



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

October 16, 2014

LaPorte County seeks influence with Toll Road

NWI Times
Stan Maddux
10/16/14

LaPorte County has taken steps aimed at influencing the state to try and take back operations of the Indiana Toll Road and provide revenue sharing to counties along the entire stretch of the highway if the road remains under a lease. The LaPorte County Commissioners on Wednesday hired a law firm specializing in bankruptcy proceedings to investigate if the language in the 75-year lease allows the state to take back daily operations of the Toll Road. The Toll Road has been leased to a Spanish-Australian conglomerate that has filed for Chapter 11. If the operations do not revert back to the state, the attorney will push for revenue sharing for LaPorte and all other counties adjacent to the highway from whoever assumes the lease. LaPorte County attorney Shaw Friedman said the preference of the commission is for the state to reassume operations of a highway he called a "cash cow." Friedman said the state would have to "buy back" control of the Toll Road for about \$2.4 billion to help retire whatever debt ITR Concession Co. is left responsible for after its bankruptcy proceedings. Its current debt is listed at \$6 billion. Friedman said the state can float a bond issue to finance the buy back. And, even with such a debt, figures show annual profits of about \$80 million annually from the highway that could be applied toward the debt payments and local infrastructure, he said.

[LaPorte County seeks influence with Toll Road](#)

Plans call for right to run the Ind. Toll Road to be sold at auction

WNDU
Mark Peterson
10/15/14

The private company that runs the Indiana Toll Road managed to spend some \$34 million on improvements this year despite the fact that it has filed for bankruptcy. That was the message Wednesday at a meeting of the Indiana Toll Road Oversight Board in Granger. The board found that Indiana Toll Road Concession Company (ITRCC) was in substantial compliance with the lease requirements. "It's an old road, it takes a lot to maintain it and they're doing what they need to meet the terms of the lease which is pretty stringent," said board member Kevin Kelly. ITRCC reports that it spend some \$15.6 million on new pavement in 2014, \$12.6 million on structures like buildings and bridges, and \$1.1 million on new machinery. "It (the bankruptcy) shouldn't change anything for the people driving on the road, when it starts changing things for people driving on the road this group will get after them," said board member John Letherman. "But from all the reports we got, technical reports, they're in compliance and things are getting better." How long ITRCC remains in charge remains to be seen. It's expected that the right to run the Indiana Toll

Road will be auctioned off to the highest bidder in bankruptcy court in Chicago in the next three or four months. "Indiana can approve a new operator or changes that might happen with that operating lease, which they're not likely to do," said Kevin Kelly. "And thirdly, if that all goes to heck, Indiana gets the road back free and clear."

[Plans call for right to run the Ind. Toll Road to be sold at auction](#)

Northwest Indiana's public transit future is focus of Valparaiso forum

Post-Tribune

James D. Wolfe Jr.

10/15/14

VALPARAISO — The public transportation systems that have seen the most growth in ridership in Northwest Indiana during the last year are the local and commuter bus lines in Valparaiso. Given that success, the city may be overseeing two other local bus services in Porter County, but even the satisfied riders of Valparaiso's two systems, V-Line and ChicagoDash, want more. About 20 city officials, local transportation officials and passengers attended Wednesday's meeting of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission at city hall. The meeting is part of a series to get input on local transportation issues. One was held Tuesday in Portage, there's one at 2 p.m. Thursday at LaPorte City Hall, one at Michigan City's city hall at 5 p.m. Thursday and another at Hammond's downtown library at 4 p.m. Oct. 23. NIRPC transit planner Belinda Petroskey on Wednesday discussed the commission's 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan and its recommendations on expanding and interconnecting the public transit systems serving the region. The focus would be on high-speed rail, commuter rail and regional bus service under regional leadership. Northwest Indiana also needs to find financial resources for local matches to federal and state grants, which municipalities usually need for mass transit projects.

[Northwest Indiana's public transit future is focus of Valparaiso forum - Post-Tribune](#)

Groundbreaking Set For 'Diamond' Interchange

Inside INdiana Business

10/14/14

JOHNSON COUNTY, Ind. - The Indiana Department of Transportation and the City of Greenwood will officially launch construction of the new \$16 million Interstate 65/Worthsville Road "diverging diamond" interchange at a groundbreaking ceremony Wednesday (OCT. 15) at 1:30 p.m. Greenwood mayor Mark Myers will be joined by INDOT officials, contractor representatives, the project designer and others at the groundbreaking site located in the project's northeast quadrant - just north of Worthsville Road (C.R. 750 North) along Graham Road (C.R. 200E). "This is a great thing for Greenwood. It has been a long time coming, and I appreciate the efforts of everyone involved to make it happen," said Mayor Myers. "This exit will dynamically improve our east-west traffic. With the new Aquatics Center opening in the spring, it will give Interstate travelers a more direct route." According to INDOT Seymour District deputy commissioner Tony McClellan, "I-65 access at Worthsville Road will ease congestion at Main Street and Whiteland Road interchanges in Johnson County. This addresses safety concerns and the need to improve traffic flow." Funding of construction for the I-65/Worthsville Road interchange is being shared on a 50/50 basis between the city and the state. E & B Paving and Gradex, acting as a joint venture, were awarded the \$16,085,500 contract earlier this month.

[Groundbreaking Set For 'Diamond' Interchange - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

INDOT plans Ind. 55 repaving ahead of Illiana construction

NWI Times

Keith Benman

10/14/14

The Indiana Department of Transportation plans a \$4.5 million repaving project for a section of Ind. 55 that could host a key Illiana Expressway interchange. The rehabilitation of the "Nine Mile Stretch" of Ind. 55 from Ind. 2 to U.S. 231 should be underway next year, when INDOT is also hopeful construction can start on the Illiana Expressway. The Transportation Policy Committee of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission on Tuesday voted to add the repaving project to its short-term transportation plan. The full NIRPC board is set to act on the same amendment Thursday. The Illiana Expressway would intersect with Ind. 55 north of Lowell, just north of where 163rd Avenue currently intersects with Ind. 55. The NIRPC Transportation Policy Committee also amended its short-range plan to include \$1.5 million in mass transit grants. [INDOT plans Ind. 55 repaving ahead of Illiana construction](#)

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