



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

January 17, 2012

Roundabout, 2-way traffic studied in street reshuffling

The Journal Gazette

1/12/12

FORT WAYNE – There could be more changes coming for downtown commuters. The Fort Wayne Board of Public Works approved a study Wednesday to examine possible benefits of creating a roundabout at the intersection of Superior Street, Ewing Street and Fairfield Avenue. The roundabout would be part of a larger change to allow two-way traffic on Ewing and Fairfield in the downtown area. Ewing currently serves northbound traffic and Fairfield serves southbound drivers. The board hired American Structurepoint for \$24,950 to complete the study. Shan Gunawardena, city traffic engineer, said studies have been done to examine how converting the streets to two-way traffic would affect downtown intersections. He said while there likely would be some increased traffic delays, it was not large enough to cause a concern. The plan would convert the streets to one travel lane in each direction and a middle turn lane between Baker and Superior streets. In the past, the streets were converted to one-way to handle increased traffic from General Electric, but there no longer is a large volume of traffic, he said. [JournalGazette.net - Local | The Journal Gazette | Fort Wayne, IN](#)

Valpo redevelopment group OKs \$18.3 million budget

NWI Times

1/12/12

VALPARAISO | Although its revenue is expected to be only about \$5 million this year, the city's Redevelopment Commission approved a budget Thursday that calls for spending almost \$18.3 million. The commission has been saving money for various projects for the past few years, and many of them are expected to be done in the coming year. Valparaiso officials plan to expand the tax increment financing district to include the U.S. 30 corridor, commission Executive Director Stuart Summers said. The expansion will help finance improvements along a five-mile stretch of the road in city limits. The city is working on obtaining funding through the Indiana Department of Transportation for the U.S. 30 corridor, and Summers said an announcement could be made at the commission's February meeting. In preparation, the commission has \$270,000 budgeted for those improvements. Other new ventures include switching the North Calumet Avenue facade grant program to the section of Lincolnway from Morgan Boulevard to Roosevelt Road. The commission also plans to purchase of the Worstell building on Indiana Avenue across from the Porter County government center. The property will be used to expand Central Park Plaza. The budget calls for increasing the challenge grants to the Valparaiso and Washington Township school districts from \$150,000 in 2011 to \$200,000 this year. A total of \$15.1 million is budgeted

for projects, with the rest going toward management, staff services, legal services, debt service and a contingency fund. In his report to the commission, Summers said the commission's financial advisers estimated revenue from the existing TIF areas to be between \$4.9 million and \$5.4 million. [Valpo redevelopment group OKs \\$18.3 million budget](#)

INDOT, FHWA Skip I-69 Subcommittee Meeting

Indiana Public Media
1/13/12

The Bloomington Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization is no closer to a decision in I-69. The I-69 subcommittee met today, but didn't accomplish much because no one from the Indiana Department of Transportation or the Federal Highway Administration attended. According to MPO President Kent McDaniel, the subcommittee hoped to sit down with INDOT and FHWA to hammer out a deal that would allow the MPO to approve I-69. "Frankly," he says, "we didn't get nearly as much done today as we hoped, because INDOT and the FWHA didn't show up today." INDOT sent a letter to the MPO, expressing displeasure at the public discourse during the last MPO meeting. In that letter, INDOT Commissioner Michael Cline called the way the MPO conducted the meeting, with regard to public comment "shameful". Both Cline and Federal Highway Administration Division Administrator Bob Tally sent official letters to McDaniel condemning the way the public comment section of the meeting was handled. During today's meeting, Subcommittee Chair Richard Martin expressed that neither Tally nor Cline were likely familiar with the way Monroe County residents express themselves at public meetings. McDaniel says the MPO needs to sit down with INDOT before the group's next meeting. "What we need to do," he says, "is figure out a way to leverage what little influence we have with INDOT and get them to the table to let us participate in the design on Section Five." [INDOT, FHWA Skip I-69 Subcommittee Meeting | News - Indiana Public Media](#)

