

**ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 24, 2008  
8:30 AM**

The Allen County Council met on Tuesday, June 24, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the County Council/Commissioners Courtroom. The purpose of the meeting was for discussion of the Maplecrest Road Extension Project.

Attending: Paul G. Moss, President; Roy A. Buskirk, Vice President; Paula S. Hughes, Maye L. Johnson, Darren E. Vogt, Calvert S. Miller and Paulette Kite.

Also Attending: Tera Klutz, Chief Deputy; Bill Brown, Commissioner; Linda Bloom, Commissioner; Nelson Peters, Commissioner and Becky Butler, Administrative Assistant.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by President Paul Moss with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Paul Moss:** Again, I would like to welcome everybody today. We have an important issue in front of us. At this point, the intent is that those of you who may have been in attendance at the last meeting in which this issue was discussed, we ended up halting that meeting after a significant amount of discussion. The desire, at the time, was to reconvene which is what we are doing today. We will have the Commissioners complete their presentation and then Mr. Dan Avery, who was not able to get all the way through his presentation, will also complete his presentation. We have additional information that will be provided by Mr. Harrold and Mr. Royse from the Planning Department. In terms of the process here today, what I would like to do is just go in that order, the Commissioners followed by Mr. Avery and then Mr. Harrold and Mr. Royse. I would ask, and this is a difficult task for Council, if we can try to get through as much of these presentations as possible and hold any questions. You might want to jot down any questions for at least towards the end of each separate presentation and then ask those at the end. I think that would be helpful in terms of timing. I would remind everybody that this is not advertised as a public hearing. However, there is absolutely no desire to not hear what the public has to say. There are a lot of folks here whose time is very valuable and so we are going to try to move through this as quickly as we possibly can in order for everybody to be heard. I would ask, however, if it is at all possible as these presentations are occurring, if you could possibly work a little bit amongst yourselves and if there is a common interest with regards to this project, if you could have someone appointed to represent you that would be helpful. We certainly want to hear what folks have to say on this issue. With that, welcome Commissioner Peters.

**Nelson Peters:** Thank you, Nelson Peters, Allen County Commissioner. First of all, thanks for having this special meeting today. We know it is kind of out of the norm but we recognize, along with you, the importance of this project. Additionally, I

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would like to say thanks for the questions that have come out of previous meetings regarding this issue. It has pushed us to the point where we have had to perform some of the extra due diligence. It has not only confirmed our original thinking but I think it has put us in a position to actually have you, as the County Council, to challenge us to look at requesting a decrease in the Major Bridge Fund over the next couple of years. We have looked at some things that have shown us that perhaps there is some movement in there that we can look at. We believe today that there are really four major questions that need to be answered in arriving at a decision regarding the Maplecrest project. The first is, will economic development occur? We believe that it will but that is a philosophical question that you are going to have to debate in arriving at a decision. The second question speaks to the funding portion. Today, you are going to see several models with a number of scenarios which will address the varying levels of economic development, vis-à-vis the available funding for Major Bridges over the life of the project. I know there was some question that came back regarding the report and to what degree the economic development data lent to some comfort. What we have asked Mark Royse and Scott Harrold to do is create a number of scenarios that shows from best possible case to worst possible case. The third question is about quality of life issues. When you talk about fuel economy and you talk about time savings. We have asked Dan Avery to address those issues and we are going to ask him to come up next. He also has a Power Point presentation so it may force you to come to this side of the screen. And finally, there is the matter of safety. During the meeting, I found out this morning, there was some information that was passed out that Chief Sweet and Chief Bennett provided for us regarding safety. I will make sure that they get an additional copy to you this morning. It shows the impact of this project on public safety. Feel free to call on them at your leisure, after the first presentations are done. As President Moss alluded to, we are hoping to get through the first two presentations before there are any questions, to believe that a number of your questions will be answered right out of the gate with the presentations that those two will make. At the end of the day, we do believe that the funding portion of this project, and the argument can easily be made with not only not picking the taxpayers' pockets but as I alluded to before, with the potential for the reduction in taxes on down the road once we have had the opportunity to see how the dust settles. The question that I alluded to of how much convenience of safety and economic development are really philosophical issues that this body is going to have to grapple with. We truly recognize the position that you are in, in that you are being asked to make probably one of the single biggest funding decisions that you will ever be asked to make while you serve on this Council. We do believe that this is a good project and is one that will benefit the entire community. When you deliberate, this morning, remember the expectations that have been created by those who have preceded you, regarding this project. Remember the hopes for this community by those people who will follow us and please permit us the opportunity to move ahead with this \$25 million bond. Thanks very much and with that, I would like to bring Dan Avery to the table.

**Paul Moss:** Just to clarify, Commissioner Peters, you are asking that at the end of the day, for us to have a motion and then a vote on moving forward with bond counsel.

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**Nelson Peters:** No, we are asking you to allow us to proceed with the process to move the \$25 million bond for that. It will include bringing, on board, bond counsel, getting the appropriate paperwork through them and all that is associated with actually doing the \$25 million bond. We are asking you to allow us to proceed with the process and push that \$25 million bond forward.

**Paul Moss:** Okay. Mr. Avery?

**Dan Avery:** Good morning. We are going to start with the Power Point presentation.

**Paul Moss:** Okay, we will move out front.

**Dan Avery:** Good morning. My name is Dan Avery and I am the Executive Director of the Northeast Indiana Coordinating Council. And as Commissioner Peters has explained, I want to start out with a brief presentation on some of the background of this project and some of the benefits. Parts of this we will go through kind of quickly because we hit on some of it a couple of months ago at the last presentation. I wanted to start out, first of all, to address a couple of issues that have kind of been floating around as information about the project moves through the community. One of the issues has to do with the earmarked dollars and whether they can be used somewhere else. We have been hearing a lot of comments about that. The truth of the matter is that those dollars are specified for this project. They are in a transportation bill and federal legislation and they can not be placed to schools or to other road projects. It is very specific in the bill and would essentially take an act of Congress to change how that money can be used. The second item, if we need to get into specifics about the dollar amounts we can do that, but it has to do with the idea that I've seen that this is a project that was thought about a long time ago and we are just now getting to it. I think some of the slides will explain the process. There has also been some discussion that now that we have 469, this project isn't really needed. But the truth of the matter is that 469 and this project, along with a number of other projects were developed together. They were developed in a manner to support each other and to provide a good system for the entire community. The first item that I wanted to go through is just the planning process. Then I have some maps that I would like to go through that brings us through this and then back to the benefits. The transportation planning process is done in a comprehensive manner and done in a very coordinated process that involves representatives. Those include elected officials and appointed officials from New Haven, Allen County, Fort Wayne, INDOT, plan commissions, the airport and we all sit down at the table together to evaluate what the needs of the community are. We then come up with a plan. We look at the constraints on our system which can be geographical constraints or other types of physical constraints. We look at the existing transportation system. We look at how we want the community to develop, what the economic development folks are expecting and what the plan commissions will tolerate within the community. We look at what will be industrial and what will be residential. Then we calculate the future travel demands using a transportation model. We develop

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projects to meet those demands and then those projects end up in a transportation plan and we start go through the implementation process. This process is updated and evaluated and the projects are evaluated and updated every three to four years. Even projects that were originally thought about in the 70's or early 80's continue to be reviewed and evaluated. Let us switch over to some maps. This will give a better view of the process. This is a map that was pulled out of the comprehensive plan showing not only the City of Fort Wayne but also some of the surrounding area and what the existing land uses are. This is a key component that goes into the planning process. Then we look at the constraints on the system. This may not be as clear as I had hoped but hopefully you can see. The blue, we have floodways, streams and rivers that we have to cross. We have railroads that impact and form boundaries and barriers to how the transportation system can work. You can see the development throughout the area. We also have like a Continental Divide that runs through the western part of the county. That means water and sewer and those types of utilities are more difficult to provide in certain areas. That means that development will occur in different ways throughout the community. We also have historic areas, parks, preserves and neighborhoods that we take into account as part of the planning process. We also look at the constraints of the system itself. We have talked about this in the past. Our system is essentially a radial system. Back in the late 70's and early 80's, when some of the formal transportation planning processes began, this is what we saw. This is what we had on the ground in terms of major corridors and how most of them entered into the urban core. At one time, this was a very positive process when the activity was centered in the downtown. But as our community has changed and developed and we have spread our employment base out, we have spread our residential and retail development out. We knew back in the late 70's and early 80's that this system was not going to serve the needs in the future. We started to see trips through those suburban areas connecting the outside of the urban core. This map shows the highway system in the early 80's and is prior to some of the projects that we will advance through. This was the starting point of the formal transportation planning process and the network that was in place and what we had to work with. It represents that existing system and it shows that from some of the development where the community had grown. Some of the sub-streets there are the current system but the blue lines are what we had initially started with. Then we look at the future. What do we want in the future and what do we anticipate in future development? This is out of the 2030 transportation plan. It identifies areas where growth is anticipated. We sat down with folks like Mark and Scott, with Rob Young and with Greg Leatherman to see where is the community going to change. The downtown plan has an impact on how activity will be occurring in the downtown. We know the area around the airport is a target area for economic development. We know that the east end is a target for economic development. We have some in the northwest quadrant. We look at what the plan commissions will tolerate in terms of where they will allow residential growth. We use that as an input into the planning process and into a transportation forecasting model that essentially, for a highway project, means what are the future traffic volumes going to be? What is the future demands going to be on the system. This is based off a nationally recognized transportation modeling process. It is approved and reviewed by federal agencies and

