



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

January 7, 2014

EDITORIAL: South Shore extension must not be delayed

NWI Times
Dan Carden
1/5/14

Last September, U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky gave an impassioned speech about how not investing in mass transit has fueled brain drain in Northwest Indiana. His call to action must not be forgotten. Since the 1970s, Northwest Indiana has lost 9 percent of its population. Personal income has stalled as well. Northwest Indiana could learn a lot from the Pied Piper tale Visclosky cited. The Hamelin, Germany, city fathers hired the Pied Piper in 1284 to lure the mice away from town. When the city refused to pay the piper, he led the children away. Visclosky has been urging Northwest Indiana for years to pay the piper, to work with the Indiana General Assembly to come up with the local match necessary to expand South Shore commuter rail service in the region. In September, Visclosky set a deadline of the end of March to settle on that local match. The Indiana General Assembly session ends then. It's up to the General Assembly to determine how this needed mass transit initiative will be funded. And it's up to the region's legislative delegation to show leadership on this issue. The reason to build the South Shore extension is clear. There are more jobs within walking distance of the South Shore stations in Chicago than there are in Lake and Porter counties combined. A study by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District a few years ago found that in every sector except manufacturing, jobs in Chicago paid better than comparable jobs in Northwest Indiana. Those are paychecks worth pursuing.

[EDITORIAL: South Shore extension must not be delayed](#)

Unclear track ahead for South Shore extension

NWI Times
Dan Carden
1/4/14

INDIANAPOLIS | Northwest Indiana lawmakers will have to be creative and quick during the 10-week legislative session that begins Monday if the state is to play a role in extending the South Shore Line into south Lake County. Early indications are that no measure will be filed funding even a portion of the proposed South Shore extension -- estimated to cost \$465 million to Dyer or \$615 million to St. John -- largely because 2014 is not a budget year. The Republican-controlled General Assembly last year set state spending through June 30, 2015, and rarely acts on proposals that spend money, especially hundreds of millions of dollars, in nonbudget years. "Opening up the budget is just not in the cards," said state Rep. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso, chairman of the House Roads and Transportation Committee. That has prompted region lawmakers to look at how local governments might raise the money needed to match some \$200 million in federal funds that U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Merrillville, has promised to deliver for a South Shore extension. State Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon, D-Munster, said she is hoping the

Legislature will provide an appropriate tool the region can use to pay for expanded mass transit; she just doesn't know what that might be. "It's not soup yet," she said, adopting a favorite line of former state Rep. Chet Dobis, D-Merrillville. "But we just can't afford to wait any longer."

[Unclear track ahead for South Shore extension : Elections](#)

BRIDGING THE FUTURE: Examining the Ohio River Bridges Project's impact on Clarksville

News and Tribune

Matt Koesters

1/4/14

CLARKSVILLE — Nick Lawrence has his finger firmly on the pulse of everything that is Clarksville. As the town's redevelopment director, Lawrence has a front-row seat and a hand in shaping Clarksville's future while being tuned in to its residents' concerns. A multibillion dollar project rising over two sections of the Ohio River promises to forever change commerce and the way of life in Clarksville — making it impossible for Lawrence and others to ignore. The Ohio River Bridges Project — two bridges connecting the downtowns of Louisville and Jeffersonville and Prospect, Ky., to Utica — is at the top of officials' minds as they predict its impact on everything from business development to property values to the commercial market. "The bridges, including the Big Four [pedestrian and bicycling] Bridge, have a lot of people and businesses taking note throughout the country," Lawrence said. "This project is a big deal, and it will change the landscape of this region." Unlike neighboring municipalities such as Charlestown and Jeffersonville, Clarksville won't see a direct impact from the bridges project, and thus how it will change the town is less certain. The project will impose tolls that may hit the wallets of workers who commute to or from the town daily, which also could influence traffic on Clarksville's booming retail corridors along Veterans and Lewis and Clark parkways.

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West Lafayette approves 2014 spending plan

WLF1

Brittany Tyner

1/2/14

The spending plan for 2014 is in place, so construction projects in West Lafayette can move forward for the year. The West Lafayette Redevelopment Commission approved its 2014 spending plan Thursday afternoon. Some of those construction projects include rebuilding Navajo Street at the Salisbury intersection, Phase 3 of Cumberland Avenue, the State Street Master Plan and work on Happy Hollow. Commission President Larry Oates said there will be a major project in West Lafayette that residents will be satisfied with. "There will be a major project. We will take Northwestern Avenue, now, from a state highway, since it's been turned over to the city, and make it much more pedestrian and citizen friendly," said Oates. He said all of the projects in 2014 will be funded by current income and current revenues. He said that takes more planning, but it will prevent debt. "It allows for a much more financially sound situation for the city and for the redevelopment commission itself," Oates said. "We're not hanging out there, like some of the redevelopment commissions around the state area, with amounts of debt sitting out there funding projects." Oates added it is not only better for the redevelopment commission, but for the entire city. Construction is set to take place on most of the projects this summer.

[West Lafayette approves 2014 spending plan | WLF1 - West Lafayette, Indiana](#)