



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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IndyGo Ridership on The Rise

Inside INdiana Business

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Indianapolis, Ind. -- IndyGo's ridership hit a 23-year peak in 2014, soaring to 10.29M passenger trips with seven individual months hitting highs that had never been seen before. "Growing ridership shows that there's a desire for more public transportation in Indianapolis," said Mike Terry, President and CEO of IndyGo. "2014 was a huge year for us, and 2015 will be even bigger with the grand opening of our Downtown Transit Center." IndyGo announced the Downtown Transit Center project in early 2014 with an interactive exhibit that unveiled the designs and ground was broken on the project in September. The transit center will greatly enhance the passenger experience, offering real-time arrival information, indoor waiting areas and on-site customer services. The transit center will be fully operational by the end of this year. Late last year, IndyGo was awarded a \$2M federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant for the environmental and design work for the Red Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Proposed as the first full electric BRT line in the nation, the 28-mile route would run from Hamilton County through Indianapolis to Greenwood in Johnson County. IndyGo also made significant investments in bus stop amenities and infrastructure throughout the city in 2014, installing more than 4,000 sq. ft. of sidewalks and concrete pads for benches and shelters in collaboration with the Department of Public Works. More than 70 amenities including shelters, benches and trash cans were also distributed throughout the IndyGo service area.

[IndyGo Ridership on The Rise - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

Illiana Expressway suddenly hits roadblock

NWI Times

Keith Benman and Dan Carden

1/17/2015

Kick-started by a Republican governor in Indiana, the fate of the Illiana Expressway now rests with a Republican governor in Illinois who never showed his hand in regards to the \$1.5 billion project during his campaign. But last week, new Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner wasted no time in playing his cards, halting the Illiana Expressway and other major projects pending a "careful review." "I was very surprised and certainly a bit troubled," state Sen. Ed Charbonneau said of Rauner's action. "It was always my understanding; in fact I thought that early in his campaigning that he was supportive. I was kind of caught off guard," the Valparaiso resident said. In December, final federal approval was given to plans for the 50-mile expressway, and departments of transportation in both states prepared to acquire land and solicit private investors who want to build and operate the toll road. It would run from Interstate 65, near Lowell, to I-55, near Wilmington, Ill. Tyson Warner, executive director at the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, said his agency did its job when it issued a report in 2013 outlining the

positives and negatives of the expressway. Subsequently, the agency's 50-member board of commissioners voted to give the Illiana the go-ahead. But nothing can happen without Rauner getting behind the road. "With a huge bi-state project like this, it's kind of a dance," Warner said. "You have two partners dancing together to make a large project like this come together. And if one doesn't dance, then it doesn't get done." Former Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels kicked off the drive for the Illiana Expressway in December 2006, when he told the Hammond Rotary Club he would seek new legislation to turn the expressway into reality. Daniels acknowledged there would be debate and left no doubt as to where he stood.

[Illiana Expressway suddenly hits roadblock](#)

John Tuohy: Will Amtrak keep rolling in Indy?

Indianapolis Star

1/17/2015

Indiana likes to call itself the Crossroads of America, yet when it comes to train travel it's more of a crosswalk than a Grand Junction. Just one passenger train a day rumbles through Indianapolis, the Hoosier State, which goes to Chicago and back four days a week. On three other days it's replaced by the Cardinal, from Chicago to New York City. But the train — which stops in Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer and Dyer — is in trouble. Congress voted in 2008 to cease funding routes shorter than 750 miles, leaving the states to pick up the tab. So the Indiana Department of Transportation and the cities where the train stops contributed \$2.7 million to operate it last year. The train has other problems, as well; it's kind of slow, is often late, doesn't have many riders and loses money. Now a Jan. 31 deadline looms as Amtrak, INDOT and a potential partner, Iowa Pacific, try to work out an arrangement to improve service and ridership and increase revenues. In a good faith move to show INDOT it was serious about improving the line, Amtrak recently made upgrades to it, including Wi-Fi and limited food service. Last year, ridership on the Hoosier State declined 7.7 percent and ticket sales dropped 10.1 percent from the year before. A total of 33,930 tickets were sold. [John Tuohy: Will Amtrak keep rolling in Indy?](#)

