



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **September 24, 2013**

#### **New US 31 detour begins for commuters as work starts on roundabout**

WRTV Indianapolis  
Chris Proffitt  
9/24/13

HAMILTON COUNTY, Ind. - Driving through parts of Hamilton County will mean a new detour for some commuters starting Monday. The newest detour on U.S. 31 is part of the major project that will eventually lead to completely closing down parts of U.S. 31 in two years. The newest detour will allow crews to build a new roundabout on 136th Street. Officials with the Indiana Department of Transportation will spend \$141 million to turn four intersections into roundabouts from 136th Street to 106th Street. Two of five segments of the U.S. 31 project are complete in Hamilton County, but the newest work is the biggest yet, and it is all in anticipation of what will happen in 2015. The new roundabout that will be built over the next two months will initially help move detoured traffic when the four-lane highway is shut down in 2015 for a major remodel. "This will be the first roundabout in that area. In the future, it will help traffic flow, especially during the planned closure of U.S. 31 in 2015," Nathan Riggs with INDOT said. INDOT officials said The New U.S. 31 Hamilton County project is expected to reduce traffic backups and improve safety. Officials hope the project will bring U.S. 31 up to freeway standards. INDOT said single lane restrictions in both directions of U.S. 31 between Interstate 465 and Old Meridian Street will start Tuesday night. Those restrictions will be in place from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. and will last about a month. [RTV6 - New US 31 detour for commuters as work begins on roundabout - Local Story](#)

#### **INDOT Announces Recipient of \$63 Million Contract**

Inside INdiana Business  
9/23/13

WESTFIELD, Ind. - The last of five major construction contracts for The New U.S. 31 Hamilton County has been awarded to Rieth-Riley Construction of Goshen. The project spans nearly four miles from 169th Street to 203th Street and includes a new single-point urban interchange at State Road 32, a roundabout interchange at 191st Street, an overpass at 169th Street and an underpass at 181st Street. Rieth-Riley will begin some off-road work and temporary pavement widening along this section of U.S. 31 in early October. The contractor plans to shift southbound traffic to share the northbound side of the highway next spring. Two lanes of traffic will remain open in each direction. The \$63 million award is the final contract to upgrade U.S. 31 to freeway standards from I-465 to State Road 38 - the largest and most aggressive road project ever implemented in Hamilton County. U.S. 31 Hamilton County is the first project in the nation to use new federal transportation legislation allowing up to 90 percent federal funding to be used for critical freight projects, an increase above the 80 percent maximum for non-interstate routes. The Hamilton County improvements are part of Major Moves projects to upgrade or bypass congested sections of U.S. 31 between Indianapolis and South Bend. Three U.S. 31 corridors in

Indiana are intended to reduce congestion, improve safety and provide continuity of commerce and regional travel for a U.S. highway that stretches from Michigan to Alabama. [INDOT Announces Recipient of \\$63 Million Contract - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

### **TARC to add Wi-Fi, 21 new buses, with \$30 million tied to bridges project**

The Courier-Journal  
Sheldon S. Shafer  
9/23/13

The Transit Authority of River City on Monday announced \$30 million on service and equipment upgrades, including 21 new buses with wider seats and free Wi-Fi connectivity, as part of an effort ordered by federal officials to lessen the impact of bridge tolls on low-income commuters. A study earlier this year found that tolls of \$1 or more would be twice as burdensome on minorities and the poor as others, prompting federal highway officials to order the states to commit \$20 million to increase public bus service. Another \$10 million for the improvements came from federal, Kentucky and Indiana highway grant money. [TARC to add Wi-Fi, 21 new buses, with \\$30 million tied to bridges project | The Courier-Journal | courier-journal.com](#)

### **Change order for Silver Creek bridge approved**

News and Tribune  
Matt Koesters  
9/21/13

CLARK COUNTY — Barring anymore unforeseen problems, the work on the Silver Creek bridge should be completed for a total cost of about \$261,000. The Clark County Commissioners has approved the second change order for work on the bridge, which is being done by Gohmann Asphalt. The original cost of repairs to all four driving lanes of the bridge — which connects Clark and Floyd counties — was estimated at \$147,215. However, when Gohmann workers began to mill the bridge, they discovered far more problems with it than anticipated. The commissioners approved a change order to the bridge that increased the cost to about \$211,000. The first change order called for the entirety of the outside two lanes to be milled. But now, all four lanes will be completely milled and resurfaced with asphalt that will contain Rosphalt, a brand-name additive that will give the bridge “extra strength and durability,” said County Engineer Brian Dixon. But there could be even more wrong with the bridge, Dixon said. “The overlay surface, they’re telling me [it will last] 10-plus years,” Dixon said. “The beams themselves, I would expect at least that, but they have to be rehabbed. So maybe before 10 years, maybe shortly after 10 years, we’re going to be trying to get a major project where we go in there and do a total rehabilitation of the bridge itself.” The commissioners decided not to vote on the second change order for the bridge work at a meeting earlier this month, instead electing to recess the meeting and reconvene to vote on the order Sept. 16 because of fears that changes to the scope of the project may necessitate the work be rebid. But County Attorney Jake Elder said the scope hasn’t changed. “I don’t believe it does open the county to litigation,” Elder said. “I wanted to make sure the scope had not changed, and the original scope was for the repair of the decking of the bridge.” [Change order for Silver Creek bridge approved » Clark County » News and Tribune](#)

