



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

November 28, 2017

New Road signal gets green light

Greenfield Daily Reporter

Evan Meyers

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A traffic signal near a busy shopping center should be up and running by June 1. City officials recently hired a contractor to construct a stop light at New Road and Barrett Drive, a project they hope alleviates traffic near the Walmart shopping center. E&B Paving Inc. of Anderson will complete the work for about \$300,000. Barrett Drive comprises a small stretch of road that runs north and south, giving drivers on New Road access to Greenfield Corner — the shopping center that houses Home Depot and the former Gander Mountain building — to the north and Walmart to the south. Residents should be prepared for some construction delays in late winter, but most of the road work will be done during the springtime, said Greenfield city engineer Jason Koch. He expects labor on the project to start in April. In addition to erecting a traffic signal, plans also include the installation of a center median to prevent drivers from turning left onto New Road from Melody Lane. The barrier will extend from Barrett Drive to State Road 9, Koch said. Drivers leaving the complex that houses Starbucks and Qdoba will also be restricted from turning left, or south. The area sees as many as 14,000 vehicles a day, according to traffic counts from the Indiana Department of Transportation, and local law enforcement officers respond to about 10 accidents there a year. Many result from a driver failing to yield to an oncoming vehicle, officials say. The project is designed to funnel traffic to a safer, more controlled intersection, Koch said. <http://www.greenfieldreporter.com/2017/11/28/57416/>

Fort Wayne Journal Gazette

JG Letters

11/27/2017

Safeguards assure truckers pay fair share for roads

I would like to correct a statement included in "The toll of driving" (Nov. 12). The "Targeting trucks" section states that if truckers on Interstate 70 aren't stopping to buy fuel in Indiana, they aren't contributing to construction or upkeep costs of the roads they are using – and that provides a "convincing" case to place a toll on heavy trucks. That's not accurate. The International Registration Plan and the International Fuel Tax Agreement are both responsible for collecting revenue for our state based on the distance each vehicle travels in Indiana, even when the vehicle is not registered here and even when drivers do not buy fuel here. Cars and trucks are not taxed the same. If a truck registered in Arizona goes from Phoenix to Boston, each state in which the truck travels along the route will receive fuel taxes and registration fees at the respective state's tax rate. The amount owed each state is apportioned according to miles driven in each state. So, unlike cars, commercial trucks cannot game the system and avoid state fuel tax by fueling up in one state and driving across another. The article mentioned the July 1 10-cents-a-gallon increase in the gasoline tax but did not mention that there was also a 20-cents-per-gallon

increase in the diesel fuel tax. Both are indexed to inflation, which means the fuel tax will remain a viable source of revenue for highways for years to come. In addition, House Enrolled Act 1002 included a 25 percent increase in registration fees for trucks. The trucking industry supported both increases as fair, efficient ways to generate additional revenue to support our roads and bridges. As the article stated, technology is forcing us to focus on the future of transportation and the best ways to pay for it. The trucking industry clearly understands that, and we agree that, there's no free ride. When you see those truck drivers rolling along, hauling nearly everything Americans want and need, you can rest assured they are paying their way.

Gary Langston

Indianapolis

<http://www.journalgazette.net/opinion/letters/20171127/letters>

McDaniel Road bridge repair on track

Terre Haute Tribune Star

Howard Greninger

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Work continues on the replacement of a retaining wall under the bridge spanning a railroad track at the McDaniel Road exit of the 641 bypass, with completion still estimated by the end of the year. The bypass exit was first closed in December 2016, preventing traffic from using the north exit for McDaniel Road. Traffic also cannot go over the McDaniel Road bridge south of Springhill Drive. The closure was caused by the collapse of a mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) wall. Its replacement, weather permitting, remains on schedule for completion by the end of the year, an official with the Indiana Department of Transportation said Monday. Debbie Calder, INDOT spokeswoman, said the contractor, Walsh Construction Co., "is nearing the completion of the wall installation." However, after the wall installation is completed, work must be completed on a "sub-grade", bridge approach pavement, barrier wall transitions, surface drainage, guardrail and seeding. Estimated opening date is still the end of the year," Calder said.

http://www.tribstar.com/news/local_news/mcdaniel-road-bridge-repair-on-track/article_c4f48b61-c335-5c91-aab0-5cb1c98b54be.html

