



Butler County Transportation Improvement District

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Butler County celebrates the opening of the Michael A. Fox Highway

A ribbon cutting and grand opening celebration will be held at 10:30 a.m. Friday, December 10, to commemorate the opening of the Michael A. Fox Highway. The event will take place in a heated tent on the highway at the Bypass 4 interchange. An invitation-only celebration also will be held in the evening to celebrate the opening and thank all those who have worked on the project.

The highway tentatively is scheduled to open at noon on Monday, December 13.

The celebration will include comments from TID Executive Director Greg Wilkens, Governor Bob Taft, Ohio Department of Transportation Director Gordon Proctor, County Commissioner Mike Fox, County Commissioner Courtney Combs, City of Hamilton Mayor Tom Nye, Fairfield Township Trustee Joe McAbee, Liberty Township Trustee Bob Shelley, and Senator Scott Nein, who will introduce the governor.

Several generous sponsors – both financial and in-kind – have made this celebration possible, and they include Kokosing Construction Company, Resource International, John R. Jurgensen Company, Seasongood & Mayer, ME Companies, Cinergy, LJB, Norvell's Landscaping, Balke Engineering, KZF, First Southwestern, Cincinnati Bell,

Fifth Third, Unicustom, Contech Construction Products, the Butler County RTA, Champion International Corporation, the Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, and Fairfield Township.

"This is an incredible time for all of Butler County," said Greg Wilkens, TID executive director. "The Michael A. Fox Highway will have a huge impact on traveling patterns around the county. It will save many drivers at least 10-15 minutes, and it will help alleviate much of the traffic congestion on secondary routes, such as Hamilton-Mason, Princeton, Cincinnati-Dayton and Tylersville roads. And it also will have a major influence on economic development in the area."

Construction of this long-awaited highway began in May 1998. Now, with only 19 months of construction, the highway is opening eight months ahead of schedule – something unheard of in road construction. Excellent team work and great weather helped ensure the success of the project.

This 10.7-mile, \$158 million highway is expected to handle 35,000 vehicles daily, and is the single largest contract ever let by the Ohio Department of Transportation.

The Michael A. Fox Highway is a four-lane, divided, limited-access highway connecting the city of Hamilton to I-75 through Fairfield and Liberty townships. It begins at the former

State Route 129/State Route 4 intersection in Hamilton and runs east between Princeton and Hamilton-Mason roads. Interchanges are located at Bypass 4, at State Route 747, at

Cincinnati-Dayton Road and where the highway meets I-75.

Because the TID is local and involved with the community, the TID was able to take an active role and help control any inconveniences in a timely manner. To encourage an accelerated schedule in heavily traveled areas and to help ensure safe travel throughout the area, construction incentives were set for the completion of the Bypass 4 and I-75 interchanges and the Hamilton-Mason Road bridge. Kokosing met these goals, and they also completed the State Route 747 interchange in 1998. Incentives also were set for the entire project, which contributed to the early completion of the highway and reduced the amount of time motorists had to deal with the usual construction inconveniences, such as road closing and detours.

Construction Team

In May 1998 Kokosing Construction Company was awarded the contract to build the highway after submitting the lowest bid. ME Companies, contract management, and Resource International, construction management and inspection, also were added to the construction team.

The Butler County Transportation Improvement District

With a local focus on economic development and safer travel, the Butler County TID plans, finances, and constructs projects, including the new Union Centre Interchange and the Michael A. Fox Highway. It is recognized as a national model for its innovation.

The TID is a local agency established to plan, finance, construct, and maintain road improvement projects. Since its inception in 1994, the TID has undertaken planning and facilitation of projects, including the new Union Centre Interchange, the Michael A. Fox Highway, the widening and extension of Muhlhauser Road, the Symmes Road extension, the widening of SR 747, and the Bypass 4/SR 4 intersection improvements and relocation of Reigart Road.

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Michael A. Fox Highway Facts and Figures

The following quantities were used on project:

- Earthwork – More than 6.3 million cubic yards of dirt handled, which is enough to fill approximately 300 football fields 10 feet deep.
- Concrete – 22,960 cubic meters of concrete used, which is enough to fill approximately 5 Olympic-sized swimming pools.
- Storm Pipe – 78,100 feet of storm pipe used, which, when lined up, would stretch 14 ½ miles.
- Steel – 2,300,000 lbs or 1,150 tons of structural steel for bridges and 1,154,000 lbs or 577 tons of reinforcing steel for structures. Combined this steel would be almost as heavy as 1,300 automobiles.
- Right-of-way fence – 97,754 feet or 18.5 miles of right-of-way fencing
- Asphalt – A total of 248,193 cubic yards or approximately 410,000 tons of asphalt was placed on the project. This much asphalt would fill approximately 22,777 dump trucks.
- Landscaping – The project includes approximately \$930,000 of landscaping. This includes almost 6,600 trees and shrubs planted along the highway and does not include plantings in the Wetland Park.

- Noise Walls – There are 55,250 square yards of noise wall installed along the project for a cost of \$5,848,597.69.
- There were 17 bridges built at 11 different locations. (Divided bridges were built at all locations except Bypass 4, SR 747, Van Gordon Road, I-75 and Hamilton-Mason Road.) The divided bridge over Maud-Hughes Road is 1,400 feet long and approximately 80-90 feet high. The bridges were completed at an approximate cost of \$11,350,000 and will be the largest in Butler County and among the largest in southwest Ohio.