



Background On the Newly-Formed Columbus-Pittsburgh Corridor Committee
from Rick Platt, Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, November 2007

- The Columbus-Pittsburgh Corridor is a 160-mile highway from Columbus to Pittsburgh. At present, with the recent opening of the SR161/I-270 interchange, four key projects, just 25% of the corridor, remain to be completed to bring **Ohio's first, true four-lane highway link between the economic markets of Columbus and Pittsburgh.**
- In recent months, **all of the key projects left to be completed appear to have stalled** during the TRAC Tier I vs. Tier II issue and/or status of spending of federal earmarks.
- With a change in Administration and the anticipated emergence of new criteria and ways to select highway projects for funding, a need to raise the profile of the corridor with key decision makers became apparent. It's also necessary to build grassroots support, particularly from the private sector, to sustain this effort.

• From west to east, the highway route starts at I-270 on the northeast side, follows SR161/SR16 through New Albany and Newark to Coshocton, becomes US36 at Coshocton to Newcomerstown. There 28 miles is all that remains between US36 and US22 at Cadiz. It's four-lane for all but three miles from there, through Steubenville, to Pittsburgh, including a direct connection on the new Findlay Connector to Pittsburgh International Airport. See

ColumbusPittsburghCorridor.com for a projects list and status report.

- The Columbus-Pittsburgh Corridor Committee held its second meeting on Oct. 19 with state legislators, county commissioners joining business leaders and economic development officials from the seven-county corridor in Ohio. **It has built momentum.**

• This Corridor Committee is organizing similar to the way the 40-year US35 Committee in Southern Ohio did when names like Bob Evans and Kenner Bush led a successful effort to complete a four-lane corridor from Dayton to Gallipolis. **Longaberger, State Farm, and AEP are among the most recognizable companies lending support to this Columbus-Pittsburgh effort.**

• Next up for the Committee is recruiting business support for the corridor, including preparing a business white paper; reaching out to state officials with a seven-county bus tour in 1Q 2008; and formalizing the Committee's structure to keep a constant diligence.

