



Transcript

JULY/AUG. 2008



ODOT marks first anniversary of Minneapolis bridge collapse

Scott Varner, Central Office

AS STATE TRANSPORTATION workers across the country paused to remember the August 1st anniversary of the collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis, ODOT is launching a new public awareness effort to highlight the conditions of Ohio's aging bridges.

"Each day in Ohio, hundreds of thousands of drivers cross over our bridges. These structures connect businesses with markets, workers with jobs, people with health care and education, and families with loved ones and home," said Director James Beasley, at an event along Columbus' Broad Street Bridge, just blocks from the Ohio Statehouse.

Director Beasley detailed for the statewide media ODOT's efforts to improve bridge safety over the past year.

"As we pause and remember the 13 lives lost and the 144 more who were injured nearly a year ago, we also take note today of how this one event 700 miles away placed a renewed awareness on the work we do to preserve, maintain, and modernize our infrastructure here in Ohio," added the Director.

Under Gov. Ted Strickland, ODOT has devoted a significant amount of its annual budget to bridge preservation and modernization. Since the beginning of 2007, more than half-a-billion dollars has been directed to improving state

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Photo by Jocelyn Clemings, District 12

District 12's bridge inspection team scales the State Route 2/Main Avenue Bridge in downtown Cleveland. It is one of the state's 16 bridges with a similar deck-truss design to the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis.

Traffic back on track after unusual 'train wreck'

Sharon Smigielski, District 8



Photo by Joe Smithson, District 8

IT WAS A DIFFERENT SORT OF TRAIN WRECK: ONE THAT upset traffic on two interstate highways in Hamilton County just days before the busy Memorial Day holiday weekend.

The curious event unfolded the evening of May 20, when a flatbed semi trailer carrying an 80-ton locomotive travelled along Interstate 275 southbound in Whitewater Township. Detached from the cab, the flatbed drifted off the highway and crashed into a pier that supported the eastbound Interstate 74 overpass.

The initial impact caused the locomotive to come partially free from the flatbed. The momentum pitched the engine forward, causing further damage to the support piers.

"The impact of the locomotive and trailer destroyed two of the three columns," said Brandon Collett, P.E., District 8's structures planning engineer. "In addition, the pier cap failed just north of the third remaining column, dropping the north end of the pier cap more than five feet."

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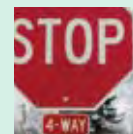
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Bridge collapse anniversary observed

and local bridges, with an additional \$354 million programmed over the next year.

A major national report issued by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) shows that one out of every four U.S. bridges needs to be modernized or repaired. Immediately making all of the necessary improvements would cost at least \$140 billion nationally; in Ohio, that cost is estimated at \$4.2 billion.

“Even with ODOT’s aggressive investment into bridge preservation, we are looking at the legacy of ‘Baby Boomer’ bridges built during the Interstate era,” said Director Beasley. “These bridges are aging, and so often it becomes a matter of ‘running in place’ to keep up with repairs, never mind preventive maintenance or building new bridges that are needed.”

“New technology can help us build bridges that are stronger and longer-lasting,” said Pete Rahn, AASHTO president and director of the Missouri Department of Transportation. “Yet we are not seeing the kind of national

attention or investment we need to address these issues.”

As it currently stands, the Federal Highway Trust Fund cannot fulfill the promises made to Ohio under the transportation reauthorization package passed in 2005. The latest figures forecast a shortfall that would result in a national cut of \$13 billion in federal investment. Ohio could face up to \$550 million in lost funding in 2009.

Targeting Ohio’s Deck-Truss Bridges

In the year following the Minneapolis bridge collapse, ODOT took additional measures to ensure the safety and longevity of the bridges in the state that share a similar deck-truss design. Immediately after the collapse, state bridge inspectors revisited 16 bridges located in Cuyahoga, Lake, Summit, Fairfield, Washington, Warren, Hamilton, Lawrence, and Columbiana counties.

Each bridge has since been re-inspected; the majority of the structures are in excellent condition

“As we pause and remember the 13 lives lost and the 144 more who were injured nearly a year ago, we also take note today of how this one event . . . placed a renewed awareness on the work we do to preserve, maintain, and modernize our infrastructure here in Ohio.”

