

To: TID Board Members

Date: August 2, 2002

Re: Director's Report

Current Projects

1. Phase II – Princeton Road at State Route 4 Bypass

The project is currently underway. Don S. Cisle Contractor began work on July 8. The eastern leg of the intersection will be closed for approximately 14 weeks. Work is approximately 25% complete, and is proceeding according to schedule, with completion not later than November 1. Some initial questions from area residents were responded to by TID staff, and misleading press coverage was brought to the attention of the paper and subsequently published with a correction.

2. Michael A. Fox/I-75, Cox Road Study

The study process is proceeding. Contact with Joe Cron of Resource International continues. I attended the July meeting at ODOT District 8 of all parties involved in the I-75 Technical Coordinating Group. Resource has now delivered the land use trip generation data to ODOT's consultant. The remainder of Certified Base Case Traffic should be to Resource by August 22, and Year 2030 Certified Traffic by October 1. Stakeholder meetings are still scheduled for October, with a public involvement meeting for the entire study area following in November. A number of discussions were held with interested parties concerning the scheduling and location of these improvements, as relates to development of the various parcels within the TIF. Efforts continue to identify ways to separate out the Fox/I-75/Cox component and accelerate its progress.

3. Visioning Process

The TID Board Retreat was held July 15 at the Wilks Conference Center. Warner Moore and his colleagues from Jordan Jones & Goulding assisted the board in identifying an appropriate role for the TID. Warner gave an overview and comments that were solicited through interviews with other individuals and entities in Butler County. Aside from those who were not well informed on the configuration and responsibilities of the TID, most stated their expectation that the TID should continue to embrace new projects and consider expanding its geographical scope. The general consensus that arose from the board was that the TID should do just that – broaden its scope of the type of projects to be undertaken, and consider additional areas of Butler County where the TID could serve. There was no sentiment for a scaled-down, minimal activity mode of operation. It was recognized that in order to move in this activist direction, however, that a program of more extensive public relations and outreach was essential. A good number of potential projects and types of future work were identified by board members, and recorded by JJ&G staff. A wrap-up session on the visioning process has been scheduled for September 9 in the 4th Floor Conference Room at 315 High Street. At that time, the consultant will lay out a future course of action for the TID, based on final results of the interview process and the issues identified at the July 15 retreat.

4. Michael A. Fox Highway

At the last TID Board meeting, a resolution to refund to ODOT a portion of the project administration charges for the Fox Highway in order to conclude the final agreement with ODOT for the outstanding financial closeout was tabled. Staff was directed to meet with ODOT regarding the funding. It was hoped that an agreement could be reached to allow the funds in question to be applied to the SR 747 widening project. Staff has met with legal counsel regarding the TID's standing in this matter, and anticipates scheduling a meeting in the near future with ODOT Director Proctor to present that proposal to him.

5. Hamilton North/New Miami Study Project

Discussions have taken place regarding how this project might be accomplished. As a first step, OKI has been contacted regarding the placement of this corridor on OKI's Long Range Plan. While federal funds probably won't play a role, having the alignment go through OKI's air quality modeling process is essential. It appears that there will be a window for amendment of the plan at year's end, and arrangements are being made to submit the necessary information to OKI. Initial concepts regarding the necessary economic development to support the roadway are

evolving.

6. Symmes Road

Financial closeout for the Symmes Road project has been concluded. The final cost was \$402,082.30 under budget.

Future Projects

1. Butler County Airport Access

As with Item #5 above, we intend to submit a request to OKI shortly for inclusion of the Bobmeyer Road extension OKI's Long Range Plan. Discussions continue with Ron Davis, Airport Director, regarding the timeframe for the process of releasing the excess airport acreage for development, which in turn will support the roadway construction.

