

**US 224 / I-680 Interchange Project
Public Involvement Meeting
May 12, 2009**

**Summary of Public Comments and
Responses to Comments**

**MAH-224-19.53
PID 79864**

June 2, 2009

An open house public involvement meeting was conducted on May 12, 2009, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Boardman Township Government Center located at 8299 Market Street (SR 7). Environmental studies and displays showing crashes, and the preferred alternative were on display. Representatives from the Ohio Department of Transportation and Eastgate Regional Council of Governments were available to discuss the project and address questions.

Public officials were invited to attend the public involvement meeting by direct letter. The general public was informed of the meeting by news release in the local newspaper (The Youngstown Vindicator) and through coverage on local television and radio stations resulting from a news release issued by ODOT District 4 on April 29, 2009.

Approximately 19 people attended the open house public involvement meeting. An informational handout was provided to all attendees along with a comment form for written comments. Oral comments and questions were addressed by representatives from the Ohio Department of Transportation and the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments. Ten (10) written comments were received during the public involvement meeting and the public comment period that concluded on May 28, 2009.

The following is a summary of the ten (10) received written comments and responses to the comments.

No.	Comment	Response
Matt Ditchey (letter) 5-28-2009		
1	<p>My suggestion is to add an off-ramp at Meadow Lane from I-680 southbound. Plan as in the paper will only slow traffic. If you add the light as planned, at least keep a direct access to Tiffany Blvd.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A partial interchange at this location is not considered feasible because it would violate the Federal interchange spacing requirement of 2 miles between interchanges and all new interchanges must be full interchanges to service all traffic movements unless other non-interstate modification alternatives are not feasible to remedy the traffic congestion in the area. Access to Tiffany Blvd. will not be changed or eliminated as part of the project.
W. Eric Broviak (letter) 5-13-2009		
2	<p>I am writing about the planned project for the I-680/US-224 interchange project in Boardman, Ohio.</p> <p>While the planned exit modifications seem to address the issues for southbound traffic on I-680, they do not address 2 other key issues.</p> <p>The environment for pedestrians turns clearly hostile at the village line. Bicyclists and walkers are often honked at by motorists who clearly feel they have no business using the bridge over I-680. Minor modifications to the presented plans would allow for a pedestrian/bicycle path connecting the Boardman businesses closest to the freeway to everyone further east. It is not acceptable to spend this much money on the project and disenfranchise one class of citizen in favor of the car.</p> <p>The other issue that does not seem to be addressed is the southbound I-680 to US-224 eastbound interchange. The "weave" model was never a good idea and like the other part of this ill conceived interchange causes all sorts of problems. Since the plan calls for a traffic light anyway, why can't we terminate the eastbound traffic on the other side of the same light? An abbreviated deceleration lane for northbound I-680 traffic would allow for both the pedestrian access noted above and an orderly flow of traffic onto US-224 east which is not the case as of today. Other than those two very important points, this project cannot be completed soon enough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preferred alternative will be modified to include an extended 8-foot paved shoulder on the north side of US-224 between Tiffany Blvd. and 300 feet east of the northbound exit-ramp to US-224 to accommodate pedestrian/bicycle traffic. However, no designated pedestrian /bicycle facility will be established within the project limits because it would lessen pedestrian caution when crossing interchange ramps with free-flow traffic. • The expenditure of funds toward elimination of the weave condition is not justifiable based on the lack of identified traffic congestion or safety issues at this location. The suggested ramp modification to intersect the proposed traffic signal would also violate minimum design standards because of the horizontal curvature of the southbound I-680 exit loop ramp would need to be reduced (tightened), resulting in a substantively reduced and inefficient operating

