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|--|---|--|----|
| Wet spring no barrier to litter pickers..... | 3 | Rail engines redesigned..... | 8 |
| Health & Wellness Corner | 5 | Half of all motorists killed were unbuckled..... | 11 |
| Cables weave protective net | 7 | Fair display challenging, rewarding..... | 12 |

'Bridge to somewhere' Cleveland Innerbelt project breaks ground

Jocelynn Clemings, *District 12*



THIS YEAR, THE FIRST Monday of May arrived in Cleveland misty and cool, but with the promise of a brighter tomorrow for the residents in the city's industrial flats. For this was also the day of the ceremonial groundbreaking of Cleveland's new Interstate 90 Innerbelt Bridge.

More than 100 guests looked on as ODOT Director Jerry Wray, alongside Gov. John R. Kasich, Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson, Cuyahoga County Executive Ed FitzGerald and others, symbolically began the start of Ohio's largest transportation improvement project and a much awaited new invigoration for the downtown area.

"It's taken awhile to get here," said Mayor Jackson to the Cleveland press, "But it's a perfect example of how the state, county and the city work together to make

continued on page 2

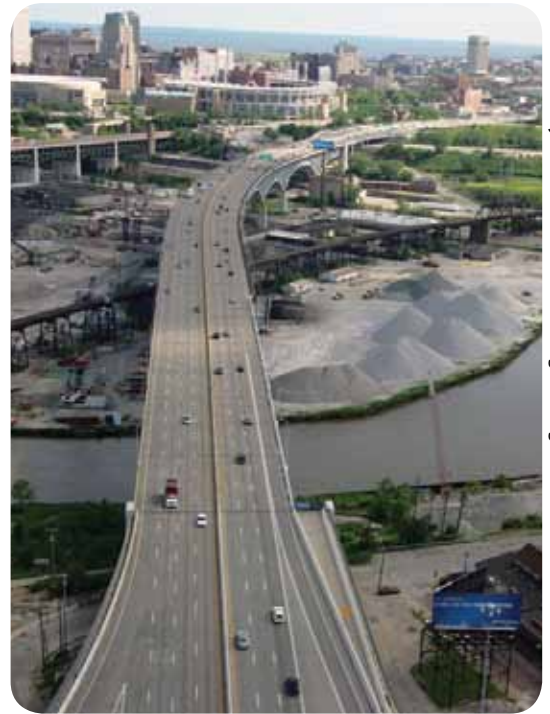


Photo courtesy ODOT Office of Aerial Engineering

Replacing the I-90 bridge is the first step in reconstructing the entire Innerbelt Corridor through downtown Cleveland.

Ohio roads get much-needed maintenance this year

Joel Hunt, *Central Office*



WORKING TO DELIVER the biggest bang for Ohio's buck, ODOT's 2011 construction program is chockfull with nearly 700 projects statewide.

"Ohioans deserve a reliable and predictable construction program which provides them with the highest value for their investments," said ODOT Director Jerry Wray. "This year, we will deliver just that."

Of the nearly 700 projects scheduled to begin this year, 250 are devoted to bridge maintenance and replacement; 200 to reconstruction and widening; and 150 to paving. Projects adding new lanes and general maintenance make up the difference.

Work will begin on two of the department's largest-ever Design-Build projects: The Interstate 90 westbound Innerbelt Bridge in downtown Cleveland and the

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

Cleveland Innerbelt project breaks ground

something happen.”

Former Sen. George V. Voinovich was on hand to witness the project's start. Voinovich, who also served as Cleveland's mayor and as governor for the state of Ohio, was responsible for securing a portion of the funding for the structure.

“This bridge is of national significance,” Voinovich said. “It is important to the movement of goods in this country and to the traveling public.”

The project will begin with the construction of a twin-span bridge, each to separately carry eastbound and westbound traffic along I-90. Work crews are driving massive piles nearly 200 feet—until they hit bedrock below—for what will be the first span of the new structure. The span will handle both directions of traffic for a time, while the current bridge will be torn down and a twin span built in its place.

