



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

October 27 , 2015

Hearing set on I-69 widening

The Herald Bulletin
10/26/15

The Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will host public hearings regarding a preliminary selection of Milestone Contractors as the preferred provider to widen and rehabilitate 15 miles of Interstate 69 in Hamilton and Madison counties as part of the state's Major Moves 2020 program. As proposed, the project would add a travel lane in each direction between State Road 37 (Exit 205) and State Road 38 (Exit 219), and add a southbound lane between the 116th Street entrance ramp and the future 106th Street exit ramp. In addition, the project includes reconfiguring the Campus Parkway interchange (Exit 210) into a diverging-diamond design to improve traffic flow, widening the Campus Parkway Bridge over I-69, and replacing the Brooks School Road bridge deck over I-69.

http://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/local_news/hearing-set-on-i--widening/article_5eebf5fd-ad10-5249-a616-a547009545ef.html

Republican initiative in Indianapolis has paved state's transportation future, no thanks to Democrats

The Journal Gazette
David Long
10/23/15

Having been involved in public service on the local and state levels for nearly 28 years, I've seen my share of wild claims tossed around by sparring political opponents. Usually, these can be dismissed for the politically motivated attacks they are, but occasionally they fall so far beyond the pale that a response is required. That's the case with the current coordinated attack from Indiana Democrats on the state of road funding in Indiana. Interestingly, they have chosen this as a political issue, despite having no plan of their own, and consistently opposing Indiana's major road funding accomplishments in recent years. Finding ways to pay for roads continues to be a challenge facing Indiana and every other state in the nation. But as someone who has been involved in our historic infrastructure accomplishments over the last decade, I think it's important to remind Hoosiers of the facts. When former Gov. Mitch Daniels came into office in January 2005, he inherited a \$3 billion road infrastructure gap – equivalent at the time to about ten years' worth of road construction. With the support of Republican majorities in the General Assembly, Daniels responded by undertaking an historic infrastructure initiative called Major Moves. Made possible by the long-term lease of the Indiana Toll Road that included an up-front cash payment to the state of \$3.8 billion, Major Moves paid for a decade of road construction across the state, without a penny of new taxes or debt. The accomplishments have been real: The U.S. 24 "Fort to Port" project in Northeast Indiana. The I-80/I-94 interchange in Northwest Indiana. I-69 in Southwest Indiana. U.S. 31 improvements in Central and Northern Indiana. The State Road 25

Hoosier Heartland Corridor. The Ohio River Bridges project in Southern Indiana. The list goes on and on. [Republican initiative in Indianapolis has paved state's transportation future, no thanks to Democrats | Opinion columns | www.journalgazette.net](#)

I-65 construction project complete in Greenwood

WTHR

Kevin Rader

10/23/15

"All lanes are now open." It's a phrase commuters love to hear and now, that's the case on Interstate 65 on the south side of Indianapolis. It's an important four-mile stretch of road, because it literally paves the way for a much bigger project to come. The newly completed stretch of interstate runs from Southport Road to the Main Street exit in Greenwood. The project began in early March and included repairs to six lanes and an upgraded overpass. Friday's ribbon cutting was also an opportunity for one Indiana family to continue their work to prevent fatalities in construction sites. "This has been an incredible project in that they were 3-5 weeks pushed back by rain and now they are finishing on time. It's an incredible job," Harry McGinty from INDOT proclaimed. That was accomplished by working around the clock, seven days a week to meet the deadline, allowing INDOT to cut the ribbon on the \$35.9 million project on time. "This project behind us, Major Moves 2020, added capacity and preserved an existing facility. We are very much focused on preservation. We've been adding preservation at an unprecedented level. That means more smaller construction sites all over the state," INDOT Deputy Director Sam Sarvis said. Dennis DeMoss was on hand, as well, to unveil a new sign motorists will now see all across the state. The signs, which read "Slow down, save a life, we are all in this together," will be placed at 16 locations across Indiana. "If it saves one life it is worth doing, because you can't put a dollar amount on a life," DeMoss said. [I-65 construction project complete in Greenwood - 13 WTHR Indianapolis](#)

