



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

February 3, 2015

GOVERNMENT: Transportation funding poses challenge

NWI Times
Andrew Steele
2/1/2015

Maintaining roads has become a significant challenge for all levels of government, and lack of action by the federal government has "really left a lot of local governments in a bind," said Michael Griffin, Town of Highland clerk/treasurer. It costs \$100,000 to \$110,000 simply to resurface a mile of road, he said. It costs about \$750 million a year to maintain roads in Indiana. With gas tax revenue declining, other options should be investigated, Griffin said. Public officials nationally are keeping an eye on an experiment in Oregon, which is trying a 1.2 cent per mile user fee to fund its needs. Griffin said Lake County's 911 emergency phone system consolidation is progressing and should be up and running this spring. Local officials are also watching the Indiana General Assembly's consideration of funding the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority, and whether funding renewal will include requirements for specific projects. Local officials also continue to be concerned about a possible shift away from the business personal property tax as a revenue source, according to Griffin.

[GOVERNMENT: Transportation funding poses challenge](#)

Indiana needs to invest more in transit

Indianapolis Star
Kim Irwin
1/31/2015

On the other hand, over the last few years, as statistical and anecdotal evidence has shown that demand for transit in Indiana has increased, the state flat-lined transit spending. The time has come to correct this failure to adequately invest in the future. The General Assembly needs to increase state transit funding from the current \$42.5 million — the same funding level for each of the last seven years — to \$60 million so we can accommodate demand and seize the opportunities that better transit can bring. A bipartisan proposal is aimed at doing just that. Rep. Randy Truitt, R-Lafayette, has introduced a bill (HB 1215) that's co-authored by Reps. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso, David Ober, R-Albion, and David Niezgodski, D-South Bend. People who follow statewide transit efforts have seen interest grow steadily. Across Indiana, thousands of citizens have turned out for public hearings to discuss the need for improved and enhanced transit, from the fixed-route services in urban areas to the rural on-demand services that provide so many seniors, people with disabilities and others with transportation to medical appointments and other essentials. They show up for annual Transit Day activities at the Statehouse (to be held this year on March 10), they contact their elected officials to ask for better services, and they sign petitions. But the evidence of increasing interest is more than just anecdotal. In Indiana, combined transit ridership was up 15 percent from 2004 to 2013, according to information in the

Indiana Department of Transportation's 2013 Indiana Public Transit Annual Report.
[Indiana needs to invest more in transit](#)

INDOT, Amtrak Agree to Extend Hoosier State Contract

Inside INdiana Business
1/30/2015

The Indiana Department of Transportation has announced an agreement with Amtrak to continue operating the Hoosier State Line through April 1. The previous extension was set to run out Saturday. The state says the additional time will allow the parties to continue long-term contract talks. A bill that would set aside \$3 million annually for Amtrak to provide inter-city passenger rail service "on a rail route of less than 750 miles" has been referred to the Indiana House Ways and Means Committee. The state announced last June it had chosen Illinois-based Corridor Capital LLC as the "preferred vendor" for the Indianapolis to Chicago route. In August, the state and the company announced an extension agreement. Then, October first, Amtrak announced it would continue to operate the line until January 31, prompting Corridor Capital Chief Executive Officer Jim Coston to say delays beyond the company's control led the state to go back to Amtrak.

[INDOT, Amtrak Agree to Extend Hoosier State Contract - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#) Also, [Amtrak's Hoosier State train to keep running](#)

Funding Could Be Cut for Indiana Public Transportation

Tri-State Homepage
1/30/2015

Changes could be coming to public transportation in Evansville. The Metropolitan Evansville Transit System, also called METS, could be seeing a decrease in funding. According to the Indiana Citizens' Alliance for Transit, Indiana's state public mass transportation fund has been at \$42.7 million the past 7 years and several state representatives are pushing for an increase in the fund to \$60 million. However, Governor Mike Pence proposed a 3% cut for transit funding in his state budget for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. The number of riders is up across many cities in Indiana; however, that number is down in Evansville when comparing 2013 to 2014. In 2012, almost 2.1 million people took public transit, but the number fell in 2013 to 1.9 million. Executive Director of Transportation Todd Robertson says when funding is cut, they have to find ways to become more efficient. He says they are always looking for cheaper bids on supplies, such as tires, to save money. However, he says the proposed cuts couldn't have come at a better time because they are currently performing a comprehensive operation analysis to find ways to become more efficient. Kim Irwin from the Indiana Citizens' Alliance for Transit says cuts to mass transit are never a good idea. She says the majority of people who ride public transit are riding it to get to jobs or to school. If not for transit service, they would probably be unable to work, earn a living, feed their families or put money back into the economy. Robertson says they need the public's help when it comes to becoming more efficient, such as locating where higher demands for transit is at across the city, by taking a survey.

[Funding Could Be Cut for Indiana Public Transportation - Tristatehomepage - Eyewitness News](#)

Troubled bridge is subject of INDOT meeting

The Brazil Times
Frank Phillips, Times Reporter
1/29/2015

BOWLING GREEN -- An information meeting was conducted Thursday night about a troubled bridge on S.R. 46 over the Eel River. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) conducted the meeting about the structure destined to be replaced or reduced to carrying half the traffic that travels over it now. Or, some hope, it could be used as the centerpiece of a

recreational area at the town that served for years as Clay County's seat. One thing is sure, it will not continue to be the sole means for cars and trucks crossing the Eel River at Bowling Green. An estimated 140 people crowded into the Bowling Green Community Center by 6 p.m. for the meeting Rickie Clark, director of public involvement for INDOT, conducted the meeting. A public hearing will be called this summer when a definite plan of attack for the bridge project is presented. The new bridge is expected to cost state taxpayers \$10.3 million.

[Brazil Times: Local News: Troubled bridge is subject of INDOT meeting \(01/29/15\)](#)

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