

# U.S. 23 to I-71 Connector Study

## Quick Reference for Public Meetings

### OPENING STATEMENT

- “For us, this study is not just about a freeway. It is about homes, farms, livelihoods, and communities that have existed here for generations.”

### FARMS & AGRICULTURE

- How would ODOT address the long-term impact of dividing farms with a freeway?
- How would farmers move equipment, livestock, and grain trucks between fields if farmland is split?
- How does the State weigh the permanent loss of productive farmland?

### FAMILIES & SCHOOLS

- How would a new freeway affect school bus routes, travel times, and student safety?
- Has ODOT coordinated with local school districts to understand potential impacts?
- What protections exist for homes near the freeway regarding noise, safety, and property impacts?

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

- How could the bypass affect response times for volunteer fire departments, EMS, and law enforcement?
- If crashes occur on the bypass, which local agencies would respond?
- If the bypass closes due to weather or accidents, what detour plans would exist?

### COMMUNITY IMPACTS

- Would the bypass divide rural communities or restrict local travel between towns and neighbors?
- How has ODOT evaluated impacts to property values and rural quality of life?

### ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

- What impacts could the freeway have on wetlands, waterways, wildlife habitat, and soil?
- What measures would be used for wildlife crossings and environmental protection?

### NEED FOR THE PROJECT

- What specific transportation problem is the bypass intended to solve?
- If congestion is primarily in Delaware County, why should rural communities farther north bear the impacts?

### ALTERNATIVES

- Why not complete improvements already identified along the existing U.S. 23 corridor first?
- Have alternatives such as freight rail or using other existing highways been fully evaluated?

### COST & FUNDING

- What is the estimated cost of constructing the bypass?
- How would this project be funded given billions in unfunded transportation needs statewide?
- Could the bypass potentially become a toll road?

### TRANSPARENCY

- When will updated maps and parcel-level impacts be shared with property owners?
- If strong public opposition is documented, would ODOT consider recommending the bypass not be built?
- Will what we say actually influence the outcome of this study, or has the decision to pursue a bypass already been made?
- House Bill 54 funded a \$1.3 million study for a new Interstate 73, which would primarily follow U.S. 23 and connect with I-270 in Columbus. These two projects look related. Why do we need both a new interstate and a new U.S. 23 Bypass for NW Ohio’s economic development?

### CLOSING QUESTION

- How does ODOT determine when it is appropriate for one set of communities to bear permanent impacts for benefits experienced elsewhere?