



Advancing Mobility Worldwide

## Daily News Briefs for January 30, 2015

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By Peter Shelly

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## Tough Limestone Delays MoPAC Toll Lanes Project

[Austin Business Journal](#) reports that, "MoPac Expressway's new toll lanes may be ready at the end of the year rather than in September, the Austin-American Statesman reports. Contractor problems and tougher-than-expected limestone are partly to blame, according to the report, which states that the 11-mile-long highway makeover still will cost less than the \$197 million that the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority was granted for the project."

## **NY Thruway Looking for Savings**

[The Journal News](#) (Westchester County) reports that, "The state Thruway Authority will have to find 'savings' in its \$1.7 billion budget in order to avoid a toll increase in 2015, according to the highway system's new director."

## **CO Toll Project Close to Opening**

[The Clear Creek Courant](#) (Clear Creek, CO) reports that Idaho Springs bridge projects are now scheduled for completion in February. "The bridge construction projects are part of the \$72 million toll lane being built eastbound from Empire to Idaho Springs. The 13-mile toll lane project is slated to open to traffic in fall 2015," according to the report.

## **IFA Financing for Ohio River Bridges Project**

[The News & Tribune](#) (Jeffersonville, IN) reports that, "The Indiana Finance Authority has authorized the borrowing of \$170 million for the Ohio River Bridges Project east-end crossing."

## **VDOT Hosts Public Meeting on I-66 Toll Proposal**

[WTOP-FM News](#) staffs the first public session on the Virginia Department of Transportation's plans, reporting that "all three options on the table would include three general free lanes and two toll lanes in each direction. Two options include flexible bollards to divide the lanes, similar to the 495 Express Lanes. A third option would use a concrete barrier, similar to the 95 Express Lanes. HOV-2 would change to HOV-3 and, like the current Express Lanes, only non-HOV drivers would have to pay the toll."

## **MDX to Supervise Miami Intermodal Center**

[The Miami Herald](#) reports that the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX) is

negotiating with Dade County to assume supervision of most of the operations of the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC). The newspaper says the opening of a new MIC component, the \$2 billion Miami Central Station transit center, is being postponed in part because MDX and the county have not come to terms. "MDX is working with the county on language for a supporting resolution that would allow transfer of the MIC to MDX," Mario Diaz, the MDX spokesman, told the newspaper.

## Free Market Think Tank Compares Ohio Pike and ITR

[RStreet.com](#) (web site of the R Street Institute, a Washington-based free market think tank) offers a blog post comparing conditions on the Ohio Turnpike with those on the Indiana Toll Road. The conclusion: "Introducing competition and innovation to staid government programs can be a path toward getting the best of both worlds. But privatization initiatives must be carefully crafted to avoid tying together all the inefficiency of government with the 'rational self interest' (aka, greed) of the market."

## In Canada, Questions on Private Tolling Authorities

[The Montreal Gazette](#) looks at the "pitfalls" of privately run authorities, reporting that, "Next month, the tolls charged to use the new stretch of Highway 30 are set to increase by 40 cents to \$2.40 for a passenger vehicle. That's a 20-per-cent increase from this time last year and a 60-per-cent hike from when the autoroute was first opened at the end of 2012, when the tolls were only \$1.50." The column adds, "It seems counter-intuitive to hike the price because it is popular -- or dare I say, convenient."

## Fitch Rates Golden Gate Commercial Paper

[Fitch Ratings](#) has affirmed "the underlying 'A+' rating on the Golden Gate Bridge Highway & Transportation District's . . . \$61 million of Commercial Paper (CP) Notes issued on behalf of the District. The Rating Outlook is Stable."

## A Thumbs-Up for EU Tolling Proposal

["Fleet World" Magazine](#) (UK) reports on EU transport commissioner Violeta Bulc's proposal for an optional, Europe-wide road use charge system. The article notes that "William Todts, senior policy officer at sustainable transport group [Transport & Environment](#) [link added], greeted the news, saying: 'EU governments are all faced with

similar problems: falling fuel tax revenues, heavy congestion, and stubbornly high transport emissions. Smart, distance-based tolls are the way to tackle these problems head-on, and Europe can play a very useful role in making sure that systems across the continent work together as well as possible."

## Belarus Toll Road Expansion Announced

[BelTA](#) (Belarus's official news agency) reports that the country "will expand the network of toll roads under the BelToll system by more than 300km in 2015," according to the transport ministry's roads department.

## "Backyard Toll Road" Creator Recognized

[Bath Chronicle](#) (UK) reports that Mike Watts, "the brains behind the Kelston Toll Road," was among the guests invited to a recent reception with the Prime Minister, David Cameron. "The reception welcomed people from communities across the UK who have been involved in the voluntary sector."

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **InfraAmericas' US P3 Infrastructure Forum**

Tuesday, June 9

### **2016 IBTTA Conferences Planning Meeting**

Friday, July 10

### **IBTTA Summit on AET, Managed Lanes & Interoperability**

Sunday, July 12

[View all events](#)



## JOBS

### **Director of Finance, Kansas Turnpike**

Posted: May 21

### **Senior Programmer Analyst: Kansas Turnpike**

Posted: May 8

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## RFPS

### **RFI: Tolling Solution System Integrators and Equipment Manufacturers**

Posted: June 1

### **Automated Vehicle Occupancy Detection Solution**

Posted: May 20

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