



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **December 3, 2013**

**BridgeLink Initiative Focuses on New Bridge from Evansville to Henderson, Ky.**  
Evansville Courier & Press  
12/2/13

At a press conference on Oct. 14, Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke and Henderson (Ky.) Mayor Steve Austin announced the launch of BridgeLink, a nonprofit advocacy organization focused on building a new interstate bridge to link Indiana and Kentucky via Interstate 69. To date, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has completed three of six currently planned sections of I-69. Motorists can travel seamlessly from Evansville to Crane, Ind., and the completion of Section 4 — planned for late 2014 — will open the interstate for travel between Bloomington and Evansville. As Indiana builds new highways, and as Kentucky upgrades existing highways to Interstate standards, the urgent need for a new Ohio River bridge has come into focus. BridgeLink launched to promote the construction of a the new bridge, which will seamlessly connect I-69 in Indiana with I-69 in Kentucky, eventually leading to the creation of an international trade corridor connecting Canada, the United States and Mexico. A February 2012 report titled “U.S. Metro Economies: Exports in the Next Decade,” prepared for The United States Conference of Mayors and the Council on Metro Economies and the New American City, suggests that the Evansville regional community could see significant growth in exports over the next several years — reaching as much as \$5 billion in exported products by 2020. An easily navigable intermodal transportation system will be key to securing export growth for our region. As the Twin Bridges continue to age (the Northbound span was completed in 1932 and the Southbound span was completed in 1966), costly maintenance poses a significant threat to daily commuter traffic and commercial transportation. Neither bridge is built to current earthquake standards.

[BridgeLink Initiative Focuses on New Bridge from Evansville to Henderson, Ky. » Evansville Courier & Press](#)

**State Awards Road Contracts**  
Inside INdiana Business  
12/2/13

NOBLESVILLE, Ind. - The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is awarding two paving contracts for sections of state highways 32, 37 and 38 in Hamilton County. Calumet Civil Contractors will resurface more than two miles of State Road 32/38 between Hague Road and Union Chapel Road. The \$775,000 contract includes reconstructing the railroad crossing at the intersection of State Road 32/38 and Eighth Street, which requires closure of both roadways. The closure is anticipated to take place between March 29 and April 13, 2014, and exact dates will be announced in advance of the work. During the closure, state highway traffic will be detoured to U.S. 31, I-465, I-69 and State Road 37. Eighth Street will have a local detour that follows Cherry Street, Tenth Street and Logan Street. A separate contract calls for E & B Paving to resurface

more than four miles of State Road 37 between Allisonville Road and State Road 213. A work schedule for the \$840,000 contract is yet to be established. Both projects are expected to be complete by September 2014.

[State Awards Road Contracts - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

### **Illiana Expressway vote scheduled Tuesday**

NWI Times

Keith Benman

12/1/13

The first step in a two-step process toward approving the Illiana Expressway will take place Tuesday when a Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission committee votes on the controversial bi-state project. Anticipating a crowd, NIRPC's Transportation Policy Committee has moved its meeting from NIRPC headquarters to the Sycamore Room, Woodland Park, 2100 Willowcreek Road, Portage. The meeting starts at 9 a.m. The committee will be acting on a request from the Indiana Department of Transportation to approve including the Illiana Expressway in its 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan, which calls for reviving northern cities and creating livable communities throughout the region. Also included in the same vote will be an INDOT request to approve widening of Interstate 65. The committee's vote will be passed to the full NIRPC board as a recommendation. The full board is scheduled to take the decisive vote on the Illiana Expressway on Dec. 12. If the board votes against including the expressway in its 2040 plan, it would not be eligible for the needed federal approvals. The Illiana Expressway would run 47 miles from Interstate 65 just northeast of Lowell to Interstate 55, near Wilmington, Ill. Last week, the NIRPC staff issued a report which delivered a mixed verdict on the Illiana Expressway. The report found the expressway will have a positive impact on many of the 2040 plan's goals but could stymie some others.

