



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

May 22, 2012

Toll Road, 6 years later

The Journal Gazette

5/17/12

Six years after state lawmakers approved Gov. Mitch Daniels' controversial plan to privatize the Indiana Toll Road through a long-term lease, both advocates and opponents can find evidence to support the views they expressed in 2006. Proceeds from the lease have unquestionably improved the state's highways. By the end of this year, the state will have added 375 miles of new roads, improved pavement on more than 5,000 miles and replaced or rehabilitated more than 700 bridges. Two key Major Moves projects, financed largely by the lease, directly aid economic development efforts for the Fort Wayne area. The last segment of the Hoosier Heartland Corridor – offering a four-lane highway from Fort Wayne to Lafayette – will be completed. Indiana will also complete its part of the Fort to Port project – offering four lanes from Fort Wayne to Toledo. And the lease injected hundreds of millions of dollars into the economy at a time when Hoosiers really needed it. Highway and bridge projects have employed hundreds of laborers, providing evidence that the labor interests who broke with Democrats and supported the lease were correct about creating jobs. [Toll Road, 6 years later | The Journal Gazette](#)

Mass transit on a smaller scale: New bus service in Lawrence

Indianapolis Star

5/17/12

Plans for regional mass transit remain on the drawing board -- but a new, privately run bus service soon will begin in the city of Lawrence. Private investors are working with the Northeast side city of 45,000 to launch the service, which will begin with a few routes on local thoroughfares with plans to grow during the summer. It will augment the two IndyGo bus routes that currently run through Lawrence. A group led by Lawrence couple Cliff and Paula Redden funded the Lawrence Transit System. They estimate startup costs at \$600,000 and their annual budget around \$950,000. They say Lawrence needs public transportation for residents to get to jobs, local businesses and medical facilities. A kickoff celebration for the new service is 1 to 3 p.m. May 19 at Wal-Mart, 10735 Pendleton Pike, Indianapolis. Organizers expect ridership to start at 300 to 500 riders per day and hit 1,000 riders within three to six months.

[Mass transit on a smaller scale: New bus service in Lawrence | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

Hammond mayor has questions about Cline upgrade money

NWI Times

5/17/12

PORTAGE | Indiana Department of Transportation District Director Bob Alderman congratulated

East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland for his role in securing a new Cline Avenue toll bridge, but another local mayor wants to know what happened to the \$75 million or so that was slated for upgrades to the bridge before it was closed down. Alderman told McDermott during the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission executive board meeting Thursday that it's a decision "above my level." He said those kind of funds move around to other projects and that was once a priority in 2006 might not be in 2012. "You're not getting shorted," he said. Because the new bridge will be built with private funds and "we'll be paying tolls on it for the rest of our lives," Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. would like to see the upgrade money stay in the region, particularly for the roads in his city, Gary and East Chicago that have been damaged after being used as alternate routes after the bridge closed. NIRPC also sent a letter Thursday to the Lake County Council asking it to fund regional public transportation. [Hammond mayor has questions about Cline upgrade money : The Times of Northwest Indiana](#)

Start of \$12.1 million road project will close Vann Road at Indiana 261

Evansville Courier & Press

5/18/12

NEWBURGH —The start of a \$12.1 million road project in Warrick County, Ind., will close Vann Road at Indiana 261 beginning Wednesday, according to a news release issued Friday morning. Indiana Department of Transportation officials said the closure, just south of Castle High School, will last through mid-June "for reconstruction to accommodate the additional lanes of traffic and realignment of the intersection." The project includes upgrading Indiana 261 from three to five lanes (two lanes in each direction with a center turn lane) from Indiana 66 to Fuquay Road. From Fuquay, the roadway will be upgraded to three lanes (one lane in each direction with a center turn lane) to Old Plank Road. The roadway will then continue north as two lanes to Jenner Road and will have a dedicated turn lane into the Lake Ridge Subdivision with improved shoulders. The work also includes realignment of the Fuquay intersection with Indiana 261, sight-distance improvements and a new stop light at the intersection of Indiana 261 and Peachwood Drive. The overall completion date for the project is April 2014. [Start of \\$12.1 million road project will close Vann Road at Indiana 261 » Evansville Courier & Press](#) Also, [INDOT beginning widening of Indiana...](#)

New Albany City Council defeats bridges resolution

News and Tribune

5/18/12

NEW ALBANY — In 2010, the New Albany City Council became the first municipal body in Southern Indiana to pass a resolution opposing tolls as they pertain to the Ohio River Bridges Project. On Thursday, they again broke the mold, but this time the group became the first Southern Indiana municipal council to defeat a nonbinding measure that called for construction of a downtown bridge to be delayed and that a tolling proposal to fund the project be denied by the Federal Highway Administration. The resolution, offered by Councilman John Gonder, was defeated 5-4 with those opposing it questioning whether a municipal body should be considering such a measure as well as citing concerns that the project could be further delayed. "This project has been delayed for 40 years," said Councilman Bob Caesar, who voted against the resolution though he added he "hates" the idea that tolls will be used to pay for the project, which as currently designed, calls for the addition of east-end and downtown bridges, as well as the reconfiguration of Spaghetti Junction. But Gonder said residents, especially those from Southern Indiana, will be struck the hardest by an inflated project cost of \$2.6 billion that relies on tolling. [New Albany City Council defeats bridges resolution » Recent Local News » News and Tribune](#)

New Harmony bridge to close permanently | POLL

Evansville Courier & Press

5/20/12

NEW HARMONY, Ind. —In an emergency meeting Sunday night, White County Bridge Commission members voted to close the aging span at noon May 29 — the day after Memorial Day. Commission member Jim Clark said the closure is in response to the results of an April 29 inspection of the bridge by nine engineers. Sunday night's meeting was attended by members Jim Clark and David Rice. Spud Egbert was not able to attend. "They found problems with the crossbeams that connect with the outside girders," Clark said. "They have deteriorated more than we thought." The inspection was carried out by four engineers from the Indiana Department of Transportation, one from the Illinois DOT, two federal inspectors and two engineers from the bridge commission. The engineers began their inspection on the approach to the bridge from the Indiana side. The "arms-length" inspection was carried out from a bucket truck. Inspectors used chipping hammers to remove rust and corrosion to inspect the steel beams. "There are problems all along the bridge," Clark said. "Overall, the cost to make repairs was more than we could imagine." [New Harmony bridge to close permanently | POLL » Evansville Courier & Press](#)

For Whom the Road Tolls

Indiana Barrister

5/21/22

I have always maintained that in politics if you stick around long enough, you will eventually see everything. Already, my Democratic friends are lamenting that money from the lease of the Indiana Toll Road is about to expire. And because there are still 69 years left on the lease they say that this clearly demonstrates the lease was shortsighted and bad public policy. My how things gets curiouiser and curiouiser. Please note while the Democrats opposed the Toll Road lease, they had no problem trying to divert the money from state road projects into education, Medicaid and whatever else they could get their hands on. Ironically, they even supported efforts to block the deal from going through back in 2006 via a lawsuit. Luckily no one had the more than billion dollars on hand to post the bond that would have been necessary to stop the deal. I bring this up, because a couple things have been forgotten in all this. First, the money from the lease of the toll road was never intended to be a long-term fix to Indiana's transportation issues. It was to help shore up a backlog of road projects. [For Whom the Road Tolls | Indiana Barrister](#)

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