Our Opinion: These crossroads could be tricky

South Bend Tribune

10/23/15

Even though Gov. Mike Pence has done little more than announce a \$1 billion spending plan focused on Indiana's roads, the path ahead already looks bumpy. Unveiled earlier this month, 21st Century Crossroads would only fund state-mandated highways and bridges. The new money, to be spent over the next four years, would be in addition to the \$3.2 billion in planned spending over the next five years. The proposal involves tapping into the state's \$2 billion surplus. Pence, who has been defending the condition of Indiana transportation infrastructure in recent weeks, wrote in an op-ed that his plan is "a substantial next step that will improve our roads and bridges as we work toward the solutions for the even longer term." He also wrote that he looks forward to working with the General Assembly in the upcoming legislative session to accomplish these goals. Those negotiations could be tricky, based on initial response from lawmakers — in both parties — to 21st Century Crossroads. Democrats, who have been criticizing the governor about the state of Hoosier roads, fault the plan for achieving only the "bare minimum." They also note that, according to an interim study committee for roads and transportation, the plan neglects 90 percent of the state's roads and bridges. For their part, House Republicans have sounded a tepid response. House Speaker Brian Bosma said legislators "appreciate" Pence's ideas and will "keep his proposals in mind." Concerns about taking on debt were expressed by House Ways and Means Chairman State Rep. Tim Brown. [Our Opinion: These crossroads could be tricky - South Bend Tribune: Our Opinion](#)

Pence's road plan falls short

Indianapolis Star

John Zody

10/23/15

Over the past couple months, Democrats have made it clear we are willing to put up a fight to protect our state's "Crossroads of America" reputation and to hold Statehouse leaders accountable. We're willing to call out Gov. Mike Pence for his failure to govern on an issue he shouldn't have let fall through the cracks, Indiana's crumbling roads and bridges. Whether it was the month-long I-65 bridge closure this summer or the \$71 million in taxpayer dollars wasted on faulty asphalt, Hoosiers are seeing that time and again, our state's infrastructure system is being mismanaged. Indiana Democrats have been working to hold Pence accountable because our state's economy — and our travelers — cannot afford to wait on bridge and road closures while he scrambles to come up with a plan to fix them. Unfortunately, Pence has chosen to govern with his rigid ideology instead of what was best for Hoosiers. Now, because his campaign polling numbers have dropped, the governor made an announcement last week that seems to amount to more of a political reaction than a real plan to fix our infrastructure. The governor's late-to-the-game plan fails to meet the bare minimum that's required to maintain our sagging infrastructure system. Pence claims the state has invested more than ever in our roads and bridges — and yet, there are still more than 1,900 structurally deficient bridges across the state. He also claims our roads are sound and yet, when the faulty asphalt was discovered, INDOT blamed a contractor instead of taking responsibility for a product the agency had tested and approved more than 70 times. [Pence's road plan falls short](#)

COMMENTARY: Where we're going, we do need roads

Indiana Economic Digest

Larry DeBoer

10/22/15

Most of the money for roads comes from motor fuel excise taxes. Indiana taxes gasoline at 18 cents per gallon, one of the lowest rates in the country. We tax diesel fuel at 16 cents but then add a surcharge of 11 cents for big trucks. That 27 cents total is near the middle of state tax rates nationwide. We also tax motor fuel with our 7 percent sales tax — only nine states apply sales taxes on top of their excise taxes — so Indiana's total state tax burden on fuel is high compared with other states. The motor fuel taxes raised about \$800 million in fiscal 2014, and almost all of it was used for roads. Fuel taxes were used for the state police and the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles, but starting in 2014 the General Assembly decided to pay for those functions from other sources. They also earmarked 1 percent of total sales tax revenue for roads. Those two changes added about \$175 million to total road funding. Altogether, we distribute more than \$900 million to the state, the counties and the cities and towns for road maintenance and construction. We divvy up the money by using a couple of formulas. The Motor Vehicle Highway formula allocates 53 percent of its funds to the Indiana Department of Transportation, 32 percent to counties and 15 percent to cities and towns. The amount going to each county is based mostly on vehicle registrations and on the road miles each county maintains. The city and town money is distributed based on population. [COMMENTARY: Where we're going, we do need roads - Indiana Economic Digest - Indiana](#)

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