

Finances in order for \$50M Liberty Interchange project

State Rep. Courtney Combs says project may help create thousands of jobs.

By Eric Schwartzberg
Staff Writer

HAMILTON — By month's end, financing for the \$50 million Liberty Interchange project will be in place. Liberty Twp. trustees, But-

ler County commissioners and West Chester Twp. trustees will finalize their individual monetary commitments to the project in the coming weeks, said John Romner, executive director for the Butler County Transportation Improvement District.

TID board members will gather Jan. 29 for a special meeting to sign off on the project, which calls for an extension of Cox Road north to the Green Crest Golf Course, the widen-

ing of Hamilton-Mason Road to five lanes from Cincinnati-Dayton Road to Butler-Warren Road, and adding on and off ramps at Hamilton-Mason Road.

West Chester Twp. trustees had previously said they were unable to meet a \$6 million TID request to help fund two sections on Hamilton-Mason road within West Chester Twp. Romner called the Liberty Interchange "an example of the cooperative approach to infra-

structure projects that the TID has always worked with."

With recent changes at the statehouse and the Ohio Department of Transportation, state Rep. Courtney Combs, R-Hamilton, told TID board members Monday that Butler County officials from all levels — county, city and township — as well as state legislators must band together and speak with "one voice."
"What we have to sell Colum-

bus and the governor's office on is that Butler County is a generator of jobs, which is going to make Ohio look good," said Combs who said a unified voice can help the county garner financial support for projects such as the Liberty Interchange, which Combs said could help create thousands of jobs in the area.

ODOT recently extended the deadline for rights of way acquisition for the project from mid-Janu-

ary to the summer, Romner said. Liberty Twp. trustee President Christine Maticic said the move will mean moving forward with a project that is "vitaly important" to the region.

"This is the future of Liberty and I think it's a good step forward," she said. "It shows all the cooperation we have with all the various entities that are involved."
Contact this reporter at (513) 755-5126 or eschwartzberg@coxohio.com.