Greenwood Chamber Weighs in on I-69

Inside INdiana Business

1/16/15

Greenwood, Ind. -- The Greater Greenwood Chamber endorses the State Road 37 corridor from Martinsville north to Interstate 465 in Indianapolis as the Chamber's preferred route for section six of the Southwest Indiana Interstate 69 expansion project. This SR 37 corridor is the same route INDOT originally recommended in December 2003, and the same route the Federal Highway Administration approved in March 2004. Indiana is positioned within a day's truck drive to 75% of the US and Canadian population. We understand, and have already seen the effects of, interstate connectivity as an important economic driver to both our state and local economies. It is a widely accepted economic development principle that interstates drive new investment and new jobs. We believe the I-69 expansion is a unique infrastructure opportunity that will translate into new economic investment and new jobs for the Johnson and Southern Marion County economies; investment and jobs that we would not otherwise be afforded. Furthermore, we also note: Experts at INDOT already spent considerable time and tax money studying the costs, feasibility, and other environmental impacts for alternative routes; the SR 37 corridor was INDOT's ultimate recommendation after considering more than ten options. We are aware of pent-up economic demand for the SR 37 corridor to become I-69 section six; some businesses have expressed a desire to relocate or start-up along the SR 37 corridor after I-69 is constructed. The construction delay and unnecessary rehash of the final section six route is further hurting existing businesses along the SR 37 corridor that have suppressed expansion plans over the last 10 years because they were waiting for the I-69 expansion to disrupt or relocate their operations. Not all business which will be disrupted oppose this corridor; we have spoken with businesses that must relocate but still support the SR 37 corridor for I-69 section six because they believe in the greater

economic good for the entire community. [Greenwood Chamber Weighs in on I-69 - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

Indiana bill would revise I-69 route restriction

Keith Goble
Land Line Magazine
1/16/2015

An Indiana House bill would nix a restriction in place for nearly a decade on the path of the Interstate 69 extension near Indianapolis. Rep. John Price, R-Greenwood, has introduced a bill that would update a 2006 law that prohibits construction of the I-69 extension in southern Marion County. Specifically, HB1036 would remove a requirement that the General Assembly must first authorize construction of the roadway in Perry Township. The rule was included in then-Gov. Mitch Daniels' "Major Moves" initiative. The main component of the initiative was the lease of the Indiana Toll Road for 75 years in return for \$3.85 billion. Besides the toll lease, the governor got the green light to build an extension of I-69 with a requirement to shift the roadway west of Perry Township in southern Indianapolis. Advocates said the requirement was necessary to avoid harm to the state Road 37 corridor. Instead, Sen. Pat Miller, R-Indianapolis, who was behind the path restriction eight years ago, wants the new highway to tie into Interstate 70. The 142-mile highway slated to connect Evansville to Indianapolis is partly built. The first three sections, a 70-mile stretch linking Evansville to Crane, opened to traffic in 2012. Sections four and five from Crane, southwest of Bloomington, to Martinsville are under construction. Price is hopeful his bill could free up the Indiana Department of Transportation to instead run the final section of I-69 on the Indiana 37 corridor. He said the highway would bring economic development benefits to his district. The state DOT is conducting an environmental impact review of route alternatives. The process is expected to take up to three years. HB1036 is awaiting consideration in the House Roads and Transportation Committee. [Indiana bill would revise I-69 route restriction: Land Line Magazine](#)

