

## Indy Plans Millions To Repair Union Station; Bus-Rail Station's Future Cloudy

In an announcement on August 20, the City of Indianapolis released its long-awaited report on Union Station and the Amtrak-Greyhound bus station (i.e. the train shed structure which includes the Crowne Plaza Hotel and other facilities).

The report was prepared by the architectural firm of Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf.

It identified numerous problems, including a south wall failure on December 20, 2012. A train loading study was also done. Concrete platforms have occasionally dropped concrete from overhead, including at the Amtrak/Greyhound station. Steel mesh is being installed to protect pedestrians and autos from falling concrete and also temporary shoring has been placed in the waiting area of the transportation center (a.k.a. Amtrak/Greyhound waiting area). According to media reports, the city plans to spend \$3.7 million to fix pressing structural problems. A total of \$6.8 million in spending was identified.

WTHR's Mary Milz reported that the City is considering the possibility of selling the Greyhound/Amtrak terminal to Greyhound or closing it. Milz's report noted that the City spends \$2.3 million a year to operate the facility. However, Adam D. Thies, Director of the Department of Metropolitan Development for the City of Indianapolis told *All Aboard Indiana*, "No ideas are final about Union Station other than us wanting to address some immediate structural issues that we have discussed. As you well know, there are lots of moving parts and we are trying to understand each one as best as possible."



*Indy's Union station has been in a state of disrepair for quite some time; it will need \$3.7 million in immediate repairs.*

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## Indy Changes Its Mind; Hoosier State To Continue through January

The four-day-a-week Indy-Chicago train—the Hoosier State—was spared a possible October 1 shut down as INDOT reached an agreement with Indianapolis to continue subsidizing the train. The City had initially balked at a continued subsidy.

This means the communities of Indianapolis, Crawfordsville, Rensselaer, Lafayette, West Lafayette, Tippecanoe County and Beech Grove will continue to subsidize 50% of the cost of the service through Jan. 31, 2015. (Indiana is the only state to require local communities to fund passenger rail service.)

INDOT said it is also negotiating with Corridor Capital LLC to improve the service and its funding model by the end of the contract extension in January.

IPRA sent Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard a letter on August 14 urging continued city support for the Hoosier State. We also met with Indy's Department of Public Works on August 21. IPRA met with the City on Thursday, August 21 to thank them for continuing the support of the train until January.

Given the low ridership and poor performance of the train, the City noted that some questioned the need for any subsidy for the service.

## South Bend Airport Offers One-Stop Bus/Rail/Plane Connections; New Freeway Offers Indy Travelers New Rail Option to Chicago

With the completion of U.S. 31 between Plymouth and South Bend and the Kokomo bypass as a freeway (and the Carmel construction to upgrade that section), central Indiana travelers have a new way to get to Chicago by rail. They can drive the 138 miles to the South Bend Airport (which is now or will soon be a freeway for much of the way) and take the South Shore Line to Chicago.

Better yet, take the Miller Bus from Indy (board at Am-

trak/Bus station), ride to the South Bend airport, and then take the South Shore Line to Chicago.

South Bend Airport doubles as the final stop on the South Shore Line. Also available is regional bus service (Greyhound, Trailways, Miller/Hoosier Ride, and Coach USA). Travelers can take a bus to O'Hare, Midway Airport, Indianapolis, and other cities. Also at the airport is a city bus stop for Transpo ([www.sbtranspo.com](http://www.sbtranspo.com)).

Parking is convenient and economical—just \$1 for the 18-hour lot and \$8 per day at the economy lot. Though two Amtrak routes serve the city, the Amtrak station is not at the South Bend Airport. Amtrak is located at 2702 West Washington.

To plan your South Shore trip, go to [www.nictd.com](http://www.nictd.com). For the Miller Bus to Indy, call 800-544-2383.

