



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

February 16, 2010

City improves plan to widen Yeager
The Exponent
Jonathan Oskvarek
2/11/10

West Lafayette city officials and private contractors displayed improvement plans for Yeager Road between Sagamore Parkway and Northwestern Avenue during an open house and public hearing Wednesday. The plan is to widen the near quarter-mile stretch of road from three to five lanes, add a roundabout at the Northwestern intersection, add a 10-foot multi-use path on the west side of Yeager bordering the golf course and add a 5-foot sidewalk on the east side. Jeromy Grenard, traffic services manager for American Structurepoint, said the \$3.3 million project could begin as soon as 2011, but delays into 2012 are possible. When started, the project should be completed in two construction seasons. David Buck, West Lafayette city engineer, said, "There's a lot underground that you don't see." Relocating the various pipes, lines and sewers is a delicate process, which Buck said could be a source of delay. Additionally, planning the project in accordance with federal regulations slowed the process. Meeting federal requirements is crucial, as Buck explained federal funds are paying for 80 percent of the total cost.

http://www.purdueexponent.org/index.php/module/Section/section_id/11?module=article&story_id=19889

INDOT almost done shoveling all stimulus money into projects
The NWI Times
Keith Benman
2/11/10

The Indiana Department of Transportation announced Tuesday it has awarded or advertised for bid all \$658 million of the state's highway and bridge allocations under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The commitment of all the roadway funds marks an important milestone for a state that initially was slow out of the gate on committing some stimulus funds but has made up the distance in a hurry. In all, INDOT oversaw the bidding process for 1,082 projects in all 92 Indiana counties, which works out to an average of \$608,000 per project. Those projects ranged from walking-trail construction to bridge replacements. INDOT said it was able to fund more projects than it at first had projected, because actual construction bids came in 15 to 20 percent below engineers' estimates. Nationally, the U.S. Department of Transportation is dishing out \$48.1 billion in stimulus funds with \$34.1 billion already spent or in the process of being awarded, according to figures compiled by the nonprofit newsroom ProPublica. Although Indiana has spent or is in the process of bidding all its stimulus allocation for road and bridge projects, it still can apply for other stimulus dollars for transportation through other stimulus grant programs. http://nwitimes.com/business/local/article_29aad7da-370f-5f30-9e2d-a17b1c44a349.html

Stop the posturing and build the Illiana
Post-Tribune

2/11/10

The controversy surrounding the construction of the Illiana Expressway across Lake County seems to be taking on the complexion of a daytime soap. It is time for the theatrics to stop and for cooler heads to prevail. This appears to be much more than a Republican versus Democrat kind of issue. It is heavily philosophical with a pinch of paranoia. Rep. Chester Dobis, D-Merrillville, who has been in the Indiana House of Representatives for 40 years, introduced a bill calling for a public-private partnership to construct Illiana as a toll road. It would run west from Interstate 65 to I-55 in Illinois. State Rep. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso, is co-sponsor of Dobis' bill. But House transportation committee chairwoman Terri Austin, D-Anderson, didn't give the Dobis bill a hearing, advancing her own version of Illiana legislation instead. Both Dobis, Soliday and Gov. Mitch Daniels said the Austin bill contained too many restrictions that ultimately would kill the project. After hearing Austin's side of the story, the usually reserved Soliday called her a liar. House Speaker Pat Bauer said the Dobis bill would give Daniels the authority to build the road at his own discretion without public input. <http://www.post-trib.com/news/opinion/2041183,edit-illiana-02xx.article>

U.S. 27 public hearing to be rescheduled
Palladium-Item
2/11/10

A public hearing for future U.S. 27 reconstruction, scheduled for Wednesday evening, was canceled due to inclement weather. A new date for the meeting will be announced within a month. Mary Jackman, hearing examiner for the Indiana Department of Transportation, met with Richmond Mayor Sally Hutton before making the decision at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday to postpone the meeting. The U.S. 27 reconstruction to be discussed is from .58 miles north of Ind. 227's south juncture to .12 miles north of the north juncture. This includes the Eighth and Ninth street one-way parallels through downtown Richmond. The project scope would extend reconstruction of U.S. 27 south of work currently under way. <http://www.palladium-trib.com/article/20100211/NEWS01/2110325/1008/NEWS01/U.S.-27-public-hearing-to-be-rescheduled>

