on hundreds of acres of land south of the Subaru of Indiana Automotive plant on Indiana 38 and east of the Nanshan and GE facilities on U.S. 52 South. "It turns into jobs eventually," Winger said. "If the county had not invested money

to open the J.N. Kirkpatrick drain, GE Aviation would not have built that complex because they would not have been able to drain that ground." Kuhl said she will use \$1 million next year to replace the Burnett Road bridge over Burnett Creek. Another million is budgeted to pave roads. [County preparing for next wave of development](#)

### **Indiana seeks \$5M from contractor for faulty asphalt**

USA Today

Tony Cook, The Indianapolis Star

9/27/15

INDIANAPOLIS -- The state is seeking to recoup more than \$5 million from a contractor accused of using faulty asphalt on a road project state officials say began falling apart shortly after completion. The Indiana Department of Transportation is demanding \$5.15 million from Fort Wayne-based Brooks Construction Co. unless the company agrees to remove and replace three miles of the Hoosier Heartland Highway it completed in 2012, according to a letter INDOT sent to the company Friday. It is the first time state transportation officials have taken action against a contractor since acknowledging last week that nearly 200 road projects may have been completed with bad asphalt, causing highways across the state to crumble years ahead of schedule. Some road construction industry representatives have questioned whether the state's new asphalt specifications are to blame, but state officials have dismissed that notion. INDOT says Brooks Construction's work on a four-lane stretch of the Hoosier Heartland roadway on Indiana 25 in Cass County near Logansport is already showing signs of rapid deterioration, including large patches of crumbling pavement and cracks several inches wide. The pavement was supposed to last 20 years. "Taxpayers in Indiana deserve to get what they pay for from contractors serving the state," Gov. Mike Pence said in a statement. "With today's action, Hoosiers can be assured that our administration will hold those who do business with the state of Indiana strictly accountable for the products and services they agreed to provide." [Indiana seeks \\$5M from contractor for faulty asphalt](#)

Also, [INDOT demands local contractor refund \\$5M or fix crumbling road | Local | www.journalgazette.net](#)

### **Rieth-Riley Wraps Up \$92M South Bend Work**

Construction Equipment Guide

Irwin Rapoport

9/26/15

The Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Inc. (RR) was awarded the first contract (2010) of the multi-year project to upgrade the northern corridor of U.S. 31 in South Bend Indiana (U.S. 31 Major Moves) and it is finishing the last contract to complete the job. The contractor has secured five of the eight contracts awarded for the project, all worth a total of \$92 million. RR's work consists of earthmoving, underground, sub-grade treatment, aggregate, concrete paving and asphalt paving. The final contract will be completed in the fall. The project, initiated by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), is to build a new section (alignment) of the highway - 22 mi. (35.4 km) - in St. Joseph and Marshall counties. The new alignment starts in Marshall County, just south of U.S. 6 and goes into St. Joseph County, where it ties into the U.S. 20 bypass. The old U.S. 31 ran through a few smaller communities and it intersected with several country roads, which required having traffic lights, that while addressing safety issues, slowed down the flow of traffic. The goal of the work is to have a continuous flow of traffic and address the needs of a growing residential community and commercial sector. The new north-south road will continue to be two lanes in each direction. [Rieth-Riley Wraps Up \\$92M South Bend Work | Story ID: 26267 | Construction Equipment Guide](#)

### **Boehner's exit makes shutdown less likely**

Tristate Homepage  
Deirdre Walsh, Ted Barrett and Allie Malloy CNN  
9/26/15

There is no more talk of a government shutdown now that John Boehner has stepped down. "It makes it highly unlikely," said Republican John Fleming, a Louisiana conservative who is a member of the House Freedom Caucus, which led the charge to oust Boehner, moments after the Speaker Friday announced he would leave his post in at the end of October. That's good news for government workers and all Americans who are anxiously staring at a Wednesday midnight deadline for Congress to approve new money for government operations or face the possibility of another disruptive shutdown. In 2013, a fight over funding Obamacare triggered a 16-day partial shuttering of the government. A group of more than 30 House conservatives have told Boehner they would not vote for any spending bill that didn't bar all taxpayer money for Planned Parenthood, the women's health care organization that provides abortion services. Many of these members on the right of the House GOP conference used their threat to topple Boehner as leverage against passing a continuing resolution that didn't defund Planned Parenthood. But now that the Speaker has decided to go, Boehner can put the bill on the floor without fear of political reprisal. "It will probably take substantial Democrat votes to pass it," Fleming said, noting that he and many other conservatives would still vote against it. The legislation would fund the government through Dec. 11, ostensibly giving lawmakers and the White House time to reach a broad agreement on a longer term spending plan for the government as well as an increase in the debt ceiling, passage of a highway funding bill, and possibly hard to achieve changes to the tax code. [Boehners-exit-makes-shutdown-less-likely - Story | Tristate - Southern Illinois, Southern Indiana, Western Kentucky - Evansville, Henderson, Owensboro | TriStateHomepage | WEHT-TV and WTVW-TV](#)

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