The 14 piers of the structure will carry steel arches over the river valley, meant as a tribute to numerous historic river crossings which bear the same shape. Later, energy-efficient LED lights will be added to illuminate the bridge with more than 200 possible colors during the Cleveland nights. Scheduled to be completed in 2013, the first of the two new bridges will cost \$287.4 million to build and includes the re-

habilitation of numerous overpasses, roadway relocations, aesthetic work, landscaping, utilities and more.

As impressive as the bridge will be, it is but the first step in reconstructing the entire Innerbelt Corridor through downtown Cleveland. Along with work on the main viaduct, the multi-billion-dollar “Innerbelt Plan” will incorporate safety improvements such as flattening the sharp Innerbelt Curve, reconfiguring important downtown ramps and other modifications along this important downtown corridor.

The officials speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony noted the project's financial benefits, which has the power to provide jobs and make the flow of travel and commerce easier in downtown Cleveland.

“It's connecting things,” said Gov. Kasich. “You don't want to build things just because some politician wants to build something — you want to build things that actually bring economic development. And so this bridge is all about economic development.”

Newly elected Cuyahoga County Executive FitzGerald perhaps best summed up the total meaning of the project and its significance to the city.

“This is a bridge to somewhere,” he said, “somewhere very special.” ☺

continued from page 1

Ohio roads get much-needed maintenance

Interstate 71/Interstate 670 interchange in downtown Columbus. While work is already underway on the I-90 Bridge, construction will not begin on the I-71/I-670 project until later this year.

A Design-Build project is one in which the design and construction services are performed under the same contract. This delivery method can save time and money—and increase the opportunity for timely innovations—compared to the traditional Design-Bid-Build approach.

Around the state, work will continue on the Interstate 71 Jeremiah Morrow Bridge replacement—

Ohio's tallest—near Lebanon; the Nelsonville Bypass; the Interstate 75 Modernization Project through downtown Dayton; and the U.S Route 24 Fort-to-Port project in Napoleon.

Motorists should use caution as they navigate through the hundreds of construction work zones this year. In a report just released by ODOT, data shows there were 5,038 crashes in work zones last year resulting in 1,909 injuries and 12 fatalities.

The top three causes of work zone crashes include following too closely, failure to control, and improper lane changes. ☺

Wet spring no barrier to litter pickers

Joel Hunt, Central Office

Photos by Liz Lyons, District 8



Despite soggy weather, participants showed up to pick litter across the state during this year's Great American Cleanup, including these Adopt-A-Highway volunteers in District 8.



DESPITE BEING ONE OF THE wettest springs on record, ODOT and thousands of volunteers collected 181,000 bags of trash along Ohio's highways.

Each year the state is forced to spend \$4 million on a preventable problem: litter. The money could be used instead to install 323 culverts, pave 40 miles of a two-lane road, install 340 miles of guardrail or purchase 28 snowplow trucks.

Last year, ODOT spent \$4.4 million and 206,221 hours picking up 392,305 bags of trash statewide.

Each March, ODOT organizes cleanup events around the state as part of the annual Great American Cleanup. In Ohio, hundreds of volunteers made up of individual citizens, neighborhood groups, businesses, and organi-

zations, take to Ohio's roadways to pick up thousands of bags of recyclables, litter, and debris.

Youngstown was host of ODOT's 2011 statewide litter kickoff. In March, District 4 joined forces with Keep Ohio Beautiful, Keep Mahoning County Beautiful and the Youngstown Litter Control and Recycling to host the statewide Great American Cleanup event near Stambaugh Stadium in the city of Youngstown.

Volunteers picked litter along seven different locations in Mahoning County, including several along Interstate 680 and a couple along U.S. Route 422, the Madison Avenue expressway.

Overall, the city of Youngstown filled 102 bags of trash while ODOT filled 258. Also, 60 tires were removed from the Williams Avenue exit ramp at I-680.

"Gathering together to pick up litter along roadways gives Ohioans cleaner and safer roadways, helps to foster pride in communities, and positively affects healthy economic development," said ODOT Director Jerry Wray.