(in terms of sufficiency and general appraisal ratings). However, additional attention was placed on three of the structures, including the I-90/Innerbelt Bridge in Cleveland, where the department will soon begin a \$10 million preservation project which includes reinforcement of several steel gusset plates used to tie beams together on the structure.

Repairs were also made to the State Route 2/Main Avenue Bridge in Cleveland to strengthen two lower cord members of the structure. Also completed was an ongoing bridge painting project—which adds to the longevity of this steel structure by preventing corrosion.

In Lake County, crews are working to replace the I-90 structures over the Grand River. The new westbound bridge is complete and open to traffic. Crews currently work to demolish the old eastbound bridge, with construction of a new bridge to begin in late August.

“As a department and as a state, we are doing all we can to make sure that Ohio’s bridges are safe and reliable,” said Director Beasley. “But it is not a failure of inspection or design or construction that leads to most bridge failures. In fact, the primary causes are natural disasters or man-made disasters such as freeway crashes.”



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Job Profile: Deputy Director Livengood proud of public service

Ron Poole, Central Office

JUNE 2008 MARKED RACHEL Livengood's first anniversary as deputy director of the Division of Quality and Human Resources in Central Office. The occasion arrived amid other exciting and joyful events in her life, too: her recently-concluded participation in the Strawberry Festival Soccer Tournament held in her home city of Troy, and the wedding of her daughter, Mary-Patricia.

"This May was the 11th year my husband, our two daughters and I have been involved in the soccer tournament," said Livengood. "We have managed concessions, handled registrations and anything else that needed doing."

Livengood started with ODOT 24 years ago as an officer with Labor Relations in District 8, and later became an assistant to the deputy director for Labor Relations. She

left ODOT and served in several positions at the Department of Liquor Control and the Office of Collective Bargaining during a ten-year stint, which included managing the arbitration program, before returning to transportation.

She rejoined ODOT as a labor relations officer with District 7, and then came to Central Office last year. Her present job, she says, involves finding new and better ways to serve employees.

"We need to ensure we are



Photo by Michael Stout, Central Office

Division of Quality Deputy Director **Rachel Livengood** emcees the 2008 Team Up ODOT.

finding and keeping a good staff to meet ODOT's critical needs," reflects Livengood, "and to do that, we need to provide employees educational and career growth opportunities, answers to questions about job duties, and a safe and orderly work place."

"We are also the driving force behind ODOT's focus on continuous quality improvement," she added.

One way her division is supporting Gov. Ted Strickland's Efficiency Review and Continuous Improvement Initiative is by developing a work process mapping course, where employees will learn to document their work flow.

"The Governor's focus made us realize we do a great job of improving our work processes," said Livengood, "but we do not have a consistent method for documenting and sharing these improvements. A work process map can be a valuable tool for objectively examining a work function and seeing where changes can be made."

Livengood resides with her husband in Troy, where they have raised two daughters, Mary-Patricia and Hannah. The recently-married Mary-Patricia will attend law school in New Orleans, while Hannah will start her junior year at St. Louis University this fall.

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Bridge collapse anniversary observed

Keeping the Public Informed

In marking the anniversary of the Minneapolis collapse, ODOT's communications team launched a new online public awareness effort to highlight bridge safety.

Visitors to ODOT's website are able to learn more about the state's bridge inspection program, including a guide to common bridge engineering terms.

"Terms like 'structurally deficient' and 'functionally obsolete' can be rather frightening if you don't know how they are calculated," Director Beasley told reporters.

"In addition to user-friendly bridge definitions and a 'frequently asked questions' page, Ohioans can also watch a video which shares a national perspective of the reliability and safety of the bridge system we all have come to depend on," he added.



Photo by Nancy Burton, Central Office

"As a department and as a state, we are doing all we can to make sure that Ohio's bridges are safe and reliable," said ODOT Director **James Beasley** at a news event along Columbus' Broad Street Bridge, just blocks from the Ohio Statehouse.