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state agencies to assure that it gives good numbers and is used to do the air quality conformity. The results of this used to do the air quality conformity demonstrations and determinations. We think the modeling process has served us quite well. As we move from the modeling process, we look at and put on the table a number of different options. What types of projects would meet future needs. We analyze those projects and spend quite a bit of time reviewing those. Initially, we had a whole host of projects to put on the table. This represents some of those that were put on the table and discussed for inclusion in the transportation plan but were eliminated. At one time, we were looking at east-west and north-south expressways through part of downtown. Those were discarded. We looked at connecting some of the roads in the interior like Brooklyn and Tyler to Harris, Covington to Pontiac, extending Hobson south across the river, Landin Road to Wheelock and Butler Road to Vance. We looked at a number of different options. These were felt to be too costly or disruptive to neighborhoods and so they were discarded. One project that was left was the extension of Engle Road to Aboite Center Road. That was a major corridor that was added into the process. Maplecrest Road was extended south from State Street to Lake Avenue and is one of the projects in the progression of projects that leads us to where we are today. 469 was added in. The concept, the arterial plus bypass plan, essentially used the bypass as the mechanism to get folks around the urban area that didn't need to penetrate or didn't have activity in the urban area, to get truck traffic around the urban area or didn't have business in the urban core, to serve the long trips and provide the expeditious way to get around the urban area. The arterial plus bypass concept included these additional arterial connections that I am showing on the screen as well as a number of widening projects that have taken place over the years, like Coldwater Road and so on. Another phase, the extension of Maplecrest Road to the north to connect with St Joe Road and tie into 469 was another piece of this process of building the Maplecrest corridor as an important north-south arterial within the urban area. It included some small projects like the extension of Minnich Road in New Haven to connect from 930 to Dawkins Road. We added Airport Expressway to connect the airport area over to the interchange with I69 and Lower Huntington Road. We added in the section between Hillegas and Ardmore to make the connection. There is the recently completed section of Ardmore Avenue to the south which takes it from Lower Huntington Road to the Airport Expressway. Now we are at the Maplecrest Road project that we are discussing today. This is one of the last links in the implementation of this plan that has been progressing for the last 25 to 30 years. This slide represents some of the improvements that have been made to the Maplecrest corridor over the years. We have looked at not only the interchange up north with 469, we have talked about the extension from Rothman up, there has been widening from Stellhorn Road to Rothman Road and the extension south. There has been improvement at Maples and Wayne Trace and the interchange at 469 to the south. An estimate in today's dollars is about \$75 million and has already been invested in this corridor. Following this plan and implementing the plan over the past 25 years. I am going to go through some of these fairly quickly. You have already seen most of these. The benefits, safety, mobility, transportation efficiency and community development was talked about a little bit at the last meeting. I am sure you may have some questions and there are folks here that are able to discuss

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this and the access for emergency responders. We know that we are eliminating two at-grade railroad crossings with this project that has had some instances in the past and causes a lot of delays. Transportation system efficiency, we know we are going to reduce vehicle miles of travel with this project. We will reduce vehicle hours and there are some positive environmental benefits from this in terms of fuel consumption, vehicle emission reductions and as part of this overall plan, it will relieve capacity on other corridors. It will free up capacity on parallel corridors even extending into the downtown area. As we have seen, a number of the routes coming into downtown, we don't have a lot of good north-south routes on the east side of town. We are providing an alternate method of travel. I forgot to point out that when you looked at that 1980 map, if you looked on the east side at Anthony, there is no bridge until you get to Coliseum. There is no bridge until you get to Landin Road. There are some wide gaps and you will not see wide gaps in our system for north-south corridors, like that. Even on the west side, before Ardmore went in, you still had Lindenwood and Thomas even though you had to zigzag around to get to those, there were some alternatives there. On the east side, there are not any of those alternatives. Vehicle miles of travel, based on the modeling, we think 14,000 vehicle miles a day, initially. In 2012 and assuming that it is open, we can start saving vehicle miles of travel. 14,000 miles a day building to 28,500 over a 25 year period into 2036 and there would be a total savings of \$23 million. That is at a 15.1 cent per mile operating cost that we know is going to escalate over time. We held it constant and Scott will use some of these numbers in his evaluation and bring these back to net present value. Hours of travel, 1,200 hours saved daily and up to 5,400 hours in 2036. You can calculate the savings, in terms of time to people, in a number of different ways. I use the Texas Transportation Institute numbers. These are the numbers that you see published nationally on the numbers of hours that are wasted, on an annual basis, on our highway system. I believe that these are 2005 numbers. They were using \$14.60 an hour for just an average driver's time and if you include commercial time at about five percent of the traffic, that means business people that are traveling during work, you can raise that to \$17.73 an hour. Over a 25 year period, you are looking at \$322 million to \$391 million. Environmental benefits were discussed a little at the last meeting. The fuel savings equates to about 200,000 gallons of fuel annually with a reduction of carbon monoxide of 90.6 tons. The VOC's and nitrous oxides, 9.4 and 3.1, those are the initial reductions. The volatile organic compounds and the nitrous oxides are the ones that we are very concerned about. Those are the two that synthesize with the sunlight and other factors to create ozone. Ozone is the pollutant that this area is hedging on being in non-compliance again. If the EPA was to make its designations today, we would be back in non-compliance. We have the last three years, instances that would put us over the new threshold of .75 parts per million. Any type of project that we can do, and we have a number of them underway, to reduce pollutants and make travel more efficient, are vital to our air quality. It is not to get under the standard but to make our air healthier and make our community healthier. We will wrap up here with some of the community development benefits that we see. There has been a lot of time talking about the economic development and I won't go into that. It bridges the opportunities of the population center, north of the river, to where we want

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economic development to occur south of the river. It will help to tie in the community of New Haven and will provide an alternate route for that community. It encourages growth within 469 which supports the comprehensive plan. As you saw on some of those maps, there is a void in the southeast quadrant of our community. There is room for economic growth there. It is the most advantageous location in terms of delivery of government services to have it adjacent to the urban core and as close to existing development as we have. Stringing it out along some of the more popular corridors like the interstate or Coldwater Road just makes the cost of delivering governmental services much more expensive. It helps control urban sprawl and supports the efficient delivery of government services. That is where I will end.

**Mark Royse:** Mark Royse, Deputy Director of Economic Development. Based on the last meeting on this topic and going back to the Economic Development's staffs' first involvement in it, we were asked if we could do what RW Armstrong ended up doing. That was to do the proposed build out by types of land uses and whatnot. We said that that was beyond our capabilities and that the Commissioners should hire that work out. They did and what they brought back was what basically you would establish as the baseline of data for this study. One of the issues that came up at the last meeting was tax abatement. When that discussion occurred and we were working on the scope of services, I brought up that I didn't know how they could do tax abatement, not knowing more on the personal property side and manufacturing equipment. When they did their build out and the final report came in and they had the build out over the years, on the real property it was easy enough to go back and, assuming that anything on the conservative side would get a ten-year abatement, then we could factor that in. What we still don't have in these numbers is any type of manufacturing equipment. We don't have any abatement numbers for the manufacturing equipment nor do we have any numbers of what it could potentially contribute from a tax increment financing standpoint. One of the things, as you look at what Scott has done, that is not in there. The second notable thing is that if you look at the debt service over the life of the bond, those are not dollar for dollar every year, if it is like your mortgage, it would be like you paying or holding back 25%. The bond payment is one thing but they also make you have a reserve account and they fund that at about 25% of the annual. From year one of paying the bond, you are building up a reserve. Those are the points that I wanted to make sure were brought across before Scott goes into the details. He did go through a number of scenarios and these were all based on concerns or questions that Council members had. At the end of the day, individually and collectively, some Council members may be comfortable with one scenario and others with more of a worse case scenario. It doesn't matter as long as that information gives you the comfort level to make a vote. I think the staff has been able to provide that for you today.

### **Scott Harrold's Power Point Outline see attached presentation:**

#### Introduction

- Consultant Report and Highway Dept. info used as foundation of analysis
- Impact of Tax Abatement

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- Sensitivity Analysis of various Scenarios
  - Impact of Scenarios on Major Bridge Fund
  - Cost-Benefit Analysis
    - Impact of Tax Abatement
      - On TIF Revenue / Major Bridge
      - Sensitivity Analysis
      - Base Scenario - Buildout Percent Applied to All Areas Equally
      - Sensitivity Analysis
      - 16% Reduction in
      - Major Bridge Revenues
      - Sensitivity Analysis
      - No Development at Marion
      - Center / I-469 Interchange
      - Sensitivity Analysis
      - No Wal-Mart Related
      - Commercial Development
      - Sensitivity Analysis
      - Wal-Mart Commercial Variations
      - Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Based upon 25% Buildout Scenario, only 50% of Transportation Benefits, and not counting Residential Devel.

### **Conclusions**

- Tax abatement does not significantly impact results
- Combination of TIF revenue and Major Bridge funds sufficient to fund project even under worse case scenario.
- Sufficient funds remain to fund Other Major Bridge projects
- Cost-Benefit shows this is a good project

**Scott Harrold:** That pretty much does it for me. Tax abatement doesn't significantly affect the results. The combination of TIF revenue and the Major Bridge Funds will be sufficient to fund the project and the debt service even in the worst case scenario. There should be sufficient funds remaining to fund the other Major Bridge projects. At this point, I will open it up for questions.

**Paul Moss:** First of all, thank you Dan, Mark and Scott for the presentations. They were really well done. It probably comes as no surprise to Council that Councilman Miller was the only one that didn't adhere to the "no questions" rule.

**Cal Miller:** It was a kind request to limit the questions, as I recall.

**Darren Vogt:** And I bit my tongue the whole time.

**Paul Moss:** With that in mind, what we could probably do to move this along is to start to my right and go through the questions that Council has. It would probably be good to have Dan and Scott up here. Councilman Vogt, feel free to start with your questions.

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**Darren Vogt:** Dan, my first question comes to you. You made a comment that I want to flesh out a little more. You made a statement that in the transportation plan, and as you go through things, some projects are determined to be too costly and they are discarded. I have a pretty good idea what one of those projects was. At what point do you determine and what rationale do you use to determine a project to be too costly?

**Dan Avery:** We look at a number of different things. The biggest is the impact to the community. The bottom line is the cost benefit. Are the benefits greater than the cost of the project? We factor in a multitude of things including, probably the most notable, the environmental aspects. When I say environmental, that includes social aspects, business displacement, residential displacement and those types of factors. Generally we are looking at the efficiency of the system which is the vehicle hours of travel, vehicle miles of travel, is there a reduction and will those benefits end up exceeding the cost of the project.

**Darren Vogt:** Then give me some examples of what projects didn't go through because of that analysis was not in favor of it.

**Dan Avery:** Things like we have tested over the years, an east-west expressway at several different stages throughout the planning process. The costs are too exorbitant. We also know that we have a limited pool of money to work with. If we see something that is a \$200 million project and there are not federal funds and the Indiana Department of Transportation is not willing to step up, I can't commit those kinds of dollars to a project.

**Darren Vogt:** So it is safe to say a big project was an east-west expressway.

**Paula Hughes:** Or a spur from 69. There was a conversation to bring a spur from 69 into downtown. There have been some of those kinds of projects.

