



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

November 13, 2012

Injunction filed to stop bridges project fails

News and Tribune

11/8/12

SOUTHERN INDIANA — A preliminary injunction designed to halt the construction of the Ohio River Bridges Project was denied Wednesday. Coalition for the Advancement of Reasonable Transportation Inc. — or CART — filed a motion for preliminary injunction to stop preparatory site work ongoing to construct an east-end bridge, downtown bridge and reconstruct Spaghetti Junction. The motion was denied by U.S. District Court Western District of Kentucky Judge John G. Heyburn. CART had moved for a preliminary injunction to keep the Federal Highway Administration and the respective states' transportation organizations from starting on "preconstruction activities." The injunction was filed after Indiana Department of Transportation had issued a notice for construction — clearing trees and land to prepare for road construction — along the east end corridor, according to the opinion filed Wednesday. It also explained that due to seasonal restrictions, tree clearing could only take place between dates in August and March. INDOT Spokesman Will Wingfield said the plan is still for site clearing to begin in January. He added that both of the contracts to clear the paths for the Indiana and Kentucky approaches to the east-end bridge were awarded Wednesday. [Injunction filed to stop bridges project fails » Clark County » News and Tribune](#)

StarWatch investigation: State paid twice what some I-69 land was worth

Indianapolis Star

11/10/12

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. -- In 2006, Barry Elkins paid \$850,000 for about 200 acres in Monroe County owned by former Indiana University basketball coach Bob Knight. Elkins told a local newspaper he had no plans to develop the land. He said he also was quite aware state officials planned to acquire at least some of the property for the new I-69 freeway project. Nonetheless, Elkins told a reporter: "It's a heck of a piece of ground." Turns out, it produced a heck of a profit, too. In July, state highway officials paid Elkins \$2.41 million for an easement covering 140 of the 200 acres. That's almost four times the \$658,800 that state appraisers said the easement was worth. An Indianapolis Star investigation reveals Elkins, who also sold two other properties to the state, was not alone in collecting payouts significantly above the appraised value for land in the I-69 corridor, raising questions about whether the state overspent in its rush to build the road. Confidential settlement documents obtained by The Star detail the appraised values and the state's final offers for the Elkins properties, as well as 31 others in Greene, Pike and Daviess counties. They reveal INDOT offered \$7 million for real estate appraised at \$3.34 million -- more than double the fair market value of those parcels. [StarWatch investigation: State paid twice what some I-69 land was worth | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

'Fort to Port' U.S. 24 project set to open

The News-Sentinel

11/13/12

After more than two decades of planning and construction, the U.S. 24 "Fort to Port" highway project is a reality, creating a safer – and more business-friendly – expressway between Fort Wayne and Toledo. Gov. Mitch Daniels will join public officials, business leaders and community members Wednesday to cut the ribbon on Indiana's \$170 million portion of the new and improved U.S. 24 – a project that supporters believe will save lives and create jobs. "The safety issue, of course, was primary to me," said City Councilman Mitch Harper, who helped found the original Fort to Port committee as an Indiana House member in the late 1980s. "It seems like we all know someone who was killed on U.S. 24." The old U.S. 24 was a winding, rural two-lane road on which heavy traffic, including many trucks, traveled at high speeds. Between 34 and 41 accidents a year occurred on the old U.S. 24 from 2002 through 2006, according to the Indiana Department of Transportation. According to INDOT estimates, about 8,000 vehicles – half of them trucks – used Indiana's portion of the highway each day. As a child, Harper said, he remembers when trucks would speed along the highway's curves at 65 miles per hour, which was then its speed limit. "We had a saying, if you'd gone awhile without a fatal accident on 24, you were due," he said. And Fort to Port advocates also believe the improved highway could help bring new employers to Allen County and keep existing jobs here". ['Fort to Port' U.S. 24 project set to open - News-Sentinel.com](#)

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