The more things change: *Transcript* at 20

Ron Poole, Central Office



IT BEGAN THE SAME YEAR THE movie “Die Hard” first exploded on movie screens, and the world watched the summer Olympics unfold in Seoul, Korea. And it has seen things like cell-phones and personal computers become part of the everyday work here at ODOT.

ODOT *Transcript* had its 20th anniversary this July.

There had been other employee newsletters before it, with names like *The Interchanger*, *Highlights*, *Transaction*, and *Access*. But the department had no employee publication for five years until the first *Transcript* reached everyone at ODOT that summer in 1988.

Back then, the first stories came from the cutting edge of word processing: big, solid IBM Selectric typewriters. A great deal of the page layout had to be done by physically cutting up paper copies and pasting them to larger pieces of cardboard along with black and white pictures developed by hand in the department’s darkroom.

“It was a bit like arts and crafts in grade school,”

recalled Bruce Hull, a graphics design specialist with Central Office Communications who worked on many of the first issues of *Transcript*. “I remember the excitement, the nervousness, and the ‘don’t-screw-it-up’ kind of fear that went into them: It was one of the biggest things we had ever produced.”

Two decades later, *Transcript* is an offspring of the digital age, with stories untouched by white-out and paired to digital photos downloaded directly from their cameras.

But no matter the change, *Transcript* will always be a newsletter for ODOT employees. It was well expressed by then-ODOT

Director Bernard Hurst, P.E., in that first issue of the newsletter:

“I hope you consider *Transcript* yours,” he wrote, “It is intended for the entire ODOT community . . . It will be, I hope a place where we can share our goals, our successes, our interesting thoughts and projects.”



Multi-modal champion Carla Cefaratti retires

Dave Seech, ODOT Central Office

FOR 25 YEARS, SHE HAS been a tireless and enthusiastic supporter of multi-modal transportation projects in Ohio, and has been involved in almost every aspect of ODOT—from budget to construction. Now, Deputy Director of Local Programs Carla Cefaratti retires from the department at the end of August.

“This was not an easy decision for me,” said Cefaratti. “I have been fortunate to have a wonderful career at ODOT. Few people get the opportunity to work in a job that touches the lives of so many people every day.”

Prior to joining ODOT as an executive assistant to the Director in 1983, Cefaratti was a legislative aide in the U.S. House of Representatives and served as councilwoman in Lakeline. She became deputy director of Local Programs in 1985.

As deputy director of Local Programs, Cefaratti oversees programs providing financial and technical assistance to Ohio’s local governments for locally administered highway, aviation, transit, and enhancement projects. She staffs the Transportation Review Advisory Council and serves



Photo by Bruce Hull, Central Office

transportation and the creation of the Local-Let Program allowing local governments the ability to administer federal aid highway projects. This program was recently cited by FHWA as one of the best in the country.

She has been recognized by several organizations, including the U.S. Department of Transportation and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, for her service and commitment to the transportation industry. The Ohio Public Transit Association honored Cefaratti with their Ohio Woman in Transit award in 1999.

“Carla’s contributions to improving public transit in Ohio are unprecedented,” noted Marianne Freed, ODOT Office of Transit administrator. “She is recognized all over the nation for her leadership.”

Cefaratti will be missed by ODOT and transportation agencies around the state.

“The most difficult part,” she reflected, “is leaving people I have had the pleasure of working with over the years. Every day brought new challenges, but I learned a lot from you, and I sincerely thank you for all the help you have given me.”

as a member of the four-person Loan Committee for the State Infrastructure Bank.

Cefaratti directed numerous internal ODOT projects and initiatives, including the first statewide study of the economic impacts of water

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Traffic back on track

Making repairs involving two interstates would be a challenge. Fortunately, the collision could not derail the determined forces of ODOT’s District 8.

The 32-year-old steel bridge sagged, but did not collapse, and eastbound traffic on I-74 was able to travel over the damaged bridge for about 10 minutes before emergency personnel arrived to close that section of roadway.

ODOT’s District 8 personnel and contractor crews worked quickly to mitigate the inconvenience to those traveling I-74 and I-275. Emergency

repair work began the day after the accident to stabilize the overpass with the construction of a temporary pier.