ODOT's more than 1,400 Adopt-A-Highway groups—at least one in each of Ohio's 88 counties—clean a two-mile section, or interchange, a minimum of four times a year for two years. On average, Adopt-A-Highway volunteers pick up 25,000 bags of trash, saving the department \$280,000. 🌱



Now underway: the 'ODOT Works' project

Ron Poole, Central Office



HAD ODOT GOTTEN THE CONTRACT, Rome would have been built in a day.

ODOT engineers can go through roundabouts without turning.

Snowplow operators don't plow the snow; the

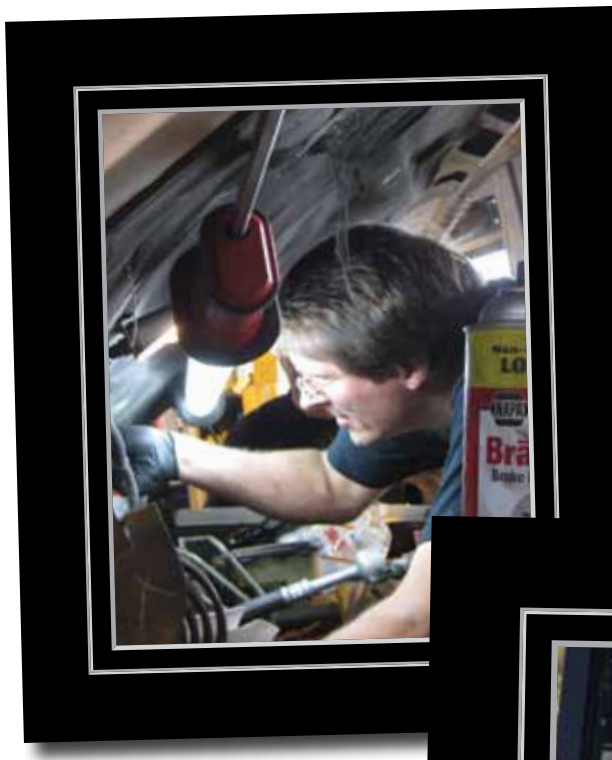
snow moves out of their way.

What the Germans call the "Great Autobahn," district work crews call a "so-so effort."

We are... the most excellent transportation work force in the world!

Fun with a famous set of commercials aside, ODOT Director Jerry Wray believes the members of the department represent the finest state transportation has to offer. To recognize that fact, he assigned Communications personnel from around the state to collect photos of department's work force doing what they do best: maintaining Ohio's world-class transportation system. The best shots will

continued on page 5



continued from page 4

The 'ODOT Works' project

be blown up as posters, mounted, and redistributed for display in district offices and other department facilities.

“This is all about showcasing the people of ODOT,” said Wray. “We want to show the true face of this department: More than official announcements and press releases; more than projects; ODOT is its people and the exceptional effort they make every day in service to their local communities.”

Currently, Central Office has received several dozen submissions from various district offices and is in the process of selecting images for mounting and distribution. The first of the “ODOT Works” photos should start appearing mid-August, but the hunt is still on for more:

If you have any great photos of your teammates, please submit them to your district Public Information Office. Please take a cue from the candid action shots displayed here for examples of the style of shots we're interested in featuring. 📷



Health & Wellness Corner

Don't let the heat beat you

Ron Poole, Central Office



THE WARMTH OF SUMMER can be wonderful, but only in moderation. Whether you work or play in the summer heat, keep the following potential health risks in mind and know what you can do to protect yourself.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

What it is: Heat exhaustion develops after long exposure to high temperatures and insufficient intake of fluids. Signs include heavy sweating, paleness, weakness, headaches, muscle cramps, tiredness, dizziness, nausea or vomiting and fainting.

What to do: At first sign, get out of the sun and get a cold drink.

SUNSTROKE/ HEATSTROKE

What it is: A life-threatening condition where the body can't regulate temperature due to prolonged exposure to and/or excessive production of heat.

