



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

**June 19, 2014**

### **Opponents hope bat, mussel can stop Illiana construction**

Post-Tribune  
Carrie Napoleon  
6/19/14

A bat and a mussel could jeopardize construction of the Illiana Tollway, something that hundreds of local residents opposed to the project have been unable to do. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has raised concerns about how the proposed 47-mile highway would affect the endangered sheepsnose mussel and the threatened long-eared bat, James Earl, project manager for the Indiana Department of Transportation, recently told the transportation committee of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission. There's also continued concern about how the tollway would impact the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Will County. The tollway, estimated to cost \$1.5 billion, would run from Interstate 65 near Lowell to I-55 near Wilmington, Illinois. Environmental groups have been worried about the highway's environmental impact since the first environmental study was completed in 2012. Andrew Armstrong, a staff attorney with the Environmental Law & Policy Center in Chicago has filed two lawsuits in trying to stop the highway. [Opponents hope bat, mussel can stop Illiana construction - Post-Tribune#.U6MLU4dOXIU#.U6MLU4dOXIU](#)

### **Agency calls for AG to investigate RBA funds**

NWI Times  
Keith Benman  
6/17/14

The disability-rights agency Everybody Counts has asked Indiana Attorney Greg Zoeller to look into why the bulk of funds earned by a defunct bus service in Hammond were sent to other communities. In a letter sent Monday, the agency tells the attorney general's office its own efforts to investigate have been blocked. "We still don't have any clear answers, and if someone doesn't take a closer look, it's just going to happen again," said Everybody Counts Executive Director Teresa Torres. The controversy dates back to the collapse of the Northwest Indiana Regional Bus Authority in June 2012, which left thousands of bus and para-transit riders stranded with no service in Hammond. Because of its soaring ridership in Hammond, the RBA had "earned" more than \$1 million from the state's Public Mass Transportation Fund. It was to be paid out over the next three years. But the bulk of the funds distributed in 2013 — \$506,207 in all — went to on-demand bus providers in Porter County and South Lake County. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission appropriated the money to the demand-response providers as part of its 2013 budget process. NIRPC officials have said they were faced with an unusual situation when the RBA went out of business. They contend their agency followed the Indiana Department of Transportation's direction on how to distribute the funds.

<http://www.nwitimes.com/business/transportation/agency-calls-for-ag-to-investigate-rba>

[funds/article\\_b9553f60-af73-5498-874e-746317853f4a.html](https://www.newsandtribune.com/local/x1669973634/Official-questions-durability-of-Grant-Line-work-in-New-Albany)

### **Official questions durability of Grant Line work in New Albany**

News and Tribune

Daniel Suddeath

6/17/14

NEW ALBANY — As design continues for the next segment of the project, one city official questioned Tuesday why paving for the first portion of Grant Line Road “failed” so soon. The New Albany Board of Public Works and Safety agreed to expand its design contract with Jacobi, Toombs and Lanz by \$8,800 in order for the firm to study the right turning lanes near Wal-Mart and Applebee’s. Though construction is likely two years off, the next span of Grant Line Road to be upgraded will be from Beechwood Avenue to McDonald Lane, which encompasses the area to be studied by Jacobi, Toombs and Lanz. Using funds provided by the state to maintain Ind. 111, the city paid more than \$2.5 million to improve the northern portion of Grant Line Road from Mt. Tabor Road to McDonald Lane in 2012. The project included expanding the right southbound lane and resurfacing, but Warren Nash, president of the board of works, criticized the durability of the paving Tuesday. “It just doesn’t seem right when a major construction like that after a year fails,” Nash said. MAC Construction and Excavating was the contractor for the project. John Rosenbarger, director of public facilities projects for the city, said failure was “too strong” of a description for the issues occurring on Grant Line Road. Street Commissioner Mickey Thompson, who is also a member of the board of works, faulted Mother Nature for some of the base failures on the road. “Right after the project finished, we had one of the worst winters we’ve had around here in years,” he said. Existing lanes were resurfaced, not rebuilt, as completely paving the roadway from the ground can add up to 50 percent to the cost of a project, Rosenbarger said. Engineers will consider what portions of roadway can be resurfaced and which spans need to be rebuilt for the second leg of the project based on what is feasible, officials said.

<http://www.newsandtribune.com/local/x1669973634/Official-questions-durability-of-Grant-Line-work-in-New-Albany>

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