## Bicentennial History Train Tours the State This Fall

By Amy Lamb, Indiana Historical Society

This month, the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) will kick off the 2014 run of the Indiana Bicentennial Train. A unique collaboration with The Indiana Rail Road Company and Norfolk Southern Corporation, the Bicentennial Train will visit

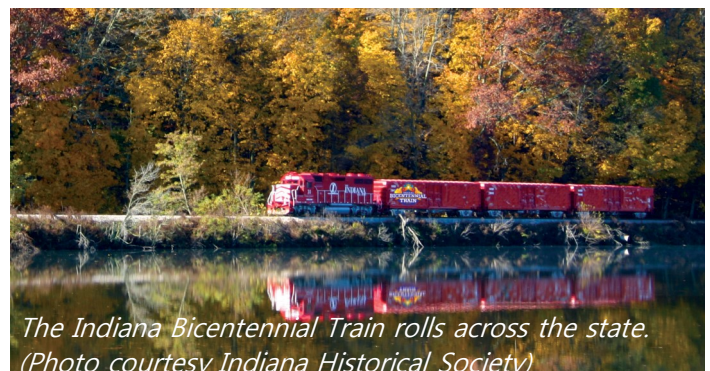
Columbus: Sept. 18-20, Bartholomew County Fairgrounds

Jasper: Sept. 25-27, Train Depot

Terre Haute: Oct. 2-4, Margaret Avenue just west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

Bargersville: Oct. 9-11, Downtown

Originally known as the Indiana History Train, the Indiana Bicentennial Train has welcomed more than 71,000 visitors in its six years of travel. It consists (*continued*)



*The Indiana Bicentennial Train rolls across the state. (Photo courtesy Indiana Historical Society)*



*("Bicentennial Train" continued from page 2) of three 65-foot renovated Amtrak freight cars and features a free traveling exhibition, *The Next Indiana*.*

The Bicentennial Train and its accompanying activities are all free and open to the public, operating 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. You can get on board the train cars and see the exhibition, connect with your community's history, enjoy performances by historical actor Kevin Stonercok, and shop the Basile History Market.

The Bicentennial Train will run each fall for two more years, culminating with the state's bicentennial in 2016. Local volunteers are still needed for each stop, and several time slots are available. To sign up, or for more information, call (317) 232-1882 or visit [www.indianahistory.org/train](http://www.indianahistory.org/train).

Support for the 2014 Indiana Bicentennial Train is provided by The Indiana Rail Road Company, Norfolk Southern Corporation and Kroger, in partnership with the Indiana Bicentennial Commission and Indiana Humanities.

## Amtrak Thruway Bus Allows Rail Connections Without Going to Chicago

Hate the 6 a.m. departure to Chicago from Indy? We have two daily Amtrak Thruway bus options. Take a 7:30 a.m. or 12:50 p.m. Amtrak Thruway Trailways bus instead and connect to Amtrak trains in one of three central Illinois stations: Champaign Urbana (CHM), Bloomington Normal (BNL), or Galesburg (GBB). If you are going St. Louis or Springfield (IL), ask Amtrak to put you on an earlier train. (Otherwise the connection times are very long.)

Here are some sample trips from Indianapolis using the Amtrak Thruway Bus operated by Trailways:

To Los Angeles: Leave 7:30 a.m. and connect via GBB

To Dallas: Leave 7:30 a.m. and connect via BNL

To St. Louis: Leave at 7:30 a.m. or 12:50 p.m. and connect via BNL (ask at BNL to be put on an earlier train)

To Denver: Leave at 7:30 a.m. and connect via GBB

To Springfield: Leave at 7:30 a.m. or 12:50 p.m. and connect via BNL (ask at BNL to be put on an earlier train)

To Carbondale: Leave at 12:50 p.m. and connect at CHM

To New Orleans: Leave at 12:50 p.m. and connect via CHM (or drive to Effingham, IL and board there—just 2 hours from Indy)

All of these options avoid going up to Chicago at 6 a.m. Unfortunately, the connection times are very long. However, this is daily service not threatened by the Hoosier State funding issue. Also, when coming from Chicago, you can connect to a Thruways bus to go back to Indy. Leave Chicago at 4 p.m. and you actually arrive earlier than the Hoosier State.



