

Contact: [D01.PIO@dot.ohio.gov](mailto:D01.PIO@dot.ohio.gov)  
419-999-6803

## Interstate 75 project through Findlay on pace for 2020 completion

### *Project is in year three of four-year construction schedule*

LIMA, Ohio (Thursday, Aug. 8, 2019) - The most significant highway construction project in the Findlay area's recent history stands at approximately 70% complete.

The Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) \$114 million reconstruction and widening of Interstate 75 through Findlay and Hancock County has progressed well. The project is in year three of a four-year construction schedule and is on pace to be completed late next year.

The project is reconstructing five miles of the existing four lanes of I-75 and constructing an additional lane of travel in each direction from just north of the county Road 313 overhead, south of the U.S. 68/state Route 15 interchange, to county Road 99.

In addition, the project is replacing all mainline bridges on I-75, replaced the Harrison Street overpass, redesigning and reconstructing the interchange between U.S. 68/state Route 15 and Interstate 75, and redesigning and reconstructing the interchange with U.S. 68/state Route 15 at Lima Avenue.

ODOT officials understand why motorists feel the project seems to have taken long to complete, but the scope of work involved is far beyond an ordinary project. "This project is like rebuilding your whole house while you're still living in it," said Chris Hughes, deputy director for ODOT District 1. "We are reconstructing and expanding interstate lanes, reconstructing bridges and interchanges, all while maintaining four lanes of traffic the majority of the time," he said.

The original project completion was spring of 2020 but is now more likely to be winter of 2020. "Given the scope of work, frigid winter temperatures, and extraordinary rainfall we've experienced, we're happy with only that much of a delay," said Hughes.

Here's a look at what's been completed on the project, and what's to come:

What's been completed . . .

- Motorists will see a shrinking work zone this year as the majority of the work from state Route 12 to County Road 99 has been completed. Two existing lanes on I-75 have been reconstructed and a new third lane has been added. "Work is still occurring there, but later this summer we anticipate all lanes will be open and the final pavement in place," said Hughes.
- The final layer of asphalt, which was predicted not to be in place until the final year of the project, is currently being placed on this section. "We would've been paving very early in the spring next year when temperatures are still low and frost can still occur, so we opted to complete that now," said Hughes.
- Significant structure work has been completed. The reconstructed Harrison Street bridge was completed last year. A new flyover ramp, which carries I-75 southbound traffic to U.S. 68/state Route 15, was completed last year as well. The new flyover eliminated a loop ramp where numerous rollover accidents occurred. The bridge on I-75 over the Blanchard River has been reconstructed and only needs its final driving surface.
- All ramps at the state Route 12 and U.S. 224 interchanges have been reconstructed.
- A retaining wall along the railroad within the U.S. 68/state Route 15 interchange area was constructed and another along the mainline of U.S. 68 is under way.
- Thousands of feet of drainage pipe have been installed.
- A service road for properties along Lima Avenue near the headquarters of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is complete.
- The reconstruction of Logan Avenue is complete.
- Noise walls have been completed.
- A steel arch over an abandoned railroad track north of the Blanchard River was installed. Rather than removing the existing bridge over the tracks and filling in beneath, ODOT opted to install the arch to keep the area open to allow water to flow to mitigate the area's propensity to flood.
- Earthwork is a major component of the I-75 project. Roughly 800,000 of the approximately one million yards of dirt needed have been moved.

What is under way . . .

- Pavement reconstruction on I-75 is occurring from the U.S. 68/state Route 15 interchange to the south end of the project just north of the county Road 313 overhead. Traffic is currently in a contraflow pattern where both northbound lanes are traveling on the southbound side in order to reconstruct the existing northbound lanes.
- The pavement on U.S. 68/state Route 15 is under reconstruction from its interchange with I-75 to the south end of the project. Traffic on U.S. 68/state Route 15 is currently shifted through this area and is bypassed around work at Lima Avenue. The reconstruction of the lanes of U.S. 68/state Route 15 is expected to be completed this year.
- Construction of the double roundabout interchange at Lima Avenue continues. A portion of the roundabouts was opened to traffic this year and approximately 50% of the construction has been completed.

Construction of the bridge over Lima Avenue, which will carry traffic to and from I-75 and U.S. 68/state Route 15, is under way. Lima Avenue beneath I-75 is expected to reopen in December. Work in the interchange area will continue once Lima Avenue reopens.

The new interchange design will create direct access to Lima Avenue from I-75 without merging first onto U.S. 68/state Route 15.

- Earth work continues at Lima Avenue, on U.S. 68 mainline, at the railroad, and in the area of a new bridge which will carry traffic on U.S. 68/state Route 15 to I-75 southbound.
- Howard Street and River Road are open but will close periodically for bridge painting and for construction of drainage trenches and paving. Grading and seeding of the roadsides and clearing of debris from the river near the roads are yet to be completed.

In the final year of the project in 2020 . . .

- Significant structure work will take place in 2020. A bridge to carry I-75 over the railroad, and a bridge to carry U.S. 68/state Route 15 traffic to I-75 southbound are yet to be completed.

- The reconstruction of the ramps from U.S. 68/state Route 15 to I-75 southbound, and from I-75 northbound to U.S. 68/state Route 15 will be completed.
- The final driving surface of asphalt on I-75 will be placed from the U.S. 68/state Route 15 interchange to just north of the county Road 313 overhead.
- Final work at the Lima Avenue interchange will occur. Landscaping of the roundabouts, final grass seeding, and installation of street lights and a pedestrian sidewalk at Lima Avenue will be completed.

\*\*\*