



## TIMELINE: Auburn-Crile-SR 44 Road Improvements

Since the completion of the Auburn-Crile-SR 44 road project, many questions have been raised regarding the design of the corridor road improvements, particularly the circulation pattern changes at the Auburn-Crile Road intersection at SR 44. ODOT singled out this highway intersection as a high crash location in 2008. As reported in the study, too many car accidents had occurred and the number of accidents was increasing every year.

- 2004-2006: 43 crashes were reported at the Auburn/Crile/SR 44 Intersection. Nearly 1/3 of these crashes resulted in injuries.
- In 2008, SR 44 and Auburn Road was ranked #132 in the state in non-freeway safety issues.
- In 2008, SR 44 and I-90 was ranked #87 in the state on freeway safety issues.

The following is a timeline detailing the evolution of the project, the dramatic decrease in injury accidents according to Ohio State Highway Patrol statistics, and Concord Township's ongoing work with ODOT to improve safety and congestion within the growing corridor.

- 2006-** Concord Township enlists the assistance of the Lake County Planning Commission to develop an Auburn Road Corridor Business Study to address the controlled growth of Concord Township's only commercial district.
- 2007-** Concord Township, working with Lake County Engineer, received the Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) Grant from NOACA to perform a traffic corridor study to help alleviate congestion at SR 44 and Auburn and Crile Roads. The comprehensive study looks at the transportation network from Girdled Road to SR 84 (north and south) and Painesville-Ravenna Road to Hermitage Road (east and west).
- 2008-** During the TLCI study it is determined that just widening the Auburn/Crile SR44 intersection will not provide an acceptable level of operations. The idea of having an alternate access point to SR 44 is discussed with ODOT, NOACA and Lake County. This would require ODOT approving a limited access (LA) break on SR 44. After having significant discussions and analysis, ODOT approved the LA break, with the condition that southbound Auburn Road traffic and Crile Road traffic headed to SR 44 be diverted to the new road further south off Crile Road. By diverting this traffic, ODOT believed that the Auburn Rd-Crile Rd-SR 44 intersection would operate at an acceptable level.

In May 2008, an inter-office communication by James Young - ODOT Central Office reported, in part, the following:

*The SR 44 and Auburn Road intersection operation is complicated by the intersection of Auburn and Crile Roads. It is in our offices' opinion that this roadway access needs to be more controlled from Auburn. Our office has provided a configuration (Figure 2) that can accommodate Crile Road with restricted movements. The figure also provides signal phasing for the intersections. This configuration would only allow southbound Auburn to turn right at SR 44. The other movements would have to utilize Crile Road for access to SR*



44 southbound and Auburn west of SR 44. The SR 44 and Auburn Road intersection with improvements in conjunction with the new connector road can absorb this diverted traffic. This will also minimize the conflicts of both of these intersections being so closely spaced. This is an existing condition and its improvement should be part of improving the Auburn Road intersection. This is a modification to what was provided in the study.

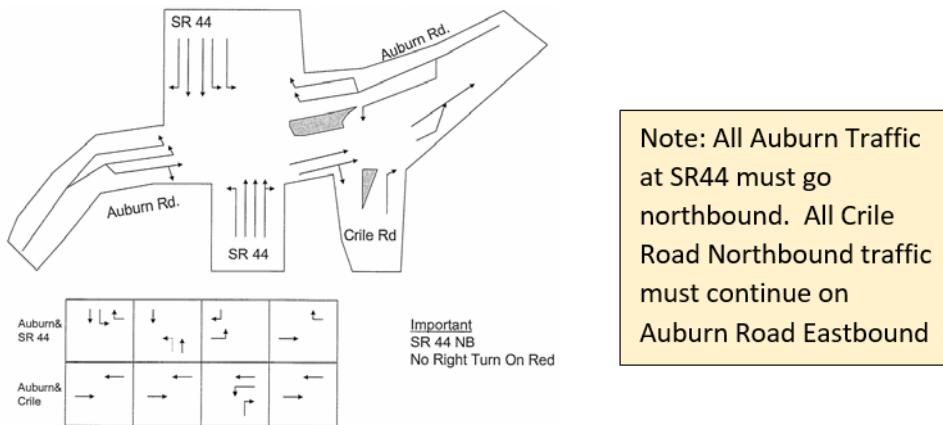


Figure 2

**2011-** Concord Township initiates a detailed study to look at alternatives to implement the connector road concept. Alternatives must meet ODOT requirements for the LA break. Several alternatives were evaluated, with public meetings to gather feedback from the community. Final alternatives were approved in 2013.

Concord Township applies for and receives nearly \$3.2 million in NOACA funding for the construction of the new connector road and right of way acquisition.

**2013-** Concord Township advances the environmental clearance, final design package and right of way acquisition to move the project from a planning study to a construction project. Work includes stream and wetland mitigation, permit applications and development of construction drawings. Due to the work on SR 44, ODOT determined that it will administer the project construction.

Concord Township applies for safety funding through ODOT to help with the construction costs of proposed improvement. Since the project helps alleviate an intersection prone to accidents, the project scores well and is awarded an additional \$3.2 million in construction funding.

Concord Township applies for and receives a low interest loan from the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) to cover anticipated construction costs for the project. This loan will allow the Township to be able to front the money for the construction, and repay the loan using proceeds from the JEDD, eliminating the need to use Township funds.

**2015-** ODOT bids the project out and it is awarded to Karvo Construction for approximately \$8.7 million. Construction begins.



Concord Township initiates an update of the Township Comprehensive Plan to provide a structured plan for the controlled development anticipated to be spurred by the road project.

**2016-** Project reaches substantial completion and is open to traffic. Since the December 2016 opening of the reconfigured Auburn Rd-Crile Road-SR 44 Intersection, the Ohio State Highway Patrol reports:

- Injury Crashes have been reduced approximately 65%.
- Total Crashes have been reduced approximately 35%.

**2017-** In late October 2017, Brian Blayne, one of ODOT's Traffic Planning Engineers, reports that new coordination timings have been implemented 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 has notified ODOT that there is a need to adjust the timing of traffic signals at Auburn and SR 44, as there continues to be problems with the eastbound traffic on Auburn heading north onto SR 44 blocking the intersection, and 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.

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