101st Ave. work could be pinned to federal money
Post-Tribune
Karen Caffarini
2/11/10

Matching federal grant money through the new Economic Development District might be the answer for improvements to the 101st Avenue bridge leading to the Purdue Tech Center, Councilman Shawn Pettit, D-6th, said Tuesday. Pettit told fellow council members that local municipalities have until Friday to submit projects for consideration from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. He said there is no limit on the dollar amount for the grant, but municipalities must match half the cost of the total project. Also, all projects must be new ones and they need to promote economic development. Pettit suggested both the Interstate 65 bridge and Colorado Street road improvements as possibilities for the grant money. <http://www.post-trib.com/news/lake/2041752,mvroads0211.article>

Stimulus money a boon for M'ville
The NWI Times
Chas Reilly
2/12/10

Two road projects in Merrillville are moving forward. Town Councilman Shawn Pettit said a paving project on Harrison/Madison Street from 53rd Ave to 61st Avenue was awarded to Rieth-Riley Construction Co. for about \$291,000. Another paving project on 73rd Avenue, from Clark Street to the Interstate 65 overpass, was awarded to Walsh & Kelly for about \$632,000, he said. Both projects are

being funded entirely through grants from the federal stimulus program. Merrillville Public Works Director Bruce Spires said a start date for the projects hasn't been established, but he expects they will begin when the weather gets warmer. Spires said he hopes the projects can be completed by the end of May. He said the town's financial problems have prevented Merrillville from finishing paving projects in the last two years, so the town appreciates the stimulus funds.

<http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/eb9ff2aa-8067-5af4-8997-e1f1dcabbb73.html>

County 2nd in stimulus road spending
Hoosier Heartland project big reason
Journal & Courier
2/15/10

More than \$650 million in federal stimulus money will be spent on more than 1,000 bridge and road projects around Indiana. And a great deal of those will be in Tippecanoe County. The Indiana Department of Transportation announced last week it had advertised or awarded 100 percent of the state's allocation of federal highway and bridge stimulus money since receiving it last year. "We met the March 3 deadline to assign money to projects," said INDOT spokesman Will Wingfield. "So none of that money is going back to Washington." The state has \$658 million to spend. Tippecanoe County will end up with a combined \$48.51 million that will fund 27 projects. That's the second highest dollar amount in the state, behind Marion County, home to Indianapolis. One of the biggest and most expensive projects is the Hoosier Heartland Highway, under construction from Lafayette to Logansport. The project, which will improve the route between Lafayette and northeast Indiana, had been in the works for more than a decade. <http://www.jconline.com/article/20100215/NEWS02/2150323>

A lonely stroll to bid farewell to troubled road
Post-Tribune
Jerry Davich
2/14/10

Like a condemned prisoner awaiting execution, the damned 1.5-mile bridge awaits demolition after being closed since Nov. 13 for safety concerns. Its victims include 14 construction workers killed from a 1982 bridge collapse, innumerable vehicle crashes through the years, and countless suicides from people who jumped from its towering perch. Before a wrecking ball removes the damaged, crumbling bridge from our sight, if not our memory, I took a stroll on it to pay my last respects. <http://www.post-trib.com/news/davich/2047001,clineave-214.article>

Public hearing set for redesign of South Bend's 'five points' intersection
South Bend Tribune
2/13/10

The intersection's redesign likely won't become reality until 2012, but the Indiana Department of Transportation has set a public hearing on the project for Thursday. Construction is proposed for 2012 at an estimated cost of \$10.5 million.