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		speed along the loop ramp, an undesirable condition not recommended for the project.
Frank Krygowski, P.E. (letter) 5-27-2009		
3	<p>This letter is to provide feedback on the I-680/US-224 interchange project. I attended the public meeting on the proposed design. Unfortunately, I cannot support the project as currently presented, because ODOT has included no provisions for safe pedestrian access across the bridge and the ramps.</p> <p>As you must know, immediately east of that bridge are large residential neighborhoods in Poland Village and Boardman Township. Immediately west of that bridge are some of the most important shopping venues in the region, plus many restaurants and office complexes. Yet few dare to make the short walk between the two areas, because the bridge is a barrier, hostile to anyone who travels other than by car. A two-foot-wide raised concrete surface is too narrow to safely accommodate pedestrians, and the guard rail is no more than 30 inches high. Traffic lanes are too narrow to safely share between bicycles and motor vehicles. High traffic volumes and chaotic traffic patterns all contribute to the problem.</p> <p>I ask that the design be modified with these provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks on both the north and south side of that bridge • Suitable pedestrian crossings at each ramp • Sidewalks continued as far east and west as possible • Outside lanes widened to fifteen feet, the minimum for safe sharing between bicyclists and motor vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preferred alternative will be modified to include an extended 8-foot paved shoulder on the north side of US-224 between Tiffany Blvd. and 300 feet east of the northbound exit-ramp to US-224 to accommodate pedestrian/bicycle traffic. However, no designated pedestrian /bicycle facility will be established within the project limits because it would lessen pedestrian caution when crossing interchange ramps with free-flow traffic.
Timothy D. Sicafuse, Mayor Village of Poland & Joseph N. Mazur, Council President (letter/comment sheet) 5-28-2009		
4	<p>We support the project with reservations. After studying the ODOT proposal, we respectfully request that you revisit the project to include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Construct a southbound exit ramp off I-680 behind the Wal-Mart</u>, perhaps between the two retention ponds. The exact location of this proposed I-680 exit ramp may require additional study but we think this is a viable concept. Tiffany Boulevard should be widened to accommodate two north/south lanes where it now is reduced to one lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of a southbound I-680 exit-ramp behind Wal-Mart and a southbound entrance-ramp from US-224 via Tiffany Blvd. south of US-224 were both evaluated as part of the US-224 corridor study and determined not to be viable options because they would require the elimination of all access driveways between the ramps and US-224 and

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	<p>each way near the Marc's parking lot. This approach would be an easy "relief valve" for the traffic congestion at the existing I-680 southbound exit ramp at US-224. Traffic intending to head south on Tiffany Boulevard to the motels, Springfield Grill, etc., must exit I-680 on the proposed ramp, travel south on Tiffany, and cross US-224 at the traffic light. Westbound cars on US-224 could turn left on Tiffany Blvd. but no left turn from the existing I-680 exit ramp.</p> <p>2. <u>Construct a new southbound entrance ramp from US-224</u> via Tiffany Boulevard southbound to I-680 south. This approach would allow motel customers and Boardman residents in that area that intend to head south on I-680 an easy access and eliminate some traffic at the US-224/I-680 interchange.</p> <p>3. <u>Add pedestrian islands and sidewalks</u></p>	<p>create a split interchange, thereby compromising the ability of traffic to efficiently access I-680 from US-224, a major thoroughfare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The preferred alternative will be modified to include an extended 8-foot paved shoulder on the north side of US-224 between Tiffany Blvd. and 300 feet east of the northbound exit-ramp to US-224 to accommodate pedestrian/bicycle traffic. However, no designated pedestrian /bicycle facility will be established within the project limits because it would lessen pedestrian caution when crossing interchange ramps with free-flow traffic.
Irene John (letter) 5-15-2009		
5	<p>I travel this interchange daily. There is no need to change the ramps or widen the road. The access to and from Tiffany Blvd. from US-224 needs to be eliminated. People use this as a cut thru from South Ave., both directions, to that end of US-224. All businesses are accessible from South Ave. and do not need another access.</p> <p>Why not construct two more exit ramps off I-680 to access South Ave. No one wants to get off in downtown Youngstown to go all the way out to Boardman. Make a ramp to exit for South Ave. northbound and southbound. This would alleviate the traffic on US-224 and the ones who get off at Western Reserve (which is now overcrowded) who want to come slightly back to businesses on that end of South Ave.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any full or partial closure of Tiffany Blvd. at the intersection of US 224 would require the support of the Boardman Township Trustees, local businesses and business patrons served by this road. An interchange at this location is not considered feasible because it would violate the Federal interchange spacing requirement of 2 miles between interchanges unless other non-interstate modification alternatives are not feasible to remedy the traffic congestion in the area.
Leslie Rice (letter) 5-13-2009		
6	<p>Consider extending the I-680 southbound off-ramp northward to allow traffic to exit at an extension of Doral Drive. This extension would connect South Ave. and Tiffany Blvd. Modifications to existing access drives could be shared with each store. This construction could also be a by-pass in the future especially when the economy improves and traffic increases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This alternative was evaluated as part of the US-224 corridor study and determined not to be a viable option because it would require the elimination of all access driveways between the ramp and US-224 and create a split interchange, thereby compromising the

