



# OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOHN R. KASICH, OHIO GOVERNOR

JERRY WRAY, ODOT DIRECTOR

## Ohio Department of Transportation • News Release

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

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### **State Innovation, Efficiency Eliminates Delays for Five Major Projects** *Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Area Projects All to See Construction Next Year*

COLUMBUS (Thursday, September 27, 2012) – The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) today announced that it will move up by as much as a decade the start dates for five major highway projects thanks to funds made available by improved in-house efficiencies and an unexpected bump in federal funds.

“The sooner we can move forward with needed highway projects the sooner those projects can start helping boost Ohio’s economy and create jobs. Community leaders are good about sharing with us the importance of specific new road or bridge projects and these actions today demonstrate that we’re listening,” said ODOT Director Jerry Wray. “Governor Kasich has pushed us to find new ways to get these projects built, because he knows that this is a way to put Ohioans back to work and help keep motorists to be safe on our roadways. We’re not giving up and will continue to work to find new revenue to put towards vital transportation improvements.”

Construction dates for all five projects were delayed more than a decade when ODOT announced this past January a \$1.6 billion budget hole that put the brakes on the construction on some of the state’s largest, most complex transportation projects.

#### **The projects moving forward today are:**

**Cuyahoga County** – West 73<sup>rd</sup> Street relocation and new bridge construction as part of the Lakefront West project

The next phase of the Lakefront West project will extend and relocate West 73rd Street and construct a new bridge under the Norfolk Southern Railroad to access the West Shoreway and Edgewater Park. In order to get shovels into the ground next year, ODOT is investing \$12 million in the project combined with \$7 million from the city of Cleveland and \$15 million from the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA).

**Franklin County** – The reconstruction of a portion I-270’s northern corridor

The initial phase of the I-270 project will include the construction of two new express lanes from I-270 to U.S. Route 23 north. The lanes will actually go under the existing U.S. Route 23 and reemerge just north of the Franklin County line, bypassing traffic lights, reducing congestion and improving motorist safety.

**Franklin County** – The construction of two new bridges as part of the downtown I-70/I-71 redesign. This downtown project will include the construction of a new bridge from I-70 on Mound Street and a second new bridge over I-70 on 18<sup>th</sup> Street. Construction for both projects could begin as soon as next summer.

**Clermont County** – An interchange reconstruction on I-275

This project is a phase of the Eastern Corridor in southwest Ohio. It will include the reconstruction of an interchange at I-275 and US 32 to accommodate traffic increases and help reduce congestion.

**Hamilton County** – A railroad bridge replacement over I-75

This project will construct phase six of the Mill Creek Expressway and includes the replacement and reconstruction of a rail road bridge located south of SR 562 on I-75.

In January, ODOT announced a \$1.6 billion transportation funding crisis that resulted in pushing back by decades some of the state's largest construction projects. But by June, the agency was able to redirect more than \$400 million through improved department efficiency, workforce and vehicle fleet reductions, higher than projected gas tax receipts, the elimination of federal earmarks, and savings from a mild winter. That money was used to help plug a portion of the budget hole and meant that future delays for some construction projects were significantly reduced or eliminated.

ODOT continues to explore every option to generate additional revenue, including Public Private Partnerships and leveraging state-owned assets like rest areas and the Ohio Turnpike.

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