



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

September 3, 2013

Report: Ohio River bridge tolls to cost \$1 to \$12 each way

The Courier-Journal

Marcus Green

8/31/13

FRANKFORT, KY. — Frequent commuters will pay as little as \$1 to cross one of the new Ohio River bridges, while some truck drivers will pay as much as \$12, according to a newly released Kentucky highway report. The report, released Friday, was prepared as part of the state's plan to borrow money later this year for the downtown portion of the \$2.6 billion project. It predicts that Kentucky stands to bring in tens of millions of dollars each year in toll revenue to pay back the debt and interest. The study also predicts how many drivers will take free bridges to avoid the charges. Those with electronic transponders attached to the windshield will have the toll deducted from their account. Cameras will read the license plates of those without transponders to settle the bill. Some Southern Indiana small businesses long have opposed efforts to toll the I-65 bridges, and on Friday Jeffersonville businessman Wes Johnson said the proposed toll rates will "be devastating." "Tolling existing infrastructure at that rate is going to devastate businesses in Southern Indiana, I don't think there's any question about it," said Johnson, co-owner of Buckhead Mountain Grill. The report also shows the time and cost savings associated with driving across some toll bridges. For instance, a driver headed south on Interstate 65 in Indiana would add about eight miles, 17 minutes and \$1.25 in operating costs to take a "free" route along I-265 and the I-64 Sherman Minton Bridge before rejoining I-65 in Kentucky. There would be no change in operating cost to take the untolled Clark Memorial Bridge, although that route would add about eight minutes of travel time. Still, plenty of drivers are expected to choose the Clark Memorial or Sherman Minton. [Report: Ohio River bridge tolls to cost \\$1 to \\$12 each way | The Courier-Journal | courier-journal.com](http://courier-journal.com)

Hoosier Heartland prepares to hammer the last spike

Journal and Courier

Justin L. Mack

8/31/13

Completion of the last leg, from Delphi to Logansport, will cap a project that has been talked about since the mid-1970s and under construction for more than 20 years, said Tom Weatherwax, Hoosier Heartland Association president. The perennially underfunded project received a major boost in 2005 when then-Gov. Mitch Daniels launched Major Moves. The state plowed money — more than \$10 billion since 2005, according to INDOT — from the lease of the Indiana Toll Road into highway projects, including the Hoosier Heartland. Weatherwax, who as a state senator backed the controversial toll road lease, said it's still hard to believe that in less than two months he'll be driving the full length of the highway. "I relate this to almost like the last spike in the first transcontinental railroad. But I don't think it took as long to build the transcontinental

railroad as it did this highway,” Weatherwax said. “Many people have worked very hard for well over 35 years to bring this dream to reality. Many of these people and my friends, some of them who aren’t here anymore, never thought they’d live long enough to see this become a reality.” The Hoosier Heartland runs from Lafayette to Fort Wayne, and from there it connects to a section dubbed the Fort-to-Port corridor — from Fort Wayne to Toledo and Lake Erie. Completion of the Hoosier Heartland and Fort-to-Port highways provides more direct connections, not only between towns and cities but also key transportation facilities, such as Interstates 65 and 69 and the Port of Toledo on Lake Erie. The most recently completed section of the Hoosier Heartland, from Lafayette to Delphi, opened in October. [Hoosier Heartland prepares to hammer the last spike | Journal and Courier | jconline.com](#)

Congestion ahead for Indy-Chicago drive on I-65, study says

Indianapolis Star
Maureen Groppe
8/30/13

Within 20 years, the average daily drive between Indianapolis and Chicago on I-65 could become as congested as on Labor Day weekend, the U.S. Travel Association warns. The group, which lobbies for the travel industry, looked at usage data and growth rates of 16 key interstate corridors to examine the growing congestion on U.S. highways. Average daily car volume will surpass that of the typically busy Labor Day weekend within a decade in some places, the group said in a report released Thursday. The association is sounding the alarm now because major transportation projects can take 15 years to complete. “Traveling with relative ease cannot be taken for granted, whether it’s for business or pleasure,” said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. “If the average day on the road resembled those brutal periods when bumper-to-bumper traffic is the norm, it would devastate our economy and way of life.” The most-traveled part of I-65 between Indianapolis and Chicago has about 50 percent more traffic on the Labor Day weekend than on an average day, according to the report. Travel will be half of Labor Day peak in 10 years and as busy as Labor Day congestion by 2033. The current federal highway spending program, which Congress struggled to pass because of the dwindling Highway Trust Fund, expires in about a year. Roads, bridges and mass-transit projects have been mostly paid for through user fees, particularly the 18.4 cents per gallon federal gasoline tax, which hasn’t increased since 1993. But revenues haven’t kept up with demand, in part because of inflation and because vehicles have become more fuel-efficient so less tax revenue is generated for miles traveled. [Congestion ahead for Indy-Chicago drive on I-65, study says | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

