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# NEWS

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## \$470,000 in state funds boost Monticello road project

By [Curt Snyder](#)  
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MONTICELLO -- A planned pedestrian walkway along one of the city's busiest thoroughfares will get a \$470,000 shot in the arm.

State Sen. Brandt Hershman, R-Wheatfield, on Monday announced the release of an extra \$470,000 in Indiana Department of Transportation funding for the Sixth Street/West Shafer Drive Pedestrian Walk Way.

The money will help construct the paved walk, which will run the length of a project to widen Sixth Street and Gordon Drive from the city's south side to Indiana Beach.

"We're real excited about the bike path," said Ruth Davis, operations manager for Indiana Beach. "We don't have anything like that in the community now."

As one of the state's premier tourist cities because of the attractions it offers, Hershman said funding the improvements will not only benefit the city's residents, but also uphold the reputation the city has earned.

"We really appreciate Senator Hershman for his help on this," said Monticello Mayor Bob Fox, noting that U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, R-4th District, also has been influential in securing money for the estimated \$18 million widening project.

In 2004, White County received a \$250,000 Transportation Enhancement grant for the walkway.

In addition to the walkway, the project will add a center turning lane along Gordon Drive west from U.S. 421 to Sixth Street. From there, Sixth Street will be widened to include a center turning lane north, crossing U.S. 24 and continuing to the entrance of Indiana Beach, Fox said.

New stoplights will be added along Sixth Street at Fisher Street and at Rickey Road. The 5.5-mile project will use a mixture of federal, state, county and city funds.

"I've seen many people walking down the side of the road. It's a safety issue," said Leslie Motel, who owns Aardvark Electronics on Sixth Street.

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Though she knows disruptions to her business are likely during the construction process, Motel is looking at the larger picture.

"When it's done, it will allow more traffic to get in and out of our parking lot," she said.

"That corridor is the main route to Indiana Beach," White County commissioner John Heimlich said. "And in recent years, Sixth Street has become a very important commercial corridor as well."

Construction is expected to begin next spring, Fox said.

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