



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **January 21, 2016**

#### **Indiana House panel accepts road-funding bill with tax hike**

Indianapolis Star  
Brian Slodysko  
1/20/2016

A measure that would finance improvements to Indiana's crumbling infrastructure by raising cigarette and gasoline taxes was approved by a House transportation committee Wednesday, offering a long-term alternative to the governor's proposed short-term highway funding plan that does not call for more taxes. The measure by Rep. Ed Soliday, a Valparaiso Republican who chairs the House Roads and Transportation Committee, was approved on an 8-5 vote, with Democrats on the committee and one GOP member voting against it. Soliday said the plan, which is backed by House GOP leaders, offers a sustainable solution to a problem many states across the U.S. are grappling with — raising Indiana's cigarette tax by \$1 a pack while tacking 4 cents onto the state's 18 cents-a-gallon gas tax. It also would redirect a portion of the state's gasoline tax that lawmakers currently spend on other priorities to infrastructure projects. And it would give municipalities with a population greater than 20,000 the authority to raise their own vehicle registration taxes to help pay for local improvements. "What we're asking (for) is enough money in this bill ... to stop the decline of Indiana roads," Soliday said. He also contrasted his proposal with that of Gov. Mike Pence, which calls for a combination of borrowing and drawing down state budget reserves to pump about \$480 million into highway projects in 2017.

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/2016/01/20/house-panel-accepts-road-funding-bill-tax-increase/79096946/>

Also <http://www.theindychannel.com/news/local-news/transportation-plan-includes-increases-in-gas-cigarette-taxes>

#### **New Road Expected to Raise Economic Tide on Ohio River**

Inside Indiana Business  
Kylie Veleta  
1/20/2016

Transportation leaders say there's an "infrastructure bonanza" on the banks of the Ohio River in southeast Indiana—a project involving two bridges, one river port, a massive available industrial site and a specially-designed road that will connect the critical parts. State and local business partners recently broke ground on the first phase of a \$30 million project to build a heavy haul road connecting River Ridge Commerce Center in Jeffersonville to the Port of Indiana-Jeffersonville. On paper, the project may not look like much—simply a road—but local leaders say it's the key that will finally turn the ignition on two major economic engines. The initial phase of the heavy haul road—now underway—stretches from the new I-265 Interchange to Highway 62, running through the River Ridge Commerce Center. A second segment to be built later will connect the port to the same I-265 interchange. "The ability to link a leading inland waterway port

facility to a 6,000-acre commerce center is a significant opportunity that simply doesn't exist anywhere else," says Port of Indiana-Jeffersonville Director Scott Stewart. The port and River Ridge currently have no direct link; trucks must maneuver between the two using a state highway, then I-265 for a short period. While open to the public, the new road is designated a heavy haul corridor, because it will be an extra-wide, two-way direct connection designed to meet specifications for oversized loads, such as steel coils or other raw materials; of the 28 companies at the port, about half are involved in steel processing.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/31012420/new-road-expected-to-raise-economic-tide-on-ohio-river>

### **Bill to provide \$430M for local roads and bridges passes Senate**

WLFI, Channel 18  
Alexandra Kruczek  
1/19/2016

A bill authored by State Sen. Brandt Hershman that would immediately provide \$430 million to local governments for road and bridge improvements across Indiana passed the Senate Tuesday by a vote of 49-1. Senate Bill 67 would provide immediate access to the funds and require that 75 percent of the money be used for repairs or placed in a rainy day fund. The remaining 25 percent can be used as needed. Tippecanoe County could receive more than \$12 million of those funds to go towards immediate road and bridge repairs. Under current law, Hershman said the state distributes local income tax revenues to the appropriate local units of government after processing tax returns to determine how much funding each locality should receive. He said over time, excess balances in local governments' accounts have accumulated to a statewide average of 25 percent of annual receipts. This led Hershman to decide to make a one-time distribution of the current excess balance. The bill now moves to the full House for further consideration.

<http://wfi.com/2016/01/19/bill-to-provide-430m-for-local-roads-and-bridges-passes-senate/>

### **County bridge construction to close local roads for months**

Greenfield Daily Reporter  
Daniel Morgan  
1/19/2016

Work on two bridges that have fallen into disrepair will pose potential delays to drivers traveling through New Palestine and McCordsville this spring. Both structures have deteriorating steel elements, a common problem among bridges that are used regularly, said county highway engineer Gary Pool. A bridge on County Road 600S between county roads 400W and 300W will be rebuilt in New Palestine. Another bridge, along West County Road 600N between county roads 400W and 350W in McCordsville, also will be reconstructed. More than 1,200 drivers use the New Palestine bridge each day, while about 2,700 cars cross the McCordsville bridge daily, according to county traffic data. Crews are scheduled to begin work on both projects in March, Pool said; he expects both projects to wrap up in early September. Together, both projects are estimated to cost the county about \$1.1 million. That sum will be pulled from the county's bridge fund, which is collected from local property taxes.

[http://www.greenfieldreporter.com/view/local\\_story/County-bridge-construction-to-1453259154](http://www.greenfieldreporter.com/view/local_story/County-bridge-construction-to-1453259154)

### **Roundabout coming to busy intersection**

Franklin Daily Journal  
Corey Elliot  
1/19/2016

Every day, residents from three Greenwood subdivisions converge along Yorktown Road and sit at the stop sign, waiting for a break in traffic to turn onto Smith Valley Road. The city is planning

to build a roundabout at the intersection, with the goal of ending that daily routine of waiting and chancing an accident. Construction of the roundabout will begin in June 2017, with the roundabout likely opening in August of that year, city engineer Mark Richards said. The roundabout will take the same amount of time to construct as the new one at Averitt Road and Main Street, which was completed last summer, Richards said. The design and planning of the roundabout will cost about \$1.6 million and will be funded through a federal grant. The city of Greenwood will have to pay about \$320,000 for engineering costs and the land needed to build the roundabout, Richards said. Construction will cost about \$1.35 million, and 80 percent will be funded through a grant. The city will cover about \$270,000 of the construction costs, Richards said.

[http://www.dailyjournal.net/view/local\\_story/Roundabout-coming-to-busy-inte\\_1453249427](http://www.dailyjournal.net/view/local_story/Roundabout-coming-to-busy-inte_1453249427)

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