

Transportation Panel Lists Top Priorities

BY BRANDON SMITH

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A blue ribbon panel Governor Mike Pence assembled to study Indiana's future transportation needs has identified four top priorities for the state's road construction projects.

There are four existing transportation projects the governor's office says are first in line in the state's transportation future: completing I-69 from Evansville to Indianapolis, the Ohio River bridges project, the Illiana Expressway in northwest Indiana and completing renovations on U-S 31 from Indianapolis to South Bend. The blue ribbon panel has come up with the next four: adding lanes to I-65 and I-70, an I-69 Ohio River Bridge and a commerce connector around Indianapolis. Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann, who co-chaired the panel, says the four priorities were chosen from a list of 25 projects after careful evaluation based on five key criteria.

"Economic impact, capacity to meet the demand, multimodal integration and synergy – how did these different modes work together – did it increase our access to both national and international markets, and its impact on quality of life," says Ellspermann.

Governor Mike Pence says the panel went above and beyond his expectations and, working with their recommendations, state agencies can now figure out how and when these projects can be accomplished. For Indiana Public Broadcasting, I'm Brandon Smith.