



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **July 24, 2014**

#### **Hoosier State Line Could Lose Key Funding**

Inside INdiana Business

7/24/14

The future of passenger rail service between Indianapolis and Chicago appears to be in jeopardy. An Indiana Department of Transportation official says Indianapolis is ready to pull funding, about \$300,000 a year, for the Hoosier State Line. Last year, INDOT and several communities along the route agreed to a financial rescue plan with Amtrak that would keep the line running through September. State officials are currently working with Illinois-based Corridor Capital LLC on plans for improvements and potential savings in an attempt to make the train a "more viable" travel option. Indiana and the city partners have a four month option to extend the deal beyond September. Zier tells Inside INdiana Business, "if we lose passenger rail service that we have today, I'm not sure we can get it back." He says the state is still working with Indianapolis officials to determine why they aren't interested in contributing to the route. Zier says he would be "very disappointed" if an agreement can't be reached that includes future support from the Marion County city. He says the train could operate in "reverse" to not only deliver Hoosiers to Chicago, but to bring economic development opportunities, business travelers and commerce back into the state. Zier says the state is seeking corporate sponsors to help offset some costs. He says some ideas being discussed with Corridor Capital, CSX and Canadian National would include a faster train that has a "wow factor" for travelers and would knock up to 90 minutes off of travel times. He says other concepts that involve "high-level capital investment" would shrink time between Indianapolis and Chicago to 2 or 2 1/2 hours and become the "premiere way of getting to Chicago."

[Hoosier State Line Could Lose Key Funding - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#) Also, <http://www.jconline.com/story/news/2014/07/24/passenger-rail-service-indy-chicago-future-uncertain/13110955/>

#### **Tully: Commuter tax is fair, like it or not**

Indianapolis Star

Matthew Tully

7/24/14

I've found that having a calm discussion about the issue of a commuter tax is nearly impossible. Even the mention of one leads to immediate, angry responses from those who either hate taxes in general or, quite understandably, don't think their income taxes should be captured by a county other than the one they call home. A man wrote me a couple of years ago to protest the very idea of a commuter tax, which has been both discussed and stalled for decades around here, and his protest summed up the opposition well: I moved out of the city, he told me, to get away from its problems. And one of those problems, he said, was the cost of paying for the city's many other problems. So I come today in peace, understanding the built-in opposition about commuter taxes

but hoping to raise a few questions and start a conversation. It's an important one because the numbers make clear that something must be done to improve Marion County's financial situation, and it is inherently unfair to have the residents of the county accept alone the cost of funding public safety officers and road paving, and so much else, when those things clearly improve the lives of suburban residents who rush in for work five days a week. So to the questions: If we were creating a tax system from scratch, would we really create the current system — one in which only the home county of a worker receives income tax revenues generated by the worker's job, regardless of where the job is located? Or would we consider it fair to keep at least a portion of the taxes in the county that hosts the workplace, that provides public safety for that workplace, and that has built roads, sidewalks and sewers to serve that workplace and its workers?

[Tully: Commuter tax is fair, like it or not](#)

### **Mishawaka road project drains neighbors' ponds**

South Bend Tribune

Joseph Dits

7/23/14

Residents say they'd known that the road project was coming – and welcomed the improvements – but complain that they didn't get any warning that their ponds would drain. At two nearby ponds that are also shrinking, motors on two fountains at the Village at Harrison Creek condominiums burned up when they suddenly became exposed to the air, said resident Kathleen Dickinson. One of the fountains is worth \$8,000, she said. "If we were notified, they could have been removed so they wouldn't get damaged," she said, noting that the condominiums do regular maintenance on the fountains. The water dropped quicker than anyone realized, she added Monday. By Tuesday, Gradeless said, one of the ponds lost all of its water. Dickinson and Gradeless, who's president of the Harrison Creek Pond Association, and several neighbors came to the Mishawaka Common Council meeting on Monday to speak up and get some action after Gradeless tried speaking with city officials. Although it is a city street, the project is under the control of the Indiana Department of Transportation. So the city must follow state standards and seek the state's approval for any modifications, West said. That's because the 80 percent of the \$3.8 million project is being paid for with federal highway funding, he said. When completed, it will widen Harrison from two to three lanes and add curbs, sidewalks, gutters and street lights for about a mile between Lexington Boulevard and Blackberry Road, all of which is just east of Capital Avenue. "It's going to be better when it's done," Dickinson said of the road itself. "So we're excited about that." Gradeless felt buoyed after speaking at length with Wood after the council's meeting. But Gradeless' hope that life survives or comes back to the pond is still tentative. The pond level tends to drop each year in the heat of August. Wood said he was also surprised at the project's effect on the ponds. He said he'll try to seek additional ways to minimize the pond draining but couldn't promise a fix. He, too, wants to know whether this could have been anticipated. Typically, he said, "We bend over backward when we lead a construction project to leave it much better than when we started."

[Mishawaka road project drains neighbors' ponds - South Bend Tribune: Local](#)