**Dan Avery:** Sure. We talked about that and improving the access into downtown. We look at the existing system and how well that system is working and is there going to be a sufficient benefit for that project to offset those costs.

**Roy Buskirk:** Another thing is the impact on the residential.

**Dan Avery:** Exactly. How will the neighborhoods do? That is one of the things that we struggled long time with in an east-west expressway and where are you going to put it? There is not anywhere that you can put it without total disruption of a number of neighborhoods along the way. Sometimes it is very easy to discount a project as not being feasible and other times, you have to dig deep.

**Darren Vogt:** It was just meant to show that there are projects that just don't make sense. In some of your analysis of road miles and trip miles, help me understand the line of demarcation, from a road traveled standpoint, your models. I understand that

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area very well and I travel that area very often. Where are you showing a final destination when you look at the transportation models and shifting road miles and all of that, what is the final destination? What do you determine to be the final destination? Also, in the area of Stellhorn Road and Reed Road, where is the area of transportation changing?

**Dan Avery:** The way we look at it, every trip has an origin and destination. There are multitudes of origins and destinations. For this particular corridor, I have not analyzed specifically those links. We know from the impacts to the road system based on the model of this project in place, the origins are primarily in that core area north of the river, Reed to Lahmeyer Roads. Destinations are all over. That would be from the north to the south. From the south to the north, we have the New Haven area with developments occurring, areas to the southeast that have trip desires to go to the north and so it is a very complex network. I would suspect that folks who travel to the downtown area will rely on this corridor. This will get them to Washington Boulevard and that moves very well. It works much better than Lake Avenue and it tends to run much better than State or Stellhorn. Folks will migrate to that corridor even to get east or west. To identify a specific travel shed or trip shed, I would have to do some further analysis.

**Darren Vogt:** That is what I am trying to understand. If you are getting the savings from the dollars, transportation trip miles and fuel and time, where is that coming from? We are not eliminating Coliseum Boulevard or Landin Road. I would agree with you that I would not travel down Lake or State but I would go Washington Boulevard. I am trying to figure out where those benefits are coming from.

**Dan Avery:** It would be those trips. Those folks that now rely on 469, Landin Road and they will come from a number of those corridors. They use Anthony Boulevard, Coliseum or Lake Avenue because they get as far south as they can and then they have no choice but to go east or west. It would draw a few from all of those corridors. We anticipate reductions on all of those corridors, to a certain degree.

**Darren Vogt:** Okay, so from a development standpoint let me switch this over to Scott. If we are anticipating a shift from the Coliseum Boulevard, how has that impact been put into, and I know the answer is no it hasn't, from an off the cuff type of response, what impact do you see happening on Coliseum Boulevard and the commercial development along that area and the Georgetown area as well?

**Scott Harrold:** That is a difficult question to answer because with the growth in the southeast, it is expected that you would get some additional people living in that area as well. Obviously you would have some shifting from Coliseum to the east. Frankly, that portion of Coliseum, south of State Street, commercial doesn't seem to be very viable right now there anyway. There will be a negative impact on that area but to what degree, I can't tell you.

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**Darren Vogt:** I will yield. I have some other questions but I will let the others ask their questions.

**Maye Johnson:** I have a statement to make but at this time, I am going to yield. I would like to thank both Dan and Scott for the excellent job. You answered a lot of questions that I had in addition to presenting every worst case scenario that we could think of. I have a statement to make but at this time, I will defer.

**Paul Moss:** Councilman Buskirk?

**Roy Buskirk:** Dan, I know we have had several emails back and forth concerning the federal funding and where we would be if this project did not move forward, as far as reimbursement of federal funds. Would you please elaborate on that a little bit?

**Dan Avery:** Currently, we have approximately \$2 million that I can validate having been spent, in terms of federal money. About \$1.7 million was spent on engineering cost for the project. As of a couple of months ago, we had spent over \$300,000 on land acquisition. Land acquisition is a moving target because that activity is underway, as we speak. We have the potential of spending a total of about \$4 million to \$4.5 million, combined that has been allocated through the urban pot of federal money. This is not touching the earmark. The earmark is still complete. This is from the urban pot of money that goes through the Urban Transportation Advisory Board. You may see it listed, on you hand-out there, you will see TIP which is the transportation improvement program associated with those costs. It is a moving target, every day and I am sure there is additional money being spent. The total commitment right now the range is \$3.5 million to \$4 million that would have to be paid back if the project doesn't move forward.

**Roy Buskirk:** Thank you. I reserve the right to ask questions in the future.

**Paul Moss:** We don't get too many yields to keep this moving along. Councilwoman Hughes?

**Paula Hughes:** Couple of questions. One is that I couldn't help but think that perhaps, flippantly, as Scott was winding up his presentation, Walmart is funding a bridge for the community. The Walmart placement is just a huge swing in funding availability, right. The worst case scenario is that no Walmart is built.

**Scott Harrold:** Right. Walmart is related to commercial activity. If you look at the activity around a new Walmart, some companies have their business plan include being near a Walmart. That is how they do the market analysis. They draw people and they want to be nearby. That would be a major impact and it would be nice to know that they are breaking ground on it. We have no indication one way or the other, other than they have bought land. Hopefully they will come through and that will be a big benefit.

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**Paula Hughes:** I just thought it was kind of funny given the reputation that Walmart has established for itself. I had a question for Mark. You talked about the reserve for bond payments. I understand the mechanism that you will put aside funds over time. Is that something that we could earmark or set aside part of our Rainy Day Fund to take care of?

**Mark Royse:** It depends on how you structure the money and if you wanted that to be your backup. Typically, what happens is that when you look at the overall bond issue, they are looking at an amortization schedule and a reserve of 25%. Whether that reserve has to be out of the Bridge Fund or you can use any other source of revenue. When we do our TIF fund, we always back those up with CEDIT dollars in hopes that we never have to use those dollars. We could have backed those up with G.O. bonds. If you go forward and as you go forward, the final determination as to how you structure the whole bond issue.

**Paula Hughes:** Okay, but it is not unreasonable to think that it would be an appropriate use of Rainy Day Funds.

**Mark Royse:** To make the bond salable, the issue is that it is marketable to the buyers.

**Paula Hughes:** I think having the 25% set aside in a fund would certainly make it more so. Coming back to Dan, one of the things you touched on very lightly was the issue of distance between crossings of the river. My family lives north of the river and works south of the river and to get out to that part of town, it is circuitous. There is no other way to describe it. You are going around things to get to New Haven and, sorry Mayor McDonald, you touched on it a little lightly and I wanted to drive it home a little more. That is one very compelling reason to install this bridge here. We have a good chunk of our community that is cut off. It is hard to get from downtown New Haven. If there is active train traffic, which there very frequently is, even in this somewhat recessed economy, we have a lot of train traffic cutting off Landin Road. Going all the way to Coliseum and looping back is just a long drive.

**Dan Avery:** Can I comment?

**Paula Hughes:** Absolutely.

**Dan Avery:** I did kind of gloss over a few of my notes. I think I mentioned at the last meeting that as the urban area grows, the need for the additional river crossings becomes paramount to having an efficient transportation system. In addition, to some of the escalating energy costs, what we are hearing on the freight side on the railroad is that it is only going to increase. And that may be as much as 30%. With already running in excess of 70 trains a day, the New Haven folks that live there and sees it and says maybe 100 a day. If you follow some of what is happening on the northern corridors of rail traffic through the Chicago area, they are highly congested and they have trains sitting for many days before they can move from one rail system

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to the other. What we anticipate is that those trains will begin to shift to the south. The problem will not go away and will only get worse.

**Paula Hughes:** I personally don't even consider Landin Road as a viable corridor when I am traveling to the New Haven area. It is Coliseum or 469 because it is completely unpredictable as to what the train traffic is going to be.

**Patt Kite:** First of all, I would like to thank you for the hard work that you have put into this and for making everything really clear. I appreciate that you have taken it from worst case to best case scenario. You have answered a lot of the questions that I would have had today and I think you have done a wonderful job of showing me how all of this ties in together with economic development and transportation issues. I think everyone in this room knows that the public safety issue is a big one for me because I did that for a long time and I did it out there. Something that I don't think we touched on much is not only the train traffic but also the flooding issues that we have out there. I think you have answered all of the questions that I had. I know Councilman Miller is chomping at the bit with his notepad.

**Cal Miller:** To set up these questions, I invite Commissioner Peters' input as well, with respect to the RW Armstrong study, Scott you indicated that that became the nuts and bolts from which you could extrapolate information to be more pessimistic than they were. I have heard the RW Armstrong report referred to by Mr. Sheldrake, who was one of the authors of the report, as neither a pessimistic nor optimistic study. I have heard other descriptions of that and I have heard the 25% scenario is a worst case scenario and I have heard the 25% scenario is the best case scenario. My question really is it seems like, in your presentation of materials, you have taken 75% of the optimism out of the RW Armstrong report and given us a breakdown of the numbers that showed at 25% this still could be done. I want to know why we feel comfortable with the RW Armstrong report that if 25% of the optimism was met in that report, we would have numbers that work for this project.

**Scott Harrold:** I am not sure where to start. First of all, the scenarios are 100%, 75%, 50% and 25% was at your request. The indication that the 25% was a worst case scenario, that is how we analyzed it, I guess. I would certainly expect at least that much. Whether or not RW Armstrong said it was optimistic or not is a matter of opinion. Twenty-five years is a long time to look out. There is certainly a lot of potential in that area for development. One of Dan's slides showed a map of the community and it had stuff to the west and stuff to the east and there was an empty space in between. Development is something that we encourage but I will leave it to your interpretation as to whether or not it was a pessimistic or optimistic at 25%.

**Cal Miller:** The author said it was neither pessimistic nor optimistic. What is the comfort level, Commissioner Peters, with utilizing the 25%? I personally like the projections at 25% because it tells me that even if only 25% of the optimism is reached in the RW Armstrong report, we have a project that could be funded

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through the mechanism of TIF revenues and the utilization of a subsidy from Major Bridge while the TIF revenues catch up. I would like to hear from Commissioner Peters about how comfortable you feel with the 25% projection that this project can realize. We have, at Councilman Buskirk's suggestion at the last meeting, if you want to draw analogies of a north-south corridor and economic impact, we can look at the Ardmore-Hillegas corridor where I don't believe there has been a great deal of commercial development that would support the numbers that we're talking about before 75% of the optimism was reduced.

