

INDIANA ECONOMIC DIGEST

Daily News on Business and Economic Events throughout Indiana

Email Updates

About IED

RSS Feeds

Advanced Search

search...

search

home : most recent : lake

Share

June 3, 2015



Story Index

Most Recent

• Most Recent

Statewide

By Topic

By Region

By Day of the Week

By County

Resources

Business Links

Report Gallery

Contributing Newspapers

NY Times
RSS feeds

Share

428

3/29/2014 6:33:00 PM

Munster hoping federal grant can cover underpass \$30 million first phase

Jim Masters, Times of Northwest Indiana Correspondent

MUNSTER | The entire cost of the estimated \$30 million for phase one of the 45th Street underpass project could all be paid for with a federal transportation grant.

The Munster Town Council put the idea into overdrive recently in hiring [Robinson Engineering](#) at \$35,000 to complete the application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant program.

According to a federal government website, the TIGER grant program enables the U.S. Department of Transportation to "invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve critical national objectives." Congress has dedicated more than \$4.1 billion over six funding rounds since 2009.

A broad array of projects are evaluated on their merits to help ensure taxpayers are getting the highest value for every dollar invested.

Applicants must detail the benefits their project would deliver pertaining to five long-term outcomes: safety, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, livability and environmental sustainability.

Considering the grant criteria, Munster must tell a convincing story about the need and benefits of the underpass project to alleviate a longtime traffic trouble spot. Town Manager Tom DeGiulio will write this "narrative."

Although fewer than 10 percent of TIGER applicants are approved for funding, they usually get all the money they seek. Town officials plan to solicit letters of support from U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Merrillville; Sen. Joe Donnelly, D-Ind., and businesses that will be direct beneficiaries of the project, such as Community Hospital.

Joe Nordman, Robinson Engineering senior project manager, told the council a project needs to be at a certain stage of readiness for consideration, and the underpass project fits the bill. They'll have to work fast, as the application deadline is April 28.

"This is our best opportunity to fund the project," he said.

Phase one of the project consists of the east-west portion of the underpass from Calumet Avenue, extending east through the [Munster Steel](#) property and finishing at Southwood Drive. The grade separation project will create a two-bridge overpass for Canadian National trains and an underpass for cars to break the traffic gridlock at Calumet and 45th.

© Copyright 2015, nwitimes.com, Munster, IN

Editor, John C. DePrez Jr.; Executive Editor, Carol Rogers; Publishers: IBRC and IAR

Software © 1998-2015 1up! Software, All Rights Reserved