



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

March 19, 2013

Indiana raises \$702 million to build eastern bridge

The Courier-Journal

3/14/13

Indiana sold bonds Wednesday to pay for a bridge connecting Utica, Ind., and Prospect, Ky. — the state's share of the Ohio River Bridges Project. The \$677 million bond issue was higher than an anticipated sale of \$641 million because interest rates increased since the initial offering statement, said Kendra York, Indiana's finance director. She said the bonds were sold at a premium — "a financing mechanism that generates cash up front" — and results in total proceeds of more than \$702 million for the eastern span. That money will help cover the \$763 million construction cost, according to bond documents. WVB East End Partners, a 24-member group of companies chosen by Indiana to finance, build, operate and maintain the bridge, will contribute nearly \$82 million toward construction. "We are extremely pleased with the pricing" of the bonds, York said. "We had incredible investor interest which is attributable, I believe, to the strength of the WVB team and the creditworthiness of the state of Indiana." Fitch Ratings and Standard & Poor's both gave the debt a 'BBB' rating. Those are investment-grade ratings, but both agencies note that the ability to repay debt could be hampered by difficult economic conditions. The total debt, including principal and interest, on the bonds is \$1.48 billion through 2051. That compares with earlier estimates of \$1.44 billion. [Indiana raises \\$702 million to build eastern bridge | The Courier-Journal | courier-journal.com](http://www.courier-journal.com)

Illiana Expressway in hunt for private investors

NWI Times

3/14/13

Illiana Expressway planners have an aggressive schedule for bringing in private investors to build the road, releasing a timeline Thursday calling for a public-private partnership deal to be signed by the end of 2014. That is even before all land acquisitions would be completed for the almost 60-mile toll road stretching from Interstate 65 in Indiana to Interstate 55 in Illinois. The route chosen by planners for the Illiana Expressway starts at I-65 just south of 153rd Avenue and runs between Lowell and Cedar Lake before heading almost directly west to Wilmington, Ill., where it would join I-55. Local officials at the meeting Thursday at the Will County Fair Atrium also received updates on north-south roads slated for closure if the Illiana Expressway is built. Following a February meeting with emergency responders, police and Lake County officials, several roads slated for closure are now on the "open" list planners are putting together. Under the version released at Thursday's meeting, Cline Avenue, Holtz Road, and Mississippi Street will remain open. The three had been slated for closure. State Line Road, Parrish Avenue, Morris and Mount streets also remain open. "What you have seen from then until now is major changes in Indiana," Schilke said. "That's what this process is all about." There also will be changes in the 2,000-foot wide corridor that now makes up the expressway route as it is narrowed to a 400-foot

corridor, Schilke said. A public meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 16 in Indiana to give people updates on the road. Two days later, a similar meeting is tentatively planned for Illinois. The exact time and place is yet to be determined. [Illiana Expressway in hunt for private investors](#)

Indiana Senate to review Indy-area transit expansion

The Indianapolis Star

3/15/13

The Indiana Senate next week will begin to consider legislation to improve mass transit in Central Indiana. The Senate Local Government Committee will hear House Bill 1011 at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday in Room 130 at the Statehouse. The committee will allow 30 minutes of testimony for the legislation and 30 minutes of testimony in opposition. Chairman Randy Head, R-Logansport, said he hasn't heard much opposition to this point. His committee will examine the legislation from a public policy standpoint, and then send it to the Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee to look at the financial impact. If both committees approve the bill, it would go to the full Senate for a vote. Transit advocates already are gearing up their campaign in support of the legislation. Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry and representatives from two community organizations will hold a press conference in support at 1 p.m. Monday at 251 E. Ohio St. Mayor Greg Ballard, along with an assortment of elected officials from the city and suburbs, and community organizations, already have been pushing for the legislation to pass. The bill would allow 10 counties in the metro area to hold a referendum to let voters decide whether they want to pay up to a 0.3 percent local income tax to fund the local share of the transit expansion. Hamilton and Marion counties would hold referendums in 2014, and the other counties could opt in then or over time. [Indiana Senate to review Indy-area transit expansion | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

Major paving project on tap for U.S. 30 in Merrillville

NWI Times

3/16/13

MERRILLVILLE | A safety improvement project along U.S. 30 is expected to resume in coming days, and it isn't the only roadwork planned along that busy stretch of highway. Merrillville Public Works Director Bruce Spires said workers have started mobilizing to complete the extension and enhancement of frontage roads between McKinley Street and the traffic signal in front of Meijer. Town Councilman Tom Goralczyk said work on the frontage roads, which are on the north and south sides of U.S. 30, is expected to begin next week. The project should be done by the end of May, he said. But the big project starts April 1, when the Indiana Department of Transportation plans to pave U.S. 30 from Taft Street to Grand Boulevard, said Matt Deitchley, media relations director for INDOT's LaPorte District. That project should be finished in early September, he said. Although the two projects have similar construction areas, Spires doesn't anticipate major traffic problems on U.S. 30 while they are completed. He said work for the two projects have been scheduled to occur at different times each day. Paving on U.S. 30 is expected to take place between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m., Spires said. "Lane restrictions will be in place during those overnight hours of work, but all lanes should be back open by morning and throughout the day," Deitchley said of INDOT's paving project. Frontage road work will take place after paving stops and lanes are open again on U.S. 30, Spires said. Merrillville Police Chief Joseph Petruch said he does not anticipate any traffic snarl with the construction. "We should be OK," he said. "It shouldn't cause any additional traffic problems." The frontage road construction initially was scheduled for completion last year, but the project was unexpectedly delayed after it was determined multiple utility lines had to be relocated. [Major paving project on tap for U.S. 30 in Merrillville : Merrillville](#)

