



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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Amtrak upgrades planned on Hoosier State line

Indianapolis Star
John Tuohy
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Rail passenger carrier Amtrak announced Wednesday it would offer Wi-Fi, food and business-class seating on its Indianapolis-to Chicago-line. The upgrades on the four-days-a-week Hoosier State will last until Jan. 31, when Amtrak's contract with the Indiana Department of Transportation is set to expire. INDOT has hired a Chicago company, Corridor Capital, to run the Hoosier State. The company was supposed to take over Wednesday but needed more time for the changeover, said Amtrak President and CEO Joe Boardman. When INDOT asked Amtrak to continue operations for four months, Amtrak decided on the upgrades to "demonstrate its capabilities," Boardman said. INDOT has still not finalized its contract with Corridor Capital and Boardman predicted it wouldn't get done by Jan. 31, either. He said the company, which has never run a rail line, didn't anticipate all the regulatory hurdles it must cross with agencies as diverse as the Federal Railway Administration and the Food and Drug Administration. "They did not understand what they did not understand," Boardman said. Corridor Capital was awarded the contract with a bid of \$2.9 million. Amtrak did not bid on the contract, instead giving INDOT a cost estimate for another year of service. Corridor's plan calls for using Amtrak employees to run the trains, but Chairman Jim Coston said the rail service has not been cooperative in setting up the transition. "That's what the whole delay is about," Coston said. "They didn't participate in the (bidding) and were caught flat-footed. Now they are acting surprised about something that was approved months ago."

[Amtrak upgrades planned on Hoosier State line](#)

Indiana shouldn't have taken this road

Palladium-Item
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It's been eight years since the Indiana General Assembly began wrangling over the lease of the Toll Road. Eventually, a deal was done and operations of the northern Indiana highway — the only toll road in the entire state — were handed over to ITR Concession Co. for 75 years. In turn, the state pocketed \$3.8 billion in upfront cash to help fund a slew of road construction projects statewide. Now, with the debt-ridden ITR filing for bankruptcy, the debate of whether the sale actually was good for the state has been reignited. The deal was wrong then because it was not vetted properly before the legislative vote was taken. In a comment on March 11, 2006, we said that "we do not know whether it is a good idea to lease the Toll Road in exchange for a \$3.85 billion up-front cash infusion. It might be. But we do know that it is not a good idea to do it during this short legislative session, without time to conduct an in-depth fiscal analysis of the complex proposal." State senators and representatives should have been more deliberative in their

approach to the lease. Instead, then-Gov. Mitch Daniels ramrodded the proposal through the General Assembly amid promises that Indiana would use its newly found windfall from the lease to invest in roads and bridges at a time when other states were forced to watch their infrastructure crumble because of lack of funds. From the start, there was a lack of consensus — certainly in this region — that the proposal was good for Indiana.

<http://www.pal-item.com/story/opinion/editorials/2014/10/01/thursday-view/16570189/>

Council to vote on Rebuild Indy 2 funding

WTHR

Mary Milz

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INDIANAPOLIS - With the city still trying make emergency road repairs ahead of this winter, it now appears money will be set aside for major work next year. The City-County Council is expected to vote on funding for Rebuild Indy 2 at its Oct. 13 meeting. A Democratic-controlled committee signed off on a plan to let the city borrow \$70 million over the next two years to help pay for fixing bridges, streets and sidewalks. That's \$35 million less than the mayor wanted to borrow, which Department of Public Works spokesperson Stephanie Wilson says will mean fewer projects. But Wilson said DPW is still "glad to have any funding." The mayor and council Democrats have been at a stalemate over funding for a year now. Wilson said DPW has already reached out to all council members asking them to share their top priorities. She said they'll also review public input and the engineering analyses done on hundreds of projects, before putting together a final list. Wilson said the goal is to have that list by year's end and begin putting the projects out to bid so construction can begin in the spring. That's all assuming the council votes to move forward.

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