



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

October 1, 2013

Ohio River Bridges Project: Breaking the Surface

News and Tribune
Braden Lammers
10/1/13

JEFFERSONVILLE — Progress on the northbound portion of the Ohio River Bridges Project can finally be seen above the water. Construction crews on the downtown portion of the project broke the surface of the Ohio River Monday, as they prepared two footers that will connect four piers on what will become the bridge tower closest to the Indiana shoreline in Jeffersonville. “We hit a milestone,” said Max Rowland, project manager for Walsh Construction. “That’s the first part of the bridge that you can see that’s coming up and out of the water. Everything else that we’ve done so far has been below the surface.” Rowland explained that people will see a yellow tub surrounding two concrete piers that have been drilled into the riverbed. The tub itself is a 240,000-pound mold that has a precast concrete floor; it is 61 feet long and 22 feet wide. On tower No. 5 — the tower closest to the Indiana shoreline— the western-most tub is in place and the eastern tub was being put in place Monday. Once the tubs are set crews will grout, with concrete, around the precast concrete floor of the tub and the two piers. The concrete is allowed to set up and the water is pumped out of the footer. The next step is to pour a 24-inch thick reinforced concrete seal in the bottom of the footer. The form is then filled with reinforcing steel and filled with concrete, creating the waterline footing for what will become one of the bridge towers.

[Ohio River Bridges Project: Breaking the Surface » Homepage » News and Tribune](#)

Passenger rail service to continue as INDOT, Amtrak keep talking past deadline

Journal and Courier
Chris Morisse Vizza
9/30/13

The Hoosier State passenger train will continue to operate between Indianapolis and Chicago even though the state and Amtrak did not meet a deadline to get an operating agreement in place. Effective Tuesday, the federal government ended funding for Amtrak lines shorter than 750 miles, and states were expected to pick up the operating expenses of the affected routes. The 196-mile Hoosier State, which stops in Lafayette and three other cities, will not be disrupted, according to spokesmen from Amtrak and the Indiana Department of Transportation. “Amtrak provided us a 180-day notice back in April, giving us until Oct. 16 to work out an agreement,” said Will Wingfield, INDOT spokesman. “We have provided Amtrak with revisions to a short-term agreement so we can have time to negotiate a long-term agreement.” The negotiations have been positive, said Marc Magliari, Amtrak media relations manager. “I can confirm we are in talks with INDOT for a short-term agreement to prevent a Hoosier State service interruption by mid-October, so as to allow time to negotiate a longer-term contract,” Magliari said. A short-term

agreement of two or three months would allow discussions on a longer agreement to develop, Wingfield explained. He said the length of a long-term contract is unknown at this point. Funding for the route had been in jeopardy until Gov. Mike Pence authorized the talks to begin last week.

[Passenger rail service to continue as INDOT, Amtrak keep talking past deadline | Journal and Courier | jconline.com](#)

Indiana Congressmen Join I-69 Caucus

Indiana Public Media

Sara Wittmeyer

9/30/13

Two Indiana congressmen are serving on a congressional caucus formed this week and tasked with advancing the development of Interstate 69, the interstate being developed from Brownsville, Texas, to Port Huron, Michigan. Republican Larry Bucshon (IN-8) is co-chairing the bi-partisan caucus with Henry Cuellar (TX-28), Ed Whitfield (KY-1), Steve Cohen (TN-9), Blake Farenthold (TX-27), and Bennie Thompson (MS-02). Republican Todd Young (IN-9) is also on the caucus. "I'm happy to join my colleagues and lead this caucus to educate the House on the importance of this project as we move forward with transportation planning," Bucshon said in a statement. Bucshon says his hope is the caucus will help accelerate I-69 projects such as the bridge between Evansville, Indiana, and Henderson, Kentucky. "I-69 presents a tremendous opportunity to move people and products more efficiently and is vital for the economy of Southern Indiana," Bucshon said. According to Bucshon, more than 530 miles of the interstate are complete. In Indiana, the 64-mile stretch from Evansville to Crane opened in November 2012. A 27-mile section from Crane to just south of Bloomington is currently under construction. It's scheduled to open late in 2014. In a statement Trevor Foughty, a spokesperson for Rep. Young, said the congressman joined the caucus to make sure constituents' concerns were accounted for during the construction. "The road will have a significant impact in places like Bloomington, Bedford, and Martinsville, so we want to help shape the debate in Congress to the extent we can on behalf of Hoosiers," Foughty wrote.

