



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

January 15, 2015

INDOT Pilot Program Progresses

Inside INdiana Business

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Vincennes, Ind. -- Plans to improve 2nd Street in Vincennes have been on the books for more than 15 years. But with the help of an INDOT pilot program, this long-awaited project has finally been awarded and contractors are free to begin work soon. The six-block section of 2nd street that runs from Main Street to Hart Street hadn't been resurfaced in more than 20 years and it shows. The roadway is deteriorated and the sidewalks are broken and don't comply with federal standards laid out in the American with Disabilities Act. Plus, leaders in Vincennes hoped to add a bicycle lane, decorative street lighting, and curb ramps to match improvements made to the downtown stretch of Main Street. The main hurdle all those years was how to fund the \$2.1 million project. In April, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) announced that Vincennes was selected as one of four municipalities for a pilot project that would allow them to trade in federal funding the city already received for state funding. The municipalities trade \$1 of federal funding for 75 cents in state funding but the payoff is that the swap reduces some of the regulatory hurdles the projects must meet. "We were thrilled to be included," said Vincennes Mayor Joe Yochum. "This corridor is not only important to the city but the improvements will greatly increase safety." Engineering firm Lochmueller Group (Lochgroup) moved plans for the project along quickly and the construction could begin any day. The road work should be completed by the end of next year. "This project just wouldn't be where it's at today without INDOT's program," Yochum said.

[INDOT Pilot Program Progresses - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

Truitt files bill to fund Indiana Amtrak line

Journal & Courier

Chris Morrise Vizza

1/14/2015

Proposals to continue funding Indiana's Hoosier State passenger rail service have come from the governor's office and the General Assembly. State Rep. Randy Truitt filed House Bill 1217, which would allow the state to appropriate \$3 million annually so the Indiana Department of Transportation can contract with Amtrak to provide rail service between Indianapolis and Chicago. That's good news for West Lafayette Mayor John Dennis and Tippecanoe County Commissioner Tom Murtaugh. The state and local governments served by the 196-mile line have been footing the bill since Oct. 1, 2013, when federal funding ended for routes shorter than 750 miles. "The understanding from the get-go was that it would be temporary funding and that there would be a more permanent solution," Dennis said. "Our hope is to spur INDOT to treat passenger rail with the same consideration they give our highways and bridges."

<http://www.jconline.com/story/news/2015/01/14/truitt-bill-fund-indiana-amtrak-service/21774061/>

Illiana Expressway Plan Halted

Inside INdiana Business

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The \$1.5 billion Illiana Expressway project has hit a major hurdle. Our partners at The Times of Northwest Indiana report new Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner has put a halt to all major interstate projects in order to review their costs and benefits. Last year, the Federal Highway Administration approved the 47-mile stretch that would connect Interstate 55 with Interstate 65. Indiana and Illinois signed a public-private development agreement in May for the planned expressway. It outlined each state's responsibilities, management duties and project delivery requirements. At the time, Indiana Department of Transportation Commissioner Karl Browing said the project would give travelers "much-needed roadway infrastructure" and boost the economy in both states. The overall cost of Indiana's section has been pegged at about \$300 million. Studies and planning for the route have been ongoing for several years.

[Illiana Expressway Plan Halted - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

Bus ridership jumped up in 2014

NWI Times

Keith Benman

1/13/2015

PORTAGE | Northwest Indiana mass transit ridership increased strongly in 2014, due to a resurgent economy and new routes and fare programs. Gary Public Transportation Corp. ridership on buses increased 5.4 percent as compared to 2013, Valparaiso's V-Line ridership increased 5.9 percent, and Valparaiso's ChicagoDash grew ridership 13.4 percent. Those increases occurred despite last winter's severe January and February weather cutting into ridership numbers. "The year started off rough, but ended very, very good for us," the GPTC's David Wright said at Tuesday's Transportation Policy Committee meeting of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission held in Portage. The South Shore commuter railroad eked out a small gain in 2014, with 3.61 million riding the rails for an increase of 0.3 percent, said Joe Crnkovich, of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District. It had a 1.7 percent drop in ridership in 2013. NIRPC's Transportation Policy Committee also amended its transportation plan to include the \$12.4 million reconstruction of 61st Avenue between Arizona Street and Ind. 51 in Hobart. That work should start this year and will include reconstruction of the bridge over Deep River. The Indiana Department of Transportation reported it received a low bid of \$12.5 million from Superior Construction on Dec. 10 for the rebuilding of U.S. 421 in LaPorte. Work on that project also should start this year.

[Bus ridership jumped up in 2014](#)