*Amtrak's Thruways buses provide additional options for connections.*

## News, Briefly Stated

The Hoosier Environmental Council had a forum on the Hoosier State/Union station issue on August 29. Details in our October issue and at Hoosiers for Passenger Rail on Facebook.

The Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA) in partnership with the City of Fort Wayne and our other Indiana and Ohio partners is currently writing a grant for approximately \$2.6 million to the FRA to fund a TIER I EIS study on the proposed higher speed rail line from Chicago-Fort Wayne-Columbus, Ohio. INDOT has agreed to serve as the prime sponsor for this grant. The grant will be submitted by INDOT to the Federal Rail (*continued*)



(“News” continued from page 3) Administration on or before September 15, 2014. (Submitted by Fred Lanahan in Ft. Wayne)

Grand Rapids kicks off a new rapid transit bus known as the Silver Line.

The *Indianapolis Business Journal* reports Indianapolis is one of the fastest growing cities in terms of persons who do not own a car—now over 10% of the population.

*Indianapolis Magazine* did a story on creative ideas for Indy which included making Union Station a casino. The magazine called the current station a money pit given the annual maintenance needs of the station.

Amtrak Beech Grove has an opening for a police officer. Apply at [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com).

## Krause's Korner: Northbound Hoosier State Best in On-Time Performance

By Joe Krause

On-time performance of the Hoosier State and Cardinal for July and for the last twelve months shows the northbound Hoosier State (Train #851) compares favorably with many other Chicago-bound short-distance trains.

The only inbound trains to Chicago Union Station that had a better on-time performance than the northbound Hoosier State were the Illinois Zephyr, the Carl Sandburg originating in Quincy, Illinois, and the Hiawatha (which runs 86 miles between Milwaukee, WI, and Chicago on double tracks with only four stops). The Michigan trains have to get through the Indiana gateway (around Porter, IN) but that problem is being addressed by the Federal and state governments. Even the vaunted downstate Illinois trains struggle with freight traffic interference and general traffic congestion as trains near Chicago's Union Station.

Here are some statistics for July and the last 12 months for select Midwest routes:

Train Name and Originating Station (and direction)	Distance from Chicago	July 2014	2013 - 2014
Hoosier State (Indianapolis) NB	196 miles	61.1 %	63.3 %
Hoosier State SB		29.4	38.3
Cardinal SB		21.4	26.4
Cardinal NB		15.4	54.4
Pere Marquette (Grand Rapids, MI) SB	178 miles	19.4	27.5
Blue Water (Port Huron, MI) WB	319 miles	N/A	13.3
Wolverines (Pontiac, Detroit MI) WB	304 miles	32.3	33.5
ALL MICHIGAN SERVICE (all directions)		24.8	46.4
ALL ILLINOIS SERVICE (all directions)		45.2	55
Saluki (Carbondale, IL) NB	309	45.2	55
Illini (Carbondale, IL) NB	309	38.7	31.2
Lincoln Service (St. Louis, Mo Bloomington-Normal on route- NB	384 St. Louis 124 Bloom.-Normal	58.1	66.5
Carl Sandburg (Quincy, IL) EB	258 miles	90.3	73.3
Illinois Zephyr (Quincy, IL) EB	258 miles	64.5	70.4
Illinois-Wisconsin Service Hiawatha (Milw. to Chicago)(both NB & SB)	86 miles	93.7	85.6

## Indiana Still Highway Bound

By W. Dennis Hodges, Vice-President— Business Relations, IPRA

At a July 29 transportation summit hosted by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann and her transportation task force talked for 55 minutes about improvements in roads and highways with plans that will not see fruition for another 30 years. The other five minutes, which I led, was spent on passenger rail.

