Innovative Funding Plan Puts Second Innerbelt Bridge Back On-Track

In August, Governor John R. Kasich announced that an innovative financing option will eliminate construction delays for the second Innerbelt Bridge.

ODOT will use a public private partnership – or P3 – that will allow contractors to finance more than $300 million needed to demolish the existing bridge as well as design and construct the new eastbound bridge. ODOT will then pay the contractor back over time.

“Cleveland is on the move,” said Kasich. “It is rebuilding. We have to move people and things. If we think outside the box… we can continue to do very well.”

The funding plan will allow demolition of the existing bridge and construction of the new eastbound bridge to begin immediately after completion of the new westbound bridge. Both new bridges could carry traffic as soon as late 2016.

Ohio became the 30th state in the nation to enact legislation permitting ODOT to pursue P3 contracts. This is the first time ODOT will pursue a P3.

In January, ODOT announced a $1.6 billion budget hole that forced the department to push back construction projects including the second Innerbelt Bridge. Since then, ODOT has launched the Division of Innovative Delivery to review projects throughout the state and expedite those that could be candidates for P3s. The Division also works to identify sources of revenue to aid in the funding of projects throughout the state.
The New E 9th Street Extension Access Changes Coming When New Bridge Opens in Fall 2013

Remember to “Opt for the Alternate!” and use I-490 and I-77 where access to all your favorite downtown ramps will be maintained.

Enterances and Exits Closed or Removed Include:
- W 14th entrance ramp to I-90 east
  Use Abbey Avenue to Lorain-Carnegie Bridge to downtown; or
  use W 7th to I-490 east to I-77 north to I-90 east
- Broadway exit ramp from I-90 east
  Use I-490 east to Broadway; or
  I-490 east to I-77 north to E 14th to Broadway
- Ontario exit ramp from I-90 east
  Use I-490 east to I-77 north; E 9th exit around loop to Orange/Ontario,
  or Woodland/E 30th to Orange
- E 22nd Street exit from I-90 east
  Use I-490 east to I-77 north to I-90 east where access is maintained
- Carnegie exit from I-90 east
  Use I-490 east to I-77 north to I-90 east where access is maintained
- SR 176 (Jennings Freeway) ramp to I-71 north/I-90 east
  Use I-490 east to I-77 north
- E 14th Street entrance ramp to I-90 west
  Use E 9th or Ontario entrance ramps to I-90 west

Crews were busy during the summer and fall, completing most of the roadway work to be accomplished on this first Innerbelt Bridge contract.

Overpass bridges on I-90 west in Tremont – DONE!
Abbey Avenue Bridge and roadway improvements – DONE!
New E 14th Street entrance ramp to I-90 west – DONE!
Carnegie at Ontario intersection – DONE!

The list of remaining roadwork is growing shorter. Next spring, there will be some traffic impacts on Ontario Street, as crews will construct a new bridge over Ontario to carry the I-90 traffic toward the new bridge. We’ll also return to many of our work areas for final clean-up, landscaping, planting and other operations.

Next summer and fall, crews will return to the remaining roadway work:
- Asphalt paving
  - Tremont underpasses – Starkweather, Kenilworth and Fairfield (final clean-up will take place following asphalt paving)
  - West Third Street and Canal Road, under the new bridge
  - Remainder of Carnegie and E 9th Street (in work areas)
  - Commercial Road
- New pavement on Central Viaduct Way, with nearby public overlook area
- Final construction of new Abbey Loop Ramp – opens with the new bridge
- Overlook area with nearby parking lot along Abbey Avenue
- Construction of the new W 14th segment connecting Abbey to Fairfield – after the old bridge closes
Ironworkers – A Breed Apart
First in a series that will highlight workers building the new bridge.

The men and women responsible for erecting the structural steel girders on the new Innerbelt Bridge are members of Ironworkers, Local 17, although the formal title for the union is the International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Ironworkers. The Local has approximately 800 journeyman and apprentice members active in the 10 county region of northeast Ohio at this time. Our Innerbelt work crews have members with experience ranging from new apprentices to nearly 40 years as an Ironworker. Local 17 conducts a four year Apprenticeship Program that is administered by a committee of contractor representatives and union representatives. The apprentice ironworkers attend classroom and practical training in all aspects of structural steel erection, rigging, blueprints, welding, reinforcing steel in concrete, scaffold use, pre-cast erection and post-tensioned reinforcing, in addition to all the necessary safety training and certification required to perform these tasks.

During interviews with a number of the ironworkers on the Innerbelt team, there were some recurring themes. Ironworkers appreciate the sense of unity they feel with their fellow ironworkers. They feel this is particularly important because the work is so physically demanding and requires full compliance with safety procedures. They have a sense of pride in the expertise of their team. They also appreciate the complex design of this bridge and enjoy the challenge of erecting this amazing addition to the Cleveland skyline. The clincher, for most of them, is the ability to support their families with good wages and fairly steady work. They sometimes have to travel a distance to reach the job sites, but they look forward to their work every day. As a 19-year veteran said, “we’ll be able to look at this bridge for decades, and tell our children and grandchildren ‘I helped to build that bridge.’ This project is a great accomplishment of skill and teamwork.”
Looking west toward Tremont, the section of the new bridge between Abbey Avenue and Kenilworth Avenue is nearing completion. The new Abbey Loop Ramp will be constructed to the right of the bridge, beginning next summer.

**Innerbelt Bridge Project Gets National Attention**

The coveted cover image for the latest Roads & Bridges magazine was none other than the new Innerbelt Bridge, in a rendering that highlights the night view of the bridge upon completion in late 2013. The November 2012 issue includes the Top 10 Bridges, an annual list where the new Innerbelt Bridge earned the number seven slot. The article included details about the deep pile foundations, the massive excavation of soil from the Tremont Bluff, and the drilled shafts used for the piers on the slope.

*Cleveland’s I-90 Innerbelt Bridge earned 7th place on the Roads & Bridges Magazine 2012 Top 10 Bridges List*

The article was accompanied by one of our staff photos, taken during the early steel girder erection back in April 2012. Walsh and HNTB, the design-build partners on this project, had both team members involved on five of the 10 listed projects.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recently touted the sustainability efforts being made on the Innerbelt Bridge Project, by including the project as a case study for a new evaluation program.

INVEST (Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool) was developed by FHWA as a Sustainable Highways Self-Evaluation Tool designed to help transportation agencies integrate sustainability into their programs and projects.

INVEST considers the full lifecycle of projects and has modules to evaluate the entire lifecycle of transportation services, including System Planning, Project Development, and Operations and Maintenance. INVEST is intended to identify and recognize above-and-beyond efforts towards sustainability. Sustainability results for the project are posted each month on the project website – www.Innerbelt.org.