



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **November 10, 2015**

#### **GUEST COMMENTARY: Dems offer plan as Indiana is at a crossroads**

NWI Times

State Rep. Scott Pelath

11/9/15

Indiana's infrastructure is at best unbecoming of the "Crossroads of America" distinction, and at worst dangerous. Either way, it is a millstone around our future economic prosperity. Over a thousand Indiana bridges are deemed "structurally deficient." Some local streets are as much pothole as pavement. The vital Cline Avenue Bridge in Northwest Indiana has been closed for years. Ind. 156 in Southern Indiana just slid into the Ohio River. This summer, our state's aorta — I-65 — was closed from Lebanon to Lafayette for more than a month. Trying to take shortcuts, the Pence administration just squandered \$71 million on slipshod asphalt that fell apart. Our infrastructure simply cannot be defended to businesses, commuters and anyone who looks out a car window. With 10 years passed and 65 more to go on the lease, it is time to pronounce Major Moves a shortsighted failure. Thus far, it has built half a road from Evansville to Indianapolis while other places are left to crack and sprout weeds. Except for some trust fund dollars, Major Moves is done until our grandkids are drawing Social Security. [GUEST COMMENTARY: Dems offer plan as Indiana is at a crossroads](#)

#### **Construction work on I-69 extension moving north from Bloomington, completion expected in 2016**

Greenfield Reporter

11/7/15

MARTINSVILLE, Indiana — Construction crews have continued inching northward in building the Interstate 69 extension stretch between Bloomington and Martinsville in central Indiana. Much of the work in the 21-mile section involves upgrades and repairs to the four-lane Indiana 37 roadway that the I-69 route is following between the two cities. "Because it's an existing road that's being upgraded, some of the existing pavement, the existing bridges are being rehabilitated or resurfaced as the road is converted to Interstate 69," he said. "In addition, the developer's building access roads and rehabbing bridges, building new bridges and doing the work that's needed to take a four-lane road with traffic signals and convert it to an interstate." The first half of the Evansville-to-Indianapolis I-69 extension opened in 2012, and runs for 67 miles from near Evansville at Interstate 64 to near the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center southwest of Bloomington. The state highway department expects to open a 27-mile section north from Crane into Bloomington late this year. [Construction work on I-69 extension moving north from Bloomington, completion expected in 2016](#)

#### **House votes to keep highway funding level**

Indiana Gazette  
Joan Lowy, Associated Press  
11/6/15

WASHINGTON — Despite years of warnings that the nation's roads, bridges and transit systems are falling apart and will bring nightmarish congestion, the House on Thursday passed a six-year transportation bill that maintains the spending status quo. The bill, approved on a vote of 363-64, authorizes \$325 billion in spending through the 2021 federal budget year. But it provides money for only the first three years because lawmakers couldn't agree on a way to pay for it all. The measure would continue current rates of spending, adjusted for inflation. At least \$400 billion over six years is needed to prevent traffic congestion from getting worse, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx has said. The bill is similar to a transportation bill passed by the Senate in July. Congressional leaders say they hope to quickly work out the differences between the two measures and send President Barack Obama a final bill before Thanksgiving. They also said they hope to find the money to pay for the last three years of the bill, but offered no details on how that might happen. Most lawmakers lauded the bill as a major accomplishment because it would assure states and localities that they can count on federal highway and transit aid for at least three years. It's hard to plan major construction projects when availability of federal aid is in doubt. Since 2008, Congress has kept the federal Highway Trust Fund teetering on the edge of bankruptcy, unwilling to raise the federal 18.4 cents-a-gallon gasoline and 24.4-cent diesel taxes. The fuel taxes, the trust fund's main source of revenue, were last raised in 1993. Transportation aid has continued through dozens of short-term extensions and transfers of money from the general treasury to make up the gap between revenues and spending. [House votes to keep highway funding level - - November 06, 2015](#)

#### **NWI likely won't win Regional Cities funds**

NWI Times  
Dan Carden  
11/5/15

INDIANAPOLIS | Northwest Indiana likely will not receive Regional Cities funds from the state to help pay for double-tracking of the South Shore commuter rail line between Gary and Michigan City. On Thursday, members of the Regional Cities Strategic Review Committee identified the South Bend, Fort Wayne and Evansville regions as probable recipients of the \$84 million set aside this year by the Republican-controlled General Assembly to promote quality-of-place and prevent population stagnation. The panel is set to finalize its recommendation for two regional winners Dec. 15. That decision must then be ratified by the directors of the state's commerce agency, known as the Indiana Economic Development Corp., which is led by Republican Gov. Mike Pence. John Thompson, chairman of the review committee, insisted all seven regional submissions still are under active consideration, but even he posited the north central, northeast and southwest regions offer the most viable development plans. According to multiple committee members, the primary drawback of Northwest Indiana's vision to add rail capacity — and better connect Region residents to high-paying Chicago jobs — is the need to procure additional federal funds before work can begin. "I think it should happen up in Northwest Indiana, but I'm not sure that we can bank on the federal government providing that funding," said committee member Mitch Roob, a former Chesterton resident and former Indiana commerce secretary. [NWI likely won't win Regional Cities funds : Politics](#)

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