



## **TMACOG Freight Advisory Committee Agenda & Notes – June 2021**

Wednesday, June 30, 2021, 11:30 a.m. via video conference

**Welcome and introductions** – Ray Huber, Committee Chair

### **1. US 23 Connect Study - to improve the efficiency of connections between NW Ohio and Columbus** – David Gedeon, TMACOG

David Gedeon, TMACOG's Vice President of Transportation, presented on the study funded by ODOT, TMACOG, and MORPC to find a solution to the congestion and delays on the US 23 corridor between Waldo and the I-270 interchange north of Columbus. This highway corridor causes a serious delay for traffic, including truck freight connecting Toledo to Columbus. Below are some bullet points from Dave's presentation:

- The goal of the study is to evaluate different options for improving the flow of traffic, especially truck traffic, in the US 23 corridor between Waldo and I-270.
- Three options are being considered: upgrade the current U.S. 23; establish a new route to west via U.S. 33; or establish a new route to east via I-71.
- The corridor from Columbus through Delaware County is already accommodating 30% more traffic than designed for, and with Delaware County expected to add more than 85,000 new residents before 2040, and Columbus expected to grow by more than 1 million, this will only increase.
- The study will engage people along the corridor and in the region by conducting steering committee meetings with dozens of local leaders and residents, facilitating stakeholder conversations, and holding public meetings.
- The study evaluates alternatives using several metrics including travel time, safety, community context, environmental impacts, and of course cost.
- 30,000 vehicles on the north part of the corridor and 80,000 on the south travel the corridor every day on average and pass through 38 traffic signals.
- Traffic volumes exceed capacity, and the roadway overcapacity leads to increased congestion, unpredictable travel times, traffic bottlenecks, and higher crash rates.
- For the Toledo region, the corridor's freight traffic delays cause a major problem for trucking companies, shippers, and intermodal facilities.
- When the Gordie Howe Bridge between Windsor and Detroit opens in 2024 there could be a greater increase in truck freight flowing from Canada, through Toledo, and south to Columbus.
- In 2019 there was more than \$32.5 billion in annual bilateral trade between Canada and central Ohio with Canada purchasing 40% of Ohio's worldwide exports. There are also 262 Canadian-owned companies located in Ohio.



- The study is currently evaluating needs and holding first rounds of public meetings. Recommended solutions are scheduled to be available in mid-2022.
- Public input is encouraged, and a comment period is open through August 16, 2021. Go to [publicinput.com/23connect](http://publicinput.com/23connect) to access a survey, public meeting schedule, and more information.
- From our committee discussion, it is very important to include truck parking in the conversation on what improvements should be made to the corridor.

Staff will continue to follow the progress of the study and will report to the committee at future meetings. The presentation will be posted to the Freight Advisory Committee web page at [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org).

**2. Highway projects that will affect freight transportation – 2021 and beyond – Roger Streiffert, TMACOG**

TMACOG staff presented on regional highway projects scheduled for 2021 and beyond that will affect freight transportation with possible road or lane closures or other delays. Committee members were provided with a map of projects and a list of project descriptions. Projects in the current construction season include:

- I-75 pavement reconstruction/bridge rehab/ramp reconstruction - South Ave to Dorr St; scheduled to be completed in 2022 with a cost of \$158.7 million.
- I-75 pavement and ramp reconstruction/curve straightening/Disalle Bridge replacement - Buck Rd to South Ave; completion scheduled for 2023 with a cost of \$180.3 million.
- I-475 6-lane widening and new interchange at Dorr St; to be completed in 2022 at a \$45.3 million cost.
- Veterans' Glass City Skyway bridge overlay and I-280 resurfacing - Ravine Pkwy to Greenbelt Pkwy; to be completed in 2021 at \$18.1 million.
- I-75 resurfacing - I-280 to Michigan state line/I-475 resurfacing - Douglas Rd to I-75; to be completed in 2021 at a cost of \$10.0 million.
- Ohio Turnpike eastbound pavement reconstruction/toll plaza ramps (MP 46.5 to MP 51.4); to be completed in 2021 at \$30.8 million.
- US 20 (Central Ave) intersection safety improvements at Centennial Rd, King Rd, and McCord Rd; scheduled to be completed in 2021 at \$0.8 million.
- Reynolds Rd at Hill Ave and at Heatherdowns Blvd intersection safety improvements; scheduled to be completed in 2021 and in 2022 at \$1.9 million.
- US 6 resurfacing - SR 235 to Rudolph Rd (TR 133); to be completed in 2021 at \$1.5 million.

