

Connector road is the right road at the right time

November 14, 2010

The opening of the first phase of the Northwest Industrial Connector is one sign that Marion is heading in the right direction.

There are plenty of reasons for those that watch the books for local governments to be watchful.

With the state facing an \$8 billion deficit and budget hawks circling Washington D.C., it is safe to say that counting on state and federal funding at current levels is a long shot.

The opening of the connector, however, is one sign that planners here have got it right.

The worst time to settle for the status quo is when you are in trouble. Maintaining our current infrastructure just as it is, is not holding steady, it's going backwards.

There are great hopes for the Northwest Connector.

It could result in industrial development along its corridor, bringing new jobs an opportunity to workers and developers.

But, even if it doesn't, the convenience it offers the county's largest employer and the relief it will offer downtown through the diversion of tractor-trailers is worth the cost.

The Northwest Connector just might be the silver bullet to spur industrial growth and downtown retail growth. If planners had seen the sour economy coming and said now was not the time to spend money on roads we would have much less reason to hope.

This first section of the road isn't going to change lives, but it does represent positive growth at a time when it is most needed.