

Save Our Access

The Ohio Department of Transportation intends to close the Innerbelt ramps at Prospect and Carnegie. This would not happen for a number of years but the final decision will be made soon.

Users of the ramps are protesting the intended changes to local, state and federal officials. Users are NOT protesting the other planned changes to the highway including the bridge over the Flats and Deadman's Curve.

If ODOT does what it wants, **here's how drivers would be affected:**

If you now exit at Carnegie, the ODOT change would force you to exit at either E. 22nd (near St. Vincent's Hospital) or Chester Ave.

If you now exit at Prospect, the ODOT change would force you to exit at Chester.

If you now enter at Prospect to get to I-77, the ODOT change would force you to go to E. 21st. (Entering at Chester would also lead to I-77).

If you now enter at Prospect to get to I-90 west, the ODOT change would force you to go to E. 14th (or Chester).

If you now enter at Prospect to go east (such as to Euclid), the ODOT change would force you to take a new street to be constructed above the Innerbelt. The new street would begin at Carnegie, cross Prospect, cross Euclid, cross, Chester, cross Payne, cross Superior – and then drop down to the highway.

ODOT also intends to close the I-77 exit to E. 9th Street. Drivers would be forced to exit at either E. 30th/Woodland or E. 14th.

In doing all that, ODOT states in the report of its plan:

The objective is **“to address ... access shortcomings.”**

And in so doing **“There is a need to preserve the local roadway connectivity function of the Innerbelt and provide access and mobility to the central business district, adjacent neighborhoods and commercial/industrial areas.”** ODOT states its plan will achieve that by **“maintaining circulation and access at levels similar to existing conditions. All access points are maintained or mitigated through ramp and/or local street improvements.”**

As a result, **“A driver [passing through downtown not intending to exit] will encounter fewer exits and ramps enhancing the intactness of the transportation corridor.”**

And if that’s not enough, **“Positive regional economic benefits are expected due to improved facility, reduced congestion, efficient access.”**

ODOT speaks glowingly about its plan and refuses to recognize the disruptive and costly impacts that would result. When you get right down to it, all ODOT cares about is having traffic move smoothly **through** downtown (“A driver will encounter fewer exits and ramps enhancing the intactness of the transportation corridor.”). Great. We intend to save the access that feeds Cleveland’s vitality.