Central Indiana mass transit bill gains bipartisan support

The Indianapolis Star
1/13/12

Legislation that would strengthen mass transit in Central Indiana is building bipartisan support. Peggy Welch, D-Bloomington, today asked to be added as a co-author of the transit bill. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jeff Espich, R-Uniondale, authored the bill that would authorize a referendum to ask voters if they want to raise income taxes to fund the Central Indiana Transit Task Force's 10-year, \$1.3 billion transit overhaul. The referendum is targeted first in Marion and Hamilton counties, and if approved would double the size of IndyGo and add train service from Noblesville to Downtown Indianapolis. Other counties can opt in and vote to fund additional upgrades. Welch is looking, in part, toward that future, as she represents parts of Morgan County. "I support meeting the transportation needs of all of Indiana," Welch said. "Obviously you need to start somewhere... There seems to be support within Hamilton County and Marion County." [Central Indiana mass transit bill gains bipartisan support | The Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#) Also, [Delaware County could join Indy transit district | The Star Press | thestarpress.com](#)

Espich: Mass transit bill doesn't have support needed

The Statehouse File
1/13/12

INDIANAPOLIS – A proposal that could create a new mass transit system in Central Indiana may never get even a committee vote at the General Assembly this year. House Ways and Means Chairman Jeff Espich, R-Uniondale, is the author of House Bill 1073 and said Friday he doesn't see enough support for the legislation to move forward now. "Nobody has said they'd like to

coauthor with me,” said author of the bill Rep. Jeff Espich, R-Uniondale. “I saw no support for it in committee.” The bill would give local officials the authority to increase income taxes to pay for a new 10-year, \$1.3 billion public transportation plan proposed by the Central Indiana Transit Task Force. The Ways and Means Committee heard testimony on the plan last week. “I don’t know if I’m going to bring it to a vote until I see some support from individuals or at least can find a way to amend it to make it acceptable for people,” Espich said.

The bill was based on the task force proposal, which would double the number of buses and add train service in Indianapolis and surrounding counties. Rep. William Crawford, D-Indianapolis said Friday he is “disappointed” that the bill may not move forward. Crawford said citizens would have the choice to say “yea or nay” through referendum and that he is still in support of the bill.

Hamilton County Commissioner Christine Altman describes herself as a “transit advocate.” She said Friday she supports the bill. [Espich: Mass transit bill doesn’t have support needed - The Statehouse File | The Statehouse File](#) Also, [Spotlight shines harshly on glaring transit problem | The Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

Watchdog Indiana Plan to Better Use Indiana Gasoline Tax Dollars

Watchdog Indiana

1/14/12

There is pressure building to increase the Indiana Gasoline Tax to provide more revenue for the construction and maintenance of our Indiana streets, roads, and highways. Similar pressure is also building for more counties to impose a Wheel Tax – 47 of 92 counties currently impose a Wheel Tax.

The Wheel Tax, which the state allows to be as much as \$40 per vehicle per year, is a regressive tax. In a county that imposes the maximum Wheel Tax, a widow living on Social Security who only drives her 1994 Oldsmobile to church and the grocery store would pay the same \$40 annual Wheel Tax as a well-to-do salesman who drives his 2012 Lexus a thousand miles a week. The Indiana Gasoline Tax rate is 18 cents per gallon of gasoline (and gasohol). A driver’s Gasoline Tax burden increases when the miles driven increase. Most Hoosiers mistakenly believe that all our Gasoline Tax dollars go to the construction and maintenance of our Indiana streets, roads, and highways. This is NOT true. Only 71% of the \$546.7 million in revenue from our 2011 Gasoline Tax dollars was dedicated directly to the construction and maintenance of our Indiana streets, roads, and highways without borrowing. Of the total Gasoline Tax rate of 18 cents per gallon, 6.7 cents (or \$202.9 million) went to the State Highway Fund, 4.7 cents (or \$143.3 million) went to our counties, and 1.4 cents (or \$42.5 million) went to our cities and towns. Spending NOT directly related to the construction and maintenance of our Indiana streets, roads, and highways totaled 5.2 cents (or \$158.0 million). http://finplanneducation.net/gas_tax_reform.htm

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