



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

January 26, 2016

House roads plan offers solutions

Palladium-Item

Tom Saunders, State Representative

1/26/2016

Last week, I was proud to vote in support of a bill aimed at improving our roads and bridges during its hearing in the Committee on Roads and Transportation. It is no secret that our local infrastructure in Henry County and the surrounding areas is in need of repair and improvement. I know as well as anybody in District 54 that I-70 and other roads that run through our region have a lot of room for improvement. We need to work toward a solution that is comprehensive, long-term and responsible, ensuring safe roads and bridges for generations of Hoosiers to come. Our plan does just that. House Bill (HB) 1001 provides dedicated funding mechanisms for future and existing road funding needs. It is a step in the right direction in making sure Indiana lives up to its reputation as the Crossroads of America. Unlike other short-term proposals, this bill provides for ongoing, sustainable funding to maintain our roads and bridges at the state and local level. I am pleased to join my colleagues who crafted this legislation, Reps. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso and Tim Brown, R-Crawfordsville, in delivering real infrastructure solutions.

<http://www.pal-item.com/story/opinion/contributors/2016/01/26/house-roads-plan-offers-solutions/79340814/>

County Road 250S project advances

Crawfordsville Journal Review

Bob Cox

1/26/2016

Montgomery County Commissioners received good news Monday when they opened the bids for the construction of the County Road 250 South extension project. The lowest of three bids, which was provided by Milestone Contractors of Lafayette, actually was \$30,000 less than the estimated cost. The project will extend the county road from U.S. 231 South to State Road 47 South. The ongoing project is a combined effort between the county, city, Indiana Department of Transportation and private citizens. The goal is to open the area for future business expansion and to make the intersection of C.R. 250S and State Road 47 safer. Milestone's bid was for \$1.197 million. The other bids were from J.S. McCollough of Bainbridge and Atlas Excavating of West Lafayette in the amounts of \$1.28 million and \$1.35 million, respectively. Commissioners took the bids under advisement. They expect to make a decision at the Feb. 8.

http://www.journalreview.com/news/article_7eb82a48-c3e2-11e5-ae70-fb3951729a3f.html

Indiana should find right route to pay for roads, bridges

South Bend Tribune

Morton Marcus, Economist/Opinion
1/26/2016

"How should we pay for our roads and bridges?" Eulala Effersen asked as we waited for our coffee to cool.

"Are you asking a theoretical or a practical question?" I said. "Is your emphasis the best way to balance who pays with who benefits? Or is your concern getting the Indiana General Assembly to come up with more money for roads and bridges?"

"Both," she said with a smile containing too many teeth.

"As far as practical politics goes," I replied, "Rep. Ed Soliday, of Valparaiso, has an interesting proposal. He says raise the existing per gallon gas tax, shift existing fuel sales tax revenues from the general fund to roads and bridges, and offset the loss to the general fund by raising the tax on cigarettes."

Eulala was making little steam engine sounds at her coffee. She gazed at me with her cold blue eyes and asked, "Will it be enough?"

"Oh, Rep. Soliday wants local governments to help close the gap by passing or increasing their vehicular taxes, often called wheel taxes," I said.

"Then it's going to cost Hoosiers more to operate cars and trucks," she declared. "That's makes workers less willing to travel long distances to work. Won't that force some employers to pay more to get the workers they want?"

"That causes prices to rise," she continued. "Higher taxes make store deliveries more expensive and then retailers will have to raise prices. All of this brings about inflation, drives jobs overseas, causes unemployment, and the evisceration of American society."

I laughed heartily. "I'm sorry to laugh at you, but you sound like those folks who never understood economics and pontificate about what politicians should do.

http://www.southbendtribune.com/news/business/indiana-should-find-right-route-to-pay-for-roads-bridges/article_6303bd90-5ed1-5f07-a903-131745d7d2f8.html

State Road 37 project on hold until the Hamilton County Council votes

FOX 59

Brian Bondus

1/25/2016

Elected officials from Fishers, Noblesville and Hamilton County met Monday evening to discuss the \$124 million improvement project planned for State Road 37 in Fishers. Governor Pence announced the project in December and the goal is to reduce traffic on SR 37 by creating similar roundabouts that are currently on Keystone Parkway in Carmel. However, some business owners located on SR 37 fear their company could suffer the same fate as some businesses in the Merchant Square area of Carmel, which located on Keystone and had several businesses, close down during construction. The Fisher's City Council approved the first phase of the project at its December 21st meeting. The first phase includes a \$12 million financial commitment for the City of Fishers as well as Hamilton County. The state would give \$100 million to the project as part of the agreement. That \$124 million would then go toward four large roundabout interchanges at 126th, 131st, 141st and 146th streets in Fishers. The Hamilton County Commissioners also approved the first phase of the project shortly before Monday's meeting, pending the Hamilton County Council's approval, which serves as the financial power of the county. Now, the project is on hold until the county council approves the agreement.