The plans are indeed, impressive, but it is clear that the type of futuristic roads and highways that were spoken of will not happen for a very long time. In contrast, a 21<sup>st</sup> century passenger rail system could be (*continued*)

*("Highway Bound" continued from page 4)* added to Indiana's transportation mix within five years, carry as many passengers as a four lane highway, and provide a measurable convenience for many who travel the state and beyond. It would also cost the state far less money to build an impressive passenger rail system than it would to develop the proposed road and highway systems. Twenty-first century passenger rail trains have been shown in studies to add measurably to the local economy. They are also business friendly, will have a new industrial base developed around the system, and would improve the quality of life for many Hoosiers. But Indiana does not want to acknowledge the numbers. It wants still more proof that our proposed rail system will produce what we claim.

Having lived in France for some years and ridden the amazing rail system there and in other European countries, the evidence is clear. Twenty-first century trains can produce a similar economy and quality of life here that is enjoyed in Europe and in Far East Asia and very soon, Mexico.

I found it interesting that the State's Transportation Task Force Report called in a variety of road and highway consultants but called on no one to tell the passenger rail story. There is a reason for that. The state simply wants to build more highways, which in time will cause serious environmental problems. (This is already happening.) Why, when tangible arguments favor passenger rail? Four companies in Indiana—Cummins, Nashan, Steel Dynamics, and Progress Rail Service—are ready and waiting to build modern trains. Indiana should want these companies to grow and produce even more jobs. Other states surrounding Indiana are looking to trains to provide the available answers to their transportation concerns and issues. This state should do the same.

The Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association and the Hoosier Environmental Council have all the evidence the state requires. We just have to more aggressively *state* the facts.

## Restored Union Stations in Denver and St. Paul Serve as Transit Hubs

By Donald Yehle

Both Denver and St. Paul have refurbished and re-opened their Union Stations and made them into inter-modal bus/rail hubs. (See NARP newsletter for Denver details.) The St. Paul Union Depot, which closed two generations ago to train traffic after nearly 50 years as the city's grand entry, replaces the Midway Station for Amtrak service. In addition to the once-daily Empire Builder Amtrak line, it also handles regional bus service as well as the new light rail line which runs between St. Paul and Minneapolis. The *Star Tribune* reports that "[f]rom the Union Depot, the newly-renovated train palace overlooking the Mississippi, to the State Capitol and then along University Avenue -- the ancient path of ox carts and streetcars -- the Green Line is said to represent St. Paul's best shot in years to turn around a stagnant downtown and revitalize what was once the Twin Cities' busiest strip."



*Denver's Union Station  
(Photo by Scott Dressel-Martin, provided by Visit Denver)*

Six bus routes of Metro Transit use Union Station as do regional bus companies including MegaBus, Jefferson Lines, Greyhound, and shuttle buses serving two area casinos. Three parking lots for short- and long-term parking are available at Union Depot.

Three taxi services have pick up and (*continued*)

*("Restored Union Station" continued from page 5)* drop off areas. Both Car2Go and ZipCar have operations at Union Depot. Electric car charging stations and priority parking for fuel-efficient vehicles are other highlights of Union Depot.

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## For More Information:

*All Aboard Indiana* a monthly publication of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (formerly Indiana High Speed Rail Association).

To learn more or to join IPRA go to  
[www.indianahighspeedrail.org](http://www.indianahighspeedrail.org)

To follow rail news on Facebook go to Hoosiers for Passenger Rail and/or Hoosiers for the Hoosier State.

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Coming to Indy? All Aboard Indiana readers are eligible for a 12% discount off the best flexible rate at the Crowne Plaza Union Station (just steps from the bus/rail Union Station). Ask for corporate identification discount 100329414.

We are a proud partner with the National Association of Rail Passengers Association. For membership information and rail news, go to [www.narprail.org](http://www.narprail.org). Members receive a 10% discount off Amtrak fares booked three days in advance.

*Please send comments, letters to the editor, news tips, etc. to [billmalcolm@gmail.com](mailto:billmalcolm@gmail.com) by August 24 to be included in the September edition.*

Note: This group is not affiliated with Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

