

FACT SHEET

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Updated Information on ODOT's Innerbelt Modernization Plan

Increasing Safety and Reducing Traffic Delays remain goals of Innerbelt Plan to build new Innerbelt Bridge, flatten Innerbelt Curve

CLEVELAND (Wednesday, July 08, 2009) - As the Ohio Department of Transportation continues to move forward on its investment in the Cleveland area's largest transportation infrastructure project, ODOT welcomes the support of community and business organizations who have joined the "Save Our Access" campaign, which today reiterated its support of replacing the I-90 Innerbelt Bridge and flattening the Innerbelt Curve.

As ODOT's many years of study and community outreach have detailed, however, the new bridge and flattened curve do not entirely address safety and congestion concerns along the interstates in Downtown Cleveland. Below is an update on ODOT's Innerbelt Modernization Plan:

The Innerbelt Modernization Plan: What Is It?

ODOT's Innerbelt Modernization Plan is focused on improving safety, reducing congestion and traffic delays, and modernizing interstate travel along I-71, I-77 and I-90 through Downtown Cleveland. This investment by the State of Ohio will rehabilitate and reconstruct the Innerbelt Freeway system and address operational, design, safety and access shortcomings that severely impact the ability of the Innerbelt Freeway system to meet the 21st Century transportation needs of Northeast Ohio.

Addressing Safety Concerns

Safety is, and will always remain, the number one priority of the Ohio Department of Transportation. In fact, 21 of the 30 sections that comprise the Innerbelt Freeway have crash rates above the statewide average. The area between the Innerbelt Bridge and Curve has been ranked as the #1 Safety Hot Spot since 2004/05, and the number of rear-end crashes are nearly one-and-a-half to three times higher than the statewide average. Addressing these safety concerns as well as modernizing the roadway to meet modern design standards will certainly have a positive impact on Cleveland.

Addressing Cleveland's Congestion

Nationwide, congestion has continued to grow over the past 15 years. According to a national mobility study release this month, the average traffic delay for a motorist in Cleveland is 12 hours per year, double the six hour delay experienced in 1992. This time stuck in traffic equates to lost money. Nationally, congestion costs the average metropolitan driver \$757 each year. In Cleveland, it's estimated that the cost of congestion to the region's motorists totals \$203 million in wasted fuel and time.

"Save Our Access" Takes Aim at the Prospect & Carnegie Avenue Ramps

Under ODOT's Innerbelt Modernization Plan, Prospect Avenue traffic would be redirected via neighboring ramps including Chester Avenue - a short drive on Cleveland's city streets. ODOT's plan to consolidate traffic from Carnegie Avenue and E. 22nd Street into a single access point at E. 22nd Street and Central Avenue would add only 465 feet to the already existing route - or the distance of a Victor Martinez homerun to the back of the Tribe's bullpen at Progressive Field.

Possible Solutions?

In its campaign material, the supporters of "Save Our Access" suggest that Opportunity Corridor - the proposed link between I-490 and University Circle - is a "possible solution...which would remove an estimated 40 percent of the vehicles now using the Innerbelt Carnegie and Prospect ramps." In combination with the safety upgrades of the Innerbelt Modernization Plan, the Opportunity Corridor would provide additional congestion relief - as well as promote major economic development in the area. In support of this effort, ODOT has committed up to \$20 million in new funding to advance the planning of the Opportunity Corridor.

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