What to do: Drink plenty of water and avoid strenuous exercise in high temperatures. If sunstroke occurs, cool body with ice or bathe limbs in cold water and seek medical attention.

SUNBURN

What it is: Burns to skin from overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation.

What to do: Do not sunbathe and avoid unnecessary exposure, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.; Use SPF 15 or higher sunscreens applied liberally and uniformly to skin; If sunburn occurs, stay out of the sun and seek over-the-counter treatments or full medical help if warranted. 📷

Safety is its own reward

Ron Poole, Central Office



BACK IN THE PRIMITIVE AGES OF THE 1990s, before smart phones, designer coffees and MP3s, there was a slogan within transportation built around the word “TEAM.” At ODOT, the word “TEAM,” it was said, stood for “Together, Everyone Accomplishes More.” The department brought this spirit, alive and well, to Phoenix, Arizona this March. Members of the department along with Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) and other local and federal agencies all shared in a LifeSaver Public Service Award from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The award was given in recognition for their combined efforts in improving road safety under the Ohio Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

ODOT Highway Safety Manager and Chairman of the Safety Committee Michelle May was on hand to accept the plaque on behalf of the multi-agency team during NHTSA’s 29th Annual Lifesavers Conference. Yet even as she appreciated the honor, May could not stop thinking about her fellow committee members in Ohio.

“They really should have all been with me,” she recalled later. “The entire team deserved to be there.”

Since 2002, ODOT and ODPS have been coordinating a statewide steering committee which meets quarterly to review crash trends on Ohio highways and discuss key strategies to be implemented across agencies to reduce these crashes. The end result was a comprehensive safety plan put in place in 2006, calling for a diversity of strategies to reduce vehicle crashes and save lives.

The 20-person committee includes representatives from local, state and federal safety agencies who network and share their information freely with hundreds of other organizations throughout Ohio. More importantly, this group looks for ways different agencies can work together to better serve the public.

“As a result of the plan and committee, I can point to dozens of projects where we are pooling funds and sharing expertise across organizations to make Ohio roads safer,” said May. “Today, ODOT

does more than design safer roads. We actively help our partners across a broad spectrum of safety issues, including DUI and seat belt education and enforcement campaigns.”

ODPS Programs Manager and member of the safety committee Felice Moretti sees the effect of the committee as far reaching around the state.

“It’s all about the joint efforts of the agencies involved,” said Moretti. “We have seen real improvements in safety since we began our work.”

Since 2002, Ohio’s total highway fatalities have dropped by 28 percent. Serious injuries suffered in auto crashes have



The Strategic Highway Safety Plan Committee. Pictured here are representatives from ODOT, ODPS, MORPC, Ohio State Highway Patrol, ODPS, FMCSA, County Engineers Association and PUCO.

continued on page 7

Cables weave a protective net on highways

Paul Nartker, *District 7*



IF YOU HAVE EVER SEEN A CROSS-MEDIAN crash on the highway or its aftermath, chances are you are not likely to forget it. When a vehicle crosses lanes and enters traffic traveling in the opposite direction, the resulting collisions can easily reach closing speeds exceeding 100 mph. From 2001 to 2005, the state averaged 17 fatal cross-median crashes per year.

Cross-median crashes are commonly caused by a variety of factors, including impaired driving, secondary crashes (vehicles crossing medians due to contact with another vehicle), driver error and icy or wet road conditions. Concrete barriers between medians can prevent cross-overs, but collisions with them can result in severe injuries and fatalities. ODOT sought a solution to handle all such collisions while providing better protection for drivers.

The answer: the use of tension cable barriers on highways instead of concrete. Also called guard cables, cable barriers are made up of steel wire ropes wound tight and mounted between anchored steel posts stretched out along the median. If a vehicle tries to cross into another lane, the system either “catches” it, like a net, or redirects the errant vehicle and prevents collision. The flexibility of the cable disperses the energy of the impact and reduces the effects felt by vehicle occupants.

In 2003, median cable barrier was first installed on a 14-mile section of Interstate 75 in Butler and Warren counties, between state routes 129 and 73. This



Photo by Tom Arnold, *District 8*

section of rural interstate has a wide median and sees 92,000 vehicles per day. There were 11 fatal accidents from cross-median crashes on this roadway during a 14-month period starting October of 2000.