**Scott Harrold:** I will address this real quick and then Nelson can add something if he wants. The process that RW Armstrong went through is that they used an economic model that is a recognized model. They went through a process that I believe was the appropriate process to go through in modeling the likely outcome of this area. Do I think it is optimistic or pessimistic?

**Cal Miller:** I am not really asking that.

**Scott Harrold:** It might be a little on the optimistic side. I feel very comfortable with the 25% scenario and I don't think we are going to see anything less than that.

**Darren Vogt:** Let me just interject one quick thing on what RW Armstrong did. If you recall, they took all of the available acreage and applied zoning laws to it and developed it. That is all they did and all they were instructed to do. They took that north-south corridor and developed every piece of acreage as it should be. Inplan is just a model and they took the acreage and developed it and that is where their numbers came from. That leads us to what Scott said that the 25%, in my mind, is a realistic scenario.

**Cal Miller:** That is really my concern. I want to make sure, through the people that have studied this so closely, that we have taken enough optimism out of the study to feel comfortable that we have a projection that isn't either best case or worst case scenario when you take the national modeling and apply it locally and that we have taken enough optimism out. When I hear that all we need to do is achieve 25% and you see the Major Bridge Fund revenues, it is certainly presented in an encouraging manner. That confidence is founded on a reasonable assumption that the 25% is really in the realm of possibility to achieve.

**Darren Vogt:** The concern that I have is the connectivity for industrial development, which is the root behind the funding mechanism, Adams Center Road has been developed to 469 South. That is the corridor that any industrial traffic would use. They would not use Maplecrest Road going north. They would go south to deliver goods and get to the interstate. Help me understand why that area hasn't been developed, to this particular point, since 469 has come into play.

**Cal Miller:** Can we answer my question first?

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**Darren Vogt:** I just thought it was related.

**Nelson Peters:** I am very comfortable and was comfortable with the initial report from RW Armstrong. They utilized the Inplan model which was developed out of the University of Minnesota. It has been tried and true throughout the United States. To address Councilman Vogt's discussion regarding the acreage, those are acres that are laid out with respect to that model. That is what they expect the build out to be based on what they have seen. I am very comfortable with that model the way it was, when you back it off to the 25% as we have, when you back it off to 60-40 matches and put in the absolute worst case scenario, we are more than comfortable that the funding exists and that this is a good project.

**Cal Miller:** What concern, and you alluded to it briefly Scott, it is tough to wrap your hands around all of the variables but at least it is one of the impressions that I am operating under and it is shared with the recognition and comments that you made is that with respect to inflationary increases on construction costs that those typically are outpacing other types of inflationary increases and you were getting very thin in terms of what was available left in Major Bridge with respect if we went to the 25% of the study.

**Tera Klutz:** If the construction costs increase, so will the assessed value tied and the market value tied to the taxable value of that property and since it is a fixed rate fund, even if the construction costs go above that.

**Cal Miller:** This is what I wanted to flesh out because you alluded that there would be some way to make that up but how does that work, exactly?

**Tera Klutz:** If there is inflationary cost for construction, we are not talking about Maplecrest cost but about industrial/commercial costs, the market value will be tied to those construction costs so that when it is valued for tax purposes, it will be higher and include those inflationary costs. Major Bridge is a fixed-rate fund and will tax at the assessed value.

**Cal Miller:** The last question, I know I have spoken to Commissioner Peters about this, but I would like to make it a part of this meeting. There has been some suggestion that this vote is being timed in a manner that would sidestep the legislation with the new law for a need of a referendum if it was passed before July 1. From a personal standpoint, all of the information has been assembled, analyzed and presented. I don't think there is anything sinister about the timing of this coming before Council, so I am not suggesting that. I would like to hear from the Commissioners' standpoint whether this is a project that would need to go to referendum if the vote was to take place after July 1, by County Council or not. We can put to rest or shed some light on that particular aspect of the criticism that has been launched against the timing of this vote.

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**Nelson Peters:** A fair question. Should you allow us to proceed today, it is likely that our bond counsel will be Ice Miller out of Indianapolis. We posed that question to Ice Miller in late May or early June and this week, they came back with a response that said that this project is not subject to referendum.

**Cal Miller:** So, irrespective of our timing today in terms of a vote, there shouldn't be any valid argument that we're rushing a vote through to avoid a referendum.

**Nelson Peters:** I believe that is true.

**Cal Miller:** Thank you.

**Paul Moss:** I have a couple of quick questions. Just to clarify because I am not sure you stated it in a manner that at least I understood it but the federal dollars, is it \$11 million, if I recall correctly, and some has already been expended?

**Paula Hughes:** No.

**Dan Avery:** The earmark is \$11 million and that is the federal appropriation. Spending authority knocks that down a little bit to about \$9.9 million in actual dollars that Congress will allow us to spend out of that earmark. They give you money and then they take a little bit off. They do that with all of the dollars across the board. The other money that has been spent, the federal dollars that have been spent on this project, came from the urban pot. That is UTAB and NIRCC. The total commitment is about \$4 million of which somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2.5 to \$3 million has been spent to date out of that pot. The earmark is still intact at this time.

**Paul Moss:** If for some reason that this was not to go through, I know you have provided some information to the Council, but for those in the audience that may not be aware, but what if any of that \$11 million can be used for other purposes or for a scaled down version of this?

**Dan Avery:** Other purposes are not an option. If I understand what the financial analyst at the Federal Highway Administration says, it is in the bill and is designated for the Maplecrest Road extension and that is the wording in there. It can not be used on anything but the Maplecrest Road extension. It has to be applied to some piece of this project that we are talking about. Congress would have to overturn that bill. It is not a simple process to spend it somewhere else. The law tags it to that extension.

**Paula Hughes:** If I could interject very quickly, one of the things that I wanted to further clarify for the audience, the UTAB dollars are federal dollars that are allocated to this urban transportation area on an annual basis. We get roughly the same amount every year and it is a board made up of members of all of the

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municipalities within the County of this urban transportation area. It is federal money that is coming from a different way.

**Paul Moss:** I am just trying to get at different scenarios. You used best case and worst case scenarios and if this was to be scaled back, then that money could be used. Is that accurate?

**Dan Avery:** Yes, I think it could be used.

**Paul Moss:** Then the only other question I have is, Scott, on your projection in terms of rehab and repair dollars. I don't know how far out, I can't remember what the build out time is, but after that time period, when will this need to be rehabbed and/or repaired? Were those costs factored into the additional rehab and repair costs that you had on there? If you look at that list of rehab and repair, it wasn't huge but this is going to become the bridge in Allen County in terms of size and expense. Were those numbers factored in?

**Scott Harrold:** I didn't include any rehab or repair of the Maplecrest Bridge. I would hope that a brand new bridge would last a fairly long time before needing any major work.

**Paul Moss:** What is the average for that before you have to start working on it?

**Bill Hartman:** Thirty years.

**Paul Moss:** Thirty years, so that answers the question.

**Dan Avery:** Paul, I wanted to add onto my response. While the federal dollars could be scaled back, all of the analysis that Scott has done is on the complete project. The benefits would shrink tremendously if not dissolve almost totally.

**Paul Moss:** That is a good segue because one of the issues that we have been talking about is public safety. We have not talked, too specifically, about that. What I would like to do is be able to move on to that component unless there is a specific question right now.

**Darren Vogt:** My question never got answered about the 25%. 469 has been developed and out there. This area has been available and industrial traffic will use the south corridor for that. Help me understand why there has been no development and tie this road into that development piece from a business perspective.

**Scott Harrold:** Obviously, transportation is important for business as to how they are getting materials in and product out. One thing that is very important with the prospects that we looked at is that they want to know what the available labor pool is and how they are getting to work. This bridge would open up all of St. Joe Township's population as a labor pool. I know Mayor McDonald would like to see

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his residents getting employed in these establishments but realistically, it opens up a much larger labor pool of available workers to businesses that would locate along here. As you know, St. Joe Township is very populated compared to the area south of the river and it makes a big difference.

**Darren Vogt:** Okay.

**Paul Moss:** Okay, I don't see any other questions for Mr. Harrold and Mr. Avery. What I would like to do, at this point, is to have an individual who the audience believes would be best suited to speak about the public safety issues related to this, would certainly be my preference.

**Nelson Peters:** It is not me but if we could, Chief Sweet and Chief Bennett were in the audience and if you could take them both at the same time, they could address a number of the issues that you have regarding public safety.

**Paul Moss:** That would be good. If you could, introduce yourselves for the record, please.

**John Bennett:** Good morning, I am John Bennett, Fire Chief from New Haven and Adams Township Fire Department.

**Mike Sweet:** I am Mike Sweet, Chief of Police for the New Haven Police Department.

**Paul Moss:** I appreciate you coming to discuss this issue. Obviously we have a lot of folks interested in speaking on this so if you could just give us a high level view of the concerns that you have related to the extension of Maplecrest and the railroad crossings.

**John Bennett:** Just to point out and emphasize this document that we passed out to you, there are over fifty calls for service in that corridor per year. That is specifically fire and EMS, as the second document relates to. There are currently over 100 trains per day, in that area. Even with three fire stations, it is happened that all of our apparatus has been landlocked or could not access that area because all of the crossings were blocked. More important to us is the impact it has on our response time. We almost constantly have to be rerouted or seek alternate routes to get into different areas. That is not just pertaining to accidents that are train accidents but automobile accidents as well. The newest document that we added to this is one where we did a project impact of all of the businesses in that corridor. We have provided you a list of forty-five businesses that are in the area. Employees alone are at 7,200 employees. That is not counting in or factoring in the customers that do business there. If we add the residences there, it is easily 2,000 people there. This is a very important and vital project from the Fire and EMS perspective.

**Paul Moss:** Do you have any comments that you want to add to that?

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**Mike Sweet:** I think Mr. Avery did a very good job of the overall view and pointed out the importance of public safety. I can see, by your faces, that public safety is important to you also. From the police standpoint, this project is paramount. In my twenty-two years in public service, one of the chief complaints I have always heard about government is that it is too reactive and that you react when it is time to do something. Here is a great opportunity for the government of Allen County to be proactive, to be ahead of the curve and to implement a project that is going to be ahead of what's to come. I am a citizen of Allen County as well as a public servant and this is very important. I know it is a tough decision but I know it is a good decision for all.