Prosecutor Terry Curry endorses mass transit expansion

The Indianapolis Star

3/18/13

Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry today announced he supports an expansion of mass transit in Central Indiana. "The Marion County Prosecutor's Office fully supports the need for a functional urban transit system, not just for the economic development benefits but also for tangible public safety benefits as well," Curry told reporters at a news conference. The Indiana Senate Local Government Committee will consider legislation to expand transit at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday in Statehouse Room 130. Transit advocates have proposed a referendum to allow residents to vote on a 10-year, \$1.3 billion expansion. Curry said witnesses, victims and others need better access to the prosecutor's office and a better bus system would help. In 2012, he said, his office handled more than 50,000 criminal cases in which those involved had to travel for case-related appearances. He said it's common for his staff to pick up and transport people to his offices. "An improved transit system," he said, "would allow those witness, victims and related individuals to have better access to the Marion County Prosecutor's office and thus serve our criminal justice system." He also believes transit can deter criminal activity by reducing household expenses, and by providing transportation to community services, jobs and re-entry programs. James Taylor, chief executive of the John H. Boner Community Center, and Kas Vargo, board president of the Binford Redevelopment and Growth community group, endorsed the transit proposal alongside Curry. They pointed to the prospects for community and economic development offered by an enhanced transit system. [Prosecutor Terry Curry endorses mass transit expansion | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#) Also, [Backers of mass transit in Central Indiana say it will improve public safety | Fox 59 News – fox59.com](#)

Changes expected in mass transit bill

WISH-TV
3/18/13

INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) - The mass transit bill backed by Mayor Greg Ballard will get a public hearing in a state Senate committee later this week and big changes are likely to be made. Supporters of the mass transit proposal picked up a new ally as Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced his belief that it would benefit public safety, if for no other reason, because victims and witnesses will be able to get to his office more easily. "It is a very, very common occurrence that individuals are unable to make the connections to get downtown," he said. Senate co-sponsor Jim Merritt, meanwhile, tempers his prediction that the bill will pass the Senate by acknowledging that plans for a light rail line from Indianapolis to Hamilton County are in jeopardy. He says the Senate must answer one question: "Will this just be for the bussing in Indianapolis or is it for all mass transit like it is now?" And another Senator, Luke Kenley, has taken his name off the bill that calls for a referendum on transit needs that could lead to an increase in local option income taxes. "I have a surprisingly large number of constituents who are strongly opposed to this," says Sen. Kenley (R-Noblesville.) "They just feel like it's going to be a tax increase on them without any particular benefit." Some of the benefits, supporters say, may not be apparent. "We are concerned about how people will move about when gas prices are \$4 or \$5," said Kas Vargo of Binford Redevelopment and Growth. But they still have a sales job to complete. [Changes expected in mass transit bill](#)

Kenley drops out as sponsor of mass-transit bill

Indianapolis Business Journal
3/19/13

Already skeptical of a mass-transit plan for the Indianapolis metro area, influential Sen. Luke Kenley has dropped his sponsorship of a related bill that's due for its first Senate hearing Wednesday. Kenley, R-Noblesville, said he decided it was inappropriate to be listed as a sponsor without giving the bill his unqualified support. "I've never been too persuaded by the need for this," he said Tuesday morning. House Bill 1011 would allow Marion and surrounding counties to hold an advisory referendum on whether to raise local income taxes to help pay for a new transit

system. The current 10-year plan calls for doubling bus service and adding rapid transit from Noblesville to downtown, as well as along other routes. The proposal calls for adding a 0.3-percent income tax to the existing tax of 1 percent in Hamilton County and 1.62 percent in Marion County. If the bill passes this year, Marion and Hamilton counties could put the question on ballots in the 2014 general election. The Senate's local government committee is scheduled to hear the bill at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday. The debate is to center on "policy issues only," according to a note on the committee calendar, adding, "Tax and fiscal issues to be discussed in another committee if bill passed." Ron Gifford, executive director of Indy Connect Now, the group promoting the transit plan, declined to comment on Kenley's position, since he hadn't spoken with the senator himself. Based on conversations with members of the local government committee, Gifford said the bill should survive the Wednesday hearing. "I'm not aware of any significant opposition at this point," he said. Earlier this month, Kenley told IBJ that he had doubts about transit promoters' financing plan, but he was willing to give local government the opportunity to put the question to voters. [Kenley drops out as sponsor of mass-transit bill | 2013-03-19 | Indianapolis Business Journal | IBJ.com](#)

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