In three days’ time, a temporary crossover was constructed through the I-74 median to direct one lane of eastbound I-74 onto the westbound side, thus eliminating the detours in place and restoring at least one lane of all movements at the I-74/I-275 interchange. Crews worked around the clock to install temporary asphalt, concrete barrier, drainage, signs, lighting and traffic control.

Their endeavors ultimately

eliminated two rather lengthy detours around the structurally compromised overpass structure at I-74/I-275 in time for the Memorial Day weekend. The structure on I-74 did not receive significant damage from the impact, and work to construct a new pier is now underway, with completion targeted for early August.

“With the high cost of fuel coupled with the Memorial Day weekend, this work from ODOT crews and multiple contractors has to be commended,” said District 8 Deputy Director Hans R. Jindal, P.E.



Task Force looks beyond Ohio's borders for solutions

Christopher Toth and Scott Varner, *Central Office*

AS THE OHIO 21ST CENTURY Transportation Task Force envisions the state's future transportation system—and the best ways to maintain and fund it—task force members are looking beyond Ohio's borders for innovative solutions.

Since the task force's launch by Governor Ted Strickland in April, three subcommittees have been meeting vigorously, focused on the key areas of promoting a multi-modal system, generating economic development, and maximizing public investment.

Hoping lessons learned in other states might apply in Ohio, the subcommittees invited transportation leaders from across the nation to share their thoughts and ideas.

"You deserve special commendation for your proactive approach to addressing transportation challenges, for focusing on multi-modal solutions, and for insuring the general public has a strong voice in the task force work," said Frank Buselachi, Secretary of the Wisconsin DOT during the task force's inaugural meeting.

OHIO'S
21ST CENTURY



TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES



TASK
FORCE

"Our transportation system is the foundation for public safety and economic growth," said Buselachi. "It got all of us here today, and it will get us all home. Yet, we take it for granted."

"The circumstances that Ohio is facing are not unique to Ohio. This is being faced across the country," said Pete Rahn, director of the Missouri DOT and President of the American Association of State Highway and

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Safe travel a focus for pedestrians, too

Joel Hunt, *Central Office*

CREATING A TRULY ACCESSIBLE transportation system which connects Ohio from border to border and to the rest of the world means more than investing in the ability

of citizens to make their way through the state, it means ensuring their safety while traveling as well.

Though it may not always make headlines, the simple act of walking can carry with it certain risks.

Over the last three years, there has been an annual average of 99 fatal crashes, 2,265 injury crashes and 349 property-damage-only crashes involving pedestrians on state highways.

To serve the needs of all Ohio travelers, ODOT has invested more than \$24 million in bicycle and pedestrian projects since 2005.

"We have been very fortunate to capture funding for local projects, improving the well-being of our citizens and maximizing safety for all transportation modes," said District 10 Deputy Director Larry Woodford.

Randy Lane, acting administrator for ODOT's Office of Local Programs, said that in areas with a history of pedestrian-involved crash problems, ODOT provides

funding to local communities for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements.

"The department also funds lower-cost safety improvements such as high-visibility pavement markings at crosswalks and pedestrian signals and signing," he said.

ODOT provides funding to local communities for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements

ODOT also works with local communities under the "Safe Routes to School" program to fund projects which make it safer and more appealing for children from kindergarten through eighth grade to walk or ride their bikes to school.

"When kids take advantage of the program, they gain increased health benefits while traffic congestion decreases," said Safe Routes to School Administrator Julie Walcoff. ☺



Awards recognize department's paving projects

Ryan Larzelere, *Central Office*

FLEXIBLE PAVEMENTS OF OHIO (FPO) recognizes projects that demonstrate exceptional quality in construction at an annual meeting. Earlier this year, this trade association honored numerous ODOT projects

from around the state for their close attention to detail during paving operations.

ODOT Director James Beasley, P.E., P.S., was invited to appear at the occasion and handed out the ODOT awards, which

included the recognition of "Master Craftsman" for pavement which provided a minimum of 15 years of service life with only light maintenance. ☺

The winning FPO projects include:

District 2

SR 19, *Ottawa County*

A reconstruction of a one-mile section of SR 19 near Oak Harbor. Project included approximately 8,700 tons of Superpave mixture.

