



Contact: Nate Green, Pickaway Progress Partnership
Economic Development Director
P: 740 420 6498
ngreen@pickawayprogress.com

News Release

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Pickaway County secures \$2 million for Pickaway East-West Connector

Circleville, OH -- Pickaway County officials received word today from Senator Voinovich that \$2 million has been set aside for the Pickaway East-West Connector ("Connector") in the Senate Transportation and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill. The bill passed out of Senate Committee and is headed for final passage in early fall. The \$2 million will be used for Right of Way acquisition for the Connector.

The Pickaway East-West Connector is a proposed four-lane roadway stretching roughly three to four miles from the southern end of Rickenbacker Airport in the vicinity of the Norfolk Southern Rickenbacker Intermodal Terminal ("Intermodal") to US 23. Total cost of the Connector, including engineering, environmental, design, Right of Way Acquisition, and construction is estimated at \$44 million.

Senator Voinovich stated "I have long believed that investing in our nation's transportation can create many new jobs and move our sluggish economy down the road to recovery. Manufacturing states, like Ohio, with a "just-in-time" economy, cannot be competitive with failing infrastructure where congestion and bottlenecks on our rails and waterways are the norm. This project is a great example of the vital role our infrastructure plays in economic development. It will pump lifeblood to our economy, create new jobs and bolster development."

The Connector provides an essential link to the expected growth in the logistics sector in Central Ohio over the next 20-30 years. It has been estimated that 15,000-20,000 new jobs can be created in the Rickenbacker area over that time frame. The catalyst for this growth is the Intermodal.

"Pickaway County is delighted and grateful to Senator Voinovich for his support and commitment to this logistics project," stated Ula Jean Metzler, President, Pickaway County Board of Commissioners. "We will be not able to realize the growth in jobs and investment without the Connector being in place. Time and again Senator Voinovich has shown exceptional leadership in his ability to target investment to economic development projects that will have a lasting impact; today is a great example of that leadership."

The Pickaway County Engineer's office is the lead agency on the Connector. The Engineer is currently conducting a transportation study in conjunction with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

(MORPC) and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). The study is nearing completion of the planning process, Step 4 of ODOT's Major Project Development Process. The next steps of the process, preliminary engineering and environmental analysis will begin later this summer. Right of Way acquisition should begin in 2011 with construction to start in 2013.

Bob Parker, Pickaway County Engineer stated "The \$2 million Senator Voinovich has secured will allow us to move the project forward at a timely pace. It gives Pickaway County the ability to further our transportation goals of supporting the growth expected at Rickenbacker as a result of the Intermodal Terminal."

Pickaway Progress Partnership (P3), the economic development agency for Pickaway County, led the efforts with Senator Voinovich and his staff to help identify this opportunity for funding. Mark Leatherwood, P3's President of the Board of Directors stated "Strong partnerships with elected officials like Senator Voinovich enhance our ability to attract and retain jobs in Pickaway County. Additionally our healthy alliance with Central Ohio partners, including the City of Columbus, Columbus Regional Airport Authority, Franklin County, MORPC, ODOT, ODOD and the Columbus Chamber allow projects like the Connector to become a reality."

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