Today we mark the opening of the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway. It is a remarkable, world-class bridge that will provide swift and scenic passage over the Maumee River.

For many years, political, business and community leaders have sought a new bridge that would best serve the area’s people and its economy. Throughout the process, an extraordinary effort was made to listen to members of the community. State and local officials conducted dozens of public meetings and made hundreds of presentations to inform residents and seek input on numerous questions ranging from the bridge’s design to the bridge’s name.

The commitment to the Maumee River Crossing Project demonstrated by area leaders and residents was matched by the state with the single largest investment in the history of the Ohio Department of Transportation.

The construction workers who have labored since the groundbreaking in 2001 are owed our gratitude. And, while this is a day to celebrate, we also remember the workers not forgotten with us who helped make this celebration possible. This bridge will long stand as a tribute to their memory as well as the sacrifices of our state’s veterans.

I’m pleased to join in this dedication ceremony and to welcome the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway into operation. The Skyway will ease the path of both drivers and ships while making a colorful and dramatic contribution to the Toledo skyline.
Today, our community ushered in a 21st century signature bridge that will shape the view of our region for generations to come. Spanning the largest river flowing into the Great Lakes, the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway’s streamlined elegance invites a new generation to a place where artistry, innovation and quality of life thrive.

Marcy Kaptur
U.S. Congresswoman

"The Veterans’ Glass City Skyway will be a lasting tribute to the creativity and hard work of the people of Lucas County and especially to the workers who gave their lives building it. The new bridge is a beautiful example of the kind of progress we can make as a community when we roll up our sleeves and work together for greatness."

Pete Gerken
Lucas County Commissioner

"The Veterans’ Glass City Skyway will stand as a symbol of engineering excellence, hard work, perseverance and Toledo pride for generations to come."

Keith Earley
Lucas County Engineer

Some cities are synonymous with their landmark bridges. The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. The Brooklyn Bridge in New York. Given the scope of the Maumee River Crossing Project, there was never any doubt that this crossing needed to be a "signature" bridge.

So what shape did we want our signature bridge to take? Selecting its cable-stayed style was the beginning of ODOT’s unprecedented effort to involve the public in making decisions on the project. Public input helped to literally shape our skyline: a single pylon with backlit glass panels and a single plane of stay cables with low-maintenance, stainless steel sheathing.

Public input was critical in naming the bridge, in deciding how to use the land now available underneath the bridge and in selecting the design of the tribute sculpture which will recognize, honor and memorialize all those who gave so much to complete this signature landmark. This is indeed our community’s bridge, reflecting our long heritage with the glass industry, while providing a signature focal point for years to come with the world’s first LED-illuminated pylon.

You have made this a world-class signature.
VETERANS' GLASS CITY SKYWAY
DEDICATION CEREMONY June 23, 2007

Call to Order

Invocation

Presentation of Colors

Pledge of Allegiance

National Anthem

Introduction
Director James G. Beasley, P.E., P.S., ODOT

Opening Remarks
Governor Ted Strickland, State of Ohio

Comments
Union Representative

Furling of the National Flags

Comments
Federal, State and Local Officials

Ribbon Cutting

Start Run/Walk

Parade
"The bridge will make Toledo look like one of the Top 10 Cities of the Future by dramatically beautifying our already striking downtown skyline. I am proud to be the Mayor of the city with one of the most beautiful bridges in the world defining its skyline."

Carleton Finkbeiner
Mayor of Toledo

"As our city celebrates its 50th anniversary, we couldn’t be more excited for the opening of the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway. It connects Northwest Ohio in a whole new way and will be the highlight of this entire region. Let’s celebrate. It has been many years in the making."

Marge Brown
Mayor of Oregon

"The opening of the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway is Toledo’s single most significant surface transportation achievement since the first bridge was built across the Maumee. With renewed emphasis on the need for the efficient connectivity of Toledo’s transportation assets in an expanding global economy, the importance of this bridge is immeasurable."

James H. Hartung
President & CEO
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority

"The Veterans’ Glass City Skyway stands tall today as a testament to what the people of this region can do when we work together to coordinate assets. It took more than 30 years of hard work, but those efforts have paid off with the largest single project in ODOT history and a monument we can all be proud of."

Anthony L. Reams
President
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments
How privileged we are to be witnessing this historic moment in Northwest Ohio history. How fortunate we are to have the talents of so many individuals working as one. How blessed we are to have been brought together to share this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Steve Nathanson  
Chair, Veterans’ Glass City Skyway Task Force

Recognize. Honor. Remember.

It is with heartfelt gratitude we recognize and celebrate the achievements of everyone who contributed to the construction of the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway. The talent, dedication and perseverance of the contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, designers, unions, surrounding communities and neighborhoods are the reasons we’re able to padr with pride to our signature bridge. We also recognize the contributions of our own ODOT team of engineers, inspectors, and managers who countless times went above and beyond the normal call of duty to reach the successful conclusion that we celebrate today.

Tribute Park will remind us always of all the men and women who worked on this project. We especially remember those who gave their lives doing the work they loved and each of their surviving families.

We honor and remember
Andrew Burns • Arden Clark • Robert Lipinski, Jr.  
Mike Moreau • Mike Phillips

After public meetings, the Tribute Committee selected this elegant sculpture designed by Evan Lewis for a permanent memorial to recognize, honor and memorialize all those who have contributed to the construction of the bridge.

The City of Toledo has recognized the efforts to complete this bridge by renaming a portion of their Ravine Park II as Tribute Park.

To the Members of the Community and the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway Task Force

This is a day of celebration and a time to thank all those who have participated in the planning and construction of this remarkable bridge. So many people made significant contributions as a new I-80/ I-280 Maumee River crossing evolved from a regional priority to a regional landmark.

We want to thank those volunteers of the Veterans’ Glass City Skyway Task Force who over many years have nurtured the vision of a new crossing of the Maumee River to reality.

The seeds of the Task Force date back to the late 1980’s when the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) formed the group to direct the planning process of constructing a new bridge. It originally was comprised of representatives from five area government entities – TMACOG, Lucas County, the Cities of Toledo and Oregon and the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority – as well as business leaders and neighborhood associations. ODOT then joined the Task Force soon after it was formed.

From day one, the mission of the Task Force was to make sure the Skyway would indeed be the community’s bridge. Mission accomplished! The Task Force has been a model of civic partnership. With subcommittees including Design, Public Participation, Information, Land Use, Naming and Education, Task Force members have worked tirelessly to involve local citizens in every major decision regarding their signature bridge. It represents an unprecedented dedication to public involvement and collaborative effort, and the results are stunning.

We have a bridge that reflects the public’s desire to honor our region’s long heritage with the glass industry, to be a point of pride in the city’s skyline, and to have a name that pays tribute to all who have served our country and protected our freedoms. The Skyway will stand for generations as a testament to what can be accomplished through collaboration and perseverance.

To all who have given so much to make this a signature project, you have the admiration of generations to come and ODOT’s gratitude for a job exceedingly well done.

David R. Dysard, AICP  
District Two Deputy Director  
Ohio Department of Transportation

We honor and remember
Andrew Burns • Arden Clark • Robert Lipinski, Jr.  
Mike Moreau • Mike Phillips