Some of the larger future projects include:

- I-75 pavement reconstruction - Erie Rd to Otter Creek Rd in Monroe County; scheduled to begin in 2022 at a cost of \$90.0 million.



- I-475 6-lane widening - US 24 to Airport Hwy (SR 2) plus new interchange at US 20A; to begin in 2022 at a cost of \$89.0 million.
- Anthony Wayne Trail reconstruction/narrow to 4 lanes - Detroit Ave to Glendale Ave; to begin in 2022 at a cost of \$18.7 million.
- Anthony Wayne Trail intersection improvements/paving - Monclova Rd to Detroit Ave in Maumee; scheduled for 2022 at \$7.9 million.
- I-280 resurfacing and related work - SR 51 (Woodville Rd) to SR 2 (Navarre Ave); to begin in 2023 at \$7.4 million.
- US 23 rehabilitation - Ohio state line to Ida Center Rd in Monroe County; to begin in 2023 with no cost estimate currently available.
- I-280 preventative maintenance/related work - Ohio Turnpike interchange to SR 51; to begin in 2024 at \$9.9 million.
- I-75 pavement reconstruction - Otter Creek Rd to Laplace Rd in Monroe County; to begin in 2024 with no cost estimate currently available.
- US 23 at Monroe St interchange upgrade/bridge redecking/related work; scheduled for 2025 at \$24.5 million.

**3. Cleveland Cliffs Toledo HBI production plant – a look at the facility as it reaches full production – Roger Streiffert, TMACOG**

As the new Cleveland Cliffs HBI facility reaches full production and celebrates a ribbon cutting, TMACOG staff presented an overview of the planning and construction of the facility. Below are some bullet points from the presentation:

- Headquartered in Cleveland, Cliffs is the largest and oldest U.S. independent iron ore mining company and the largest flat-rolled steel and iron ore pellet producer in North America.
- Toledo facility is Cliffs' first hot-briquetted iron (HBI) production plant. HBI is produced from iron ore pellets and is a high-quality iron ore used in modern, efficient, electric arc furnaces to produce steel.
- The Ironville property was a 180-acre former refinery site. Vacant for 30 years, the site was purchased by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority in 2008 for \$3.4 million.
- Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority used both Clean Ohio Funds and EPA Voluntary Action Program funds to clean up the Ironville site.
- Cliffs invested \$830 million into the Toledo site with 1100 employed during peak construction, and 160 permanent jobs.
- Cliffs uses four transportation modes at the Toledo facility: Marine – raw materials arrive by freighter from the upper Great Lakes; Rail – finished product is



shipped by rail using NS or CSX; Highway – with direct access to an NHS connector route and to Michigan heavy load routes; Pipeline – a high-volume natural gas line supplies the plant.

- The Toledo site offered Cliffs a perfect combination of marine, rail, highway access, gas and electric supply, available acreage, skilled work force, proximity to customers, and local support.
- Plant began operations in November of 2020 and will reach its full production rate by the second quarter of 2021.

The presentation will be posted to the Freight Advisory Committee web page at [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org).

**4. Update on efforts to establish a National Infrastructure Bank – Tom Galloway, Committee Vice Chair**

Tom Galloway gave us an update on efforts to establish a National Infrastructure Bank that could provide funding to address the backlog of projects across the U.S.

As congress works on passing an infrastructure bill, there is a good possibility that the available funds will come up short. A NIB could be used as a supplement to help fund projects not covered by the bill. The NIB would not only fund highway and bridge projects but would also fund passenger rail and other mass transit, water projects, housing, broadband, electrical grid, and others.

Text of HR3339, The National Infrastructure Bank Act of 2021, is available here: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3339/text?r=2&s=1>

The website for the Coalition for the National Infrastructure Bank is here:

<https://www.nibcoalition.com/>

The committee will keep up with any news on the NIB.

**5. Various topics for discussion and committee member announcements – Ray Huber/All Attendees**

The committee will look at the content of the proposed new infrastructure bill at the next committee meeting. The July 28 meeting has been cancelled and the next meeting will be Wednesday, September 29. The September meeting will be a hybrid of in-person and video conference.

**Meeting Adjourned**