District 7

U.S. Route 33, *Logan County*

A two-course overlay of Superpave mixture was used on U.S. 33. Echelon paving was used to eliminate a cold longitudinal joint.

U.S. Route 36, *Miami County*

U.S. 36 was milled and resurfaced in Piqua with a two course overlay at variable depths.

District 8

I-675 "Smoothseal," *Greene County*

A thin, preventive maintenance overlay of polymer asphalt concrete called "Smoothseal," was used on I-675.

District 6

I-70, *Clark and Madison counties*

The district used, for the first time, a process called rubblization of existing concrete pavement and overlaid it with 780,000 tons of warranty asphalt.

SR 161, *Franklin County*

The three-mile long project on SR 161 included 5,400 tons of conventional Type 1 mix. The challenge was the maintenance of traffic during this construction project.

SR 750, *Delaware County*

SR 750 was relocated and widened from four to six lanes.

District 3

I-71, *Richland County*

Reconstruction and addition of third lanes on I-71, requiring 365,000 tons of warranty asphalt concrete.

I-71, *Medina and Wayne counties*

I-71 was widened and reconstructed to six lanes of traffic using warranty asphalt concrete.

SR 60, SR 96, and U.S. 250, *Ashland County*

The three routes were milled and resurfaced, included the use of Superpave to prevent rutting in the high stress areas..

District 5

SR 651, *Coshocton and Tuscarawas counties*

SR 651 was widened with asphalt and a two- course overlay was used.

District 10

SR 7 and SR 145, *Monroe County*

The project consisted of two courses of Item 448 asphalt.

District 12

SR 21, *Cuyahoga County*

SR 21 was overlaid with two courses of asphalt concrete, including "Smoothseal."



STOP signs wink, blink for your attention

Brian Stacy, District 3

ROADWAY INTERSECTIONS all around the counties in District 3 have been receiving an eye-catching makeover for safety. The static, “no frills” traffic stop signs at these intersections are being replaced with new signs featuring light-emitting diodes (LEDs) placed around their edges.

These lights flash day and night whenever the signs are approached by vehicles, helping motorists pay attention and heed the traffic command.

“In the past, our options (for drawing needed attention) were limited to additional signs or a flashing beacon mounted above the sign,” said District 3 Traffic Planning Engineer Thomas Weidinger. “The LED-enhanced signs have been an invaluable addition to our traffic engineering toolbox.”

The new signs run off of solar-powered batteries. In some cases,

these signs can be installed to replace an overhead beacon, providing the same benefits at a lower cost.

“The cost of a typical sign beacon installation can run up to \$5,000,” said Weidinger, “while the new LED signs cost only about \$1,300 each. The sign beacons also run up monthly electricity charges, while a small solar panel on each of the new signs is sufficient to charge the battery pack.”

The first installation of LED signs in District 3 were part of several safety improvements made to a state highway/county road intersection, where motorists repeatedly ran the stop signs on the county road approaches.

Once the scene of several right-angle crashes, ODOT records indicate there have been no further instances of these kinds of accidents at the intersection since the new signs have been in use.



Photo by Joyce Miller, District 3

Weidinger says customer feedback has been positive since the signs have been placed, with drivers noting the high visibility and attention-grabbing effect of the brightly blinking LED lights. 🔄

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Task Force looks beyond Ohio



ODOT Director **James Beasley** talks about the work of the Ohio 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force with Ohio Farm Bureau Executive Vice President Jack Fisher, who is also a member of the task force. The two appeared together on the Farm Bureau's Town Hall Ohio, an hour long radio show broadcast across the state.

Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

“We all need additional revenues to make a greater investment within our transportation system,” Rahn shared at a Maximizing Public Investment subcommittee meeting in July. AASHTO has an aggressive proposal to Congress to increase the federal funding program, from \$286 billion to \$500 billion.

“[The gas tax] is a nearly perfect tax, but it’s not so perfect anymore,” said James Whitty, director of the Oregon DOT during his presentation to the task force. Oregon is beginning the switch from the gas tax to a vehicle-miles-travelled (VMT) tax structure.

“The future is not bright for the gas tax,” said Whitty.

