



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

December 30, 2014

When good toll roads go bad

NWI Times
Keith Benman
12/27/14

Northern Indiana is not the first region in the nation to be subject to fallout from a toll road bankruptcy, with a number of other privatized roads and bridges going belly up across the nation in the past few years. The good news is those roads have continued to carry traffic with little disruption. The bad news is there is usually little communities can do to influence the bankruptcy process, except in cases where roads revert to government ownership. "We were hopeful if there was a true bankruptcy and a fire sale we could buy the bridge back," said Orange Beach, Ala., Mayor Tony Kennon of the financial troubles experienced by owners of the Foley Beach Express gateway toll bridge to his island community. "We thought there might be a silver lining for us." But that proved not to be the case as owner American Roads was already on its way to a reorganizational bankruptcy in early 2013, citing \$830 million in debt on the Foley Beach Express and other toll roads it owned. Investor Syncora Guarantee Inc. subsequently became the owner. Traffic has been able to continue to use the road unimpeded, Kennon said. However the city has not been able to address the issue of the \$3.50 toll, which it feels keeps tourists and shoppers away while also burdening commuting service workers who must use it twice daily. The operator of the Indiana Toll Road, ITR Concession Co., declared bankruptcy on more than \$6 billion in debt in September. In October, it received approval to put the road out for bid, and preliminary bids have already been received.

[When good toll roads go bad](#)

City gets \$1.3M in funding

Journal Review
John Dykstra
12/26/14

The Indiana Department of Transportation granted about \$1.3 million to Crawfordsville on Feb. 5 to improve Sugar Creek Trail and emergency services. The city applied for the transportation funding prior to last December's deadline through separate applications. It received \$888,000 to connect the Sugar Creek Trail gap between the Animal Welfare League and Schenck Road. It also received \$418,950 for an Emergency Vehicle Signal Preemption system. The city wanted to connect Sugar Creek Trail for more than 10 years. By connecting it, the trail will extend about half a mile. It currently is 4.6 miles in length. Furthermore, the trail will become safer for its users. Walkers and bike riders have had to cross the intersection of Schenck Road and Big Four Arch Road or walk along the railroad to travel the entire trail. "We felt for the longest time that we needed to fill that void," Mayor Todd Barton said. "Obviously that is not an easy solution, so we had engineers assist us in creating a workable solution." Overall, INDOT awarded \$86 million in

federal transportation funds throughout the state. Approximately \$47 million will go toward road construction, while \$22 million will go toward bridges and \$14 million will go toward bicycle and pedestrian projects. Boone County, Hendricks County, Frankfort and Veedersburg received funding in addition to Crawfordsville in west central Indiana.

[City gets \\$1.3M in funding - journalreview.com: News](#)

Weather, lack of permits impacting West Connector construction

The Shelbyville News

Paul Gable

12/26/14

A road project that has been in the plans since 2007 has seen a completion date for the West Connector between Fairland and Shelbyville pushed back due to weather and waiting on permits. According to Shelbyville city engineer Matt House, the Fairland Road extension is planned to be constructed in six phases of approximately 1 to 1.5 miles each. Phase I, which is scheduled for 2014-15, is 1.6 miles in length and will extend from County Road 400 North (Fairland Road) to County Road 300 North. Phase II is 1.03 miles in length and will extend from County Road 300 North to County Road 200 North (Walser Road). Phase III is approximately a mile in length and will extend from County Road 200 North (Walser Road) to County Road 100 North (Mausoleum Road) and will provide connectivity from the northwest Industrial Park to I-74. "The key is to get to Mausoleum Road. The whole point in this road is to connect it to the industrial park," Shelbyville mayor Tom DeBaun said. Phase IV will be about a mile in length and will extend from Mausoleum Road to Boggstown Road. Phase V is also approximately a mile in length and will extend from Boggstown Road to West Washington St. with a bridge over the Big Blue River. Phase VI, the final phase, is about a mile in length and will extend from West Washington St. to State Road 44, thus providing the full connection between Fairland Road and State Road 44.

<http://www.shelbynews.com/favicon.ico>

City: Our roundabouts are built right

The StarPress

Keith Roysdon

12/26/14

MUNCIE – Now that Muncie and Delaware County governments have jumped on the traffic roundabout bandwagon, the question arises: Are they building them correctly? Mayor Dennis Tyler and other officials recently defended the usefulness and safety of the community's most-recently-completed roundabout, where South Madison and Walnut streets meet at the southern city limits. The southside roundabout opened in recent weeks, and almost as quickly, social media users began to raise concerns, namely that it is too small for semi-tractor trailers. It is, ironically, a concern that Tyler shared with The Star Press in his first week in office in January 2012, but one that the mayor recently said he no longer believes is valid. Todd Donati, executive director of the Muncie Redevelopment Commission, told MRC members in a December 4 meeting that comments expressed online about the new southside roundabout were not realistic. "People say it's not big enough for trucks," Donati said. "That's not true. It's built with rolling curbs so semis can make wide turns." He added that naysayers should "back off and enjoy the benefits." <http://www.thestarpress.com/story/news/local/2014/12/26/city-roundabouts-built-right/20920759/>

New Year's resolutions to keep Indiana on right track

Indianapolis Star

Chase Downham

12/25/14

A new year provides a new opportunity for fiscal conservatives to keep Indiana on track to becoming the economic beacon of the Midwest. This is a great time for our state policymakers to make resolutions. Here are a few issues that they may want to consider as they head into the 2015 legislative session. Repeal common construction wages. Not many issues up for debate could have a more direct impact on saving local governments potentially millions of dollars than repealing Indiana's common construction wage law. The common construction wage essentially allows for government officials and labor bosses to mandate certain wages and benefits be paid at taxpayers' expense for public construction projects. These wages and benefits are often higher than what an open bidding process would otherwise provide. This results in reduced competition and greater expenses for taxpayers. We all hear that local governments need more revenue to provide essential services and develop greater infrastructure for our cities and towns. Rather than raising taxes as some would prefer, let's make our dollars go further by allowing the free market to provide the best service at the best price.

[New Year's resolutions to keep Indiana on right track](#)

Why did mass transit fail in Carmel?

Current in Carmel

Adam Aasen

12/23/14

The IndyExpress bus ended its route to Carmel on Dec. 19. The options now for Carmel residents who want to use public transportation are limited to van pools and ride share programs. People want to know: "Why did it fail?" and "Will we ever have mass transit in Carmel?" Earlier this year, the Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority came to the Carmel City Council to ask for \$30,000 to help continue the service. The Council approved the funds, but with almost every councilor asking for a better marketing plan in the future. "There was some insufficient marketing," Carmel Mayor Jim Brainard said. "You have to run it more like a business." CIRT Executive Director Andrew Gast-Bray sat down with Current and explained that he felt there was such a negative response from Carmel's leadership that when CIRT saw that \$30,000 come to an end – and more money was needed – that they decided to pull the plug on the service. "I'm kind of frustrated that we didn't have enough time to come to them with a new plan," he said. Indy Express ridership has declined from 69,000 riders during its inception in 2008 to 26,000 riders in 2013, according to CIRT. Carmel had considerably low numbers, about half of what a similar route in Fishers would bring in, according to CIRT. Gast-Bray said Carmel had a small but loyal ridership, but budget cuts led to eliminating routes, and this led to declines in ridership.

[Why did mass transit fail in Carmel? - Current in Carmel](#)