



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **October 7, 2014**

#### **State asks for yearly inspection of 31 Shelby County bridges**

The Shelbyville News  
Alex Krach  
10/6/14

The Shelby County Board of Commissioners was recently asked by the state to begin inspecting 31 bridges every year. "It would be something like a doctor, where you go in and, as long as you're healthy or you can handle the job, then you're okay. When you get down to where you can't handle the job, it might be critical," Commissioner David Mohr said. Mohr said certain bridges need to be monitored a little more closely than other bridges for safety, due to age, use or construction quality. Previously, all of the bridges were inspected every other year. "Before, they would inspect them every other year," Mohr said. "Four years ago, you would have had what you call a major inspection. They go all through the bridge and check it out really well. Two years later, they give it a general inspection, which kind of just hits the high points." Having the bridges inspected yearly will cost \$17,081.31 cents, or roughly \$551 per bridge. According to Mohr, however, the county is only expected to pay 20 percent on each bridge, or approximately \$110 per bridge. Though the bridges require annual inspection, Mohr said they are currently not in such bad shape they need closed. "These bridges are not at the point where they could fall in. They're just at the point that the state wants them inspected every year," Mohr said.

[State asks for yearly inspection of 31 Shelby County bridges - Shelby News: Local News](#)

#### **Tipton County officials dedicate new road**

Kokomo Tribune  
Josh Sigler  
10/6/14

TIPTON – While Getrag and Chrysler went through trials and tribulations in 2007, Tipton County residents wondered if anything substantial would ever come of the monstrous building at the corner of Indiana 28 and U.S. 31. Along with that, residents waited anxiously for the coinciding road construction project, connecting Indiana 28 to Division Road just east of the plant. Just short of five months from the day the Tipton Transmission Plant was dedicated, county officials dedicated county road 550/560 West, giving residents and industry another option for travel on the county's main corridors. "A year ago, you always heard that saying 'you can't get there from here,'" county commissioner Phil Heron said. "Now you can. This started as a vision of the Tipton County Economic Development Corporation back in the middle 2000s. Through a lot of hard work and special dedication by Phil Beer, our county engineer, and the help of previous officials, this has come to pass. We now have a tie together for the two main gateways for Tipton County. It's been a good effort." The county road, which cost roughly \$1.4 million to connect, now provides a two-lane, 24-foot wide road between Indiana 28 and Division Road and provides drainage improvement for the surrounding area. County officials also hope the new road opens up further

economic development for the area.

[Tipton County officials dedicate new road - Kokomo Tribune: News](#)

### **City eyes road repairs for next year**

Herald Argus

Matt Fritz

10/6/14

La PORTE — Due to an end in the county-wide tax situation, and an increased income from reconciled tax bills, the city of La Porte's anticipated \$700,000 deficit is expected to go away. And on top of that, it's hoping to provide some \$1.5 million in additional road paving funds to repair the pot hole-ridden streets. At least that's what Mayor Blair Milo announced Monday during the La Porte City Council meeting. There, after council members introduced an ordinance appropriating some \$20.1 million for the city, she said La Porte was in a unique position to start making up for the years of austerity it experienced while cutting costs for the county's tax situation. The city collected less taxes during this time because of property assessment issues in the county. Among these changes was a 3 percent pay raise for all employees and elected officials. This included a \$1,250 floor, meaning if an employee didn't make at least \$1,250 with the raise, the city would spot the rest. She said raises were important for keeping and attracting good employees. But the mayor said the city was also expecting to get at least \$530,000 next year from the state's new fee requirements for trucks. Trucks now have to pay fees for road maintenance due to the damage they cause the roadway. The state approved the measure last year. Milo said she hoped to make the \$530,000 into at least \$1.5 million with federal matching funds and other sources. This would help La Porte fix up more roads in 2015. The appropriations also included the purchase of new vehicles for the city's different departments.

[City eyes road repairs for next year - Herald Argus: News](#)

### **Tough decisions ahead on Indiana road, bridge funding**

NWI Times

Dan Carden

10/5/14

INDIANAPOLIS | Facing the prospect of no new money to combat an expected rise in deteriorating bridges and crumbling highways over the next decade, state transportation officials are putting the question to Hoosiers — what road conditions are you willing to pay for? Currently, 373 of the 5,435 state-maintained bridges are rated "poor," with an additional 1,007 deemed only "fair," according to the Indiana Department of Transportation. Maintaining the \$273 million a year now spent on bridge repair and replacement, Indiana will have 682 poor bridges, or 12.5 percent, and 1,705 rated fair by 2024. Similarly, continuing the current \$394 million in annual pavement maintenance will leave the state with 1,305 miles of poor highways in 2024, or 12 percent, up from 1,127 miles this year. The uptick in poor-rated bridges and roads gets even worse beyond 2024 as most of the Interstate bridges and overpasses — built in the 1960s — near the end of their 75-year projected lifespan, according to INDOT. INDOT Commissioner Karl Browning recently told a legislative panel the transportation agency is willing to go along with that future if that is what Hoosiers want. "We can live with what we've got, if taxpayers are willing to, too," he said. But Browning explained INDOT's goal is to have fewer than 3 percent of bridges and less than 4.5 percent of state highways rated poor. However, getting there requires money. INDOT has determined the state would need to spend an additional \$91 million a year on bridges and \$167 million a year on pavement, or \$258 million altogether, just to maintain the roads and bridges Indiana already has.

[Tough decisions ahead on Indiana road, bridge funding : Elections](#) Also, [Indiana facing questions on bridge, road funding - Herald Bulletin: State News](#)

## **Benefits of Toll Road lease remain for Indiana**

Indianapolis Star

10/5/14

The recent announcement that the Indiana Toll Road Concession Co. was filing for bankruptcy has triggered comments that the bankruptcy was evidence that the leasing of the Toll Road was a poor decision by the State of Indiana. I disagree. I think it should be considered a positive indication that Indiana benefited greatly from the lease. Under the terms of the lease agreement the toll company assumed all risks of operating the roadway. The company's financial difficulties stem almost exclusively from the impact of the recession that affected traffic on the Toll Road. If the lease had not been in effect, the state would have suffered those effects directly. Instead, the lessee "took it on the financial chin." Beyond that, those who criticize the lease seem to gloss over its positive impact. Here's just a partial list of investments made by the toll company that would have otherwise had to be made by the state of Indiana: Installation of the electronic E-ZPass System, More than \$450 million in mandatory improvements to the Toll Road, including additional lane capacity in high volume areas in Northwest Indiana, Major repairs on 17 mainline bridges, A new State Police post near Elkhart (and payment of trooper salaries). In addition, the lease proceeds resulted in other benefits: \$267 million in cash distributed to counties, cities and towns along the Toll Road for local projects, \$2.8 billion to erase a huge deficit in Indiana Department of Transportation funding for highways, enabling Indiana to avoid increasing taxes for this purposes as 31 other states have done, \$120 million to the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority and A \$500 million Trust Fund for the Future, providing income for future transportation needs.

[Benefits of Toll Road lease remain for Indiana](#)

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