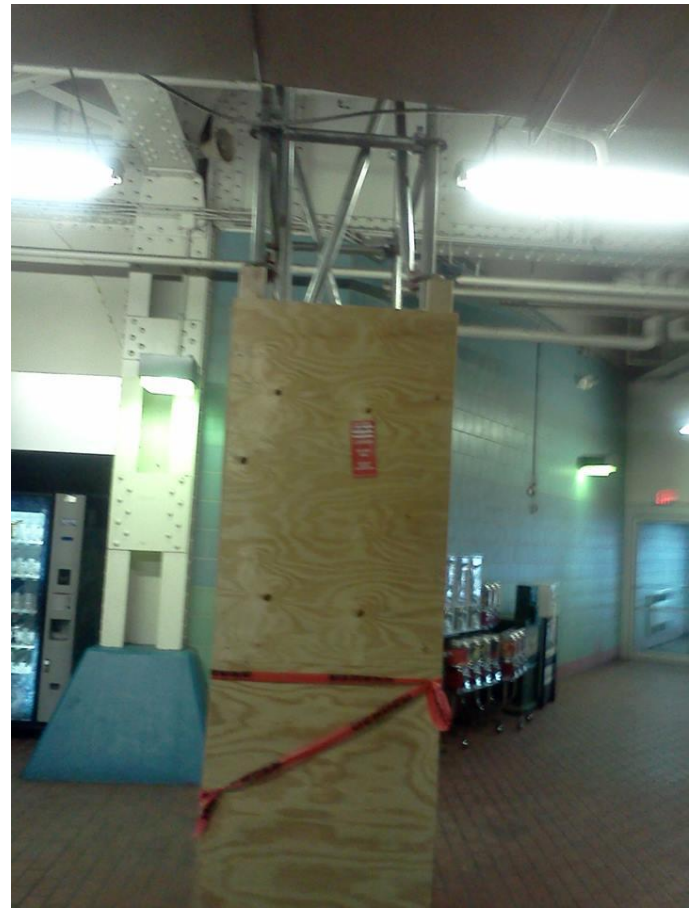


## UNION STATION REPAIRS ASSESSED

For anyone arriving at Indy's Union Station by bus or train, the site is a one of scaffolding. (Union Station is used by Amtrak, Greyhound, Miller, Trailways, and other bus lines.) The pictures below and at right show the scaffolding apparently holding up the ceiling.

A fence is now around the outside brick wall.

Adam Thies of the City of Indianapolis (which owns the station) has hired a consultant to assess the repairs needed. They expect results at the end of the month.



## WELCOME INDOT MULTI-MODAL DIRECTOR

INDOT has a train coordinator.

Robert L. Zier is INDOT's Director of Multi-Modal Planning and Programs.

Welcome Robert! We look forward to working with you.

## **R.L. BANKS LOOKS AT ALTERNATIVE TRAIN OPERATOR**

INDOT has retained rail consulting firm R.L. Banks to assess the possibility of issuing a request for proposal for an alternative operator for the Hoosier State.

INDOT expects to release the RFP in March 1 and have an alternative provider on board shortly thereafter.

The goal is to improve service on the Hoosier State.

On-time performance of the Hoosier State (80% for November-December 2013) continues to be an issue.

## **CN AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE ROUTE FROM DYER TO CHICAGO?**

Mixed signals are being sent on Amtrak's search for a better route for the Hoosier State between Chicago and Dyer (IN) (which currently goes through a UP maintenance yard and crosses several different rail companies' tracks). One consideration is whether using CN tracks is a viable alternative.

The current route takes over an hour to go 36 miles from Chicago to Dyer.

A writer for TrainOrders.org posted a summary of a recent meeting between Amtrak employees and an Amtrak superintendent:

*On Wednesday morning 22JAN a Superintendent from Chicago was in Indianapolis for a meeting with the crews.*

*What he said:*

*Canadian National will not permit a reroute of the northern part of the route to the CN line used by the City of New Orleans.*

Indeed, an engineer on the Hoosier State told me in December that the CN alternative was tried for two weeks but was dropped. Among other issues, trains have to back into Chicago.

However, INDOT and others are apparently being told by Amtrak that the CN alternative is still being studied.

## **INDIANA HIGH SPEED RAIL ASSOCIATION RE-NAMED**

At their meeting in Lafayette on January 29, the Indiana High Speed Rail Association voted to change its name to the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, Inc.

The IPRA also elected Steve Coxhead as their new president.

## **LAFAYETTE CHAMBER ISSUES RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce has adopted nine recommendations for the improvement of the Hoosier State passenger train:

1. Create an interim governance structure between Indiana and Amtrak.
2. Improve on-time performance.
3. Increase awareness of the train.
4. Reduce Hoosier State trip time.
5. Develop a measured plan for service improvement (WI-FI, bicycle transportation, limited food and beverage service).

6. Consider revising departure and arrival times.
7. Consider adding 1-2 additional trains.
8. Extend train to Cincinnati.
9. Collaborate with economic development officials and CSX to increase on line commerce.

### **SOUTH SHORE LINE EXPANSION TO DYER STUDIED**

The Northwest Indiana Times reports expanding the South Shore Line to Dyer is being considered. Also, in a January 18, 2014 story at nwi.com, U.S. Congressman Pete Visclosky promoted the South Shore Rail Extension. The 8-mile extension to Dyer would include new stations to be built in Hammond and in the Munster/Dyer area.

Supporters noted that expanding the South Shore Rail Line will give them the opportunity to increase connectivity to Chicago.



The South Shore expansion to Dyer would take about six years to plan and three years to build.

### **South Shore Facts**

- Passengers per weekday: 12,100
- Stations: 13 South Shore and 6 Metra stations served
- Fare: South Bend to Chicago \$11.75

Indianapolis riders could take the Miller Bus to South Bend Airport from Indy's Union Station (ticket on line or at Greyhound) and then connect (albeit with a long layover) to the South Shore. They could also drive to a station near Chicago such as East Chicago Station or Hegewisch and ride the train in.

For further information, visit [www.MySouthShoreLine.com](http://www.MySouthShoreLine.com)



**Midwest High Speed Rail Association**  
Reinventing Travel. Reinventing the Midwest.

Join us **in Chicago** on **Saturday, April 12, 2014** for our **Annual Spring Meeting**.

**Crowne Plaza Chicago Metro**  
**Downtown, 733 West Madison Street**

**Annual Spring Meeting**  
**April 12, 2014 from 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.**

Information at [www.mwhsr.org](http://www.mwhsr.org)

### **TAKE AMTRAK'S CARDINAL TO WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Take Amtrak to DC from Indy for around \$78 each way. Leave Indy three days a week at midnight, arrive 6 p.m. Leave DC at 11 a.m. and arrive at 5 a.m. back in Indy. Winter

weekend rates at the Washington Plaza Hotel just \$99 per night. (Best of all, the DC museums are free.)

South Bend riders can also travel to D.C. on Amtrak. This, too, is an overnight trip going east.

### **CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL UNION STATION UNDERGOING REPAIRS**

In addition to the station itself, the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Indianapolis is under-going renovation.