“We must find solutions to our short-term challenges and our long-term needs to continue investing in our transportation system,” said ODOT Director James Beasley. “We have a unique opportunity with this task force to look beyond our current limitations. We shouldn’t just think outside the box, but also look to other states and other countries for new and innovative solutions.”

This advice is not only being heard by task force members, but by Ohioans statewide who have logged on to watch webcasts of the task force subcommittee meetings at TransportationForTomorrow.ohio.gov.

Updates on the work of the Ohio 21st Century Transportation Task Force are also posted on the site. A final report and recommendations are expected later this fall. 🔄





Who are you? Do you really want to know?

Ron Poole, Central Office

ARE YOU tired of being misunderstood by your co-workers and friends? Of being mystified by certain people? Or do you just wish your office could pull together more as a team?

ODOT offers a way to help co-workers better understand themselves and work together with the help of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a questionnaire that takes inventory of personal preferences and summarizes them into personality profiles. The results of the profile are the basis for two classes offered through ODOT's Office of Quality and Organizational Development: "Myers Briggs Type Indicator: Introduction to Type," and "Working with Others."

"Before starting the introduction class, students will be asked to fill out the MBTI questionnaire," states Carol Schubert, ODOT quality coordinator and instructor for the MBTI sessions. "Then in class, we explore different aspects of people's personalities."

Among the different preferences, the MBTI shows how some people like to make decisions based on looking logically at the consequences of choices or actions (Thinking), versus those who consider what the decision means to them and

others personally (Feeling). William McElfresh, a work plan coordinator in District 10 Planning, found the MBTI surprisingly accurate.

"It really helps you see how some people are attracted to different jobs," he said. "As a thinking type, I enjoy analysis and planning. Knowing your strengths and the strengths of others can really help people communicate and work together well."

One of the personality differences identified by the MBTI is between people who feel energized around others (Extraverted Types), and those who need a lot of time to be alone with their thoughts to recharge (Introverted Types). The "Working with Others" class focuses on helping different personality types acknowledge the value of opposite types and work toward better relationships with co-workers and family members.

District 6 Highway Management Administrator Thomas Lyden found this class to be especially helpful when he first became a manager: "I was just getting to know my new staff when we all signed up for Carol's class," he recalled. "A class exercise revealed that I was an introvert managing an entirely extroverted staff! We really reached a new level of understanding: This class is a fun way to build a team."

Both MBTI classes are available through the Office of Training catalog on the ODOT Intranet. MBTI profile results are shared only with each participant and are meant for the sole purpose of personal growth. ☺

2008 Combined Charitable Campaign begins

Joel Hunt, Central Office

THE 2008 COMBINED Charitable Campaign (CCC) begins Sept. 2 and state employees are being challenged to contribute \$4.5 million to more than 2,000 participating charities around the world. The 45-day campaign begins with kickoff events in Columbus on Sept. 3 and in Cleveland on Sept. 11.

Last year, ODOT employees gave \$493,928—an average of \$85 per person—to the CCC, exceeding the \$442,372 goal. This year's goal for ODOT employees is \$444,535.

Gov. Strickland said, "The importance of each individual's contribution is highlighted in the theme of this year's State of Ohio Combined



Charitable Campaign. The theme—"Be the one to make a difference"—emphasizes that the contributions of each of us individually makes a tremendous difference collectively."

The CCC was established to consolidate many charitable campaigns into one, asking state employees for voluntary donations through payroll deductions or one-time gifts. One campaign at the workplace results in minimal workplace disruption and lower administrative costs.

Coordinators will begin distributing pledge forms on Sept. 2. Special event fundraisers, such as silent auctions, chili cook-offs and book sales are encouraged as a way to raise money and interest. ☺



Amish Buggy Safety: When horses meet horsepower

Joel Hunt, *Central Office*

OHIO HAS THE LARGEST AMISH POPULATION in the world, with more than 50,000 residents earning \$42 million in wages and generating \$9.3 million in local and state taxes in 2005. Like everyone else, these citizens rely on safe highways for their transportation needs.