I-65 construction to end next week after two years

Jeffersonville News and Tribune

Elizabeth Beilman

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Next week, drivers will notice lanes opening up on Interstate 65 after two years of construction. New lanes on the east side of I-65 between mile markers 8 and 11.2 will open overnight Tuesday. Currently, northbound traffic is routed to the southbound side of the interstate. The switch will result in two lanes of traffic in each direction, marking the return to normal flow since construction began last spring. Later that week, or possibly early the next, the two inside lanes will open once median guardrails are installed. It'll be the first time drivers will travel on six lanes on this section of I-65, between Sellersburg and just north of Memphis Road. "It's going to be open interstate," said Indiana Department of Transportation spokesman Harry Maginity. "Six lanes, which means there's more capacity for the highway. It's going to be 12-foot lanes with very generous shoulders, so I think we set a new standard for safety and for traffic flow. "This capacity's going to be wonderful. This is taking us on into the next 25, 30 years." The \$67 million I-65 widening project was part of former Gov. Mike Pence's Major Moves 2020 program, which sought to expand heavily traveled interstates reaching 50 years of age. The project included the addition of one new lane in each direction, as well as the widening and reconstruction of eight interstate bridges, or four in both directions. Construction began in April 2016.

http://www.newsandtribune.com/news/i--construction-to-end-next-week-after-two-years/article_30cc5caa-d150-11e7-81f4-6380644fa64b.html

State looks down the road at autonomous vehicles

Indianapolis Business Journal

Susan Orr
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Self-driving cars may be years from reality for the average driver, but state officials want to act now to try to ensure Indiana is part of researching and developing the technology. Gov. Eric Holcomb will ask lawmakers in 2018 to authorize the testing and operation of autonomous vehicles on Indiana roads. The issue is at the top of his legislative agenda. Holcomb said it's part of preparing for "the next generation—or really the next evolution—of transportation." Chris Kiefer, chief of staff at the Indiana Department of Transportation, said the preparation needs to happen now. "This is the future," Kiefer said. "This technology is eventually going to be deployed." And Indiana is already behind. Nevada was the first state to authorize the operation of autonomous vehicles. That law passed in June 2011. Since then, 20 other states plus the District of Columbia have passed some sort of legislation pertaining to autonomous vehicles—most encouraging research and development, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Governors in five other states have issued executive orders related to autonomous vehicles. But state Rep. Ed Soliday, who will introduce an autonomous-vehicle bill in 2018, said it's no problem that Indiana is just now considering legislation about the issue. "This is a conservative state," Soliday said. "Running out and just passing some stuff when we didn't even know what it should look like" would be unwise. The bill, in part, would create a four- to five-member task force that would consider autonomous-vehicle testing requests. Anyone who wants to test fully autonomous vehicles on public roads would have to obtain the task force's approval. The rule would not apply to activities at test facilities. INDOT officials are also thinking ahead about the state's infrastructure. The Legislature earlier this year approved a long-term road-funding plan that will generate more than \$1.2 billion in new revenue for state and local projects by 2024 alone. As the state uses that money to improve roads and bridges, Kiefer said, it can also install features necessary for autonomous vehicles. For instance, having highly reflective lane markings and signs might be important so autonomous-vehicle sensors can detect them and maintain proper position. But, Kiefer acknowledged, it's not yet clear whether that's how autonomous vehicles will work. So it's too early to say that INDOT will—or won't—install certain features along Indiana highways.

<https://www.ibj.com/articles/66403-state-looks-down-the-road-at-autonomous-vehicles>

States delay plan to freeze vehicle registrations for RiverLink toll violators

WDRB.com
Marcus Green
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Kentucky and Indiana officials have delayed a plan to keep drivers with unpaid RiverLink toll bills from renewing their vehicle registrations. The states had hoped to start the crackdown in October, using one of the strongest measures allowed to recoup delinquent tolls on three Ohio River bridges between Louisville and Clark County, Ind. But that didn't happen. Since the states announced they would begin freezing registrations, RiverLink customer service representatives have been flooded with calls, said Mindy Peterson, spokeswoman for the cashless toll network. The average number of daily calls to RiverLink's Austin, Texas-based call center has increased to about 3,200, up from 1,300 before the plan was made public in early October, she said. Drivers' registrations won't be affected "as long as we have that sort of volume of folks reaching out," she said Tuesday. Legislatures in both states passed laws that forbid drivers with unpaid tolls from renewing their registrations until they pay their bills. Those facing the holds are people who have ignored four invoices and been warned by mail.

<http://www.wdrb.com/story/36906257/states-delay-plan-to-freeze-vehicle-registrations-for-riverlink-toll-violators> ; Also

<http://www.whas11.com/news/traffic/s-indiana-i-65-widening-project-coming-to-an-end/495009545>

www.buildindianacouncil.org