[Indiana Congressmen Join I-69 Caucus | News - Indiana Public Media](#)

Rough road ahead for Illiana?

Post-Tribune

Carol Carlson

9/30/13

A report from an Illinois agency questions the need for the proposed Illiana Expressway. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning released a report last week casting doubts on the financial viability of the proposed 47-mile toll road linking Interstate 65 in southern Lake County to Interstates 55 and 57 in Illinois. The planning agency report called the Illiana a "misplaced investment" of transportation improvement funds and it questioned Illiana's impact on regional traffic congestion. State transportation officials in Illinois and Indiana have said the tollway would be built through a public-private partnership and is estimated to cost \$1.25 billion, with Illinois' share about \$950 million. At the planning agency's Oct. 9 board meeting, the group is scheduled to consider whether to endorse the Illiana. On Monday, Indiana Department of Transportation spokesman Jim Pinkerton said INDOT officials are working with staff from the Northwestern Indiana planning commission "to make sure they have the information they need from the project team in Indiana to have the Illiana included in their 2040 Plan."

[Rough road ahead for Illiana? - Post-Tribune](#)

Should Indiana Spend More On Alternative Transportation?

Indiana Public Media

Sara Wittmeyer
9/27/13

The Hoosier State rail line carries about 37,000 people from Indianapolis to Chicago each year, but its future is in jeopardy as the state and Amtrak try to work out a deal to pay for it. In 2008, Congress enacted the Passenger Rail Improvement and Investment Act (PRIIA). It set a deadline of Oct. 1, 2013 to turn over financial responsibility of routes less than 750 miles over to the states. The Hoosier State line from Chicago to Indianapolis is just shy of 200 miles. So Indiana needs to come up with \$3 million to cover the cost of the train's annual operating expenses. "We're willing to be part of the pie, just not the whole pie," says Indiana Department of Transportation spokesman Will Wingfield. Right now, the train only leaves Indianapolis one time a day, four days a week. Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday the Hoosier State leaves Indianapolis at 6 a.m. Just before midnight another train arrives back in Indianapolis. Train ridership in Indiana is growing and breaking records. According to Amtrak ridership has increased 77 percent in the last decade and July 2013 was the best month in the line's history. One thing nearly everyone can agree upon is if you improve the service and increase the frequency of the trains, more people will ride it. That would generate more ticket revenue which in turn would decrease the amount the government needs to pay. But adding a second route, or making the trains faster, or adding WiFi, costs money.

[Should Indiana Spend More On Alternative Transportation? | News - Indiana Public Media](#)

INDOT Breaks Down Benefits of Amtrak Route

Inside INdiana Business
9/27/13

An analysis commissioned by the Indiana Department of Transportation suggests the operating and maintenance costs of keeping the Hoosier State Line running exceed the benefits. INDOT released the study yesterday as the state continues to talk with Amtrak about the passenger service, which is set to lose federal funding next week. The analysis says the state would need to justify the service based on other benefits that can't be quantified by the research. Based on what can be quantified, the analysis suggests eliminating the Hoosier State has a beneficial impact due to the operating cost structure. The study outlines four "improved service options" that could annually boost ridership by as many as 164,000 passengers and revenue by more than \$4 million. In order to implement the new options, the study suggests capital improvements along the route that would exceed \$230 million over the course of many years.

[INDOT Breaks Down Benefits of Amtrak Route - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

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