



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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Sagamore could be next as INDOT gets rid of roads

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Alex Maragos

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WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. (WLF1) — The Indiana Department of Transportation is in charge of about 28,400 roadway lane miles. Make all of that one lane, and it could stretch one time around the entire globe, and then some. With all that to pave and plow, INDOT wants to focus on the most important roads, while handing off others to cities and towns that can best take care of them. That process, an old process, is called relinquishment. INDOT most recently gave up a road in the area when it handed over a portion of U.S. 52 to Lafayette in 2012. It's now officially known as Sagamore Parkway until it meets U.S. 231 in West Lafayette, but every inch of road on the West Lafayette side still belongs to INDOT. Although that may soon change. "What I would like to do with [Sagamore Parkway], if I had a wish list towards that particular stretch of roadway, I would like to make it appear more like Northwestern Avenue," said West Lafayette Mayor John Dennis. Handing over the road from the bridge over the Wabash to the U.S. 231 intersection appears to be a good fit. INDOT has expressed interest in shedding the road and Dennis clearly wants it. Both sides say talks about the takeover process will continue into next spring. Unlike an exchange or transaction, relinquishment usually requires very little from the city gaining ownership of the road. During Lafayette's takeover of Sagamore Parkway, for instance, INDOT gave the city \$21 million. That may sound like a loaded deal for localities, but to INDOT roads and bridges can be a burden of cost and manpower.

[Sagamore could be next as INDOT gets rid of roads | wlf1.com](#)

EDITORIAL: Could Toll Road counties pull this off?

NWI Times

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The Indiana Toll Road privatization story is one that just doesn't seem to go away. For a road that cuts straight across northern Indiana, the plot has a lot of twists and turns. It all begins, of course, in 2006, with Major Moves, Gov. Mitch Daniels' signature program. It was the 75-year lease of the Indiana Toll Road that prompted the \$3.8 billion windfall and sparked a transportation infrastructure spending spree. The lease required Indiana Toll Road Concession Co. to spend a lot of money on modernization, including additional lanes in Lake County and electronic tolling infrastructure throughout the entire length of the road. But now the company has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, leaving the future of the road's operations up for grabs. U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly, D-Ind., along with state Sen. Brent Waltz, R-Greenwood, and LaPorte County commissioners are wondering why the road isn't reverting to the state, the way Daniels said it would if a bankruptcy were to occur. And now LaPorte County commissioners are pushing for a seven-county consortium that would put in a bid for operating the road. That would create a nonprofit entity,

protecting the counties from any future bankruptcy. The Lake County Board of Commissioners is expected to discuss joining that consortium this morning. The idea of a seven-county consortium to operate the Indiana Toll Road sounds much like the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, which operates the South Shore Line. This idea for the Indiana Toll Road is worth exploring, even if state government doesn't want the road back.

[EDITORIAL: Could Toll Road counties pull this off?](#)

INDOT finds funds for Happy Hollow Road project

Lafayette Journal & Courier

Ron Wilkins

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Happy Hollow Road's reconstruction received the green light after two months in limbo. The state had previously pulled funds for the project just as work was supposed to begin in September. Eighty percent of the \$6 million project is funded by federal gasoline taxes, which are administered by the Indiana Department of Transportation. INDOT announced earlier this year it would cut back on funding some projects over the next five years, starting in fiscal year 2015, which began July 1. "We're thankful INDOT continued to work with us and free up the money," West Lafayette City Engineer Dave Buck said. Buck told the Redevelopment Commission Wednesday morning that city and INDOT officials had reached an agreement to fund the project. In essence, INDOT reviewed all the projects statewide and made note of those that are ready to go, such as Happy Hollow Road, while also noting projects that were behind schedule but were slated to receive funds in fiscal year 2015, Buck said. INDOT shifted funding from projects that are lagging behind schedule, giving the money to those that are ready, Buck said when asked how the Happy Hollow Road project had its funding restored.

<http://www.jconline.com/story/news/local/2014/11/19/happy-hollow-road-project-moves-forward-two-months-limbo/19270649/>

Ex-exec says INDOT ignored problems with Amtrak line bid

Indianapolis Business Journal

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A former executive with a company once in the running to manage an Amtrak line between Indianapolis and Chicago says a state agency ignored problems with the private company's approach, including its lack of financing for its proposal to operate the line. Mark Singer, who was Corridor Capital's vice president of strategic planning from February until September, said the company lacked financing and experience and didn't have rail cars ready to go to take over the Hoosier State line. He said the company's initial proposal to the Indiana Department of Transportation did not indicate that the company needed startup funds. "I was shocked to find out his own investors were not going to pony up ... to the table to finance this operation," Singer told the Journal & Courier. "The state was going to pay \$1.6 million to rehab equipment they were only going to be leasing for two years." He said state would have paid an additional \$1 million in annual lease payments. Fritz Plous, Corridor Capital's vice president of corporate communication, said the question of "who writes the checks had not been all worked out" during the company's negotiations with Indiana officials. "The customer has to pay," he said. "I don't know if that proviso is what led to the delay or dropping of the process." Corridor Capital began contract talks last summer with INDOT to provide passenger rail cars, marketing and other services on the Hoosier State line after the state's contract with Amtrak ends in January. INDOT broke off negotiations with Corridor Capital this month, offering no reasons for ending the negotiations it had started in late June.

[Ex-exec says INDOT ignored problems with Amtrak line bid | 2014-11-19 | Indianapolis Business Journal | IBJ.com](#)

State Road 37 overhaul plan has business owners on alert

Indianapolis Business Journal

Andrea Muirragui Davis

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Business owners along State Road 37 in Hamilton County expressed concern Monday night about losing customers during a highway project being proposed to ease congestion. As IBJ reported in May, county officials are vetting a plan to replace nine signalized intersections with roundabout interchanges, aiming to reduce the drive time on—and across—a six-mile stretch from Interstate 69 to State Road 32 that passes through Fishers and Noblesville. If local leaders sign off on the \$243 million proposal, their representatives will begin discussions with the Indiana Department of Transportation about relinquishing ownership (and control) of the state road. But officials want buy-in from businesses, too, given the existing commercial development and the potential for more. So they scheduled two public meetings this week to get feedback on the proposal—and perhaps some ideas for easing the pain. The second is set for 7 p.m. today at the Delaware Township Community Building, 9094 E. 131st St., Fishers. The proposed transformation has been compared to Carmel's much-touted reconstruction of Keystone Parkway, which Noblesville Mayor John Ditslear called "a beautiful drive" from 146th Street to 96th Street (where a lone remaining stoplight still causes traffic to stall). But most of Keystone is lined by residential areas, not retail. "We have a lot more to protect and perhaps a lot more to lose," Ditslear told the crowd Monday. "It's important for us ... to make sure we control this project." Business owners threw out a few suggestions—tax breaks during the worst of construction, for example, and temporary signage directing customers through the work zone—but most seemed more interested in gathering information, asking questions and studying conceptual renderings of the proposed solution.

<http://www.ibj.com/blogs/11-north-of-96th/post/50533-state-road-37-overhaul-plan-has-business-owners-on-alert>