



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

October 22 , 2015

Little-used bridges may be on abandoned roads

The Lebanon Reporter
Rod Rose
10/21/15

One of two rarely-used bridges that County Highway Engineer Craig Parks has suggested be abandoned may have already been given up by the county. Parks had told the county commissioners in early October that inspectors had found the Ray Road bridge over Goldsberry Creek and the CR 1175 W bridge over White Creek were in danger of collapse. Neither road is marked and each is choked with weeds. On Monday, Parks said he had learned that CR 1175 between may have actually been vacated — legally abandoned — years ago, although a new deck was installed sometime in the 1980s, he said. The bridge was built in 1930. Parks said he is working with Karen Lasley-Maue, the commissioners' administrative assistant, reviewing meeting minutes to learn whether either road had been abandoned. County Attorney Bob Clutter said if the road has been vacated, adjacent landowners would be entitled to half of the right of way. The commissioners generally should be "very reluctant" to vacate a road because of unseen future needs, Clutter said. But, he said, neither Ray Road nor the section of CR 1175 between CR 800 N and CR 900 N lead anywhere. The Ray Road bridge, built in 1920, does not appear on the county's GPS system. Parks said Boone County's highway revenue from the state could increase minutely next year, after an annual inventory uncovered 36 miles of county road that have never been included in the state's records. The inventory is one of several factors in a complex formula that determines how much Motor Vehicle Highway revenue the state sends to each county. The streets in the Royal Run subdivision, south of Whitestown Parkway on either side of CR 650 E, had never been counted in the inventory, Park said. [Little-used bridges may be on abandoned roads - Reporter.net: Local News](#)

South Shore project could be on track for Regional Cities funds

NWI Times
Dan Carden
10/20/15

INDIANAPOLIS | Northwest Indiana may have an edge over six other parts of the state competing this year for up to \$42 million in Regional Cities funds intended to improve quality-of-place and attract new residents. On Tuesday, several members of the state panel evaluating the regional applications seemed to favor Northwest Indiana's focused plan to double-track the South Shore commuter rail line from Gary to Michigan City, over the "kitchen sink" proposals loaded with dozens of smaller projects submitted other areas. "It seems like to me that's a no-brainer, and we probably should have done it 10 years ago," said former Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis, a member of the Regional Cities Strategic Review Committee. "If something happens on that line and there's a disruption, not only is it slower but it's kind of subject to failure." Mitch Roob, former

CEO of Indiana Economic Development Corp., the state's commerce agency, told the committee he experienced South Shore single-track delays firsthand about once a month when he previously lived in Chesterton and commuted to work in Chicago. "You just sat there for sometimes 30 to 40 minutes and waited," Roob said. "It did create a certain amount of unreliability ... and it's a real concern in that part of the state." The Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority has requested \$42 million over two years from Regional Cities to help cover the \$114 million estimated cost to double-track 14.2 miles of railroad by 2019 or 2020, and related transit-oriented development. [South Shore project could be on track for Regional Cities funds : Politics](#)

Officials: 22 acres needed for Worthsville Road connector plan

Daily Journal
Abby Armbruster
10/20/15

About 22 acres needs to be purchased from property owners before a 1¼-mile extension of Worthsville Road can be built. County officials have worked on extending Worthsville Road from Griffith Road to Franklin Road for about four years, highway director Luke Mastin said. The road ultimately will go toward building a clear east-west connector in Johnson and Shelby counties, so motorists can travel between Interstate 65 and Interstate 74 more easily. Currently, motorists have to go on smaller country roads with no shoulders to drive from Greenwood to I-74, unless they drive out of their way by using a major highway or interstate. Originally, the road was going to connect Worthsville Road to Clark School Road, but county officials decided to keep Worthsville Road traveling east to hit Franklin Road straight-on. This 1¼-mile extension of Worthsville Road through undeveloped property will be built starting in the spring of 2017, Mastin said. Once the extension is built, the county highway department will have to wait for more state or federal grants to establish more connector roads to the Shelby County border, he said. The county needs to buy 22 acres of land from 11 property owners in order to build the road. The county has not started talking to residents about specific offers for purchasing the property, Mastin said. Mastin hopes the land can be purchased for a total of \$250,000 or less, he said. The county highway department cannot start purchasing land until after an environmental study is approved, he said. So far, the environmental study has been turned into the Indiana Department of Transportation and should be approved within the next month or two, he said. Then, the county can start appraising the 22 acres to see what the property is worth, Mastin said. Mastin expects to start negotiating prices with residents next year with the goal to finalize the purchases that summer, he said. [Officials: 22 acres needed for Worthsville Road connector plan](#)

Study highlights need for long-term Indiana road funding plan

NWI Times
Dan Carden
10/18/15

INDIANAPOLIS | Indiana may need to raise taxes just to maintain its transportation infrastructure, according to a new analysis commissioned by the General Assembly. If the state doesn't raise taxes, it'll need to come up with another plan to increase revenue in the not-too-distant future. The state's top road funding sources -- an 18-cent per gallon excise tax and 7 percent sales tax on gasoline purchases -- are set to drop fast due to Hoosiers driving fewer miles than in the past and doing it in more fuel-efficient vehicles that travel farther between fill-ups. Over the next 10 years, the \$450 million Indiana currently collects in fuel taxes is projected to fall to barely \$300 million after accounting for inflation, according to the report by Cambridge Systematics, a Massachusetts-based transportation policy advisory group. That decline will make it impossible for the state to adequately take care of the 30,000 miles of roads and nearly 6,000 bridges that support Indiana's \$246 billion in annual economic output, let alone grow the system. Joe Guerre, a civil engineering principal at Cambridge Systematics, explained recently to the Legislature's

Interim Study Committee on Roads and Transportation that Indiana does not yet face a road funding crisis. [Study highlights need for long-term Indiana road funding plan : Politics](#)

How will Indiana finance its road repairs?

The Courier-Journal

Brian Slodysko

10/18/15

The condition of Indiana's poorly funded and low-ranked roads has emerged as a volatile political issue. What to do about them could become even more charged as Republican Gov. Mike Pence seeks re-election next year. Still to be worked out in the months ahead is where to find financing to repair them, if the state should look to a tax increase as part of a long-term solution and whether Pence will face political fallout over his handling of the matter. Democrats have sought to exploit the issue ever since a month-long emergency closure of an Interstate 65 bridge near Lafayette last summer. They accuse the governor of stockpiling a \$2 billion budget reserve at the expense of funding important state needs. Pence fought back last week, proposing a \$1 billion plan to rehab state highways in the coming five years — a plan he characterized as a good start. But administration officials have walked a delicate line, acknowledging road improvements are needed while pushing back against the suggestion that the state faces a "crisis." "Accusations that Indiana's infrastructure is crumbling only serves to scare the public for purposes of political gain," said Matt Lloyd, a longtime Pence aide, noting that the governor and Republican-dominated Legislature have increased road funding every year since 2013. [How will Indiana finance its road repairs?](#)

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