



## FACT SHEET: Auburn-Crile-SR 44 Road Improvements

### Safety First: Crashes, Injuries Dramatically Down

- In 2007, Concord Township received a grant aimed at increasing safety and relieving congestion at State Route 44 and Auburn and Crile Roads. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) labeled the intersection a high-accident area and specified that any road changes **must address the safety issues**, [as reported in The News-Herald](#).
- ODOT's primary goals for road improvements to the Auburn-Crile-SR 44 area were:
  - Improve safety and operations.
  - Reduce the amount of time to exit Crile Road northbound.
- **The safety improvements have worked.** Since the December 2016 opening of the reconfigured Auburn Rd-Crile Rd-SR 44 Intersection, the Ohio State Highway Patrol reports:
  - Injury crashes have been reduced approximately 65%.
  - Total crashes have been reduced approximately 35%.

### Follow the Money: No Property Tax Revenue Used On Road Improvements

- The \$11.2 million spent on the road improvements included **no property tax dollars from Concord Township residents**.
- About half of the cost - \$5.8 million – came from grants from ODOT and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA).
- The Township is paying its \$5.4 million share of the costs through the Township Capital Projects Fund, the JEDD Fund and the TIF Fund. **None of these involve property tax dollars.**
  - Capital Project money comes from hotel taxes and grants.
  - The JEDD Fund is Concord's share of revenue from the Joint Economic Development District.
  - The Tax Increment Financing Fund comes from a portion of taxes allocated from commercial improvements made within the Auburn-Crile Road Business Corridor – tax revenue that must be used specifically for infrastructure improvements within the corridor.

### Still a Work In Progress: ODOT Studying Further Improvements

- ODOT is continuing to monitor traffic signal patterns at the Auburn-Crile-SR 44 intersection and looking for ways to improve traffic flow while keeping safety at the forefront.
- In late October 2017, ODOT implemented new coordination timings in the corridor between Capital Parkway and the I-90 westbound entrance ramp. ODOT representatives will be out for a



site visit around November 1st / 2nd to evaluate the timing changes made and recommend any necessary adjustments.

- The Township notified ODOT of the need to adjust the signal timing at Auburn and SR 44, as problems continue with the eastbound traffic on Auburn heading north onto SR 44 blocking the intersection. We've also asked ODOT to improve the brief timing of the left turn signal when a motorist is heading south on SR 44, making a turn onto Auburn Road.
- The timing of the traffic light at Capital Parkway and the new Crile Road is also being evaluated. This situation will continue to be monitored until optimal operation is reached.
- While some questions have been raised whether future changes will be made to the Auburn-Crile-SR 44 intersection design, this is not an option.
  - First, the safety measures are working. Again, the numbers show crashes and injuries down dramatically.
  - Second, more than \$3 million of the grant money received by ODOT was tied to the improved design in anticipation of safety improvements, so these safety design standards cannot be removed or modified without ODOT's approval. **The Township must pay back the \$3 million if these safety improvements are reversed.**

#### **The Bonus: An Economic Development Benefit**

- In 2005-2006, Concord Township partnered with the Lake County Planning Commission to complete the *Auburn-Crile Business Corridor Study*. A key component of the study was transportation, as well as utility capacities, land use and zoning, with recommended strategies to control growth in a systematic and orderly fashion.

More specifically, the goals of the 2006 Auburn-Crile Business Corridor Study were as follows:

- Improve the overall appearance of the corridor, including architecture, access management, landscaping and signage so it presents a positive impression of the Township and offers a distinct sense of place unique to Concord Township.
  - Eliminate the unplanned and inefficiently managed commercial growth patterns as evident in other areas of the County.
  - Create zoning classification(s) that complement current businesses while addressing the market demands anticipated with future businesses.
  - Provide baseline data for the SR 44/Concord Township Areawide Transportation Study.
- So when asked if economic development was a consideration in the road improvements to SR 44, Auburn Road, Crile Road and the Capital Parkway Extension, the Township's answer is "yes."



- These road improvements, while critical for improved safety and traffic congestion within a growing corridor, were also essential for the future economic viability of the area, which became an added benefit of the road improvement project.
- The road improvements are already yielding economic development benefits, with the opening of Starbucks, Discount Drug Mart, Burgers 2 Beer, the future Pet Valu, and others. And while some of the existing businesses were impacted by the detours and the duration of road construction, which is expected with any major road improvement project, most have “weathered the storm” and continue to thrive.
- In June 2017, [the News Herald reported](#) that “Concord Township is starting to see the economic potential of the Crile Crossing project come into bloom”.
- With vacant land available on both sides of SR 44, ongoing development of this corridor is inevitable, and the current infrastructure will be able to sustain it well into the future.

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