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Transit proposal includes tax hike

Updated: Tuesday, 13 Dec 2011, 6:39 PM EST
Published: Tuesday, 13 Dec 2011, 9:45 AM EST

Jim Shella

INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) - Are you willing to pay higher taxes for a better mass transit system? It's a question that may be on the ballot come November.

Corporate leaders and mayors from Marion and Hamilton counties are back with a plan that calls for tax hikes to those two counties, if lawmakers and voters approve.

The \$1.3 billion proposal was unveiled at a news conference at the State Fairgrounds Tuesday morning. It would double bus service in Marion County over the next 10 years, expand it to Hamilton County, and establish what's known as bus rapid transit routes as well as train service from Noblesville to downtown Indianapolis.

The average family would be asked to pay higher income taxes to the tune of \$10 a month. Lawmakers will be asked to approve referendums on the higher taxes.

"We think we can show that this is an effective investment that pays dividends broadly across participating counties," said Mark Miles of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership.

"It's not going to happen overnight," said Noblesville Mayor John Ditslear. "It may not happen. I think what we're doing here is just asking for us, the people of each county, to vote if we want to do this or not."

The mass transit plan is a priority for Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard. He met with key lawmakers to discuss it on the day after Election Day.

"The reason this press conference was held today," he said, "is because they wanted to see the local support and they saw the local support."

But it's still going to be a tough sell to convince lawmakers to open the door to a tax hike in an election year.

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Boatboy65

If MASS Transit was a profitable idea private interest would have done it. People in Hamilton county won't use it to go to Indy and God Knows we don't want people from Indy comming to Hamilton County that is why we live here

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An example of tax (sales tax) that was done to make mass transit better is Houston, TX. In the metro limits and the areas outside of metro Houston where the buses go there is an additional 1 1/4% tax added onto state sales tax. Lots of park and ride... [show more]

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This rail service will offer a convenience to a few residents north of Indy. The rest of the State will not benefit from it, yet the ones who use it want everyone else to pay for it. That's a fraudulent scam for Tax payers.

If a specific community... [show more]

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