



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **February 24, 2015**

#### **Transit is a good investment for Indiana**

The Journal Gazette  
Kent McDaniel  
2/24/15

If you've seen a wheelchair lift on a public bus, odds are good it was made by a Hoosier. If you were to look under the hood of a shuttle or para-transit bus, you might see an Indiana-made hybrid engine. In fact, if you were to disassemble just about any transit bus on the road today, you'd have a good chance of finding a number of parts manufactured, assembled, distributed or sold by fellow Indiana residents. In all, more than 60 transit manufacturers and suppliers operate in Indiana, employing thousands of Hoosiers. An additional 3,500 people work for transit systems. Transit is big business in Indiana. And that means that investments in transit help to create jobs for Hoosiers – at the same time those investments help other Hoosiers get to their jobs. So, why has transit spending in Indiana been stagnant for seven years, and why does it face the threat of actually being cut this year? The truth is, transit is a good investment for Indiana: Every dollar we invest in public transit delivers more than \$3.11 in benefits. Nonetheless, the state's Public Mass Transportation Fund has remained at \$42.5 million for seven years. Now Gov. Mike Pence wants to cut an additional 3 percent from transit this year – even though doing so could cost Hoosiers jobs and stifle Hoosiers' ability to get to work. The Indiana Transportation Association and our partners at the Indiana Citizens' Alliance for Transit are proposing a better solution.

[Transit is a good investment for Indiana | Opinion | Journal Gazette](#)

#### **Lawmakers struggle to pay for roads**

The Journal Gazette  
Niki Kelly  
2/22/15

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana is at a crossroads when it comes to funding highway construction and maintenance. After years of spending billions from the lease of the Indiana Toll Road, the state is in the same boat as the rest of the nation – coping with gas tax revenues that are not keeping pace with inflation and wondering what the long-term solution is. “We can't hook to the gas tax because it's a losing proposition going forward,” said House Ways and Means Chairman Tim Brown, R-Crawfordsville. “We'll always be back asking for more gas tax money, both in efficiency and less miles traveled by Hoosiers.” Indiana has lost 19 percent of the gas tax's worth because of inflation since 2003, according to the Build Indiana Council. Indiana Department of Transportation Commissioner Karl Browning said the state can maintain the status quo with no new funding. But the question is, is that what lawmakers and residents want? It's a policy choice for Indiana lawmakers. For instance, Browning said that for real improvement, he would need an additional \$100 million a year for bridges and \$150 million a year for roadways. That would lead to a lower percentage of Indiana's highways and bridges being in poor condition. “I want to put all of this in context of what does the public want to buy,” he said. “We can manage what we've got.”

Even the anticipated declining numbers can be managed, but obviously, things will degrade. The question for your readers is: What is acceptable to you?" He said Indiana gets about the same amount of money in motor fuel taxes as it historically has. But as consumers buy less gas because cars become more fuel-efficient, it will be a problem.

[Lawmakers struggle to pay for roads | Indiana | Journal Gazette](#) Also, [Fund drive | Editorials | Journal Gazette](#)

### **Indiana seeks ways to reverse declining highway funding; state contractor eyes revenue sources**

The Republic

Rick Callahan, Associated Press

2/21/15

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana lawmakers are eyeing a slew of possible revenue sources they might tap to reverse declining funding for new highway projects and upgrades to the heavily-traveled highways and bridges that helped give the state its "Crossroads of America" nickname. Indiana isn't alone in dealing with a shrinking pot of money for its transportation infrastructure. Federal gasoline tax revenue has grown little since 2007 as vehicle fuel-efficiency rises, hybrid and electric cars become increasingly common and people cut back on driving. State-level gas tax revenues, including Indiana's, are also on the decline even as the need is mounting for highway, road and bridge upgrades. State Rep. Ed Soliday, who chairs the Indiana House's transportation committee, said concrete highways last only three to four decades before they need be rebuilt from the ground up, and asphalt roads are only good for about 12 years in Indiana's freeze-and-thaw climate. "We are at a point where we need to start rebuilding the infrastructure our grandparents and our parents built for us. And we need to look it straight in the eye, or we're going to hand it to our grandchildren," said Soliday, R-Valparaiso. Money flowing to Indiana from the beleaguered Federal Highway Trust Fund, which is financed by taxes paid on gasoline and diesel fuel, fell 5 percent from 2008-2013 to \$946 million. That's about 1.5 percentage points more than the nationwide decline, according to federal figures. Indiana's gas tax revenue has also fallen for the past decade, dropping from about \$582 million in 2004 to about \$527 million last year.

[Indiana seeks ways to reverse declining highway funding; state contractor eyes revenue sources](#)

### **Kercher Road construction projects could start this summer**

The Elkhart Truth

Sharon Hernandez

2/20/15

GOSHEN — Kercher Road will undergo several different projects within the city and out in the county potentially starting this summer. Goshen's City Council approved a revised project contract with the Indiana Department of Transportation for the reconstruction of Kercher Road from the track just east of S.R.15 to Dierdorff Road during a meeting Tuesday, Feb. 17. But that project would not start until 2017 or 2018, said city engineer, Mary Cripe. Before getting to work on that, the city, the county and INDOT will work on the reconstruction of the intersection of Kercher Road and S.R. 15. If the city gets enough funding, construction at the intersection could start this summer. In 2016, the county is expected to work on the reconstruction of Kercher Road from S.R. 15 to C.R. 17. The bridge that goes over the Elkhart River would also be rebuilt, Cripe said. Cripe said some of the money will come from the Southeast TIF district, and some more will come maybe from the city's motor vehicle highway funds and economic development income tax funds. The city is still looking for funding for the intersection reconstruction project, which has a total cost of \$1.9 million. Goshen Mayor Allan Kauffman said it's "a disappointment" INDOT will only provide \$230,000 for the project.

[Kercher Road construction projects could start this summer - Elkhart Truth](#)

---

[www.buildindianacouncil.org](http://www.buildindianacouncil.org)