



# Often asked questions about Cleveland’s new roadway

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## WHAT IS THE OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR STEERING COMMITTEE?

In 2009, the Opportunity Corridor Steering Committee was established to bring together leaders of Cleveland institutions, businesses, and non-profit organizations, as well as residents from neighborhoods to plan the best possible project. This inclusive group has been responsible for crafting the current vision and scope of this transformational infrastructure project. With over 50 active and engaged residents, businesses, institutions and agencies, the Steering Committee works to assure the intended transformational economic and community development results are achieved.

## WHY BUILD THE OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR?

The Opportunity Corridor will provide direct connectivity to several of Cleveland’s most historic neighborhoods, including Broadway Slavic Village, Central, Buckeye, Kinsman and Fairfax, and provide accessibility to over 300 acres of vacant and underutilized land in the core city. In addition, the three-mile boulevard will provide direct access to the world-class educational, cultural, and healthcare institutions in University Circle – our community’s fastest growing employment center.

The project will address these transportation needs:

- Improve system linkage: the connections among roads, neighborhoods and businesses
- Improve mobility: the movement of people and goods through the highway interchange system and University Circle
- Support planned economic development
- Improve public transportation connections
- Improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists (sidewalks, bike lanes/paths, etc).

## WILL THE OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR PROJECT INCLUDE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS?

The Opportunity Corridor road project parallels all three GCRTA Rapid Transit Lines and includes pedestrian and bicycle facilities that improve connectivity to public transit stations and stops. These include a walking/ biking path on the south side of the roadway, a sidewalk on the north side, a pedestrian/bike bridge connecting the Hyacinth neighborhood to the E. 55th Street Rapid Station and a pedestrian/bike bridge at E. 89th Street over an adjacent railroad trench. Furthermore, the preferred alternative would build new bridges over the Kingsbury Run Valley, the GCRTA Blue/Green Line and under the Norfolk Southern freight rail line, which would further reduce barriers between neighborhoods and to public transit. Additionally, the new road will help increase access to and development around the two Rapid Stations on E. 79th Street.

## HOW WILL THIS PROJECT SPUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDE JOBS FOR AREA RESIDENTS?

The many partners on Opportunity Corridor, including but not limited to the City of Cleveland, the community development corporations, Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP), Fund for Our Economic Future and other stakeholders represented by the Opportunity Corridor Partnership are working together on a broad range of strategies that will spur economic development, including: site assembly for commercial development, environmental remediation, and business attraction initiatives.

The Opportunity Corridor will support these efforts with new frontage for potential development, improved visibility, enhanced transportation options – including direct vehicular access to freeways and the University Circle area – and improved multi-modal access (public transit, bicycling, and walking) between neighborhoods, downtown and University Circle.

## HOW MANY LANES WILL BE IN EACH DIRECTION ALONG THE BOULEVARD?

The boulevard will have two westbound through-lanes, but the number of eastbound through-lanes will vary. The project includes three eastbound through-lanes between I-490 and Woodland Avenue. In general, the roadway will have two through-lanes between Woodland and Chester Avenue, but the roadway between Cedar Avenue and Euclid Avenue will include a third lane as the road travels north along E. 105th Street. Left-turn lanes will also be added at many of the intersections.

## **IS OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR A FREEWAY? HOW WILL LOCAL BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS ACCESS THE BOULEVARD?**

The Opportunity Corridor is not a freeway. It will be a city street that will have over a dozen intersections and traffic signals along its length. Local businesses and residents will be able to access the proposed roadway at these intersections, as well as at intersections as determined by neighborhood residents to be appropriate and preferred.

## **WHAT HAPPENS TO RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES WHOSE PROPERTIES MIGHT BE REQUIRED FOR THE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS?**

The City of Cleveland and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) focused on avoiding and minimizing impacts to residential and business properties as much as possible. However private property acquisition will be required to construct the project. Approximately 65 residential structures and 13 commercial structures will need to be acquired. State and Federal policies are in place to protect the interests and rights of home and business owners affected by the project.

In addition to receiving just compensation for any property acquired to construct the project, affected property owners and tenants would also receive relocation assistance. There are also provisions to ensure that decent, safe and sanitary comparable replacement housing is within the financial means of the affected individual.

Property owners and tenants with questions or concerns can contact ODOT Real Estate Manager, Mr. Dan Dougherty, P.E. at (216) 584-2130 or [Dan.Dougherty@dot.state.oh.us](mailto:Dan.Dougherty@dot.state.oh.us). Those directly impacted by the project have already been contacted by ODOT or its real estate consultants.

## **DOES THE ROAD INCORPORATE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY “GREEN” FEATURES AND OTHER AESTHETIC ELEMENTS?**

Many elements are included in the project design to minimize its ‘footprint’. These include using minimum vehicular lane widths to reduce the amount of pavement surface, extensive tree planting within the treelawns and medians, integrated bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, use of grass and mulch medians; and use of high efficiency LED lighting and traffic signals. In addition, ODOT is working with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District to reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the combined sewer system.

## **WHAT IS THE COMMITMENT TO JOBS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS?**

ODOT has set a high bar for inclusion of minorities and Cleveland residents in the construction of the road. The contract for Section 1 was awarded to a minority-owned joint venture, Perk/Mctech, whose business is located on the Corridor route. Governor Kasich and ODOT, in partnership with Mayor Jackson and the City of Cleveland, have committed that 20% of the Section 1 construction contract (\$53.4 million) must go to Disadvantaged or Minority Businesses, 8.5% of which must go to African-American owned businesses. ODOT has contracted with Ohio Means Jobs | Cuyahoga County to provide \$500,000 in on-the-job training for residents in neighborhoods through which the road travels (These are wards 4, 5, 6). ODOT has also required that the contractor for Section 1 must provide 8,500 hours of on-the-job training to residents (which amounts to about 4 jobs). ODOT plans to have the same requirements for Sections 2 and 3 of the project.

Realizing that construction jobs are only part of the jobs equation, the Opportunity Corridor Partnership Office is working with job placement and training providers to actively assist in connecting job seekers in our neighborhoods to current job openings in our community. In support of this effort, ODOT has funded two “Jobs Ambassadors” to do outreach in the neighborhoods. For more information contact Sonya Gant (Employment & Training Services) of Ohio Means Jobs at [sonya.gant@ula-ohio.org](mailto:sonya.gant@ula-ohio.org), (216) 664-3448.