Since the installation of this cable barrier, ODOT has found there have been no fatalities due to cross-median crashes. The barriers have proven effective in multiple hits. In other locations where the barriers have been installed, the incidents of cross over collisions have been much less severe; in most cases, a vehicle striking the barrier is able to drive away with minimal damage.

Since these initial studies, cable barriers have been included more and more on highway projects. Median cable barriers now include a concrete or asphalt mow strip, eliminating the need for herbicides or hand trimming. There are currently 275 miles of median cable barrier in place or under construction in Ohio. 🌱

continued from page 6

Safety is its own reward

dropped by 20 percent, and all crashes have dropped by 25 percent. In 2009, Ohio reached an historic low for highway fatalities, with 1,022 highway deaths compared to 1,417 in 2002.

“Our new goal is to reduce fatalities another 5 percent by 2015,” added Moretti.

Accomplishing even lower numbers in safety

may seem like a lofty goal, but May believes the committee has found the key to success.

“Any state can have a plan,” she observed, “but it takes a true team effort to track data and pool resources to save lives. Our committee members care about their work and their care is reflected in the numbers.” 🌱

Rail engines redesigned and redefined for our times

Stu Nicholson, Ohio Rail Development Commission



IT WAS BIG, OVER 50, a little rusty, and in desperate need of an extreme makeover. In the case of Ohio Central Railroad Locomotive #1402, however, the outside color scheme was not the problem: it was the need for more “green” on the inside. Recently, this switching locomotive, built sometime around the 1950s received a new, cleaner, and more fuel efficient engine upgrade. This was made possible, in part, by the efforts of the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC).

The commission is the public sponsor and administrator for the first two rounds of the Diesel Emission Reduction Grant (DERG), an Ohio Depart-

ment of Development program in which new or retro-fitted locomotives can be purchased to reduce their harmful emissions. In the case of #1402, a huge, old and dirty diesel engine was replaced with two smaller and cleaner-running engines. This so-called “Gen-Set” configuration allows the locomotive’s engineer to operate one or both of the engines at the same time, using only the engine power absolutely needed and thus saving fuel. And while older engines have to be left running to keep harder-to-burn diesel fuel warm when waiting in shipyards, the newer twin engines allow the locomotive to be shut down completely, saving more fuel and further reducing air pollution.

Already in service on the Newark to Mount Vernon branch and the state-owned Panhandle lines, Newark-based Locomotive #1402 is saving money for its owners and keeping the air cleaner for the residents.

“Happily, we are seeing more of this new wave of fuel and emissions-efficient locomotives operating in rail yards around Ohio,” said ORDC Executive Director Matt Dietrich. “This new generation of railroad locomotives uses 45 percent less fuel compared to conventional engines, and reduces air emissions by as much as 80 percent.”

The engine’s extreme makeover also included a top-to-bottom sandblasting, bright new paint, new interior, new controls and new wheels, all accomplished by Central Ohio’s own highly-skilled Coshocton locomotive shop crew. The \$810,000 project cost less than buying a totally new locomotive, and the shop crew got the rebuild done in between their daily duties maintaining the fleet.

“They said they could do it, and they did it,” said David Powell, a representative for Genesee & Wyoming, the company that owns the locomotive. “They take a lot of pride in their work. They’re good craftsmen.”

So far, ORDC has administered over \$2.6 million in federal funds for the purchase of

continued on page 9



Genesee & Wyoming’s new “Gen-Set” locomotive. The shop crew, pictured, gutted a 1950’s-era yard switcher and rebuilt it from the frame up at G&W’s locomotive shop in Coshocton.

Photo by Stuart Nicholson, Ohio Rail Development Commission

List of projects on TRAC

Ron Poole, Central Office



AFTER A YEAR-LONG PROCESS, THE Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) approved funding for safety and economic development transportation projects around Ohio. The final list, available on the ODOT website, provides for about \$70 million in funding for new transportation projects.