Unfortunately, Amish buggies sharing state roadways with millions of cars can sometimes be deadly, as there have been approximately 1,100 Ohio crashes involving horse drawn buggies, with 483 causing injuries and nine resulting in fatalities from 2000 to 2007.

The state has taken steps to ensure the safety of buggies and their passengers on state highways. In a 2000 study, ODOT and the Ohio Highway Patrol looked at the potential reasons for collisions where slower moving, horse-drawn vehicles share the roadway with motorists traveling at speeds up to 55 mph.

“Our report clearly showed that motorists inaccurately estimating both the speed of the horse drawn buggies and how long it would take their vehicles to overtake or come up behind these buggies were the more typical causes of collision,” said Jerry Workman, ODOT transportation planner. “These crashes occurred primarily during daylight hours, on straight roadways or at intersections.”

The following year of the study, ODOT established the Amish Buggy Safety Program and through it, has invested more than \$7 million in strategies to better protect buggy

drivers as recommended by the 2000 study.

One such strategy is the separation of the different transportation modes: last year, ODOT opened a buggy overpass as part of a U.S. Route 30 expressway upgrade in Wayne County. The overpass provides a safe way for buggy traffic to cross without having to contend with high-speed traffic.

The department is currently building a buggy lane on former railroad right-of-way from the town of Millersburg to Fredericksburg in Holmes County, which has more than 160 miles of National Scenic Byways through Amish country and brings in four million visitors each year.

“We’re not only using state monies,” said Workman “but nearly two million in federal Transportation Enhancement

funding directed by the state, and a grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to build more than 15 miles of paved roadway to keep horse drawn buggies and cars separate and safe.”

ODOT is also addressing buggy safety issues through other means, such as widening of shoulders on state roadways heavily traveled by horse drawn vehicles, and cutting vegetation to improve sight distance for the drivers of horse drawn vehicles. In specific areas, the department is installing more signs reminding car and truck drivers to be more watchful for the buggies who share the road. ☺



Saving the berms in Van Wert County

Rhonda Pees, *District 1*

GOV. TED STRICKLAND based his Efficiency Review and Continuous Improvement Initiative on the idea that implementing the good ideas of those who actually do the work of government is the way to make that government better and more efficient.

That spirit is alive in the members of the Van Wert County garage, who started to think about a new way to repair eroded or damaged stone shoulders along the sides of highways. Their solution makes the repairs faster and has saved the state over \$130,000 in one year of use.

The stone shoulders on a highway, or “berms,” are placed along the roadside to increase safety. If a driver

veers off the roadway, a berm allows for better control of the vehicle and makes it easier for the driver to get back on the highway.

Over time, these stones fall out of place from normal use or during snow removal efforts, and can often end up in a ditch. Highway work crews try to retrieve and restore these stones to the highways, but this can be nearly impossible: “We created our own devices out of grader blades and I-beams and attach them to tractors to try to pull the stones into place,” said Van Wert County Manager Don Taylor, “but we could not reach most of them due to the angle of most roadside ditches. Even if we could reach the stones, dragging them up took so long, we would just end up re-doing



District 1 Highway Technician **Mike Lichtle** explains the process of retrieving berm stone at Team Up ODOT.

Photo by Rhonda Pees, District 3

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Futuristic technology helps keep bridges safe

Scott Varner, Central Office

AS PART OF ODOT's aggressive bridge inspection and preservation program, the state's highly-trained bridge inspectors use the latest technology to keep Ohio bridges safe.

"Research is taking place all across the country on new ways to inspect and protect bridges. ODOT is applying new technology to extend the life of our bridges, and to make the ones we replace longer-lasting and more resistant to deterioration," said Tim Keller, administrator for the department's Office of Structural Engineering.

All bridges in Ohio are looked at by inspectors who must go through a mandated ODOT bridge inspection training program. Using sight, sound and touch, inspectors annually look at the bridge deck, superstructure, and the piers and abutments supporting the bridge.

Aiding in that effort is an Ohio-exclusive Ultrasonic Thickness Gauge. The device uses sound waves to measure the thicknesses of deteriorating steel members, much like an ultrasound performed by a doctor. Unlike older gauges that only measure thickness at single points, ODOT's device rolls over the steel surface and provides thickness readings for the entire length of the bridge. This allows the inspector



ODOT's Mike Loeffler, head of the department's Bridge Maintenance and Inspection Section, demonstrates for news reporters the unique capabilities of an Ultrasonic Thickness Gauge. Photo by Nancy Burton, Central Office.

to pinpoint divots, dips and section loss.