<http://www.southbendtribune.com/article/20100213/News01/100219748/1130>

Most stimulus cash for state sits unspent
Fort Wayne Journal Gazette
Dan Stockman
2/14/10

On Feb. 13, 2009, Congress passed the stimulus bill, meant to rush cash to projects that would quickly

save jobs and create new ones while investing in the nation's infrastructure. But a year later, more than half of the \$5.4 billion awarded to Indiana under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is still on the books of state agencies, according to a Journal Gazette analysis of federal stimulus reports. Data reported by companies, organizations and local governments that have received stimulus money through Dec. 31 show awards that total only \$2,336,145,641, while state agencies reported \$3,053,936,445. The newspaper's analysis shows that just five state agencies – transportation, education, finance, housing and community development as well as state government itself – were awarded 51 cents of every stimulus dollar sent to Indiana, with the Department of Transportation getting more than \$1 billion. <http://www.journalgazette.net/article/20100214/LOCAL10/302149909>

Ind. 13 detour to allow bridge work
The Indianapolis Star
2/14/10

Fortville -- The Indiana Department of Transportation will close Ind. 13 north of Ind. 67 on Monday morning. Contractor Ohio-based Sunesis Construction Co. will remove the bridge at Stottlemeyer Ditch and replace it with a box culvert that extends west for about 900 feet. The \$5 million project, using funds generated from the lease of the Indiana Toll Road, will widen lanes, add shoulders, replace storm sewers, install water lines and construct sidewalks with curbs, gutters and underdrains that meet federal disability standards. The construction also will include a left-turn lane between Alden and Brooks drives and moderation of the steep grade at the CSX railroad crossing.
<http://www.indystar.com/article/20100214/LOCAL/2140395/1001/NEWS>

The importance of public input
The Indianapolis Star
Ehren Bingaman
2/14/10

On Wednesday, a group of Central Indiana business and community leaders put forth a bold recommendation for our region's transportation future. Those of us who have been advocating for improved transit saw the announcement from the Central Indiana Transit Task Force as an encouraging development that adds momentum to the progress made in recent years. Few people can question the need for improved transit in Central Indiana. For decades, the region has focused virtually all of its transportation-infrastructure dollars on road and highway construction. This put us well behind our national peers in transportation options. It left us without the convenience, connectivity, cleaner air, improved mobility, accessibility and economic development that accompany transit improvements.
<http://www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=20102140334>

Journey to mass transit: moving in right direction
The Indianapolis Star
2/14/10

Building a comprehensive mass transit system in Central Indiana is about more than just commuting from Fishers, Greenwood or Avon to Downtown. That's why a coalition of key business leaders, under the banner of the Central Indiana Transit Task Force, unveiled a plan last week to create commuter rail services, build a regional bus system and add toll lanes on key interstates leading into the city. The proposal even addresses expansion of the trail and greenway network. Questions over whether and how to build a transit system in Indianapolis have waxed and waned for nearly two decades. The current proposal presents state and local leaders with the most credible means for finally moving forward, in part because of the influence of the coalition's leadership but also because the plan addresses head-on how to pay for a first-class system. Under the proposal, residents in each county in the metro area would vote on whether to levy a local option sales tax to help pay for rail lines and the regional bus service. The tax

increase is projected to raise about \$1.2 billion. Bus and rail fares, along with federal funding, also would be used to build out the system. <http://www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=20102140337>

INDOT fully invests ARRA funds
The Post & Mail
Chris Meyers
2/16/10

More than 1,000 transportation and infrastructure projects are in the works or being planned in all of Indiana's 92 counties as a result of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. The Indiana Department of Transportation recently announced it has fully advertised or awarded all \$658 million of Indiana's highway and bridge allocations under the 2009 stimulus act. Of those projects, two are in Whitley County, according to the Web site which tracks the projects, gov.IN.gov/countyarra.htm. The Recovery Act has funded 1,082 transportation projects, with 62 percent of the funds invested in economically distressed counties. <http://www.thepostandmail.com/content/view/187828/1/>

Public can peek at mass transit plan tonight
The Indianapolis Star
Jason Thomas
2/16/10

The proponents of a \$10 billion mass transit vision for Central Indiana will begin pitching their proposal to the public tonight. But whether the public will buy may depend on the group's ability to persuade Hoosiers not only to change their way of life, but to pay higher taxes to do it. <http://www.indystar.com/article/20100216/LOCAL18/2160332/1001/news>

www.buildindianacouncil.org