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		ability of traffic to efficiently access I-680 from US-224, a major thoroughfare.
Lyle K. Orr, Jr. (letter) 5-18-2009		
7	I think the traffic problems at US-224 and I-680 could be relieved if we would have an exit at Mathews Road. This exit could unload traffic traveling east to Poland, Struthers and Pennsylvania via Youngstown-Poland Road. It could be made a 4 lane road. The north side of Mathews going east is mostly wooded with some apartments. The traffic going west would unload on to South Ave. Mathews Road could be made a four lane road to accommodate a large portion of residential and commercial Boardman and areas west and south of Boardman. A railroad cross-over at the Southern Blvd. end would be good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interchange at this location was evaluated as part of the US-224 corridor study and determined not to attract substantive traffic. Moreover, an interchange at this location is not considered feasible because it would violate the Federal interchange spacing requirement of 2 miles between interchanges unless other non-interstate modification alternatives are not feasible to remedy the traffic congestion in the area.
Randall Jones (letter) 5-18-2009		
8	<p>The ODOT proposal as described in the Vindicator of 5-13-09 should not proceed without incorporating a clear plan to improve safety for the pedestrians attempting to move across I-680.</p> <p>I have been among the pedestrians who have crossed the US-224 bridge over I-680. Pedestrians must have a single, marked route, probably along the North side, with signs warning drivers of pedestrians, lines in the road, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The preferred alternative will be modified to include an extended 8-foot paved shoulder on the north side of US-224 between Tiffany Blvd. and 300 feet east of the northbound exit-ramp to US-224 to accommodate pedestrian/bicycle traffic. However, no designated pedestrian /bicycle facility will be established within the project limits because it would lessen pedestrian caution when crossing interchange ramps with free-flow traffic.
David J. Mosure (comment sheet) 5-12-2009		
9	<p>A southbound off-ramp to Tiffany Blvd. would eliminate a substantial amount of traffic at US-224. Along with a southbound on-ramp off Tiffany Blvd. The local businesses would also be better served.</p> <p>Different project but if the turnpike built the once planned interchange at SR-11 in Canfield and there was an on-ramp from I-680 southbound to I-76 westbound, one could get from Poland to Canfield via the Turnpike much faster than traveling US-224 through Boardman.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of a southbound I-680 exit-ramp to Tiffany Blvd. and a southbound I-680 entrance-ramp from Tiffany Blvd. were both evaluated as part of the US-224 corridor study and determined not to be viable options because they would require the elimination of all access driveways between the ramps and US-224 and create a split interchange, thereby compromising the ability of traffic to efficiently

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		<p>access I-680 from US-224, a major thoroughfare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New interchanges along the Ohio Turnpike are under the primary jurisdiction of the Ohio Turnpike Commission.
Patricia Floryjanski (comment sheet) 5-12-2009		
10	<p>Extend I-680 southbound near or at SR-7 exit off turnpike to rid traffic from US-224 and Western Reserve Road. People who live beyond Western Reserve Road have no choice but to get off on above roads. Has a survey ever been taken of how many people are South on SR-7?</p> <p>8 of 10 cars at I-680/ US-224 westbound do not yield.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility of a new interchange along I-680 south of Western Reserve Road is being investigated as part of another access study. • Comment noted. The existing yield condition at the southbound I-680 to westbound US-224 exit-ramp is proposed to be eliminated as part of the project by modifying the exit ramp and installing a new traffic signal at the proposed modified exit ramp/US-224 intersection.
Paul & Elsie Palkovick (letter) 5-17-2009		
11	<p>We are glad to read in the Youngstown Vindicator that you are going to correct the I-680 ramps on US-224 in Boardman. We live on US-224 in Pennsylvania near the Ohio line and we do a lot of shopping in Boardman. When we are heading west, the cars coming off I-680 look like they are not going to stop. You have to watch the traffic in front of you and also the traffic coming off the ramp. If you want to turn onto Tiffany you have to be aware of the traffic. Also, going west on US-224 the yield sign coming off I-680 east means nothing to motorists. Cars and trucks speed up and cut you off.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted. The existing yield condition at the southbound I-680 to westbound US-224 exit-ramp is proposed to be eliminated as part of the project by modifying the exit ramp and installing a new traffic signal at the proposed modified exit ramp/US-224 intersection.