



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

May 14, 2013

INDOT provides 'blueprint' of plans for next few years

NWI Times

5/9/13

LAPORTE | Residents of Northwest Indiana interested in upcoming transportation plans in the region were invited Thursday to an open house hosted by the LaPorte District of the Indiana Department of Transportation. Available for interested parties were documents and information on projects using federal funds between 2014 and 2017. Projects from each of the 13 counties represented by the LaPorte INDOT district were available on site and are also online at www.in.gov/indot. "What we're ultimately doing here is providing a blueprint of what we're planning for the several years down the road," INDOT LaPorte District spokesman Matt Deitchley said. Deitchley said it was a chance for people to ask questions about projects that "aren't set in stone." Jeanette Wilson, INDOT specialist, said preliminary engineering for some projects could have started as early as 2012 with a wrap-up of the right of way in 2013. Those projects might not be constructed until 2015, she said. Among those attending the informal gathering was Kerry Dubyel, of Highland-based American Structurepoint, which is a consultant for INDOT. Dubyel is a project engineer on INDOT projects who said public involvement is important to her because she's about to start the five-points roundabout project in Valparaiso. [INDOT provides 'blueprint' of plans for next few years](#)

New Harmony Bridge back in the news

Carmi Times

5/10/13

The New Harmony Bridge has been closed almost one year and buzz is still surrounding the structure. The bridge was recently listed among the 10 most endangered landmarks in Indiana by Indiana Landmarks. According to a recent article in the Evansville Courier Press, Jim Clark, the chairman of the three-member White County Bridge Commission that owns the bridge, hopes the bridge could be replaced. Clark feels there are too many safety concerns for the current bridge and feels strongly that it will not reopen to traffic. As a member of the White County Bridge Commission, Clark has spent many hours with engineers and has exhausted all avenues in keeping the structure available to traffic of any kind. "I have sighted safety concerns, the same opinion that was expressed last September at a town hall meeting in New Harmony," said Clark, who has been on the commission since 1994. "I have spent numerous hours with engineers as they went over all aspects of the bridge. In the last deal, I was there for 82 hours of inspection. At one time, nine engineers were there from Indiana, Illinois and the Federal level. The bridge is just not safe to reopen," Clark noted. At the September meeting, which included some very influential people from both Indiana and Illinois as well as at a national level, he made a motion to completely turn the bridge over to the states and the Federal government and totally eliminate the White County Bridge Commission. However, the motion died from lack of a second from the other

two commissioners. Clark realizes the impact it has had on local business and wishes he had better news, but expresses, "I know where we are at, and I told the townspeople that I was going to say things they didn't like, but I was speaking from my heart. Safety comes first." [New Harmony Bridge back in the news - News - The Carmi Times - Carmi, IL](#)

Erika D. Smith: New plan for expanding transit in Central Indiana crosses line into micro-management

Indianapolis Star

5/10/13

It has been a month since the Indiana Senate decided to send a bill to expand mass transit in Marion and Hamilton counties to a summer study committee. It has been a quiet month. But in that time, many people have asked: What exactly are they going to "study," given that Hoosiers have been studying how transit could work here for the past 30 years? Late last week, I got the first inkling of an answer -- and it's not good. You see, Sen. Brent Waltz, R-Greenwood, has come up with a transit plan of his own. Or as he prefers to call it, "a comprehensive, multidimensional transportation solution." (Try saying that five times fast.) Here's what he wants to do: First up is fixing the weekday traffic congestion in northern Marion County and southern Hamilton County. To do this, he suggests building two or three "commuter corridors." What's a commuter corridor? I'm glad you asked. Think about Binford Boulevard with its two lanes of fast-moving traffic on each side of a wide, grassy median. Now imagine the median is a bus rapid transit line. Now imagine Binford with three to four lanes of traffic on each side, plus a bus rapid transit line in the middle. Now imagine if that souped-up Binford was College Avenue or Capitol Avenue or Michigan Road, running from the heart of Downtown Indianapolis up into Hamilton County. This, Waltz says, will convince car-loving suburbanites to fund transit. It's a "value proposition." [Erika D. Smith: New plan for expanding transit in Central Indiana crosses line into micro-management | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

Testimony split over wheel tax reinstatement

The Herald Bulletin

5/13/13

ANDERSON, Ind. — Critics of reinstating the excise tax surcharge and wheel tax Monday night characterized it as burdensome and implored the Madison County Council to live within the fiscal constraints of this year's budget. Supporters of the fees, which are usually lumped together and simply called the wheel tax, say they're necessary to make sure roads are adequately paved to support business and economic development, self-sufficiency and emergency services. Public testimony on the plan went back and forth like that for a good two hours Monday as the County Council heard public testimony about the tax. A vote on the measure could come at the regular County Council meeting on May 20. Alexandria resident Danny Hayes said low wage workers in Madison county can't afford to pay the tax, and several people testified that large percentages of students in both Elwood and Anderson are eligible for reduced cost school lunches, which means many families already face daily financial hardships. "People in this county making \$10 an hour cannot afford this," Hayes said. "We've got to get business back in this town," countered Micah Mitchell, who supports the wheel tax. "If we don't take care of our infrastructure, who's going to?" [Testimony split over wheel tax reinstatement » Local Business » The Herald Bulletin](#)