



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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County gets \$1.5M for Oaktown bridge project

Vincennes Sun-Commercial
Jess Cohen
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The Indiana Department of Transportation announced Monday that Knox County will receive a hefty sum to help replace a troublesome bridge. Indiana's first county applied in June for \$1.52 million to be designated for the replacement of a bridge a few miles outside of Oaktown, and the full amount of that funding request was awarded. Bridge No. 382 is located on old U.S. 41 north, Knox County Highway Department superintendent Donnie Mize said, and is in dire need of repairs. The most recent inspection on the bridge, which has a 5-ton load limit, resulted in a rating of 3 out of 10. If the bridge had been rated at a 2, a mandatory closure would have gone into effect, Mize said. "It's an old concrete bridge that goes over the CSX Railroad tracks," he said. "It will be totally demolished and we'll put a new bridge in." In all, INDOT handed out nearly \$80 million in federal transportation funding to 64 cities, towns and counties in rural areas for infrastructure improvements. District 3 commissioner Kellie Streeter, who was chosen just a couple weeks ago by local Republican Party leaders to fill the seat on the Knox County Commission left open following Rowe Sargent's death, noted that there's a significant amount of traffic that travels across the bridge and with it being located above the railroad tracks, it was targeted as a high need to fix sooner rather than later.

http://www.suncommercial.com/news/article_f7cb201c-89c5-11e6-9337-5bfb461b138d.html

Rural Communities Score Federal Funding

Inside INdiana Business
Alex Brown
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More than 60 cities, towns and counties have been awarded much-needed resources for infrastructure improvements. The Indiana Department of Transportation has announced recipients of nearly \$80 million in federal funding for local road and bridge work, along with sidewalk and trail projects. INDOT says the communities will design, develop and purchase land for various projects that would be bid during the fiscal year beginning in July of 2020. The department says each community must pay at least 20 percent in local matching funds to be eligible to receive the federal funding. "Over the last decade, Indiana has demonstrated a commitment to investing in infrastructure that is nearly unmatched," said Lieutenant Governor Eric Holcomb. "Modern roads and bridges keep commerce moving at the speed of the 21st-century economy and sidewalks and trails help create the sense of place that sparks vibrant communities which attract businesses and talent to the Hoosier state." INDOT Commissioner Brandye Hendrickson announced the availability of federal funding for rural projects earlier this

year. It was then that the department announced it had set aside about \$5 million for sidewalk improvements as part of the "Common Paths" initiative. INDOT is also investing \$2.5 million annually to improve crosswalk and other sidewalk projects along state highways.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/33303505/rural-communities-score-federal-funding>

Raising state's gasoline tax among transportation task force's ideas

Indiana Economic Digest

Niki Kelly, Journal Gazette

10/3/16

INDIANAPOLIS – The pot of money for Indiana roads and bridges has grown from \$1.5 billion in 2001 to \$2 billion in 2015, a key infrastructure task force heard Thursday. The problem is the money hasn't kept pace with inflation – meaning it doesn't buy as much asphalt as it used to. The Legislative Services Agency also said Indiana had the second-lowest annual spending per capita spending on transportation projections of the neighboring states between 2012 and 2015. The task force of legislators and stakeholders is charged with honing a long-term funding proposal for state highways and bridges. But on its third meeting there were still no forthright discussions on the solutions. Co-chair Rep. Tim Brown, R-Crawfordsville, at least mentioned the possibility of a "revenue-raising proposal" – increasing the state gas tax that hasn't been raised in more than a decade. "Fair enough. Someone has to say it eventually," said co-chair Sen. Luke Kenley, R-Noblesville. But Kenley said the committee is trying to juggle the upcoming election and "it's a little hazy in our minds" how to get to a final report with specific recommendations for the 2017 General Assembly. Thursday's presentation included information on all revenue sources for roads –local, state and federal. The primary sources are state and federal fuel taxes, BMV fees and local wheel taxes.

<http://indianaeconomicdigest.com/Main.asp?SectionID=31&SubSectionID=135&ArticleID=85463>

Despite report, Indiana's roads, bridges in good shape

Indianapolis Star

Michael B. Cline

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It's become a habit of journalists and commentators in our state to give the impression that Indiana's infrastructure is a crumbling mess of D+-rated roads and bridges. And yet, a recent analysis by CNBC ranked our infrastructure as No. 1 in the country. What gives? Let's begin with the source of the oft-cited D+ ranking: the American Society of Civil Engineers. As a college student, I was a member of ASCE, and I respect and agree with its mission. Yet, despite the organization's noble and trust-inducing name, ASCE is still an interest group that advocates for thousands of professionals who frequently have a financial interest in exaggerating the nation's infrastructure deficit. When it comes to the ranking, ASCE is neither a neutral nor uninterested party of citizen analysts, and has admitted as much by stating that the goal of the report card is "stoking public concern ... to stimulate policy responses." Second, ASCE never gave Indiana's roads and bridges a grade of D+, as is often implied. Rather, that's the grade this group gave the state's entire infrastructure system, which also includes dams, wastewater, aviation, rail and drinking water. Note that the entire country also received a D+, so if ASCE is to be believed, Indiana's infrastructure is no better and no worse than the rest of the country. On the narrower question of roads and bridges, ASCE gave Indiana a C- for roads and a C+ for bridges, which is higher than the national average for roads and equal for bridges.

<http://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/readers/2016/10/01/despite-report-indianas-roads-bridges-good-shape/91420616/>

Indiana likely to settle on road funding plan after elections

NWI Times

Dan Carden
9/29/16

INDIANAPOLIS — A legislative study committee tasked with determining how Indiana should meet its infrastructure needs in coming decades is moving closer to developing its recommendations. The Funding Indiana's Roads for a Stronger Safer Tomorrow (FIRSST) Task Force got an overview Thursday of the complex revenue inputs and spending outputs that comprise the state's current road funding matrix. Overall, the panel learned that the resources available for state and local road and bridge construction and maintenance have failed to keep up with inflation, making the buying power of current revenue about 7 percent less than what the state spent in 2001. State Rep. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso, leader of the House Roads and Transportation Committee, said as the task force begins deciding how to remedy that shortfall it first should figure out what kind of transportation availability and quality Hoosiers want and is best for the state's economy. "There's some number associated with that, and then the discussion of how we get to that number seems like a path worthy of consideration," Soliday said. The co-chairman, state Sen. Luke Kenley, R-Noblesville, said the task force likely will meet a final time after the Nov. 8 elections to settle on a road funding plan for the General Assembly to consider incorporating in next year's budget.

http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/indiana-likely-to-settle-on-road-funding-plan-after-elections/article_00ea550f-1989-5075-af95-26f7e658ae17.html

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