**Paul Moss:** The public safety piece is always difficult because it is difficult to quantify. If you have an incident where one life is lost, that is difficult to deal with. Let's say that the cost of this was triple what it currently is and it is going to be around \$75 million. Would you still say it is a worthwhile project?

**Mike Sweet:** From a personal standpoint of property and safety for human life, absolutely.

**Paul Moss:** So, there is really no limit to what the cost could be to justify that.

**Mike Sweet:** Absolutely. In all reality, and this is not just New Haven but all public safety, this whole corridor is going to be a large metropolitan area. You are going to have Fort Wayne, Allen County and New Haven public safety going through that area to respond to needs. It is going to be serviced by all. It doesn't mean that somebody in Riverhaven is having a medical emergency or police emergency but maybe something in Monroeville happens and your responding units may need to get there by the most direct route and it would be through that area. I don't know if you can put a value on it.

**Paul Moss:** Councilman Buskirk?

**Roy Buskirk:** Let's say, in the last five years, how many bodily injury accidents have there been at the railroads? Also, have there been any deaths?

**John Bennett:** There have definitely been accidents but not only at the crossings. There have also been some at intersections. It is not uncommon to have two to three deaths a year but there are probably twenty vehicle accidents a year.

**Roy Buskirk:** Two or three deaths a year at the railroad crossings?

**John Bennett:** Not necessarily at the crossings. It could be at an intersection.

**Mike Sweet:** In this area of Adams Center, Nelson Road and Estella crossings, there are fatalities on a yearly basis. That can be attributed to the traffic in that area. There are serious accidents weekly and unfortunately deaths do occur.

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**Roy Buskirk:** Would the Maplecrest Road project improve that?

**Mike Sweet:** I think it would reduce the congestion. For instance, Adams Center and 930, you are bringing people down that corridor but you have redesigned that. You create better traffic patterns and better traffic control devices. You will be improving that for pedestrians as well.

**Paul Moss:** Are there any other questions from Council? Is there anybody else that can speak to the public safety aspect of this?

**Mike Sweet:** I don't believe so.

**Paul Moss:** We appreciate your time and patience. As I mentioned early on, there are a variety of folks that would like to speak. I mentioned that this was not a public hearing but I believe that we need to gain as much input as we can. The difficult part is trying to prioritize because everybody out there has a schedule that they are trying to adhere to. I am asking folks to try, if you can, to condense your comments if there is a common objective. We have some employers that are interested. We have a City Councilman and a Representative. I suppose, at this point, what I would do is focus on well, let's go because I think there is less opposition here than there is support. If there are folks that are opposed to this project, if you could come to the table and give us an idea of what your comments are related to this. Then we will work through those that are in support. Councilman Smith?

**Tom Smith:** I am Tom Smith, Fort Wayne City Councilman for the First District. That is where part of the Maplecrest Road extension will begin. I have been living with the Maplecrest Road extension for many, many years, since I have been on City Council and I never had any strong objections to it. I have always been concerned that Maplecrest not become a truck route, should this connection be made. I feel pretty certain that that won't happen and if it would, I would fight it every step of the way. But that is not what brings me to the table today. It wasn't until about a month or two ago that I learned that the cost had doubled in six to eight years. I began to look at it entirely differently. I began to think seriously about the \$55 million cost and began to take a much closer look at it. I was trying to think what would be the benefits to the northeast side of Fort Wayne. It was called the Maplecrest Study and what was going to be the benefit to Maplecrest Road and all of northeast Fort Wayne. I had a hard time coming up with some benefits simply because the northeast side of Fort Wayne has been built out. It happened over forty years and was built out without the bridge. My common sense took me to the conclusion that probably the southeast side of Fort Wayne, which truly does need to develop, can build out without a bridge as well. But then, what was really amazing to me was when I received a copy of the Feasibility Analysis of the Maplecrest Road extension. It made a lot of sense with the financing and the TIF district and the amount of employment that would be generated. But for that money, \$30,000 for the study, you only got half a loaf. There is not one piece of information about Maplecrest Road and the northeast side of Fort Wayne. What is going to be the impact of spending

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\$55 million on what is totally half of this project? There is not one piece of information. Maybe it wasn't asked for, in this study, and if it wasn't, it was a terrible oversight. Everything in this study talks about what is going to happen between 930 and 469. That is where the action is at. I saw nothing in the study that said that is dependent on a bridge. There is not one fact in there about that. I'll grant you, that if you build a bridge across there, it will be a major convenience. There is no question about that. In my opinion, it is much more of a want. I have lived in the Georgetown area for thirty-five years. I have never heard anybody complain that they can't get around. People from New Haven are coming, all the time, to Georgetown. I have talked to them and I don't hear them complain. Granted, it would be nice to have a convenience. At \$55 million and counting, I am really wondering what the benefit is. I would need to know what the impact is going to be on the northeast side of Fort Wayne. I know the City is putting in about \$2 million. That is a small amount for this bridge project. If that bridge project goes through, it is going to cost the City another \$3 million on top of that. Maplecrest, between Lake and State, will have to be improved. There is an elementary school there and a senior citizens center, there are two of them. It is one of the most highly pedestrianized neighborhoods in the entire city. That is \$3 million that I wished we didn't have to spend. That would be \$5 million that we would not have to spend. I am not trying to be cute here but that is money that we could be putting towards bridge maintenance. That is a big issue in this community right now. I can't see, at this point yet, what the benefit is going to be. I am probably wearing my northeast, first district hat here but I can't see what the benefit of spending \$55 million is to the northeast side of Fort Wayne. There may be some, more people would be coming from the south, as long as they aren't stopping at the Walmart first. There could be more people coming up the road and buying but it will also put more traffic on there. Something that was talked about with Dan Avery is that Coliseum Boulevard just lost a major store there, the Home Depot. Clearly, if this bridge project goes through, you are going to take more traffic off Coliseum. That road was designed to handle large volumes of traffic. It will harm more business if traffic goes off there. There is some harm if this project is done and I have no doubt about that. One other aspect to this that bothers me and it never really has been talked about. But I think we would have a real impact on how much and how often people are going to want to use Maplecrest particularly when this road will be down in the lime lagoons, the sludge ponds. That is probably the least desirable, most inhospitable place in the City of Fort Wayne and maybe even in the entire County of Allen, that you could put a public road through. There are some real concerns, if you stand at Lake Avenue, and look down there. You have to go down into these lime lagoons and there are bio-solids down there. These lime lagoons, what happens there is that the lime is used to treat the water and it is sold off to farmers once it is in the powdery form. If you look down there on a windy day, you get white-out conditions down there. There are about twenty of these lime lagoons and each is about two-thirds the size of a football field. I have stood there many times and tried to look across and couldn't see across. I think once people start driving through there, they are going to find that to be not a very healthy place to be. In the winter time, it is just as bad, if not worse. That doesn't mean that the road can't go through there. It can go through there just fine. Even down there when it is

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just plain dry. When the trucks are down there, it is like watching a farmer out in the field. I don't know how you factor that in or how you measure it. Maybe you need the Board of Health to look at it and see what happens. It is one of the factors that is very hard to measure. If people are going to be induced to use this road because it is new, you have to take that into account as well. What I would like to see is that this money not be spent, at least not at this time. I heard for the first time that it is not referendum tied. I know that 70,000 people who live northeast would like to know what is going to be the impact is going to be on the northeast side of Fort Wayne. I have always said that it should never have been called the Maplecrest Road extension. It probably should have been called the Adams Center Road extension. That is where all of the action is. I would love to see some data, analysis or impact of what is going to happen to the northeast side of Fort Wayne. Those are my concerns, at this point. Are there any thoughts or questions?

**Paul Moss:** Are there any questions from Council?

**Paula Hughes:** I just want to clarify, as I understand it, you are speaking as a single district Councilman for the Fort Wayne City Council. Your primary and only concern is your Council district. That came through very clearly.

**Tom Smith:** I represent about eight percent of northeast Fort Wayne.

**Paula Hughes:** And that is fine but I will say that from my perspective, as a district Council person, I believe that this Council's job is to think countywide. The countywide cost benefit analysis that was presented of \$3.70 return for every dollar that is put into this project is fairly compelling. I have to believe that some of that cost benefit analysis is going to spill over to the residents of northeast Fort Wayne. You probably didn't have that information before this morning and that is fine. For Coliseum Boulevard, that has been an area that retail has struggled on as long as I have been in this town. It happens in communities. Coliseum has had a really high traffic count and I am speaking as a former commercial real estate broker. There are pockets of communities that just don't develop for retail. South of State on Coliseum is one of those areas. With the Home Depot store going out now has nothing to do with whether Maplecrest is extended. I don't find that a compelling reason to not do the project. One of my favorite restaurants is on that stretch and they are thriving. I am actually a little amused by the lime lagoons being unpleasant and trucks driving through there. My four-year-old son will probably make me go down there so that he can watch the trucks. I may wind up parking on the bridge because that is what he likes to watch. There are two perspectives to everything. I understand your perspective but I believe there are alternate ones as well.

**Tom Smith:** First of all, I wouldn't park on the bridge and watch from there. I am very concerned about the businesses in my district and on South Coliseum Boulevard. I wish it was stronger but I wouldn't do anything to make it weaker and I think this will.

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**Paul Moss:** That is a good point, that you represent the first district and the northeast side of Fort Wayne. I know the neighborhood partnerships are very active. Those are folks that tend to work well and listen to their neighbors and have a good feel for opinion in that area. Has this issue been brought up at northeast area partnership and was there a vote taken? What, if anything, has happened there?

**Tom Smith:** For two months in a row, April and May, that was the major topic of discussion. There was a vote taken in May. There were about eighty people there and one hand went up in favor. Again, it was because people could not understand the benefits to the northeast side of Fort Wayne, for the amount of money being spent. That was the crux.

**Paul Moss:** Eighty people were in attendance and seventy-nine indicated that they were in opposition of this.

**Tom Smith:** Yes. Again, that opposition was based on the benefit cost ration as they see it.

**Cal Miller:** Councilman Smith, I do appreciate your advocacy for the people in the northeast part of Fort Wayne and your courage to come into a room where I assume that the great majority of people behind you have a different position than you. I think Councilwoman Hughes alluded to it that this Council's position and task is different than your own. We haven't been given the task to represent a subset of the community and have to make a decision for the community as a whole. What has been presented is a net benefit for the community even if you take the great deal of optimism out of a study that has been called neither pessimistic nor optimistic by the drafters of those people, one of which was part of the budget for the State of Indiana. I have to ask you a question that probably doesn't have an answer as you sit here today. If you are sitting up here and doing our job, and you are convinced that after you take 75% of the optimism out of a study and you can still pay for this project through TIF revenues and Major Bridge and you can demonstrate that you are going to get \$3.70 per dollar that is invested in the community, how do you respond to that?