Northside Muncie roundabout construction ready

The Star Press
Keith Roysdon
1/16/2015

MUNCIE – The community's latest traffic roundabout is set for construction. Work on the roundabout at Walnut Street and Riggin Road is set to begin on April 15, the Indiana Department of Transportation has announced. INDOT says the roundabout should be open to traffic by the end of September. "We think the roundabout will make that a much safer, accessible intersection," Mayor Dennis Tyler told The Star Press on Thursday. "I'm very pleased with it." Just this fall, the city opened its latest roundabout at Walnut and Madison streets at the city's southern edge. Roundabouts have been built in recent years at Morrison Road and Jackson Street and at Walnut Street on the southern edge of downtown. Another roundabout is planned for West Jackson Street and Nebo Road that would be a cooperative project of the city, Delaware County and town of Yorktown. The Walnut/Riggin roundabout has a price tag of \$1.26 million, according to INDOT. Federal transportation funds will pay 80 percent of the cost and the city will pay the balance. Motorists should expect closures along parts of Walnut and Riggin during the spring-and-summer construction of the roundabout, INDOT said. Officials have been talking about the roundabout for a few years as a way of alleviating traffic congestion in the area, which is near the Delaware County Airport. "I've been there at 5 when traffic is backed up," Tyler said. "This should eliminate that." Tyler noted that the city is planning to locate the roundabout to one side of the current four-way stop, adding that will allow Riggin to be "straightened out" as it approaches the roundabout. <http://www.thestarpress.com/story/news/local/2015/01/16/northside-muncie-roundabout-construction-ready/21854161/>

Editorial: Forcing issue on Hoosier State line

Journal & Courier

1/16/2015

How long the Hoosier State, a passenger rail line that comes through Lafayette four days a week, can hang on with piecemealed funding is anyone's guess. But the Hoosier State passenger rail line seems to have been living on borrowed time, facing yet another funding deadline at the end of January. Since federal funding dropped off in 2013 for Amtrak lines of fewer than 750 miles, the company line from the Indiana Department of Transportation has boiled down to this: If communities want to keep the Hoosier State rolling, they need to chip in on the approximately \$3 million annual operating costs. Communities — including Crawfordsville, Tippecanoe County, Lafayette and West Lafayette — have obliged to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars. That continued a daily passenger rail stop, when the Hoosier State schedule was combined with that of the three-day-a-week Cardinal line. What they bought, in many ways, has been the minimum: Keep the train running. Meanwhile, state negotiations broke down with a potential replacement for Amtrak. And Amtrak officials have offered services — Wi-Fi in the cars, limited food service and the like — that riders had been asking to have for years. But, finally, there's a show of good faith in the form of House Bill 1217. The bill, sponsored by state Rep. Randy Truitt, R-West Lafayette, proposes to put a \$3 million line item into the INDOT budget to keep the Hoosier State running. Now, it's up to the Statehouse to show its intentions. Is passenger rail going to be a priority in the state's transportation plan? It should be. But if the state is going to balk now, it should be clear and quit stringing communities along.

<http://www.jconline.com/story/opinion/editorials/2015/01/16/editorial-forcing-issue-hoosier-state-line/21877567/>

Despite low gas prices, gas tax hike appears unlikely

Tribune Star

1/15/2015

WASHINGTON (AP) — The new Republican-controlled Congress is facing an old problem: where to find the money for highway and transit programs. With gasoline prices at their lowest in years when the new Congress convened, there had been talk that it might be time to raise federal gas and diesel taxes, which haven't budged in more than 20 years. But already, GOP leaders are tamping down expectations, leaving no clear solution to the funding problem. "I don't know of any support for a gas tax increase in Congress," Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, the No. 2 Senate GOP leader, said flatly. Explained Sen. John McCain, R-AZ: "They don't want to vote for a tax increase." House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, while not closing the door entirely, said there aren't enough votes in the House for a gas tax increase. Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa., the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee chairman, was equally dampening. "The president has ruled out a gas tax. I don't think there's a will in Congress, and the American people don't want it," Shuster recently told The Associated Press. The gas tax, now 18.4 cents a gallon, and the diesel fuel tax, now 24.4 cents a gallon, were last increased in 1993. In the meantime, Americans are driving less per capita, cars are more fuel efficient and construction costs have gone up. Fuel taxes bring in about \$34 billion a year to the federal Highway Trust Fund, but the government spends about \$50 billion a year. The trust fund has been the main source of federal transportation aid to states for more than 60 years.

http://www.tribstar.com/news/indiana_news/despite-low-gas-prices-gas-tax-hike-appears-unlikely/article_7549b02a-9cb6-11e4-9a5f-fbd30f8a330b.html

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