“TRAC pursued an open and fair selection process,” said ODOT Director Jerry Wray, “which delivered a final project list designed to increase economic development and safety for Ohioans. We had to make some difficult decisions to keep the list within fiscal balance while still keeping pace with our state’s growing transportation needs.”

In addition to projects already under construction, the list includes projects ready for new construction and projects to be studied and designed for potential construction in the future. TRAC approved \$2.7 million in design funding for the Pickaway East/West Connector, while \$800,000 went to the Mid-Ohio Intermodal Facility in Marion.

Two safety projects to separate railroad crossings from roadways with underpasses were given funding, including \$13 million for County Road 73/McCord Road near Toledo, and more than \$16 million for State Route 58 in the village of Welling-



Photo by Theresa Pollick, District 2

McCord Road at Norfolk Southern Crossing in Lucas County.

ton. Nearly \$15 million was also approved for the Mahoning Road Transit Corridor, which will add new transit service along State Route 153 in the city of Canton. The second phase of the State Route 42 widening through the city of Strongsville will also be completed, with \$6 million in funding.

Last spring, local municipalities, county commissioners and county engineers, metropolitan planning organizations, and port authorities submitted applications for new construction investments as well as funding for new planning, design, and right of way work to the TRAC. ☺

continued from page 8

Rail engines redesigned and refined for our times

two energy and emissions-efficient “Gen-Set,” locomotives for yard work in a Cincinnati area rail yard. This project will reduce air pollution by over 110 tons a year, as well as reduce fuel costs to the railroad company by 35 percent per unit.

Also under the DERG program, the Brewster, Ohio based Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad has re-fitted several older locomotives with Auxiliary Power Units (APU’s): devices which

provide energy for functions other than propulsion. According to the railroad, the APUs saved about 1,100 gallons of diesel fuel in their first year of use. At current diesel prices, the company saved \$3,685 while improving the air in Summit and Stark counties.

The use of these and other measures are growing within the rail industry, and ORDC is playing its part in showing railroads can be green, both financially and environmentally! ☺

Budget gives ODOT authority to lease Ohio Turnpike

Ron Poole, Central Office



Gov. JOHN KASICH signed his first two-year state budget into law June 30. The \$55.8 billion spending plan includes the authority to investigate the leasing of the Ohio Turnpike to a private entity. This potentially new means for generating income for transportation projects adds a special responsibility on ODOT to oversee the arrangement.

A slowed economy, high gas prices and more fuel efficient vehicles has led to fewer fill-ups at the pump and a decrease in vehicle miles traveled, meaning less gas tax revenues to maintain and improve our transportation system.

Combined with record levels of inflation for construction materials and less available federal funds for transportation projects,

the state simply cannot fund its current level of construction projects. This slowly diminishing ability to maintain and improve highways and bridges has a wider effect on the state's economic recovery.

"Fact is," said ODOT Director Jerry Wray in remarks to a recent Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency conference, "private life, including private enterprise, depends on publicly provided physical infrastructure. It's not optional and it's not inexpensive. It's the one area of public policy where there is really not much debate."

The Turnpike lease option is an alternative means of funding with the potential to bring in billions of dollars in income; short term through an initial lump sum payment, and long term through

an on-going arrangement to fund additional highway projects.

"Whatever deal we would enter into would involve some payment upfront and a percentage of the tolls for the life of the lease, so there will be continuing revenue for the state of Ohio," said Wray.

As stewards of an important resource, state officials will put careful consideration into any agreement, making certain it addresses the needs of Ohio travelers.

"First, if we decide a lease agreement is in the best interests of the state," said Wray, "it will be a lease, not a sale. Ohio will always retain the underlying ownership and ultimate control of the facility. There will be limits to the amounts of allowable toll increases: limits on the amount per year and the maximum. And there will be performance standards . . . that will require them to maintain the road in at least as good a shape as it has always been, and perhaps better."