**Tom Smith:** I would still respond that you only have half a loaf. I would like to see a full study that would show what would happen to the other half of the Maplecrest Road extension.

**Cal Miller:** But if the net impact to the community is a positive, in terms of the way that we are judging those numbers, how can a body that is supposed to be representing the interest of the community, pick one area over another? If the net impact to the community, as a whole, you achieve a positive.

**Tom Smith:** I probably would abstain, at this point, and ask for a more complete study. I can't put myself in your shoes but I would tell you that I would like that information. I don't know what my final vote would be.

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**Cal Miller:** I do appreciate your courage and your perspective. I met with you, personally, on that and it takes guts and is a real advocacy for the people that you represent.

**Paul Moss:** Seeing no other questions for Councilman Smith, one comment that I do want to make is that there was a letter circulated from Councilman Tim Pape, who is in support of the project. I just want to make sure that that is disclosed. Are there other folks in the audience that would share an opposing viewpoint? We didn't have a signup so I don't know how the best way to get through this is but what I am going to do, and it is purely subjective to my whim, is I am going to have Mr. Haist come up. He is a representative of Do It Best. You have been intimately involved in this and I would like to hear your comments. Then it will be subjective as to how we want to move on from here.

**Dave Haist:** Thank you, President Moss. I am Dave Haist, COO of Do It Best Corp. I live in the northern part of the county at 16405 Davis Road. We certainly speak in support of the project and before going through a bit of detail, I want to thank President Moss and Council, the Commissioners and others who have really been involved to study and consider this project. We certainly thank everyone for their involvement. We will also quickly add that the points that were covered this morning and especially those with public safety, we certainly underscore. Do It Best, as most of you know, is one of those businesses in the Nelson Road corridor and right in the heart of the project. The railroad traffic and public safety issues, even before you go to the business issues, are accessibility or traffic or convenience is a very real situation where you have a couple of railroad crossings, as was talked about earlier. I think a second area hasn't been discussed at great length this morning is some of the impacts on flood control and flooding in that area. We see it from a stormwater management standpoint and a number of issues that really impact that area and would be solved by this project. Then if you really looked to the accessibility, that area is an area that has been pointed out this morning, that hasn't developed for a number of years. The Walmart on Lima Road was brought up and you don't have to go by that project more than once to see all of the activity that has already happened and much more that is following. There could be a lot of activity in this part of the County, as well, if we accessibility was more favorable to traffic. Sitting in the audience this morning and listening to the placement of bridges, any businesses or residents in that area could talk on the convenience issues and the challenges of getting across the river, given the few numbers of bridges that are in the east part of that area. This project would go a long, long way to solve that. I certainly was moved, this morning, to hear the cost benefit numbers and the challenging, by all of you, as to how realistic they are. I certainly applaud you continuing to look at those very carefully. Having said that, it is pretty impressive that a project could be done in large part with federal dollars and could have a cost benefit in the range that was talked about already. I think most importantly, this project ought to be done or not done because of the businesses like ourselves that are in the Nelson Road corridor. It really ought to be done for the community. We looked at the community far broader than the Nelson Road corridor and the district just north of the river that I heard

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about from Councilman Smith but what it means to the whole community and what it could mean years down the road. From Do It Best's perspective, we appreciate everyone's time and the chance to address all of these this morning. We encourage all of you to vote to approve the project. It is one that has been studied for lots of years and the last few years it has been studied with lots of rigor and we encourage that it go forward. There isn't a person in the room that if the project were delayed again, wouldn't believe that those costs wouldn't escalate. Again, thank you very much for your consideration.

**Paul Moss:** Council, are there any questions or comments? I was most pleased to hear that a couple of rows were Do It Best folks. That means that you may have been able to speak for a couple of rows. I don't know if we lost the folks from the Chamber or not. I think I saw Paul head out. Is he gone for good?

**Joni Howell:** He is coming back but I can speak to it if you like.

**Paul Moss:** Well, how about if he comes up right now.

**Paul Lagemann:** I am Paul Lagemann and I chair the Chamber's Transportation Committee.

**Joni Howell:** I am Joni Howell, Manager of Government and Community Affairs.

**Paul Lagemann:** We have had the Maplecrest Road Extension on our agenda since 2004. The importance of this, and we fought very hard, some of you followed the extension of Ardmore. We fought very hard and were involved in an over the year battle to make sure that extension happened so that you can get goods, services and people from the northwest side to the southwest side and have good reasonable traffic flow. This is, from the 30,000 foot view, the parallel to Ardmore. This provides exactly what Ardmore is providing on the west side, to the east side. It makes a lot of sense when you look at it from way up above. When you see those two primary arterials moving services, goods and people, and people is a key component, from the north to the south. There are a lot of other reasons but I don't want to belabor our testimony, however I will say that this is a major priority for business to not only consider how to get services from point to point but also to make sure the labor pool is packed. When the 300 plus acres of Shovel Ready sites come open, then we have the ability to move those people into those job sites quickly, easily and efficiently. This is a public safety issue and a business issue and we feel that this is really a common sense issue.

**Joni Howell:** Also, the Chief spoke about the public safety and being proactive. I think this is a proactive issue for the business community as well. What may or may not come in the next six months, the next twelve months or the next five years, I think long term development for the County and the region depends on this proactive initiative to help develop the workforce as well as potential development of

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bringing a Walmart and the related businesses that come with that. We are anxious to play a part in that.

**Paul Lagemann:** We do feel and I think the Transportation Committee feels anything that does a better job of bringing together New Haven and Fort Wayne, bringing our workforces and businesses closer, is a positive thing. That is all we have.

**Paul Moss:** Councilman Vogt?

**Darren Vogt:** One question. You referenced Ardmore Road and as I look at this, our repayment plan is based on business development. I want to encourage business development in any way that I can. Help me understand how many businesses have located along the Ardmore Road corridor. We are looking at a 25% breakeven point to repay and have a little bit of money left over. That is what I am struggling with. Help me with how you see Ardmore going.

**Paul Lagemann:** When Ardmore is finished, there will be a big difference. If you will note, right now, to get from 24 south, you are still on a bumpy two-lane road. Those improvements have not yet been made and it is a mess to get out there. It is inconvenient for anyone to locate out there and for the existing businesses to do business there. If you look at some of the folks that are being heavily impacted by Ardmore, you can count Valbruna, Omni Source, some of the concrete companies that are further out on Ardmore and you can look at folks that have to move goods and services back and forth to the airport. I think as we improve that corridor, and as those improvements come on line, you are going to see a lot more folks locating out there. It will provide easy access to internal, citywide deliveries from that area. Right now, it is very inconvenient. To make turns for the trucks coming in and out of Valbruna and Omni Source is very difficult. We think that these improvements will make a big difference for existing businesses and for expansions on those businesses. Has anything happened yet? No. Is the potential there for it to improve and for existing businesses to expand? Yes. I think the other difference that you are looking at is that you have, essentially, green fields as opposed to brown fields. We have a lot of brown fields in the Ardmore corridor. Those are much more difficult to develop and to attract economic development prospects from out of town. When you have an area that can be serviced by infrastructure and has not experienced significant development already, you have a great opportunity for bringing in larger scale industrial sites. We hope that is going to be the future for the Maplecrest extension.

**Darren Vogt:** That is assuming that there would be sewer and water to those locations which there is not at this particular point in time.

**Paul Lagemann:** If you don't have a reason to run sewer and water, you don't have the ability to get it out there.

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**Paula Hughes:** I can say that electrical lines are being proactively run right now. Putnam Paulding is expanding service into that area. They were doing so with the premise of the Maplecrest Road extension going through.

**Paul Lagemann:** I think you will see the sewer board reacting the same way.

**Paul Moss:** Council, are there any other questions? Thank you very much. That is a great tie, by the way, and if I wasn't personally opposed to wearing ties, I would have one just like it. Mayor McDonald, can you come up? Then we will have Representative Pond come up. That is not in any order of priority.

**Terry McDonald:** Terry McDonald, Mayor of New Haven. I would like to thank all of the members of County Council for being very patient and analyzing this project. I think it is good for the community to analyze the project and it is good for interlocal governmental relations. When we went into this agreement, I can't remember how many years ago, there are a couple of things that I want to bring up. I think the presentations by Scott and Dan were very good. I was appreciative of Mr. Haist from the Do It Best Corporation mentioning the storm drains issue. There will be a lot of storm drainage improvements made to this area. I know that our engineering department is actively conversing with the transmission company about the high power lines that run just to the east of the Sunnymede Addition. They are looking at putting in retention ponds and taking soil for the ramps. There is a choke point underneath the railroad that, unfortunately, goes underneath the Do It Best Corporation. They know it is there because it has broken a few times. That is a choke point for stormwater. The water and sewer capacities in that area do exist. Natural gas, fiber optics and plenty of electricity are along the Adams Center Road corridor. There is one thing that I would like to bring up and has not been talked about. That is the potential use, and we do have some active interest in, of at least two of the dinosaur buildings. One is on the Nelson Road corridor and the other is on Adams Center Road. On Nelson Road, particularly, the old Lake End Sales building and is about 145,000 square feet of unused warehousing. There is a small operation in there now but it doesn't even use a quarter of the space. There has been active interest in that building for an outside manufacturer. There are at least two other properties, the old rail building and one other property, that could potentially be redeveloped into more use. I agree that there will be an increase in rail traffic especially with the cost of diesel. It is bad news for the trucking industry but it is excellent news for the railroad. The railroad is not going to be moving anytime soon. That yard was established there many, many years ago and I just can't see them moving anywhere. Potentially a future sight may be in addition to what they have and may be further east, some day. I want to thank you for your time and thank you for having this not official public hearing, but I do appreciate you taking the time and public comment.

**Paul Moss:** Council, are there any questions for the Mayor? You obviously stated your position very well. Representative Pond, did you have a couple of comments that you wanted to make?

