



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

March 11, 2014

Opinion: Mayors should listen to constituents on transit, not businesses

Current in Carmel

3/11/14

The column on mass transit by the three mayors in the Feb. 25 edition of Current in Carmel was long on platitudes and kumbaya, but short on the specific issues that would affect the citizenry. Contrary to their unsubstantiated contention that mass transit is a requirement of 21st century communities, it would be an expensive burden on the citizens of Hamilton County, and Carmel in particular. Let me enumerate some of the problems: It would require permanently higher taxes that would be a thinly-veiled redistribution of income from the 95 percent of the taxpayers who will never use it to the 5 percent of the population who will use it – sometimes – and to the companies that would like to shift some more of their economic burden to taxpayers. We do not need to subsidize the companies that are promoting public mass transit. If they need to provide transportation to their workers, they should provide it themselves. What sense does it make for the taxpayers to incur huge capital investments and perpetually high operating expenses for a unionized government monopoly to transport relatively small numbers of low value labor over long distances to low paying jobs?

[Opinion: Mayors should listen to constituents on transit, not businesses - Current in Carmel](#)

[UPDATED] Officials Close Milton-Madison Bridge

Inside INdiana Business

3/11/14

MADISON, Ind. - The U.S. 421 Milton-Madison Bridge across the Ohio River between Madison, Ind., and Milton, Ky., is closed effective immediately and until further notice. The official detours are the Markland Locks and Dam Bridge connecting Kentucky Route 1039 and Indiana State Road 101, 26 miles upstream, or the I-65 Kennedy Bridge in Louisville, 46 miles downstream. Crews closed the bridge around 3 a.m. this morning after a steel bearing between the bridge and the pier dislodged, injuring a construction worker. Engineers are still investigating and the worker, who does not appear to be seriously injured, was taken to Kings Daughters Hospital in Madison for evaluation. The Indiana Department of Transportation and Kentucky Transportation Cabinet will keep the public informed as more information is known about what prompted the bridge closure and an anticipated reopening date. The bridge was previously scheduled to close later this week to allow the half-mile-long structure to be slid from temporary supports onto refurbished preexisting piers. During the closure, a ferry service had been planned for emergency medical vehicles only. INDOT, KYTC and their contractors are working to establish this ferry service as soon as possible.

[Officials Close Milton-Madison Bridge - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

Light rail big issue in transit bill

The Herald Bulletin

Zach Osowski

3/9/14

INDIANAPOLIS — Sen. Tim Lanane, D-Anderson, said the biggest issue facing the conference committee on the mass transit bill is the matter of light rail. Because the Indiana House and Senate passed slightly different versions of Senate Bill 176, the differences have to be ironed out in a conference committee, composed of two senators and two representatives. Lanane is not a committee member, but is serving as an adviser to the committee members. He is a co-author on SB 176. The bill, if passed, would allow for certain Indiana counties, including Madison County, to establish a referendum for residents to vote on. Citizens would choose whether they want a mass transit system and how much they are willing to pay for it. In the version the Senate passed, light rail was forbidden as an option but the House put the option back in. Lanane said the rail issue is one that has the lawmakers divided. "It's definitely the big sticking point from my perspective," Lanane said. "I think not having it in severely weakens the bill." Lanane said since the light rail option is ultimately a decision the voters will make, he doesn't see why having it in is a bad idea. But he said there are some clear opponents to light rail. Many of them think it is far too expensive to even involve consideration. If light rail was not an option, updated buses would be the only recourse proponents of a transit system would have to work with.

[Light rail big issue in transit bill » Local Business » The Herald Bulletin](#)

NIRPC wants local communities to use funds for transit

NWI Times

Keith Benman

3/7/14

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission on Friday sent a strong message to state legislators that proceeds from closing a tax loophole should go to local communities and be used for mass transit, including buses. By an 8-0 vote, the commission's executive board opposed turning an estimated \$4 million per year generated by closing the loophole over to the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority, as proposed in bills currently before the General Assembly. The RDA wants to use the money to help fund the proposed South Shore extension to Dyer, while local community representatives Friday said they want it to fund mass transit across the board, which could include the South Shore extension. "It's about principle, people," said NIRPC Chairman and Hobart Mayor Brian Snedecor. "That's what we are doing today. We want to work with our elected officials downstate. We're not picking a fight."

[NIRPC wants local communities to use funds for transit](#)

Mayor Announces \$20 Million In Infrastructure Enhancements (PHOTOS)

Indiana News Center

Emma Koch

3/6/14

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (21Alive) -- Thursday, Mayor Henry announced project for \$20 million worth of infrastructure enhancements. Residents will see a record amount of neighborhood infrastructure enhancements in the City of Fort Wayne as part of the 2014 construction season. Mayor Tom Henry today formally announced the list of projects that will result in an investment of over \$20 million. Mayor Henry visited the Oxford neighborhood in southeast Fort Wayne to make today's announcement. Concrete reconstruction and sidewalk and curb repairs will occur on Oxford Street from South Anthony Boulevard to Hessen Cassel Road. Mayor Henry was joined by members of the City of Fort Wayne's Division of Public Works, elected officials, and community and neighborhood leaders. A complete list of infrastructure projects can be found on the attached document. Highlights include 50 miles of paving, 10 miles of concrete

reconstruction, brick street work, 12 miles of chip and seal repairs, sidewalk improvements, and curb and ramp repairs. The first projects are expected to begin in late March-early April, weather permitting. Today's announcement was made possible by the leadership of Mayor Henry's Administration, the Fiscal Policy Group, neighborhood and business leaders, and the members of City Council who supported and passed a financial plan last summer that makes additional funding available on a yearly basis, \$13.6 million in 2014, to assist with maintaining the City's transportation system. In addition to the \$13.6 million, an infrastructure bond was advocated by Mayor Henry and received support from City Council that will provide an additional \$10 million each year for three years beginning this year for street and road work. The bond, along with pay-as-you-go funding for future projects, will allow the City to complete the backlog of street and road projects by the end of 2018.

[Mayor Announces \\$20 Million In Infrastructure Enhancements \(PHOTOS\) | Indiana's NewsCenter: News, Sports, Weather, Fort Wayne WPTA-TV, WISE-TV, and CW | Local](#)

A little home rule on the issue of mass transit

News-Sentinel

3/6/14

The state government has had a long flirtation with home rule – one step forward, two steps back – because although legislators occasionally give up some control to local governments, they clearly don't like to. Consider it a small step forward that both houses of the General Assembly have approved mass-transit legislation for Delaware, Hamilton, Hancock, Johnson and Marion counties in central Indiana. Officials in those counties would be allowed to raise taxes for a regional transportation system with more buses and more routes, but only if voters say yes in a referendum. The House and Senate versions differ somewhat, so it will be up to a conference committee to clean things up enough for the governor's signature. We hope it does. Success here would encourage other local governments to keep pushing for more control over their own destinies. Don't get us wrong – the case for greater mass transit is often built on false promises based on unrealistic expectations. The idea that a bigger and better system can make the greater Indianapolis area “more vibrant for the next generation” seems pretty far-fetched. Few people in Muncie are going to think of themselves as part of Indy, no matter how easy it becomes to take a bus to it. It is reasonable to consider mass transit of a certain level as a necessary urban amenity – just imagine how trapped Fort Wayne's less economically blessed would be without the city's buses. But trying to cajole more people to use public transportation when they don't need to is truly a lost cause. We are too much a love-our-cars nation, and ever-growing fuel efficiency is only going to make us more so.

[A little home rule on the issue of mass transit - News-Sentinel.com](#)

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