



## **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

### **Infrastructure Media Summary**

**February 5, 2013**

**INDOT: Section of I-69 has sunk because of underground mine | GALLERY**  
Evansville Courier & Press  
1/31/13

INDIANAPOLIS —A portion of the newly-opened Interstate 69 extension that was built on top of a mine in Pike County has sunk several inches. The 250-foot section, made of dark asphalt designed to be more flexible than concrete, is part of the lead-up to the Patoka River Bridge. It will be fixed in the coming months, said Indiana Department of Transportation spokesman Will Wingfield. “Even though I-69 is now open to traffic, construction is not completed. INDOT’s maintenance and construction personnel that have been monitoring this, and the settlement is not an issue that requires an immediate response,” Wingfield said. “INDOT will work with its contractors to make repairs as part of the normal process in inspecting and closing out a construction contract. This could be as simple as sealing the pavement and adding additional asphalt where needed.” Transportation officials for years expected some settling to occur at portions of the highway built atop old mining areas in Gibson and Pike counties. [INDOT: Section of I-69 has sunk because of underground mine | GALLERY » Evansville Courier & Press](#)

**Indiana Governor Mike Pence tours site for eastern bridge**  
The Courier-Journal  
2/1/13

Indiana Gov. Mike Pence toured the site where a new Ohio River bridge will make landfall in Utica, Ind., as part of a visit to the area Friday. Pence told reporters later that he believes the bridges project will be key to economic development in the region, but he offered few specifics when asked about the effects of tolls on drivers and businesses. Pence, who succeeded Mitch Daniels as governor last month, touted the quality of Indiana’s workforce and its location while insisting that “roads mean jobs.” “You can have the best location in the world and if you can’t get from A to B, that’s not going to create an environment that attracts investment and ways that’ll create jobs for today and for tomorrow,” he said, speaking at the Port of Indiana office in Jeffersonville. Indiana and Kentucky officials have yet to assign toll rates for drivers crossing the eastern bridge, a new span at downtown Louisville and the adjacent Interstate 65 Kennedy Bridge. Indiana is in charge of the eastern span, with Kentucky overseeing the downtown work. [Indiana Governor Mike Pence tours site for eastern bridge | The Courier-Journal | courier-journal.com](#)

**So. Ind. sees road re-routing plans**  
WTHI  
2/1/13

WASHINGTON, IND. (WTHI) - A southern Indiana community took a first look at plans to re-route a major roadway. State transportation officials unveiled a \$2.7 million change in the route of Business 50 on the east side of Washington. The project is going to be about more than re-routing traffic. The state has finished work on I-69 on Washington's east side. The interstate may be substantially done, but that doesn't mean the road construction is over. "We're not finished yet," said Washington Mayor Joe Wellman. "INDOT is, the Indiana Department of Transportation is looking at a new intersection of Business 50 and the By-Pass and that's going to be the next construction that people see." Preliminary plans unveiled on Thursday call for moving the city's first exit about 300 yards to the west, upgrading the by-pass intersection by adding a stop light and a lot more. "It's going to be more than just a road," said Wellman. "One of the things that when I was involved in some of the early discussions with INDOT: we want it to be nice. We want it to have sidewalks. We want to have a nice berm and curb, some grassy areas so it will be a real nice entry to the city." Officials say the project is going to do more than re-route traffic. It's going to give the community a new gateway. It's also going to require drivers to learn something new. [So. Ind. sees road re-routing plans | WTHITV.com Washington, Indiana](#)

### **Ethicists question secrecy in I-69 land sales**

Indianapolis Star

2/4/13

State officials can't tell you why they paid the family of a powerful Indiana Department of Transportation chief more than \$1.8 million for land on the I-69 project. They know, but it's a secret. Unlike some other states, Indiana permanently prohibits the disclosure of the appraisal, offer and settlement documents used in land purchases for highways. So it's nearly impossible to tell whether corruption, favoritism or overspending occurred as the state paid \$162 million to buy right of way for the I-69 extension across Southern Indiana. Some -- including the INDOT official whose cousins and uncle received payments -- say there are good reasons to keep such records private. They include protecting the privacy of the often-unwilling sellers who face the threat of eminent domain if they don't sell to the government. But a growing number of ethics and good-government advocates say it's time for a change. Especially because more I-69 land acquisitions lie ahead. State Sen. Brent Waltz, R-Greenwood, says he is considering amending a transparency bill he introduced last month to include language that would open real-estate acquisition records after the sales have been finalized. So far, his bill has stalled in the Republican-controlled Senate's Public Policy Committee. "It's the sort of thing we definitely need to review and look at it and make sure that Indiana's actions are beyond reproach," he said. [Ethicists question secrecy in I-69 land sales | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#) Also, [Dan Carpenter: I-69 land deal raises...](#)