### **Hoosier rail line supporters to meet at Statehouse**

Journal and Courier  
Chris Morisse Vizza  
9/21/13

The campaign to save the Hoosier State Amtrak route continues to gain momentum while Indiana

leaders continue to explore whether there is a cost-effective way to operate the line. At stake is daily passenger rail service to Lafayette, Crawfordsville and other communities along the 196-mile route between Indianapolis and Chicago. Federal funding for Amtrak routes shorter than 750 miles ends Oct. 1, and the Indiana Department of Transportation has stood firm in stating it will not pick up the \$3 million annual cost of running the line. Without the four-days-a-week Hoosier State, western Indiana cities would be left with three-day-a-week service provided by the long-distance Cardinal running from Chicago to New York. Affected mayors and business leaders say partial service is not enough to attract companies and young professionals needed to keep their communities economically viable. For months, local officials and Troy Woodruff, INDOT chief of staff, were at an impasse on how to fund the service that drew 36,000 riders during the past fiscal year but did not generate enough revenue to be self-sustaining. The ice appeared to break during a Sept. 11 meeting when INDOT shared some potential operating expenses. [Hoosier rail line supporters to meet at Statehouse | Journal and Courier | jconline.com](#)

### **Fairer distribution urged of Toll Road cash**

The Journal Gazette

9/21/13

State Sen. Lonnie Randolph is asking some reasonable questions about how the Indiana Department of Transportation makes decisions about bridge and road repairs throughout the state. Randolph, a Democrat representing East Chicago, wants to know why Indiana seems more than willing to collect tax money throughout the state to pay for expensive projects in Indianapolis but wouldn't pay to replace the Cline Avenue Bridge in his city. In 2011, INDOT decided to have a private company rebuild the bridge and turn it into a toll bridge. The bridge over the Indiana Harbor and Ship Canal carried 35,000 vehicles a day and served as a key connection to Chicago and a major economic development driver. It was closed in 2009 and demolished in January. The estimated cost to replace the Cline Avenue Bridge was \$150 million, and federal funds would have covered most of it. The state's share would have been \$30 million. Randolph described the decision as Indianapolis-centered elitism. "We should not have to have them think twice about rebuilding Cline Avenue, because all the tax dollars that they collect here go down to Indianapolis to help grow and build Indianapolis," Randolph told the Times of Northwest Indiana. He also pointed out that many of his constituents are already paying higher tolls because of Gov. Mitch Daniels' 75-year lease of the Indiana Toll Road, but they are not enjoying a fair portion of the benefits from the lease. Indiana has spent \$7.1 billion on road construction over the past five years with most of the money coming from the Toll Road lease. But the distribution has not been as generous to the communities near the Toll Road. For example, the state spent \$700 million on the 67-mile stretch of Interstate 69 from Evansville to Crane Naval Base and \$423 million to for Interstate 465 in Indianapolis. It spent \$187 million on the Borman Expressway, an east-west interstate in northwest Indiana. [Fairer distribution urged of Toll Road cash | The Journal Gazette](#)

### **Explosion guts last part of Indiana bridge**

WRTV Indianapolis

9/19/13

MADISON, Ind. - The final part of the 84-year-old Milton-Madison bridge connecting southern Indiana to Kentucky was demolished Thursday morning before rain moved into the area. The old bridge was brought down about 8:30 a.m., about a half-hour ahead of the planned 9 a.m. demolition. The new bridge, currently on temporary piers just downstream from the old bridge, was reopened to traffic about 9:45 a.m., officials said. Crews will pull the remains of the old bridge from the Ohio River, dismantle them and sell them for scrap. Work will now begin on widening the original piers so that a new 40-foot-wide bridge can be put in its place, doubling the width of the old bridge. Construction crews said they believe when they move the new bridge onto the renovated original piers, it will be the longest bridge slide ever in North America. The Indiana Department of Transportation and Kentucky Transportation Cabinet worked together on the

bridge replacement. [RTV6 - Explosion guts last part of Indiana bridge - Local Story](#)

### **NIRPC approves three major transportation resolutions**

NWI Times

Lu Ann Franklin

9/19/13

PORTAGE | Three resolutions addressing significant transportation issues throughout Northwest Indiana gained the approval of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission executive board at Thursday's meeting. All three resolutions came to the executive board with positive recommendations from NIRPC's transportation policy committee and are in line with NIRPC's 2040 Plan, said Merrillville town councilman Shawn Pettit, committee chairman. NIRPC supports the continuation and maintenance of Amtrak's Hoosier state service through funding by the Indiana Department of Transportation. That daily passenger train service connects Indianapolis with Chicago with a stop in Dyer. Support of this resolution "is contingent upon there being no adverse financial impact on state funding for any public transit providers in the State of Indiana," the document reads. An amendment to the 2014-17 Transportation Improvement Program for Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties was also approved despite repeated past attempts by the disability advocacy group Everybody Counts to prevent that action, based on what the group saw as lack of notice. A total of \$114.9 million in federal funding will be used for the 2014-17 TIP. The final resolution features a second amendment to the TIP for projects by the Indiana Department of Transportation. Evers told the board INDOT requested specific changes. Some projects were added, including bridge work and road rehabilitation. [NIRPC approves three major transportation resolutions](#)

---

[www.buildindianacouncil.org](http://www.buildindianacouncil.org)