<http://fox59.com/2016/01/25/state-road-37-project-on-hold-until-the-hamilton-county-council-votes/>

INDOT To Replace State Road 356 Bridge Over Woods Fork Creek

WBIW 1340AM

1/25/2016

The Indiana Department of Transportation met with its contractor and utility company

representatives this week at INDOT Seymour District offices to schedule operations for replacing the State Road 356 bridge over Woods Fork Creek northeast of Lexington in Scott County. McAlister Excavating of Patriot is INDOT's prime contractor for this \$1,017,814 project to demolish the existing S.R. 356 bridge located 3.13 miles east of S.R. 203--and replace it with a new 105-foot single-span structure widened to 31.5 feet side-to-side. Construction of the composite pre-stressed concrete bulb-T beam bridge will require a 120-day closure of S.R. 356. Hardy Mill Road will also close to traffic at the construction site.

<http://www.wbiw.com/state/archive/2016/01/indot-to-replace-state-road-356-bridge-over-woods-fork-creek.php>

Goshen braces for 3 major construction projects in 2016

Elkhart Truth

Sharon Hernandez

1/24/2016

After years — and, in some cases, decades — of planning, three major construction projects are slated to get underway this year in Goshen. On the north side, the Indiana Department of Transportation will start work on the U.S. 33 Northern Connector, which will direct traffic around Goshen's downtown area. Mary Cripe, the city's civil engineer, said bids for the project will go out in March, with construction to start in April and continue into 2018. The city and INDOT have been working on a way to redirect traffic around the downtown area for a couple of decades, though a plan was formalized only in the last few years. While INDOT builds the new road, the city will reroute water mains on Logan and Monroe streets this year. The water mains need to be moved because they are near construction sites for the northern connector project. On Goshen's south side, the city has been working to move utilities for the construction of South Link Road. The new road is an extension of Waterford Mills Parkway, and it will connect traffic from U.S. 33 to S.R.15. It will include an overpass for traffic at the train tracks.

Construction for South Link Road will start in April and is expected to be complete by the end of the year.

<http://www.elkharttruth.com/hometown/goshen/2016/01/24/Goshen-braces-for-3-major-construction-projects-in-2016.html>

Local lawmakers ponder options for road funding

Anderson Herald Bulletin

Ken de la Bastide

1/23/2016

With streets, county roads and interstates throughout Indiana in need of an influx of cash, lawmakers are considering five different proposals for funding.

- Gov. Mike Pence: \$1 billion over four years through a \$240 million bond, \$150 million from Major Moves and \$241 million from local income tax reserves.
- House Democrats: \$2 billion over the first four years. Redistributes \$525 million per year from state gasoline tax revenues to roads.
- Senate Democrats: \$495 million over two years. Distributes \$245 million in local option income tax reserves and \$250 million from state surplus. Includes a local option gas tax of 2 cents per gallon.
- House Republicans: \$1.5 billion over two years. Would raise gas tax from 18 cents to 22 cents per gallon and increase cigarette tax by \$1 per pack.
- Senate Republicans: \$418 million for one year. Used local option income tax reserve for funding.

The Indiana Association of County Commissioners estimates the funding gap at \$1 billion annually just to maintain the existing road system.

http://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/local_news/local-lawmakers-ponder-options-for-road-funding/article_a9d6e9b2-9505-50c4-b415-7624f8896215.html

Road Funding Debate Puts Governor Against Fellow Republicans

WFYI

Drew Daudelin

1/22/2016

Gov. Mike Pence often trumpets that state roads are in better condition than most other places in the country. In reality the data is mixed. In 2010, the state received a C- grade on roads from the American Society of Civil Engineers. That's better than the national average – the group gave the United States a D grade for roads in 2013. But a recent study commissioned by state lawmakers puts Indiana's roads in the bottom third of the country. In the city of La Porte, Mayor Blair Milo doesn't see the quality of Indiana's roadways as something to brag about. Milo says for as long as she's been in office, road conditions have been a problem. "Any time we've been able to do any kind of pavement work over the last four years, it's been being able to cobble together some funds to be able to address pretty much dire needs," Milo says. Being just south of Lake Michigan, low temperatures and heavy snow during winter months don't bode well for the pavement in La Porte. And after years of being neglected, the roads are crumbling. "We had a number of years that no maintenance occurred," Milo says. "No paving, very little crack sealing even could go on, let alone the kind of reconstruction that really needs to happen on the bulk of our roads." It's a problem lawmakers have largely been punting on for years. They assigned some money in the 2013 budget for state and local road maintenance, but it only covered long overdue maintenance.

<https://www.wfyi.org/news/articles/road-funding-debate-puts-governor-against-republican-legislators>

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