



## **Recap of May 12<sup>th</sup> Peoria Community Briefing**

More than 80 business and community leaders from the Peoria area attended the May 12<sup>th</sup> transportation briefing co-hosted by TFIC, the Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce and TransPORT.

Four state legislators attended: Senators Dave Koehler and Dale Risinger and Representatives David Leitch and Keith Sommer.

Roberta Parks of the Peoria Chamber opened the meeting. Linda Wheeler's presentation included information on reduced state funding and explained why we need to be concerned about the federal trust fund. She also outlined the TFIC program proposal during the question and answer session.

Senator Risinger said that the Governor's office now believes that the loss of federal funds is a critical problem. The Governor's office and some legislative leaders are trying to pass a capital bill in May in order to get federal trust fund money before October, when the federal funds may have to be cut due to projected deficits in the federal trust fund balance. Senator Risinger did not believe that the federal government would raise their 19 cent per gallon gas tax, especially now that some are talking about a gas tax holiday. He said that Illinois Works is looking at a variety of revenue streams. He prefers user fees to gambling.

Representative Sommer said that he is looking for a program that benefits Peoria and the plans out there now are not 'there yet.' He noted that social service agencies are also under dire financial conditions because of state funding issues.

Senator Koehler noted that the capital bill passed by the Senate includes lump sum allocations which might be helpful for local road and bridge needs.

Local business leaders asked questions about a constitutional amendment to stop diversions and the prospects for rail passenger service in Peoria. Several local highway administrators, including county engineers, talked about the lack of money in the local road funds.

A paper developed by the local chambers in the area detailing the regional road projects was distributed.