



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **October 30, 2012**

#### **OPINION: Indiana roads and the gasoline tax**

Indiana Economic Digest  
10/25/12

There's been concern in Indiana about paying for road maintenance and construction. Candidates and legislators are looking for new sources of revenue. Maybe you wonder: What about the "good old" gasoline tax? It's the biggest of the motor fuel taxes, and those taxes have always paid for Indiana's state and local road spending. The good old gasoline tax just isn't what it used to be, because people aren't buying as much gasoline as they used to. We can estimate the number of gallons of gasoline sold in Indiana just by dividing gasoline tax revenue by the tax rate. In fiscal year 2011, the state collected \$543 million from the gas tax at 18 cents a gallon. That's just over 3 billion gallons of gasoline. That's a lot of gallons, but sales in 2007 were 3.2 billion gallons. Sales dropped 5 percent in four years. The recession started at the end of 2007, and recessions always reduce gasoline sales. People lose their jobs and must economize on driving. Business travel falls off. But expansions come after recessions, and expansions usually increase gasoline sales. In the expansion of the 1980s, gallons increased from 2.3 billion in 1982 to 2.7 billion in 1990. In the expansion of the 1990s, gallons increased from 2.6 billion in 1992 to 3.3 billion in 2001. But during the 2000s, gasoline sales didn't grow. They decreased a little, from 3.3 billion gallons to 3.2 billion. During the 2000s, Indiana population grew and road maintenance costs grew, but gasoline tax revenue fell. As they say on Mythbusters, "Well, there's your problem." Why aren't people buying gasoline? Here are three reasons: [OPINION: Indiana roads and the gasoline tax - Indiana Economic Digest - Indiana](#)

#### **Authority to Consider Bridges Agreement**

Inside INdiana Business  
10/26/12

Indianapolis, Ind. -- The East End Crossing of the Louisville-Southern Indiana Ohio River Bridges Project took another major step forward today. The Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) announces it received the final Technical and Financial Proposals from all four short-listed contracting teams. "The four teams of local, national and international firms invested millions of dollars over the past few months developing proposals that are hundreds of pages in length," said Indiana Public Finance Director Kendra York. "Over the next few weeks, the Indiana Finance Authority will carefully evaluate each proposal with the assistance of the Indiana Department of Transportation. I'm confident that the winning proposal will include innovative design and financing ideas that will save money and speed the construction of this vital project." Under Interlocal Cooperation and Bi-State Development agreements, Indiana is responsible for completing design, overseeing construction and securing financing for the East End Crossing. The East End Bridge and approaches will complete an interstate loop around Louisville by connecting the Gene Snyder Freeway (Ky. 841) with the Lee Hamilton Highway (Ind. 265). Kentucky is responsible for the Downtown Crossing portion of the Bridges project, which will build a new I-65 northbound bridge

and reconfigure nearby interchanges in downtown Louisville and Jeffersonville, Ind. Indiana plans to build the estimated \$1.3 billion East End Crossing as a public-private partnership. Indiana and Kentucky will evenly divide toll revenues from project bridges, and Indiana's share will repay the contracting team's costs during a period of 35 years following construction. [Authority to Consider Bridges Agreement - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

### **Does expensive project need extravagant dedication?**

News-Sentinel

10/27/12

The most expensive local road project in years will open next week, but at least one of the invited dignitaries thinks the ceremony should be a little less extravagant. "I don't want to sound petty, but in the private sector personnel who have that much free time on their hands get sent home," Allen County Councilman Paul Moss said, referring to the planned parade of public-safety vehicles from eight agencies that will greet the completion of the extension of Maplecrest Road from Lake Avenue south across the Maumee River to Indiana 930 -- vehicles and personnel Moss said could be better utilized elsewhere. At a cost of more than \$31 million, the project is expected to create a north-south thoroughfare on Fort Wayne's east side that will improve traffic flow and increase economic activity. Under construction for more than two years and planned for decades before that, the project will also improve public safety by allowing emergency vehicles to bypass busy railroad tracks near New Haven. As such, some officials say the participation of vehicles from the State Police; Allen County, Fort Wayne and New Haven police; Fort Wayne and New Haven fire departments; and Fort Wayne and New Haven ambulance services is appropriate -- especially since the city, county and New Haven all participated in the 1.5-mile project. "But it seems excessive to me," Moss said, noting that County Council recently completed budget hearings that included Sheriff Ken Fries' appeal for more funds. "Just cut the ribbon and be done." The ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. Tuesday. After the ribbon is cut, employees of Do it Best -- a hardware wholesaler whose headquarters is nearby -- will release balloons and a Norfolk Southern train will blow its whistle, followed by the parade. Various local, state, federal and Do it Best officials will speak. The public is invited, and free trolley rides will be available to tour the entire stretch of Maplecrest after the ribbon-cutting. Members of the public should park on the Nelson Road on-ramp, because access will not be allowed from Indiana 930. [Does expensive project need extravagant dedication? - News-Sentinel.com](#)

### **EDITORIAL: Pence the best choice to continue the work started by Daniels**

Evansville Courier & Press

10/28/12

However, we recall that when Republican Daniels finally won control of state government from Democrats, he took on a state that was deep in debt and suffering an economic malaise. Those were depressing times in Indiana. Indeed, Pence points out that when Democrats handed over the keys to state government, Indiana was \$840 million in debt. Daniels moved quickly, instituting tough -- and unpopular -- spending measures that eliminated the deficit in relatively short order. And when he leaves office in a few months, Daniels will hand off a healthy surplus to the next governor. And just to put an exclamation point on it, Daniels pushed through his \$3.8 billion Major Moves highway initiative which is now allowing Indiana to build Interstate-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis, as well as other major infrastructure projects. Former Indiana Gov. Frank O'Bannon who was governor when Gregg was speaker did a wonderful job of advancing planning for I-69 and choosing the direct route. However, had Democrats remained in control of Indiana, we trust that Major Moves never would have been conceived and I-69 would still be a line on a map. As it is, the highway between Evansville and Crane will be completed by the end of this year and will go on to Bloomington sometime in 2014. It will be up to the next governor to see the highway is funded and completed to Indianapolis. We trust that Pence is the gubernatorial candidate most likely to complete that important task. [EDITORIAL: Pence the best choice to](#)

[continue the work started by Daniels » Evansville Courier & Press](#)

### **Super loads lead to bridge closures**

News and Tribune

10/19/12

NEW ALBANY — The Sherman Minton Bridge has been closed often in recent months to make way for trucks carrying large beams and machinery needed to build bridges and windmills in other parts of the state. “Anything that comes over like that with excessive height or weight has to be escorted,” said Indiana State Police Sgt. Jerry Goodin. The Sherman Minton is closed so that there’s no additional weight on the bridge when the super loads are coming across, Goodin continued. Typically the closures last up to 30 minutes. Traffic is blocked before the bridge in both directions when the equipment and beams are being transferred across the Sherman Minton. Depending on the destination, the super loads are then routed to either Interstate 265, or they continue up Interstate 64. Goodin said much of the cargo is headed farther north for windmill projects. “If that slows down, everything will get back to normal,” he said. But there’s not a definite end date for the bridge closures to end as a result of the super load traffic. Indiana Department of Transportation spokesman Will Wingfield added some of the beams are being used for the Interstate 69 extension project, which will connect Evansville to Indianapolis. [Super loads lead to bridge closures » Recent Local News » News and Tribune](#)

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