



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **May 23, 2017**

#### **City to apply for second roads grant**

Journal Review

Nick Hedrick

5/23/17

Crawfordsville plans to apply for a second round of funding through a state road and bridge matching grant, but won't have to invest as much for its portion this year. The Community Crossings Local Road and Bridge Matching Grant Fund invests hundreds of millions of dollars each year into new state and local infrastructure projects. This is the second year money has been available to cities, towns and counties from the Indiana Department of Transportation. Last year, Crawfordsville received more than \$687,000 for multiple street milling and repaving projects. Work is set to begin this summer, including removing old railroad ties on West Main Street from Grant Avenue to Barr Street. The city has until July 14 to apply for the next cycle of funds, and will know by late August if the request is granted. A list of projects is being finalized, Mayor Todd Barton said. Changes in the program ease the matching requirement for small cities like Crawfordsville. Communities with less than 50,000 population now only have to match a quarter of the total construction cost, instead of half. The changes were part of a new legislation signed into law last month. "I think this is a great move on the part of the legislature," Barton said. All projects must be shovel-ready before INDOT will consider funding. Local governments must prove a project has been bid out or they have signed a contract with a material vendor before money is awarded. [http://www.journalreview.com/news/article\\_8fdd64e0-3f4d-11e7-b9b7-1faf62ff036a.html](http://www.journalreview.com/news/article_8fdd64e0-3f4d-11e7-b9b7-1faf62ff036a.html)

#### **City and county facing different matches for road building**

Washington Times Herald

Mike Grant

5/19/17

When the Indiana General Assembly passed the road funding bill this spring it made some changes to the matching amounts cities and counties would pay on projects under the Community Crossroads grant program. The original program called for local government to put up a 50 percent match, but some changes were made this spring lowering the required matching funds for less populated areas. "It's really good for rural counties," said Senator Eric Bassler of Washington. "We wanted to help the smaller ones and we defined small counties as those with populations under 50,000 and small communities as those under 10,000." "We're excited about the whole thing," said Daviess County Highway Superintendent Phil Cornelius. "Our population is under 50,000 and that means our matching money has dropped to 25 percent from 50 percent." The change though will not help the city of Washington. With a population of 14,000 Washington will remain among those communities paying the 50-50 match. "We don't get the break the county does," said Mayor Joe Wellman. "It's no worse than it was before. I don't think there are a

lot of counties like ours where the city is considered too large to get the matching break. I think it would be better if they just did it on the county level. It is still a good program and I'm not going to lose any sleep over it." Bassler says the size of community to get a break on matching funds was one of the items debated in committee. "There were some who thought it should be set at 20,000, and others argued it should be smaller," he said. "They settled on 10,000. You have to draw a line somewhere." [http://www.washtimesherald.com/news/local\\_news/city-and-county-facing-different-matches-for-road-building/article\\_5724e827-437e-5c12-955d-ad23ccac2108.html](http://www.washtimesherald.com/news/local_news/city-and-county-facing-different-matches-for-road-building/article_5724e827-437e-5c12-955d-ad23ccac2108.html)

### **We must invest in infrastructure**

Indianapolis Recorder

Andre Carson

5/18/17

Indiana is the Crossroads of America. Our roads, highways, bridges and public transit are the backbone of our economy, impacting how we get to work and school, how much our homes are worth, and how much groceries cost at the store. The availability and quality of transportation infrastructure determines where companies locate and where jobs are created. Yet, despite its critical importance to our lives and our economy, we have allowed our nation's infrastructure to fall into a state of disrepair. Today, we spend less on infrastructure as a percentage of GDP than at any time in the past twenty years, and the results are plain to see. Every day, Americans get stuck in traffic jams, drive on potholed roads, or face unacceptably long waits for public transportation. Meanwhile, local governments are stuck finding a way to pay for expensive modernization that becomes more costly every day that deterioration continues. In Washington, I am working hard to ensure that your tax dollars come back to Indianapolis to help pay for our most important projects. Most recently, Congress agreed to provide \$50 million dollars to Indianapolis to improve and expand our public transit system. The money will go to build the nation's first battery-powered bus rapid transit system extending from Fountain Square to Broad Ripple. More than 54,000 residents, 144,000 jobs, three universities, and 6,000 households below the poverty line will be within walking distance of the Red Line. The Red Line will transform communities by improving mobility and access to jobs, education and other important opportunities for thousands of people. It will be the foundation of a growing transit system, which will serve an increasing number of Hoosiers as time goes on. This project is an important tool in the effort to ensure that hard working Hoosiers are offered a chance to succeed. [http://www.indianapolisrecorder.com/opinion/article\\_e68ebfbc-3bd5-11e7-b291-b3da55e43d9a.html](http://www.indianapolisrecorder.com/opinion/article_e68ebfbc-3bd5-11e7-b291-b3da55e43d9a.html)

### **Industry Heads Talk Problems, Solutions For Ailing Infrastructure**

WBOI

Annie Ropeik

5/18/17

A who's-who of Midwest business leaders met in Indianapolis Thursday to talk about their stake in fixing updating the nation's aging transportation system. Many say Indiana's plans for road repairs should stand as a national, multi-modal example. Ports of Indiana CEO Rich Cooper, who helped host the roundtable discussion, says the state and national economies rely on more than ships and barges. Changes at one part of the system, he says, have huge ripple effects on the rest. "Ports are nothing more than transportation exchange points. We're handing off from the rail to water, from the highway to truck, from the truck back onto the water," Cooper says. "And I think speaking as one voice collectively with all these modes can help give it some balance." Cooper and his counterparts in other industries and transportation sectors say Indiana's new road funding package is a model solution, with its earmarked tax hikes and local input. Indiana Chamber of Commerce President Kevin Brinegar says that model's value includes the public outreach it involved. Upgrading the nation's infrastructure, he says, "is going to require investments at significant levels higher than are occurring today, and just like we did in Indiana, we need to make

the case to the public why this was needed." <http://wboi.org/post/industry-heads-talk-problems-solutions-ailing-infrastructure#stream/0>

### **NIRPC signs off on \$1.6 billion in transportation projects**

Post-Tribune

Tim Zorn

5/18/17

Northwest Indiana's network of roads and rails stands to get its largest-ever boost in the coming four years, with nearly \$1.6 billion in planned local road, highway and rail improvements. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission approved that list of projects Thursday in its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the 2018-21 fiscal years. "This is a historic day," Kevin Breitzke, Porter County Surveyor, said after the vote. "The benefits far outweigh the expenditure." As the transportation planning organization for Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties, NIRPC assembles and analyzes projects that use federal transportation dollars matched with local funding. The list for the coming four years includes \$1.156 billion in transit projects - largely, the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District's West Lake extension from Hammond to Dyer and its double-track expansion from Gary to Michigan City. Also, the Indiana Department of Transportation plans to spend \$278 million on state highways in the region, such as widening Interstate 65 from Merrillville to Lowell. Local roads and streets on the list total \$144, million. Large projects include construction of a 45th Street underpass at Calumet Avenue in Munster, widening 45th Avenue in unincorporated Lake County, extending Kennedy Avenue in Schererville, widening Chicago Avenue in Hammond, reconstructing part of Ridge Road in Gary, reconstructing parts of Central Avenue and Samuelson Road in Portage, and building a roundabout at Silhavy Road and LaPorte Avenue in Valparaiso. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/post-tribune/news/ct-ptb-nirpc-projects-st-0519-20170518-story.html>

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