



Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Transportation

ODOT Legislative Update on Budget and Operations

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Chairman Greenspan, Ranking Member Skindell, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Transportation - on behalf of Director Jack Marchbanks thank you for the opportunity to present to you today.

I am William O’Gorman, ODOT Deputy Director of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs and I am here to report that ODOT crews have been working diligently across the state this summer. These efforts ensure our roads and bridges are well-maintained, safe, and can handle the rigors required both to support the vital services provided through the commercial industry and by motorists traveling in Ohio.

As you will recall Director Marchbanks outlined during his testimony on HB 62 the dire situation ODOT faced involving the resources that would be available to maintain Ohio’s largest physical asset - our highway network. However, because of the additional revenue from your legislative action we, and our local partners, find ourselves in a significantly better position to tackle the many infrastructure needs that would not have been addressed.

Today I would like to give you an update on our maintenance, safety, and major new capacity projects since the motor fuel user fee increase. I would also like to brief you on the work being done by DriveOhio, what ODOT is doing to fulfill our \$100 million-dollar pledge, and finally - our collaborative relationships with transportation stakeholders across the state

MAINTANING WHAT WE HAVE

The bulk of our work at ODOT is maintaining and preserving our existing transportation network, which consists of thousands of miles of roads and thousands of bridges. Thanks to the work done by the General Assembly and Governor DeWine -- the One-hundred and fifty million dollars in maintenance projects that were set to be delayed, important safety projects, and selective but necessary capacity adding projects on our existing system can now continue to move forward.

With the revenue increase, there has been a drastic improvement in our September work plan as compared to the work plan established at the beginning of the year that assumed no additional revenue.

In the next two years, we will be able to:

- Pave and maintain nearly 1,500 additional lane miles of road (21.6% increase) and
- Address more than 450 additional bridge projects (26.4% increase)

SAFETY

One of Governor DeWine's biggest priorities – and shared by Director Marchbanks - is ensuring Ohio's transportation network is as safe as possible. Because of this, he has tasked ODOT with attacking dangerous intersections in the state's urban, suburban, and rural areas. The governor charged ODOT with finding solutions to address these top 150 locations. Director Marchbanks took action immediately and ODOT identified improvements for these intersections. The results are remarkable given the relatively short timeframe:

- 11 intersections are or will be under construction in 2019;
- 8 additional location improvements are being implemented by District and local forces;
- 16 more locations will move to construction in 2020
- 99 locations are under design for future corrective construction; and
- 13 of the locations were studied but no further action was recommended – typically because crashes have improved since originally identified, or they may have had some sort of improvement project at an earlier time. However, ODOT will continue to monitor them to ensure an adverse situation does not return.
- The remaining locations are being reviewed and coordinated by District Offices and the Roadway Engineering Division

A major element of all our road and bridge activity involves work zone safety and continues to be of paramount importance to ODOT. Unfortunately, crashes in work zones continue to occur. So far this year there have been more than 4,000 crashes in our zones across the state which have resulted in 72 serious injuries and 8 fatalities. This is one reason why we continue to partner with the Ohio State Highway Patrol to establish traffic enforcement in work zones where appropriate, while emphasizing the hazards of distracted driving.

There are several areas across Ohio where we have implemented or are planning to implement Distracted Driving Corridors that encourages drivers through additional signage to put their phones down while driving. These corridors will also have increased enforcement to serve as a deterrent to texting and driving.

In the Cincinnati area we are finalizing outfitting 23 ramps along an 18-mile stretch of the I-71 corridor in Hamilton County with 92 electronic signs and 82 detection devices to alert drivers that they are entering the interstate the wrong way.

This large-scale use of technology to combat these deadly occurrences is a first for Ohio.

Another safety element ODOT continues to move forward with involves the centerline rumble stripe application that was part of HB 51 passed by the House earlier this year.

As a result of the great work spearheaded by Representative Ginter, we have developed an internal policy that would essentially accomplish the shared goals outlined in HB 51 to include centerline rumble stripes on two-lane state routes with a speed limit of 45 mph or higher.