[Illiana Expressway vote scheduled Tuesday](#)

### **I-69 extension 'dirt work' prepares ground for pavement in Crane-to-Bloomington section**

The Republic

Thomas B. Langhorne, Evansville Courier & Press

12/1/13

EVANSVILLE, Indiana — Work on the next phase of Interstate 69, a 27-mile stretch between Bloomington and Crane, Indiana, is in full swing — but that doesn't mean any asphalt is being laid. Instead, workers are doing "dirt work" — the kind of dirty work necessary when you build what the Indiana Department of Transportation calls a new-terrain interstate. "You're moving the dirt that's in its place and getting it to a specific elevation, so you may have to cut down hills or fill in valley areas," said INDOT spokeswoman Cher Elliott. "So that way, when they pour the concrete for the roadway, it is at a certain elevation. It's the moving of the dirt to smooth it out. We don't just plane it off. We have a lot of compacting work that has to take place so that (the dirt) is established and solid before we put the road on top of it. "We won't see actual mainline pavement being poured until sometime next year," she told the Evansville Couirer & Press. The second-term congressman holds out hope that he can get federal money for I-69 construction next year. "One thing that will be important is that, at the federal level we're going to be working on a new highway bill again, starting in January," Bucshon said. "Hopefully, we'll make sure we continue to secure Indiana's share of the federal highway money that some wish could be used for I-69." The projected cost of I-69's Crane-to-Bloomington section: \$470.5 million, which is to be paid in seven contracts to a prime contractor and subcontractors who perform such tasks as marking pavement, installing signs, doing grass seed and sod or paving.

[I-69 extension 'dirt work' prepares ground for pavement in Crane-to-Bloomington section \(12/1/13 4:28 pm\)](#)

## **Tax Break For Mass-Transit Commutes May Soon Be Slashed**

Northeast Indiana Public Media

David Welna

11/29/13

Unless Congress acts quickly, taking mass transit to work is about to get more expensive for some people. For the past four years, public transportation users and people who drive their cars to work and pay for parking have been able set aside up to \$245 a month in wages tax free if they're used for commuting costs or workplace parking. The transit tax break expires at the end of the year. So starting Jan. 1, the benefit for riders will be cut nearly in half — to \$130 a month. Drivers, on the other hand, will get a slightly bigger break as their parking benefit rises to \$250. "It doesn't make sense at all, the fact that you get a bigger tax break for driving your car than riding a train," says Dan Smith, who lobbies Congress on tax issues for the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. He says many commuters don't realize that the parity for transit and parking tax breaks vanishes in the new year. But they soon will. Oregon Rep. Earl Blumenauer, who rides his bike to work, is sounding the alarm. "We've heard lots of talk about fiscal cliffs, a dairy cliff, but at the end of the year, we are facing a transit commuter cliff," he says. Blumenauer has rounded up five House Republicans and 44 fellow Democrats to co-sponsor legislation that would keep the parking subsidy, which by law is automatically renewed, equal to the transit subsidy, which requires congressional approval every year: "You might tilt it the other way and provide greater benefit for people who are having less impact on the planet," he says. "But the fact is, this is embedded, ingrained and accepted, so we want to at least just have transit parity for the full range of commuter options."

[Tax Break For Mass-Transit Commutes May Soon Be Slashed | Northeast Indiana Public Radio](#)

## **State may front \$180 million for Illiana Expressway**

NWI Times

Keith Benman

11/29/13

The state of Indiana may pay upfront costs of as much as \$110 million for the Illiana Expressway's construction and may make payments of up to \$70 million to investors shortly after completion, according to a document provided to regional planners Tuesday. The Indiana Department of Transportation provided the document at the request of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, which must decide in upcoming votes if there is enough money available to pay for the road. The 12-mile Indiana portion of the Illiana Expressway has a \$300 million estimated cost. INDOT remains confident some of the \$300 million cost can be raised from private investors, according to the document. Both states also will make annual payments to investors in the road so those investors can recoup their costs as well as be paid for operating the road. The document did not specify how much those state payments to investors will be. But INDOT forecasts its own share of toll revenues by 2053 will be between \$800 million and \$1.3 billion. On the other side of the border, the Illinois Department of Transportation should be able to recoup between \$2.4 billion and \$3.8 billion. The INDOT document states the cumulative value of the toll collections will exceed the total cost of the availability of payments over the same 35-year period. That means there could be some revenue left over for the states.

[State may front \\$180 million for Illiana Expressway](#)

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