

The I-475 Strategic Plan Study

Travel on I-475 and US 23 in the Toledo metropolitan area is becoming more challenging each and every day. In response, ODOT has retained Jacobs Associates to identify the problems, develop conceptual solutions and solicit public input along the way. The Consultants will work with Lucas County, Wood County, The Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) and the local communities to develop the best overall plan to improve transportation within this important corridor.

The overall purpose of this study is to prepare a Strategic Plan for I-475 around the Toledo metropolitan area to allow it to serve safely and effectively through the design year of 2035. The study will examine some 20 miles of mainline limited

access highway, explore modifications to 13 existing interchanges and consider potential new interchanges along I-475 and US 23. It is anticipated that the recommendations of this Strategic Plan will lead to a series of major projects in the I-475/US 23 corridor that will be developed over the next twenty years.

The Project Development Process (PDP)

The I-475 Strategic Plan will be developed in accordance with ODOT's 14-step Major Project

Development Process (PDP). The work that is beginning now will take the project through the first four steps of the process.

Steps One through Four are to be completed in 24 months and will identify the design concept for improvements to I-475, estimated costs and proposed funding sources for those improvements, a priority listing for

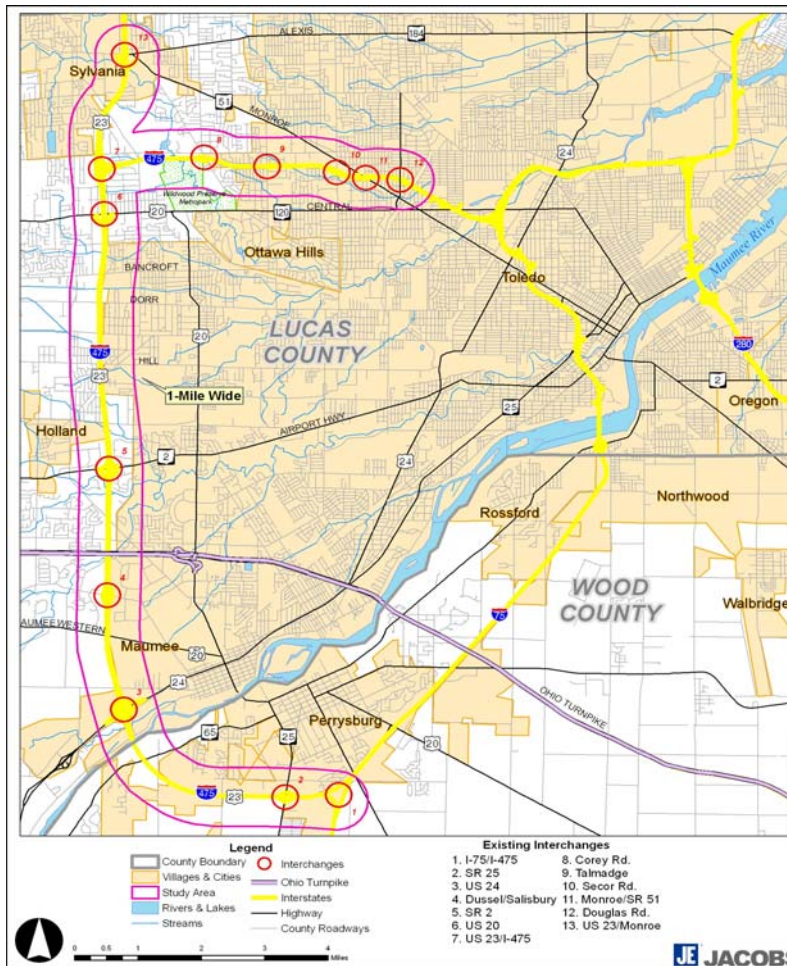
implementation of the improvements, and the future level of environmental analysis anticipated for each improvement in subsequent steps of ODOT's PDP.

Steering Committee of Local Representatives Formed

As a way to ensure that local community interests are reflected in the project, ODOT has established a Steering Committee, representing key stakeholders and groups. This Committee will serve as a sounding board for the team

and provide valuable local insight and perspective to the project.

The I-475 Steering Committee includes representatives of the local jurisdictions within the study area, the metropolitan planning organization (TMACOG), the local transit agency, emergency service agencies, the Port Authority, business stakeholders and the University of Toledo. This cross section of





Fact Sheet

community leaders will be key to the early development of the study.

In addition, there will be public meetings to provide the general public information about the study and offer their comments.

A Look At The Existing Corridor Early Work Identifies Existing Problems and Issues

Three reports have been prepared thus far as the team determines the technical deficiencies of the corridor and identifies key sensitive areas within the corridor. Completed reports include *The Red Flag Summary Report*, the *Existing and Future Conditions Report* and the *Purpose and Need Report*.

- **The Red Flag Summary Report** identifies locations and issues of concern within the project study area. These locations or issues, referred to as “red flags”, may require additional study and coordination in future steps. The report also identifies any “fatal flaws” – locations that must be avoided and include both engineering issues and environmental or land use issues. A prime example is the Wildwood Preserve MetroPark in the northern portion of the study area.
- **The Existing and Future Conditions Report** looks at existing data to determine technical deficiencies and conditions within the corridor. A variety of studies were conducted. A crash analysis was undertaken along with current traffic counts. Traffic projections for the year 2035 were

There were a total of 1,600 crashes recorded in the study area within the three-year period of 2001-2003. Nearly half of these occurred at just 5 interchanges and 2

provided from TMACOG’s regional travel demand model.

Mainline sections and each existing interchange were examined to

determine the current and future traffic levels of operation. Steering Committee members were asked to complete a survey to identify congestion “hot spots” in the corridor and locations that pose safety concerns. In

general, locations identified by members were the same as those where deficiencies were identified in the technical investigations.

- **The Purpose and Need Report** is developed based on the information contained in the *Red Flag Summary Report* and the *Existing and Future Conditions Report*, along with other data collected. Based on the transportation and safety problems identified in these reports, two main goals of the Strategic Plan for improvements to I-475 emerge:

Goal 1 - Reduce existing and projected future mainline and interchange congestion and safety problems through the year 2035

Goal 2 - Improve accessibility within the I-475 and US 23 corridors.

What Happens Next?

The Study Team will make refinements to the conceptual alternatives that were presented to the Steering Committee, based on comments received. The corridor will be broken into logical segments, cost estimates developed for each alternative, and the projects prioritized. A public meeting will then be held.

Early results indicate that a third lane will be needed in both directions along much of I-475 to safely handle projected 2035 traffic volumes.

How To Reach Us!

The easiest way to stay in touch with the project is to log on to www.thefuturei475.com. Information already appears on the site and more will be added as it becomes available. Please check it regularly and add your name to the mailing list for future information by clicking on the “Contact Us” tab.

Call, write or email. Feel free to contact ODOT’s Project Manager with your comments or questions.

Michael A. Stormer, P.E.
Ohio DOT District 2 Planning Engineer
317 East Poe Road
Bowling Green, Ohio 43402
(phone) 419.373.4472
(email) michael.stormer@dot.state.oh.us