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**Phyllis Pond:** I am Phyllis Pond, State Representative of the 85<sup>th</sup> District, which is all north of the Adams Township line. We have had good testimony about the economic development and so I won't mention that. I would like to thank this Council as well as past Councils for having the foresight to develop the Hillegas and Ardmore and Huguenard and Engle Roads. Those have been real blessings and have areas for expansion. I hope that you do consider this. I only want to address the emergency responders and safety issues that Mike and John touched on. When Sunnymede School closed, they brought all of the children from Lake Forest and Sunnymede to New Haven. That gave me an opportunity to visit Lake Forest and Riverhaven a lot. I would go out there to visit the parents and kids and I got so well known that when I drove in, I could see the kids going from house to house letting them know that the teacher was there. So, I want to only talk to one issue. If you can, pretend for a minute that you live on South River Road, Beverly Drive, Spillson or McBride. When the water comes up, Rose Avenue and Parrot Road close. If there is a train on the track, you can't get out and the emergency responders can't get in. When I was out there, one time, talking to the mother of one of these three kids, the grandfather came out. The grandfather has now passed away but his name was Curly Rhoads. He impressed on me how helpless they were and he said if he had a heart attack, it could be an hour before anyone could get across the railroad tracks. If somebody's house caught fire in that area, the fire trucks couldn't get there. I was unaware of it until that time. I thought about it, all these years, and this Maplecrest extension is worth it. They will have a way out then. If you have ever been to New Haven, you know that those trains can sometimes be on the tracks for a long period of time. We sometimes forget the Riverhaven area and there are several people that live out there. The Lake Forest people, across the river, can get help from Fort Wayne. I hope you will consider for the safety and the emergency responders. The testimony today has proven that the money is either there or can be there and I think it is a win-win project. I knew, too, that the sewer pipe runs under the Do It Best. The lady that sold the land for Walmart at Adams Center and 930, I bet she called me six or seven times a year trying to get the water problem taken care of there. This will take care of the water problem. It takes a major project, like this, to take care of that. Thank you very much.

**Paul Moss:** Thank you. Council, are there any questions for Representative Pond?

**Roy Buskirk:** I have one. Do you think there could be some earmarked funds from the State because of the safety issue?

**Phyllis Pond:** I would think maybe even on the water too. They need to go clear around Do It Best and not even use that sewer that goes underneath. They are getting sewer and water out in Riverhaven and it will probably make it prime property. If you get the sewer and water and then get the new road, that is going to be very valuable property.

**Roy Buskirk:** I think that is one thing that hasn't been brought up and that is on this road project, the flooding issue out there and some of the solution that this project

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will have on the flooding. I talked to Walmart yesterday and talked with the engineer that designed their site plan and he feels that they are taking care of any water issues on that site.

**Phyllis Pond:** They are going to dig a pond.

**Roy Buskirk:** Yes, they are going to dig a retention pond. I talked with the gentleman who is in charge of developing all of their sites in Indiana. He told me that Walmart still anticipates building the store there. I asked him if they were going to start this Friday or next Monday and he said that he could not commit to a date. He did say that if there is no road project, there would be no Walmart.

**Darren Vogt:** There is a distinction between flood and sewer. Let's make sure that we understand that Riverhaven is still in a flood zone and that is not going to change. Sewer waters are a completely separate issue from flood waters.

**Phyllis Pond:** Right, it is flood water that comes down from where the Walmart would be. They need to divert all of that flood water.

**Darren Vogt:** From a property value standpoint, that property is still in a flood plane.

**Phyllis Pond:** They have great ways to build that up.

**Paul Moss:** Council, I would just remind everybody that per Commissioner Peter's comment early on, they are hoping to have a motion made and successfully passed. Anybody at this table can do that at any time. My intent, if there is a motion made, is to have a roll call vote so that everyone who has refrained from making their comments can have an opportunity to do that. Having said that, I am going to assume that everyone in the audience is in support of this project however, if there is an individual that may or may not represent a group that has not heard or can bring a relatively fresh perspective to the discussion, we will be happy to hear it. Come right up.

**Steve Jehl:** I am Steve Jehl, Manager and part owner of the Georgetown Shopping Center. Our family also owns the Georgetown Apartments and Lake Forest Apartments. The bottom line is that the Georgetown Shopping Center is all for this Maplecrest Road extension. I am very happy to see it coming. In Jehl's Barn, which is just down Lake Avenue, there is a picture of a very old man wearing a Cubs hat and Cubs uniform and he says, "I'm waiting for the pennant." This might be the year for the Cubs and this might be the year for the Maplecrest Road extension. I have been waiting for the Maplecrest Road extension for a long, long time. It is good to see Eli Samaan in the audience. He has had this Maplecrest Road extension on the future transportation plan since 19...

**Eli Samaan:** 1971.

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**Steve Jehl:** 1971.

**Eli Samaan:** November 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Steve Jehl:** My family, Tom, Leo and Paul Jehl, were the people that spearheaded the developing of the Georgetown Shopping Center and the area around Georgetown in the late 1960's. They expanded it on the anticipation of this Maplecrest Road extension and it was something that they were looking for. Right now, Georgetown has a few vacancies that we would like to fill and we think that the increased traffic and opportunities for people to come to Georgetown would be a benefit to us. We are happy to see that happen. It is great to see that there is a cost benefit analysis that is positive. Georgetown is all for it.

**Cal Miller:** Have you spoken to Councilman Smith?

**Steve Jehl:** I was quite surprised to hear his comments.

**Cal Miller:** Were you the one who attended the meeting that only had one vote in favor of this?

**Steve Jehl:** I wasn't at the meeting.

**Paul Moss:** One of the things that is interesting about this project is there is the north part of it and the south part of it and there is a dividing line that we are going to bridge, no pun intended, but there will be traffic flow and some development north and south. It is tough to understand which way that is going to go. From your perspective about Georgetown Square, you just believe intuitively. You made an interesting comment about having some empty storefronts. That has been one of my concerns and I have used that as somewhat of an analogous situation. We have a lot of strip malls out there that are sitting empty because we have to build one two blocks away. I do believe that the Coliseum Boulevard is going to have a negative impact there. You have to weigh that with everything else. Is it just intuition, in your opinion, that you are utilizing and you believe that the additional traffic is going to help fill some of those storefronts and get some additional business out there?

**Steve Jehl:** Yes. We have talked with a lot of our store owners over the last several years and they have said what's happening that will help Georgetown? We always say that this project is looks like it is going to happen. The store owners say great and they are happy to hear that. We have had some stores that just closed recently because the traffic isn't there that used to be there and they couldn't hold on long enough for this extension to occur. Yes, it is intuitive and not something that I can say for sure is going to happen but it will help.

**Paul Moss:** Well, based on your experiences, this will help.

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**Steve Jehl:** If someone looks at Georgetown and says they would like to have a store there, they ask what the traffic count is and what is the three mile or five mile radius of population? Of course, everything south of the river can't be included in that population because it takes them a circuitous route to get there. From the standpoint of what retailers look for, they look for traffic and population.

**Paul Moss:** Council, are there any questions for Mr. Jehl? Certainly appreciate you taking the time to wait through this and voice your opinion.

**Eli Samaan:** Would you allow me two minutes?

**Paul Moss:** Yes, you just limited yourself. I was going to give you five but come on up.

**Eli Samaan:** I am not European so I am not calm, I am sorry. I am a common citizen, Eli Samaan. By the way, I am a member of the Fort Wayne Chamber Transportation Committee, we work together to see the benefits for the whole community. Let me clarify this, 1971 plan included many corridors. At that time, there were dreams. Try to take Hobson all the way to Edsall and you will have problems. That was eliminated. The expressway system, we realized that east-west may be possible. North-south, forget it because it is going to destroy many things. Studies were done. In 1974, the cost was \$110 million. When we privately met with the State Highway, they said that if we have the money, we can build it. It is about time that this community knows that there won't be an expressway system to relieve congestion. So, you are relying on what certain urban corridor to distribute the traffic. 469 is way out. Coliseum Boulevard, which we worry about, and you have that gorgeous interchange that can handle so much traffic? No! It is limited. It doesn't matter if you have four lanes or not. That interchange can not handle the traffic. There are bad times that we are going through now but I hope you guys are not always pessimistic like you sounded. If we are going to bounce out of this, we have to keep fighting. We shouldn't be shy asking for further grants. Each one of us is paying lots of money to the federal government. How about receiving some of it back! What is the matter with you? Why can't we ask? Don't be shy. We talked with Congressman Souder until he got us money. I am not going to stop talking. I want more money coming to this area. South Bend, Evansville and Lafayette all go after it and they get the funding. Why? Because they are looking in the future. How can we sustain and compete? We shouldn't be shy. We love this area. Work together and come up with good responsible projects. Thank you.

**Paul Moss:** Hold on. Councilman Buskirk?

**Roy Buskirk:** I was just trying to get him stopped.

**Paul Moss:** Well, I have a question. You have been involved in this since, I think you said November 17, 1971, so this has been on the books, so to speak, for a whole

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lot of years. Who is primarily responsible for, what I believe is a gross failure in moving this forward at a time when the costs were dramatically lower?

**Eli Samaan:** Okay, let me explain this. Prior to starting Transportation Planning, based on President Kennedy's requirement in 1961, there was no funding in planning. It came with the State starting to spend some of their funds. I worked with a firm from Chicago and the City of Fort Wayne, from Mayor Brudy, Zeis and everybody to make a decision of what is needed. That doesn't mean that you are going to build all of the project. INDOT, at that time State Highway Commission, gave us allocations per year. When I did the analysis of finances, I found out how much Allen County can put aside for projects. Mayor Zeis' secretary gave me how much the Board of Works can afford to put, per year, to do projects. We did an analysis and we came up with a twenty-year possibility of doing projects. Maplecrest wasn't the highest priority, so you have to prioritize every five years. In 1968, the Commissioners did a study to see if a toll road can be built. Washington, D.C. said that we didn't have enough traffic in 1968. In 1974, Floyd Burroughs and Associates did a study for the County Commissioners. The cost was \$14 million in 1974. And nobody would help them on funding it. Now...

**Paula Hughes:** Wait, wait. Eli, you know that I have the utmost respect for your experience and abilities in this but you have been talking for three and a half minutes and we are only to 1974. I am going to make a motion that this Council approve the Commissioners going forward on the \$25 million bond issue to fund the Maplecrest Bridge expansion.