Recently, Ohio's U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown introduced legislation to provide tax credits to improve anti-corrosion technology that protects existing infrastructure.

"We must act now to protect Ohio motorists," said Senator Brown in a news release from his office in Washington, DC. "Requiring corrosion prevention plans is a common-sense step toward safe and sustainable infrastructure. We also need to develop and install new anti-corrosion technologies. This will protect American infrastructure while creating

jobs and saving taxpayer dollars."

The proposed Corrosion Prevention Act would provide tax credits for corrosion prevention measures. This could include engineering design, materials, and application and installation of corrosion prevention technology.

"While the most cost-efficient solution to preventing corrosion is painting, ODOT has investigated these newer technologies, but the challenge has always been cost," reminded ODOT Director James Beasley, "Senator Brown's proposal to offer tax credits for companies to improve and hopefully reduce the cost of new anti-corrosion technology will add to Ohio bridge preservation efforts." 🌱

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Van Wert County's Berm Savers

the entire road."

The Van Wert County garage members formed the Berm Savers quality team and challenged themselves to find a more efficient and cost effective way to make these repairs. The team worked with a local manufacturer to design and build a device for loosening and lifting stones from where they lay and putting them back into place.

"Our 'berm reclaimer' is a made up of a row of disc blades which are attached to the side of a mowing tractor and can be angled in different ways to reach more stones," said Van Wert Highway Tech Lance Clifton. "After the stones are back into place, the tractor pulls a roller behind it to compact and firm up the restored berm."

In one year, the new process has reduced the amount of time the garage spends on these shoulder repairs by 200 hours, and has saved ODOT \$130,985 by using reclaimed stone.

"It's really cut our spot berming down in the winter," said Clifton. 🌱



Van Wert County Berm Savers team members Lance Clifton (left) and Ryan Long staff their informational display at Team Up ODOT.

Photo by Rhonda Pees, District 3



District 4: Painting upright bridge no easy task

CREWS CONTINUE THE CHALLENGING TASK OF painting the Ashtabula Lift Bridge in the city of Ashtabula. To keep the waterways open to marina traffic in the Ashtabula Harbor, the lift bridge must remain in the upright position throughout the entire painting process.

The painting is part of a \$5.4 million project in District 4 to refurbish the bridge, including replacing the bridge deck and performing mechanical, electrical, and structural repairs. The bridge will remain closed until this September when the project is scheduled for completion.

Still an active connection to Lake Erie, the historic Ashtabula Harbor was also a stop on the Underground Railroad, when fugitive slaves hid in warehouses along the harbor before escaping to freedom in Canada. 📍

Photo by Amber Rebillot, District 4



'Bendable Bus' Highlights State Fair

WITH AN ENVIRONMENTALLY friendly hybrid engine, enough room for 100 people, and a middle that can "bend" around tight corners, the 62-foot-long Rapid Transit Vehicle (RTV) highlighted ODOT's booth at this year's Ohio State Fair. The RTV, with sleek looks resembling a high-speed train, will be used this fall along the soon-to-be-completed Cleveland Euclid Corridor. Operated by the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the HealthLine will connect the city's Public Square to University Circle, the Cleveland Clinic and beyond.

The \$846,000 RTV has several notable design features, including the articulated design joint in its midsection. The vehicle's hybrid diesel engine operates an electrical propulsion system, requiring less fuel than standard engines and producing 90% less emissions. 📍

State Treasurer teams with Task Force

AS CHAIR OF THE Maximizing Public Investment subcommittee on the Ohio 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force, Ohio Treasurer Richard Cordray has led several discussions on finding new resources for funding the state's infrastructure.

A broad variety of financing concepts being considered nationally may be able to be used in some form here in the Buckeye State. Read more about how other states are joining Ohio's "Transportation Conversation" on page 6. 📍



Photo by Bruce Hall, Central Office

Transcript

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