### **Indiana looks for local, rural road funding boost**

Land Line Magazine

2/4/13

Multiple efforts underway at the Indiana statehouse would provide a boost for local and rural road funding. State lawmakers are scouring for funding sources as Indiana's "Major Moves" initiative comes to an end. State officials say that something must be done because money remaining from then-Gov. Mitch Daniels' \$3.85 billion lease of the Indiana Toll Road is mostly spent or due to be spent for specific projects. As a result, Indiana must again rely on the state's 18-cent-per-gallon fuel tax to address a \$200 million budget shortfall for state roads. Gov. Mike Pence's recommended budget for the upcoming year addresses the problem. It focuses on providing additional funding for transportation. Specifically, the governor's proposal targets about \$350 million in excess reserves during the next two years and would put that money in Indiana's roads and infrastructure. The governor's administration describes it as "a key component in growing Indiana's transportation and logistics networks." However, leading lawmakers have voiced concern about the proposal to use one-time, surplus revenue to fund road repairs and

construction. They say the quick fix poses long-term issues. In response, lawmakers have introduced several dozen bills that address aspects of state and local transportation funding. The House Ways and Means Committee recently took up for consideration multiple bills that would raise more than \$400 million annually for roads. [Indiana looks for local, rural road funding boost: Land Line Magazine](#)

### **Giving local governments the power of the purse**

News-Sentinel

2/5/13

The Indiana General Assembly has previously flatly refused a request from Marion and Hamilton counties for a mass-transit tax referendum. But the mood seems to have changed this year. A bill allowing the referendum passed the House Roads and Transportation Committee 11-1 last week. There is still a long way to go – it must also get through the House Ways and Means Committee, and there is likely to be more opposition in the Senate – but there is at least a chance a bill will hit the governor's desk this year. The question of the hour is: If a bill does make it to Gov. Mike Pence, will he sign it? He has, after all, signed Americans for Tax Reform's Grover Norquist's "no new taxes" pledge, and this could end up raising \$1.3 billion more in central Indiana. He certainly should sign it. Yes, it could lead to a local income tax hike of 0.3 percent to expand bus and rail service to give the greater Indianapolis area a "world-class transit system." A recent poll showed a majority in the affected area would approve the tax, and 7,800 people have signed petitions encouraging lawmakers to allow the referendum. But there doesn't have to be a tax increase. The bill would merely let the voters who would be affected by the tax increase and would benefit from the improvement project decide for themselves. That's something the state should do more of – let cities and counties have more authority to decide their own fates and more power to determine how projects they think they need are paid for. The point isn't whether central Indiana needs an improved transit system but whether its citizens get to decide if they do. Almost every local government in Indiana has a project or two they need more home rule over. But giving in to home rule has been a hit-or-miss affair, and the state is especially reluctant to give up control of the purse strings. But that is precisely the control that is most needed. So, yes, the governor should sign. It is not breaking a no-tax pledge to give Hoosiers more power to decide their own fates. [Giving local governments the power of the purse - News-Sentinel.com](#)

### **Mass transit in Indy would be a win for DePauw**

The DePauw

2/5/13

Last Wednesday, the Indiana State House of Representatives Roads and Transportation Committee approved House Bill 1011, which calls for a total revamp of bus routes and the implementation of a light rail system between the city and its northern suburbs. A tax hike of about 0.3% on Marion and Hamilton counties is proposed to cover these much-needed infrastructure modifications. If Indiana Representatives in the House Ways and Means committee continue to move the bill forward, the issue will be left up to voters in a 2014 referendum. As an Indiana resident, I hope the bill passes. And as a DePauw student, I really hope it passes. Mass transit in Indy would mean big things for the University, even if the proposed system doesn't stretch all the way to Greencastle. Despite being the 12th largest city in the U.S., urban sprawl in Indianapolis leads it to feel smaller and more disjointed than other large cities. Public transportation would help to concentrate the metropolis and unify its bedroom communities. This concentration would bring Indianapolis up to par with other major metropolitan areas and continue to propel its rapid growth. And if last year's surge-free hosting of Super Bowl XLVI was any indication, Indy undoubtedly has the capacity to become a world-class economic and cultural hub. [Mass transit in Indy would be a win for DePauw - Opinion - The DePauw](#)

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[www.buildindianacouncil.org](http://www.buildindianacouncil.org)