As we researched the implementation of center line rumble stripes there were several challenges that effected both internal and external stakeholders. The policy development process involved:

- Reviewing national guidelines and other states rumble stripe practices;
- Gathering feedback from industry representatives;
- Numerous field reviews;
- Addressing center line joint deterioration concerns; and
- Thorough internal vetting.

As a result, ODOT crafted a policy supportive of the systematic implementation of center line rumble stripes. This statewide policy will initially include center line rumble stripes on select projects on roughly 110 miles of roadway. These projects will allow us to continue to analyze performance, safety improvements and any maintenance challenges that need to be addressed to successfully implement this application on a larger scale in the future.

MAJOR NEW CAPACITY

The additional revenue has also allowed the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) to move forward with considering and funding major new capacity projects. Funding is now available for projects already committed in Tier 1 of the program (10 projects for approximately \$500 million that will be constructed between 2020 and 2023).

TRAC was also able to solicit for major new capacity projects - a process that began in May - that would not have been possible prior to the availability of increased revenue. The TRAC has held hearings around the state to get project information from project sponsors, local governments, and regional partners and scored the 27 project applications that were received. While there are still meetings to be held, the vote on a final list is on an accelerated schedule to keep projects moving and will be concluded in November.

DriveOhio

DriveOhio, the state's one-stop shop for smart and connected vehicle technology, continues to be at the forefront of transportation innovation. The dozens of public and private entities involved in the design, development, testing, use, and regulation of autonomous and connected technologies continue to forge new ground.

We know approximately 94 percent of all crashes begin with some level of human error and if we can use technology to help drivers make better, safer, decisions - we all benefit. We already experience driver assist features like blind-spot awareness, backup cameras, and variable cruise control to make our vehicles safer. It is only a matter of time until the early in-vehicle technologies are developed into a comprehensive system that guides our travel, minimizes distractions, and eliminates poor decision-making that can result in tragedy.

Another significant development recently occurred when DriveOhio was awarded a \$7.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to develop and deploy automated transportation solutions focused on Ohio's rural roads and highways.

By focusing on Ohio's rural Appalachian region, studies supported by this grant will be the most comprehensive effort yet to be conducted on our nation's rural roads.

Along the connectivity lines we continue to add features like traffic signals that communicate with vehicles or variable speed limits that allow us to slow traffic down in inclement weather to help make roadways in Ohio safer.

These examples illustrate how ODOT and DriveOhio are committed to use technology and smart mobility to advance mobility solutions in the state.

ONE RED LION

During discussion on HB 62, Director Marchbanks pledged to both the General Assembly and Governor DeWine that ODOT will find a further \$100 million in savings and efficiencies over the next four years. That initiative is called One Red Lion.

The Director has made it clear to all ODOT employees that no idea is too big or too small. Whether it's a thousand-dollar idea or a million-dollar idea, we are listening. To date, over 750 ideas have been generated from all levels of ODOT – from equipment sharing/efficiency, to improved procurement or personnel decisions. ODOT has identified and approved roughly \$11 million in savings so far and will continue working toward our \$100 million goal.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

In HB 62, the legislature appropriated \$70 million over the biennium in general revenue funds to invest in Ohio's public transit industry. ODOT has continued its collaborative working relationship with the Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) to help establish how best to distribute the funds. We have met with stakeholders in the transit industry several times over the months to get their feedback and input on how the program should be run. Applications for funding are currently out, with the submission deadline being September 25 and award notification in November.

ODOT will continue to meet with OPTA to maintain a strong partnership to ensure funding granted by the General Assembly for public transit is making the best investments for Ohio.

COLLABORATION

It is ODOT's goal that all of Ohio will be connected by a safe, smart, and collaborative transportation system that moves people and freight efficiently and reliably.

ACCESS OHIO 2045, our long-range plan, wraps this into a big-picture look at future needs for the entire transportation system.

Through the end of the year, we will conduct public meetings around the state, seek public and industry comments, and ask for input to improve Ohio's great transportation networks to ensure one of our state's greatest assets is being utilized to its full potential.

ACCESS OHIO 2045 requires the collaboration and engagement of the freight, transit, rail, maritime, aviation, and highway industries to compile a comprehensive transportation plan for Ohio's future – and we look forward to strengthening those working relationships moving forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you today – I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.