Passed 7-1 (Sabbagh)
Banach absent

RESOLUTION 4-19

**OPPOSING THE ROUTING OF INTERSTATE 69 (I-69)
THROUGH THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON**

WHEREAS, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) chose to do a "tiered" Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Interstate 69, and at Tier 1 INDOT selected Alternative 3C which will pass through the City of Bloomington; and

WHEREAS, in Tier 1 seven of nine members of the Bloomington City Council submitted a letter to INDOT and the Governor as part of the public input process, opposing the routing of I-69 through Bloomington and further recommending the existing US-41/I-70 corridor as the most fiscally responsible and least environmentally destructive I-69 alternative; and

WHEREAS, a Council resolution is the appropriate, sanctioned legislative tool available to cities to express their position on items of great importance to the community; and

WHEREAS, the EIS is moving into Tier 2 and INDOT is currently soliciting comments from public officials regarding I-69 issues in their communities, and so it is appropriate and timely for the Council to re-state its position in the form of a resolution opposing route 3C for I-69; and

WHEREAS, Bloomington's comparative economic advantage is the beauty of its natural surroundings and its unique quality of life as enhanced by the cultural opportunities and attractive amenities available in this community; and

WHEREAS, an interstate highway through Bloomington and Monroe County would undermine our existing economic strengths and threaten the assets and characteristics that are key to our future economic vitality and high quality of life for our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Bloomington will continue to thrive if we maintain and enhance our unique and attractive environment, our outstanding natural and cultural amenities, and our distinct community character, all of which stand to be diminished by the pollution, noise, traffic, and generic sprawl that will result from a superhighway bisecting the City; and

WHEREAS, an international trucking corridor through the City will adversely affect the air and water quality of Bloomington and the surrounding areas, and which could lead to Bloomington becoming a non-attainment area for air-quality under EPA regulations which would have a significant negative effect on the business environment; and

WHEREAS, the development of such a corridor will promote a growth pattern of "urban sprawl" by encouraging the dispersal of development, and necessitating reliance on automobiles for transportation while increasing barriers to alternative transportation, all in opposition to the stated goals of Bloomington's Growth Policies Plan (GPP); and

WHEREAS, this corridor, as shown in profile in the EIS, is massive with 12 lanes, including an elevated 8-lane "urban freeway" in the center, with a "wall" of unspecified height at the edges and frontage roads on either side; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington's Growth Policies Plan recognizes that sustainability and environmental protection are key components of the guiding principle of nurture environmental integrity, and the proposed new terrain I-69 interstate undermines both sustainability and environmental integrity; and

WHEREAS, the existing road network provides Bloomington with the competitive transportation costs and reliability of service that we need in order to prosper, and

we are in close proximity to Indianapolis, the most interstate connected city in the country, and the Indianapolis airport, and we are linked directly to the Indianapolis metro area by a divided 4-lane highway, State Road 37; and

WHEREAS, appropriate improvements to SR 37 and other area highways will help our region more than huge, costly investment in one limited-access superhighway; and

WHEREAS, Indiana currently is one of the most interstate-dense of all states yet is also a leading state in terms of job loss and slow income growth, and we do not believe that additional interstate highway mileage will help Indiana position itself to succeed in the 21st century economy; and

WHEREAS, I-69 is being planned and designated as a NAFTA superhighway, with part of its stated purpose being the furthering of NAFTA, and under NAFTA the corporate trend has been to move manufacturing and assembly jobs to low wage countries with less enforcement of health, safety, labor and environmental standards; and

WHEREAS, the economic development benefits in the form of new local manufacturing jobs often touted by proponents of I-69 are highly speculative and should be evaluated critically based upon actual evidence; and

WHEREAS, the EIS states, among other relevant findings, "When (population change) is taken into account, we find that the real disposable income per capita for the build alternatives does not differ significantly from the 2025 forecast for the no build alternative." (INDOT Draft EIS for I-69, technical report 5.3.2, page 37), indicating that I-69 will not improve economic conditions for residents of Southwest Indiana; and

WHEREAS, the original $800 million price tag estimate for the project has grown to $2 billion, with construction still years away, and the true cost to Indiana taxpayers is unknown and very likely much higher; and

WHEREAS, a recent cost and funding analysis by the State Senate Finance Chair concluded that in order to build I-69 route 3C either virtually all of the State's highway construction money for many years to come would need to be dedicated to this single project or a significant State gas tax increase would be required; and

WHEREAS, Senator Richard Lugar stated in a letter to a Bloomington City Council member, "The bulk of the federal highway funds required to construct the Southwest Indiana Highway (I-69) will likely come from Indiana's annual allocation transportation funds distributed by the U.S. Department of Transportation according to the formulas specified in the TEA 21 law."; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of unlikely, significant new and additional funding sources, the high cost of I-69 will translate into a reduction in the state's ability to complete other needed, important local and state transportation projects; and

WHEREAS, Senator Lugar described the financial implications of I-69's cost to Indiana when he stated in another recent letter, "All Hoosiers may wish to discuss the priority of such expenditures and the probability of potential public and private economic gains at a time of extraordinary national security, health care, social security, and education needs in Indiana and throughout the Country"; and