The cost to operate the Turnpike has increased by \$41 million from 2000 to 2009 and will continue to rise. Leasing the turnpike reduces the cost of maintenance while maximizing the use of the asset as a revenue source for investment in major transportation projects which have the greatest economic impact, including job creation. Ohio would be able to invest in other statewide infrastructure priorities, while

continued on page 11

KNOW THE BENEFITS OF TURNPIKE LEASING

Short-term, leasing the Turnpike would help Ohio potentially generate billions of dollars with a lump sum payment.

Long-term, Ohio would receive an annual revenue stream from the tolls collected.

Generated revenue will be used to invest in major transportation projects which have the greatest economic impact, including job creation.

All proposed projects must still follow the TRAC process.

Any economic development and infrastructure improvements would make the Turnpike even more valuable once the lease has ended.

Budget gives ODOT authority to lease Ohio Turnpike

any economic development and infrastructure improvements made to the roadway by private interests would make the Turnpike even more valuable once the lease has ended.

Ohio has yet to enter into any talks or negotiations with any private interests. ODOT will establish and monitor the leasing agreement, and would have the rights to take over operations should the private entity fail to meet their contractual obligations. The administration currently favors a 30- to 50-year lease agreement. 🌐

THE NEXT STEPS

The budget plan went into effect July 1, and gives OBM and ODOT the authority to explore the option of leasing. But certain steps must be taken before an actual agreement will be in put in place.

ODOT, OBM and an advisor team will evaluate the turnpike to determine its value and the functions to be included in the agreement (i.e. collecting tolls, maintenance, rest areas, etc.).

The team will develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) detailing the findings of this evaluation and the terms the agreement will need. The RFP will be presented to the Ohio Legislature which must review and approve the proposal within 90 days of submission.

The department estimates the RFP process will take 18 months total. It will be ready for submission in 2012.

Half of all motorists killed were unbuckled

Joel Hunt, *Central Office*

SADLY, HUNDREDS OF OHIOANS LOSE their lives each year because they don't buckle up.

To bring the seatbelt message home to Ohio drivers and passengers alike, ODOT once again joined forces with the Ohio Department of Public Safety on the "Click It or Ticket" seat belt campaign.

Click It or Ticket is a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) campaign aimed at increasing the use of seat belts among young people in the United States. The campaign uses targeted advertising aimed at teens and young adults.

"Although 20 percent more people are wearing seatbelts now than they did in 2000, we need to close the gap through enforcement and education," said Director Jerry Wray.

According to ODOT safety experts, crashes among young drivers are the number one killer of their age group. In fact, of the 221 young people



Photo by Joel Hunt, Central Office

killed in 2009, 135 were unbelted.

According to NHTSA, across America, seat belts saved nearly 13,000 lives in 2009 and nearly 300,000 lives since 1975.

During the campaign, ODOT placed Click It or Ticket yard signs at ODOT facilities around the state and on message boards over interstates in Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, and Akron. 🌐



Setting up Fair display challenging, rewarding

Ron Poole, Central Office



THE RUN OF OHIO STATE FAIR and its ODOT exhibit, from July 27 to August 7, is a familiar rite for two Central Office employees: Mark Gall and Dominic DelCol. The two sign fabrication technicians with the sign shop worked together and with others to assemble the ODOT display in the Marketplace building. Gall has worked on the display every year for the last 16, DelCol for the last ten.

“We have different themes each year, making different demands on us,” noted Gall. “Sometimes we hang 80 road signs; sometimes we build models of construction zones. Somehow, it always comes together the final two days of set up.”

This year’s display theme, “Every Move you Make . . . Keep it Safe,” focused on highway safety and featured a multiscreen driving simulator for visitors to experience the effects of distracted driving, and information on safety practices. Governor Kasich visited the exhibit opening day to introduce the new 2011-2013 state road map.

“The driving simulator was the most challenging thing we did this year,” said DelCol. “We created a dashboard and an interior space for the simulator so it would be more like real driving.”

Both men agree the best part of the job is showing the finished display to their families.

“It’s rewarding, building something you know will be seen by thousands of people,” said DelCol. ☺



transcript

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John R. Kasich, Governor

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