


Today's forecast



HIGH 33 | **LOW** 24

WEATHER | A14

Market Basket



Chief ice cream heads to Granger

BUSINESS | A9

Count 'em up



Try 'scavenger hunt' style of bird-watching

EXPLORE | B6

South Bend Tribune

Volume 148 Issue No. 326

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

\$1.00

County seeks long-term growth plan

Consulting firm could be paid up to \$500,000

By Christian Sheckler
South Bend Tribune

SOUTH BEND — St. Joseph County expects to pay an outside firm up to a half-million dollars to create a new long-term roadmap for land use in the county's suburbs, rural areas and small towns, a move that comes amid ongoing conflict over designs for heavy industrial growth on farmland near New Carlisle.

The Board of Commissioners, the county's three executives, voted Tuesday to seek applications from consulting firms to create the "comprehensive plan," which could guide zoning, infrastructure and other development decisions in the county for the next two decades.

Commissioners President Andy Kostielney said the county expects to pay \$250,000 to \$500,000 for the development of the plan. Proposals are due to the commissioners March 16, and the county hopes to select a firm and kick off the project in May, with the final plan expected two years later.

Commissioners Kostielney, Derek Dieter and Deb Fleming voted unanimously to put the work out for bid, noting the county's long-term plan had not been updated since 2002.

"This has been a long time coming," Kostielney said before the vote Tuesday. "We're anticipating it to be on the higher end of what the cost would be, but we want to make sure it's done right, that we get plenty of community input, check all the boxes."

Comprehensive plans are used by local governments to determine where to allow various types of housing, commercial, agricultural and industrial development; where to build infrastructure such as roads and sewers; and how best to manage growth while preserving the environment and an area's traditional character.

Some of the projects identified in the county's 2002 comprehensive plan, such as development of the Capital Avenue corridor in Mishawaka and the Blackthorn area north of the South Bend International Airport, have already come to fruition.

Other changes, such as the Four Winds Casino on South Bend's southwest side and the re-routing of U.S. 31 to bypass Lakeville, also have changed the landscape.

When the 2002 comprehensive plan was formed, South Bend was part of the Area Plan Commission, but has since withdrawn. The county's new plan will cover unincorporated areas and the towns of Roseland, Unceola, Lakeville, North Liberty and New Carlisle.

Much of the public discussion around the long-term plan is likely to focus on the redevelopment of farmland in Olive Township for a divisive industrial "mega-park" known as the Indiana Enterprise Center.

See COUNTY, A2



"We're hoping to have so many projects going this summer that the complaint isn't the conditions of the roads but 'hey, all our roads are being constructed,' so it will be a lot."

— Mayor James Mueller

'REBUILDING OUR STREETS'

Plan unveiled to repave more neighborhood roads

By Jeff Parrott | South Bend Tribune

SOUTH BEND

Mayor James Mueller Tuesday announced a three-year \$25 million "Rebuilding Our Streets" plan that will focus more attention on repaving lesser-traveled neighborhood streets.

"During my conversations with residents throughout South Bend, I have heard loud and clear that our streets are in desperate need of improvement," Mueller said at a press conference at the corner of Ford and Dundee streets, a block whose street surface his administration has deemed in some of the worst condition.

Mueller said the city historically has prioritized streets with the highest traffic volume for annual repaving, but residents in a 2018 quality of life survey identified neighborhood streets as one of the most important things they want to see city money spent on.

The administration plans to ask the common council next month to issue a roughly \$9 million bond issue to get a "jump start" on the work, debt that will be repaid through existing income tax rates in the years to come. The rest of the funding will come from state and federal

sources the city traditionally has used to resurface streets.

The city's Public Works Department has assessed all streets' condition and rated them on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the worst. Streets with the lowest ratings will see attention first. Public Works Director Eric Horvath said the city plans to resurface about 50 lane-miles this summer and another 50 or 60 miles of "smaller treatments," roughly twice the usual amount.

"We're hoping to have so many projects going this summer that the complaint isn't the conditions of the roads but 'hey, all our roads are being constructed,' so it will be a lot," Mueller said.

Mueller's chief innovation officer, Denise Linn Riedl, also unveiled a new online dashboard where residents can check the condition rating of streets and track progress toward their improvements, in both the three-

year plan and a larger 10-year goal.

Joining Mueller at the press conference were several common council members, including Council President Karen White.

"We're very supportive of this plan," White said. "It's a very exciting plan. The dashboard is even more exciting, where our citizens can go online and see where they're at in terms of their various streets."

Council member Sheila Niezgodski, in whose district the intersection lies, also spoke in favor of the plan.

"This is wonderful day," Niezgodski said. "This plan represents fair equity for all of our neighborhoods, especially areas like where we stand today that have felt left behind."

The plan, including a list of the streets to be addressed, ranked by their condition, can be found at southbendin.gov/streetsplan.

Tribune Photo/ROBERT FRANKLIN

Dundee Street, shown near its intersection with Ford Street, is one one of the streets the city will resurface first because of its relatively poor condition, as part of the "Rebuilding Our Streets" plan that South Bend Mayor James Mueller announced on Tuesday.

Getting tough on rioters

State bills propose increased penalties

By Casey Smith
Associated Press/Report For America

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indiana's Republican lawmakers are attempting to deter protests that have elevated since George Floyd's death with a series of bills that would increase penalties for rioting, vandalizing monuments, blocking emergency

See TOUGH, A3



AP File Photo/MICHAEL CONROY

A woman leads a chant as protesters took a knee at the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis, June 1, over the death of George Floyd, a Black man who was in police custody in Minneapolis. Floyd died after being restrained by Minneapolis police officers on Memorial Day.

Senate confirms Buttigieg as transportation leader

Former S.B. mayor now faces infrastructure, climate issues

By Hope Yen
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate on Tuesday confirmed Pete Buttigieg as transportation secretary, the first openly gay person to take a Cabinet post, tasked with advancing President Joe

Biden's ambitious agenda of rebuilding the nation's infrastructure and fighting climate change.

Buttigieg, a 39-year-old former mayor of South Bend, and Biden's one-time rival during the Democratic presidential



See SENATE, A2

Buttigieg