**Patt Kite:** Second.

**Maye Johnson:** Second.

**Roy Buskirk:** Second.

**Paul Moss:** **We have a motion and three seconds.** That is probably a record. There is an opportunity for further discussion amongst the Council but there is an individual that has been waiting and waving to come up. Normally there would be discussion amongst us but if it is okay with all of you, I would like her to come up and make her comments. Then we can have any additional discussion.

**Patty Davis:** My name is Patty Davis and I live at 6515 Old Maumee Road. I will make this very quick. I am directly behind Do It Best. I just have one question and concern for the Maplecrest extension project. Three residential properties, on my street, have been purchased already, one on 930 and a commercial building on my street. My understanding for the three residences is that they will be out by late summer or early fall. The one on 930 is already empty. My question is, let's say that they move August 31<sup>st</sup>, who is responsible or what is the time limit for demolishing those homes? My concern is the deterioration of my property, my street and my neighborhood. We hear about all of these metal thefts, water and copper and

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vandalism. That is my concern and no one has brought that up. Is there a timeframe? One week those houses will be demolished and where do we stand on that?

**Paul Moss:** Councilman Buskirk may have an answer to that.

**Roy Buskirk:** Because I do right-of-way buying throughout the State, my experience has been that once the property has been closed, then the responsibility in this case would be turned over to the Commissioners. Sometimes the actual demolition is delayed because of funding involved with it.

**Patty Davis:** That was my question, whether the project moves forward or stays as is, do we just sit with three empty homes?

**Roy Buskirk:** If they remain empty, they have to be boarded and there are certain safety steps that they have to take even if they are not completely demolished. Rodents are one of the concerns and safety issues, as far as trespassing. As soon as funding is available, they will have demolition on them. I don't know if they have funding in place. Is there funding?

**Linda Bloom:** Yes, there is funding.

**Paul Moss:** You should probably work with Mr. Hartman and Commissioner Bloom, to get those questions answered.

**Patty Davis:** You say that they will board them up but that is real negative to my area.

**Roy Buskirk:** I understand that.

**Linda Bloom:** There will be a demolition.

**Roy Buskirk:** I was just giving you a general answer.

**Patty Davis:** Okay, thank you very much.

**Paul Moss:** We have a motion of support for this project and several seconds. Is there any additional discussion that you would like to have amongst ourselves? If not, what I would ask, Becky, is that you provide us with a roll call vote so that folks can make any comments that they choose to make.

**Becky Butler:** Councilman Vogt?

**Darren Vogt:** I am no idiot and I can do the math and I heard three seconds and that means this vote passes. Actually, my vote isn't relative to the situation. The concerns that I have are, let me start with pessimism. My job, as a fiscal agent, is to be pessimistic when I look at projections and repayment of this bond. I have to take

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those with the utmost seriousness and look at the viability. The only correlation that I have right now is the Ardmore expansion, to consider whether or not the development will occur. I have talked to many developers and real estate agents about the residential potential for this area and there is very little residential potential for this area which leads to very little potential for commercial growth outside of the Walmart situation. Walmart, although they do bring jobs, it is a shifting of labor force from one to another and as I see the continued overdevelopment of strip malls and empty facilities all along the area, that concerns me. The benefits of the project, there are a lot of them. It will benefit a lot of people including me. The ozone issues and the attainment levels are there. The trips, although I don't think we can quantify those as Mr. Avery alluded to and there is some skepticism on my part towards those. With all of that said, I go back to the repayment and my concern about the ability to do that, the affect to potentially be one of two things, one that we may have to raise the rate on Major Bridge or we reduce the taxes. In this town, our taxes have continued to go up and at this point, I am going to vote against this motion.

**Becky Butler:** Councilwoman Johnson?

**Maye Johnson:** I struggled with this particular project wanting to vote for it. I really feel that this part of Allen County has been neglected, in terms of business development and I see the economic benefits for doing this. My main concern was how we pay for it. I really want to thank my colleagues, Miller, Buskirk and Vogt, for their analytical approach and for asking questions that resulted in answers, in my opinion, that supported every factor that we have talked about, the transportation, connectivity, environmental, quality of life issues and public safety. I want to go back to making decisions that serve all of Allen County. I had the good fortune of serving on the Plan-It Allen Committee with Councilman Smith. As a matter of fact, Councilman Smith, you talked me into serving. What we were looking at was a comprehensive approach to bringing development to all of Allen County. I think this project has that potential. We have found out how we can pay for it and the cost ration benefits certainly have been presented today. So, I am support of the project.

**Becky Butler:** Councilman Buskirk?

**Roy Buskirk:** Pretty much a repeat of everything that has been said and we had asked the people in the audience to not repeat what had been said. There are a couple of side benefits from this project. One is the flooding issue, which we mentioned this morning. The other is the ozone benefits. It is very difficult to attract new industry and new businesses to a county that does not meet the federal air quality controls and we had gone through that for a couple of years. I was personally involved in site selections for a couple of industries that ended up turning away from Allen County because of the ozone issue. I am disappointed on the safety numbers that have been provided. I have an associate degree in accounting and I like to have facts and figures. This Council has been provided with a lot of facts and figures on the funding side. I have said, from day one, that I would support this extension or

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expansion of Maplecrest if I could be assured of the funding mechanism being in place and I have been and so therefore, I support this.

**Becky Butler:** President Moss?

**Paul Moss:** This has been one of the more interesting discussions that I have been involved in since I have been on Council. I have taken a jaundiced view of this project for a variety of reasons and I don't apologize for doing that. I think this Council should be applauded for taking an extremely hard look at a project of this expense. I think that is critically important. I am disappointed in the way this was handled in many facets, over the years. I am disappointed that this Council wasn't brought in on a more timely basis but here we are, at the present day, needing to make a vote. I think it is important, for the folks in the audience, to understand that if you look at the total debt service that we have accumulated in Allen County, and when I say the total debt service, I mean schools and they are the majority of it and other taxing entities, the Auditor's Office provided and this is a moving number that shifts daily as payments are being made to take down the debt, but we are currently at \$562 million in terms of the debt service for Allen County. I think that that is significant. We are not at our limit and we have room to go. For some folks and some bureaucrats, they would probably push to get us to that goal and do it with a smile on their face. I take a different approach. I think that is something that we need to look at and it has played significantly into this. The numbers that have been provided by Mr. Harrold and Mr. Avery, I believe those numbers have been adjusted over time, primarily because of some of the questions that we have asked. We have probably given this about as hard a look as we possibly could. I personally believe that the bonds will be repaid as has been stated by Mr. Harrold and Mr. Royse and the Commissioners. If, on down the road, they are not, then I will pledge that I will personally will show up at each and every Commissioner's home and picket right out in front of their homes. There is a bit of a leap in faith in that regard but I am as confident as I could be that this is going to be repaid appropriately. With that, I vote in support of the project.

**Becky Butler:** Councilwoman Hughes?

**Paula Hughes:** I want to go back to the day, last fall, in November and I was standing in the County Council office and sorting through the mail. I opened the New Haven Chamber newsletter and read that our County Highway Department had told the New Haven Chamber that Maplecrest Road was going forward and was being funded by a \$25 million bond. I was outraged and appalled because, as a County Council member, that was the first I had heard of it. I am bringing up old news but I am doing it to bring up a point that I think we have come a long way in terms of communication between the Commissioners and Council. It has, at times, been extremely painful but I hope we can hang on to some of the lessons that we have learned through this. Council, I think we have done a very good job of pushing the Commissioners and the staff of County government to prove the point. I came on board, fairly early on, in favor of the Maplecrest Road project because I have a

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background as being the Council person that served on the Urban Transportation Advisory Board and on the Regional Coordinating Council. I also represent the northeast quadrant of Allen County. I completely eclipse Councilman Smith's district. His district is completely enclosed in my district and so I represent the same citizens. I have heard nothing but positive and have not had a single, negative call about this project. I have received more calls about this project than I have anything else that I have done in my six years at the Council table. Those things weigh heavily in my mind but I am here to represent the citizens. I feel that voting positively in support of this will do that. I take the fiscal responsibility very seriously and once I understood the mechanism for funding this, that it is a Major Bridge bond, the reason there is no referendum required is because there are no new property taxes associated with this project. It is going to be funded entirely by existing revenue streams and TIF bonds generated by new growth from the project. Those are compelling reasons. This is what government is here to do, in my mind, to create the infrastructure that helps a community grow. The critics of this project have said that this is just for convenience but you can say that about any road project. Frankly, what is a road but a convenient way to get from Point A to Point B? I am very happy to be able to support this and vote in favor.

**Becky Butler:** Councilwoman Kite?

**Patt Kite:** I have been making all kinds of notes because I don't want to forget some of the things that have been going through my head. I, too, have been a supporter of this project since early on. Probably part of the reason or most of the reason is because I have been a first responder and an emergency responder in the very area that we are talking about. I know what that means to the lives there. To Councilman Buskirk's concern about not having numbers, I don't know that public safety issues are always measurable by how many minutes someone was delayed to get somewhere for a fire call or ambulance call. I will tell you that if it costs a life, you can certainly make a statistic out of that. I know that the decision that I am going to vote on is probably not going to be popular with everyone and that anyone in the whole world can do things right, if they practice enough. It is not always a popular decision or fun to do the right thing. With that, I will say, I am not going to be here next year but I am very honored to be part of a decision that is going to move Allen County forward and I am voting for the project.

**Becky Butler:** Councilman Miller?

**Cal Miller:** This has been the most interesting and exciting issue I have ever been involved with on County Council. It is government at its absolute best when you are challenging each other every single step of the way to prove your point or see if you can't prove your point. I will tell you, Mr. Samaan, that I will continue to be pessimistic for every single day that I remain in office because it is through that pessimism that the Commissioners were able to make the point that when you take out 75% of the optimism of a study, you can still make the funding work. I think that was a beautiful illustration that we have done for the taxpayers. It has been the most

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challenging decision, most interesting, most rewarding embracing of government and how it works and interacts with each other. I have the utmost respect for the no vote from Councilman Vogt, the utmost respect for Councilman Smith and with that said, I vote in support of this project. I look forward to reaping the benefits on the northeast side of town as I do every single day as I get onto Ardmore/Hillegas and hope that the folks on that side of town can enjoy this for years to come.

**Paul Moss: So we have gone through that and the motion carries 6-1. Would anyone care to move to adjourn?**

**Darren Vogt:** Move to adjourn.

**Paula Hughes:** Second.

**Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.