Amtrak Hoosier State train is heading down the tracks to failure

The Exponent
8/29/13

With \$3 million hanging in the balance, the Indiana Department of Transportation has a big decision to make regarding Lafayette’s future involving mass transit to Chicago and Indianapolis. A decision that, for the sake of a failing company, should be no. In 2008, Congress made a decision to let the states take over the responsibility of whether to continue train routes that are less than 750 miles long. One of these routes is the Hoosier State line that runs from Indianapolis, through downtown Lafayette and up to Chicago. Congress’ decision set a deadline of Oct. 1 for the state to take control of Amtrak and make its decision about a form of transportation that INDOT says uses \$80 of government money for every \$22 paid by each rider to cover costs. If INDOT’s decision is in fact no, the Hoosier State line will be taken out, which services riders four days a week, and the Cardinal line will be the only train left going through Lafayette which fills in the other days the Hoosier State doesn’t service. This will take away the station’s now daily service. Marc Magliari, a spokesperson for Amtrak, made it clear when he said, “The question is do you want the service?” But the even bigger question is “Do we want to

pay for the service?" [Amtrak Hoosier State train is heading down the tracks to failure - Purdue Exponent: Opinions](#)

NIRPC transportation plan hits another roadblock

NWI Times

Keith Benman

8/29/13

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission ran into another potential delay Thursday on its four-year, \$724.8 million transportation plan, while an earlier delay already is taking its toll on state road and local transit projects. NIRPC Transportation Projects Manager Gary Evers told commissioners at their regular meeting the agency failed to give a 30-day notice of public meetings on the plan as required by a 2006 consent decree. "INDOT projects are being harmed by our delay as we speak," Evers told a room packed with commissioners and the public. "To INDOT, there is definite harm in this delay." If implementation of the plan has to be delayed again, it could affect the timing of NIRPC votes on the Illiana Expressway and Interstate 65 expansion. NIRPC had hoped to have those major projects ready for a vote in October. In July, NIRPC had to call off a vote on the same four-year transportation plan when the disability rights group Everybody Counts pointed out no public meetings had taken place as required by federal regulations. That set the plan approval back one month as the meetings took place. On Thursday, the commission approved the plan on a voice vote with some dissenting votes, but it was contingent on review by the agency's lawyer. If attorney David Hollenbeck says the plan was duly approved, it should free up the Indiana Department of Transportation and local transit agencies to proceed with projects. But if Hollenbeck finds the lack of a 30-day notice of meetings was a "fatal flaw," it would take at least two more months to bring the plan up for a vote again. The 2006 federal court consent decree that contains the 30-day notice provision came about because of a lawsuit brought by the disability-rights group Everybody Counts over alleged violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Members of Everybody Counts and other disability-rights groups came to Thursday's meeting with protest signs with messages like "Equal Rides" and "We are the real stakeholders." [NIRPC transportation plan hits another roadblock](#)

Residents don't like C.R. 29/U.S. 6 bridge proposal

The Goshen News

Sherry Van Arsdall

8/29/13

SYRACUSE — Monica Lambricht is a postal worker in Syracuse. She voiced her opinion on a proposed new bridge to carry C.R. 29 over U.S. 6 in Elkhart County during a public hearing at Wawasee High School Wednesday evening. Indiana Department of Transportation officials told an audience of approximately 35 at the meeting there will be no access off C.R. 29 with the proposed bridge. "I don't think the bridge is necessary. A light might be better," Lambricht said. "(Mail delivery) will be impacted a lot if a bridge is built and carriers will have to figure out how to get down and around (C.R. 29), it's a concern. They don't need to spend money on an overpass." The purpose of the proposed project is to enhance safety by addressing accident frequency at the intersection of U.S. 6 and C.R. 29, INDOT officials said. In the last two years, officials told the audience there have been 17 crashes recorded at that intersection and six of those crashes had nine people with recorded injuries. Several different improvements have been done in low-cost single quick fixes, said Dana Plattner, INDOT traffic engineer. "The bottom line...it hasn't worked," Plattner told John Longenbaugh, a local resident. Logenbaugh agreed the intersection can be dangerous. "People are inattentive and they have to be attentive. If people are attentive, they should negotiate it fine," Longenbaugh said. "But by building the bridge, you eliminate the on and off (for local residents)." [Residents don't like C.R. 29/U.S. 6 bridge proposal » Local News » Goshen News, Goshen, IN](#)

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