2. SR 747 Widening, Phase III

Until now, securing federal funds for this section of SR 747 (Tylersville Road to Princeton Road) was stymied on two fronts. Because the "urban boundary" only extended as far north as Tylersville Road, the project was not eligible for federal Surface Transportation (STP) Funding through OKI (unlike the Phase II section, which OKI did fund). Since this roadway segment was "rural", the traditional source of federal STP funds was ODOT. The lack of a funding commitment through ODOT's TRAC process left Phase III in limbo. In recent weeks, however, the Census Bureau release of the preliminary urban boundary (based now on the 2000 census) gives the TID new opportunity. It appears that when OKI makes final adjustments to the boundary over the next few months, the Phase III segment will not be eligible for OKI STP funding. The timing is key, since OKI only solicits new project requests every two years and the next opportunity will occur this fall. It is anticipated that any provision of ODOT assistance on this project (see Item #4 above) will help the request score higher when OKI conducts project request evaluations.

3. SR 4 Bypass Widening

As with SR 747 above, the window for OKI funding applies to this project as well. The TID will need to quickly establish the amount of financial support that the communities involved would provide to this project, so that a funding application can be developed in time for OKI's process. While it may be difficult to attract major funding for two projects within the county, perhaps timing or project staging issues can be negotiated with OKI.

4. Fairfield-Hamilton Corridor Study

Discussions have taken place regarding the TID undertaking a corridor conceptual study similar to the Ft. Lauderdale/North/New Miami Study for the region between State Route 4 and State Route 128 on the west side of the Great Miami River to the area bounded by Nilles Road on the south and St. Clair Avenue on the north. An east/west corridor might include the further improvement of Symmes Road west from Gilmore Road; the extension of Nilles Road across the Great Miami River with a possible connection to the Symmes Road corridor; and, the possible extension of St. Clair Avenue across the Great Miami River and possible tie-in of it east of State Route 4 to the Symmes Road corridor.

The communities had previously been involved in a project known as the Riverside Freeway which talked about the improvement of north/south roadway systems from State Route 129 in Hamilton through the City of Fairfield with various alternatives to connect to U. S. 27. Part of that major study involved the alternative for constructing additional bridges across the Great Miami River, one in Hamilton and one in Fairfield, with the connecting and improvement of the existing roadway systems along the river, i.e. SR 128. The general concepts from that study still have validity and there is interest in the two communities for reviving the transportation planning process that

regard. Rick Record of Balke Engineers has prepared a preliminary cost estimate for the work involved, and this information has been shared with staff of the Cities of Hamilton and Fairfield.

Priorities

At the July 15 TID Board Retreat, I was asked to identify the top three priorities for action, and the next necessary steps to advance these priority projects. The following is my assessment of our current situation and the direction that should be taken.

Priority One - Michael A. Fox/I-75, Cox Road

This improvement was the consensus top issue both at the retreat and in the expressed opinions of comm

leaders. The development pressure and the need to mitigate arterial congestion in the I-75 vicinity are the driving forces involved. The incorporation of this proposal in the I-75 corridor study has clouded the picture considerably, and efforts to break this improvement free of the ODOT timeline are essential.

- Identification and use of alternative methods to communicate with Columbus.
- Continued pressure on the TID's consultant to meet ODOT's schedule of product delivery leading to certified traffic.
- Assume financial risk of proceeding with design work ahead of ODOT's schedule once design parameters are established.

Priority Two – SR 747 Widening, Phase III

This widening project is the remaining element of the network of improvements originally established as the basis for the TID's creation. Continued development along SR 747 and increasing travel demand with resultant congestion argue for completion of this improvement as soon as possible.

- Obtain ODOT financial support through uses of Fox Highway administration residual.
- Obtain financial commitment from Liberty and West Chester Townships for preliminary engineering.
- Select and hire an engineering firm to begin preliminary engineering.
- Begin preparation of OKI funding application.

Priority Three – SR 4 Bypass Widening

Congestion issues along Bypass 4 are widely recognized as an item the TID should address. While right-of-way acquisition is not an element of cost, the overall project will still be very expensive. Issues of local participation and project staging are crucial.

- Obtain financial commitment from governmental bodies for overall project match.
- Obtain financial commitment from governmental bodies for preliminary engineering.
- Select and hire an engineering firm to begin preliminary engineering.
- Begin preparation of OKI funding application.
- Identify how project might be staged if financial support is inadequate for entire improvement.