WHEREAS, Terre Haute and other Hoosier cities along US 41 and I-70 have current economies that are more transportation-based and whose economies stand to be harmed significantly by the diversion of existing traffic and associated economic activity to any new-terrain I-69 route; and

WHEREAS, predicted safety increases will likely be offset by decreases resulting from greatly increased volumes of traffic, increased speeds, and increased time of exposure due to road closures that would necessitate additional driving time for local traffic; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes the importance of Naval Surface Warfare Center at Crane (Crane) to Bloomington, the region, and the State, and the Council has expressed its support for Crane in a resolution, passed unanimously, and the City of Bloomington has contributed funding to the Southern Indiana Business Alliance to assist in lobbying for Crane in the face of threat from the base realignment and closure (BRAC) process; and

WHEREAS, Crane is served on the west by US Highway 231, which is currently undergoing major upgrades, including recent completion of a new bridge over the Ohio River and a new roadway from Rockport, Indiana, to I-64, and a planned bypass around Jasper, and it is served by 4- lane SR 37 approximately 13 miles east of Crane's north gate, both part of Indiana's National Highway System as submitted to the FHWA; and

WHEREAS, a major international trucking highway passing by Crane would promote traveler service and other development encroachments associated with interstates that could reduce the facility's military value and security, making the base more susceptible to closure, and these development pressures and patterns would be particularly difficult to control in counties with no planning and zoning like those where Crane is located; and

WHEREAS, it is questionable that the proposed I-69, lacking identified funding and at least 15 years from completion, is a significant factor in current BRAC deliberations; and

WHEREAS, elected members of local government have a duty to express the best interests of the community in a civil manner for the sake of informing the public debate and encouraging outcomes consistent with the community's vision and the quality of life expectations and hopes of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, it is the Council's responsibility to provide the community with a civil forum for the discussion of important community issues;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

SECTION I. The Council concludes that I-69 route 3C is inconsistent with and conflicts with our community's vision, our Growth Policies Plan, and the quality of life expectations and priorities of our citizens.

SECTION II. The Council concludes that I-69 will have an overall harmful rather than beneficial economic effect on Bloomington and Monroe County and that it is not in the interest of our citizens to have I-69 routed through our community.

SECTION III. The Council further concludes that I-69 route 3C is not in the best interest of the citizens of the State of Indiana, and the Council beseeches the Governor and INDOT to focus our scarce transportation funds on appropriate improvements to existing roadways where there are demonstrated needs, and on rail and other more sustainable transportation modes that will reduce negative environmental impacts and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

SECTION IV. The Council asks the state to abandon plans for route 3C, and if it does not, the Council asks the FHWA to not approve the project.

SECTION V. The Council urges INDOT to focus on the management of the State Road 37 corridor, continuing with intersection improvements, prohibiting additional direct road cuts throughout the corridor, and constructing frontage roads where needed.

SECTION VI. Be it further resolved that, we direct the City Clerk to send a copy of this resolution to the Governor of Indiana, the Commissioner of INDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and our state and federal legislative delegations.

PASSED and ADOPTED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this 22nd day of September, 2004.

MICHAEL DIEKHOFF, President
Bloomington Common Council

ATTEST:

REGINA MOORE, Clerk
City of Bloomington

PRESENTED by me to the Mayor of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this 23rd day of September, 2004.

REGINA MOORE, Clerk
City of Bloomington

SIGNED and APPROVED by me upon this 23 day of September, 2004.

MARK KRUZAN, Mayor
City of Bloomington

SYNOPSIS

This resolution is sponsored by Councilmembers Ruff and Gaal, and serves four primary purposes: (1) to serve as a response to a solicitation from INDOT (via their consultants) for EIS Tier 2 input from local elected officials regarding I-69 impacts, concerns, and community issues; (2) to serve as the means for the new Council and the new City Administration to put the City of Bloomington officially and formally on record as opposing I-69 through the City by the adoption of a resolution; (3) to educate and further inform the public regarding the reasons for the City's opposition to I-69; and (4) to provide the community with a civil forum for the discussion of this important community issue. The resolution concludes that I-69 conflicts with our community's vision for the future, our GPP, and the quality of life expectations and priorities of our citizens, and that I-69 would result in an overall harmful rather than beneficial effect on Bloomington and its citizens. It asks the Governor and INDOT to abandon plans for the new-terrain I-69 and instead focus scarce transportation funds on improvements to existing roadways where there are demonstrated needs, and on other more sustainable transportation modes that will reduce negative environmental impacts and reduce dependence on foreign oil. Finally the resolution directs the City Clerk to send copies of the resolution to the Governor, INDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and our state and federal legislative delegations.

Note: The resolution was revised on Monday, September 20, 2004 in order to correct the name of Councilmember Gaal as it appears in the synopsis.

Signed copies to:
Legal (5)
Governor Kernan
INDOT
Fed. Highway Admin.
file
IN State Senators
IN State Representatives
clerk
US Senators from Indiana
US Representatives from Indiana
CA/CA (2)