

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2003

PR# 03-018

ODOT Hits Benchmark with I-40 Crosstown Property Acquisition

Preparing the corridor for the I-40 Crosstown construction is well under way with acquisition of all the occupied residential properties now finished. All of the occupied residential properties have been secured without a single condemnation, which is a major success story in a project of this magnitude.

A priority was placed on the occupied residential and commercial properties located within the park area when Coates Field Service, ODOT's right-of-way service contractor, began conducting appraisal, acquisition and relocation activities. To date, the state has acquired 69 of the total 165 properties that must be cleared for the new highway. Of the 165 total properties, 29 residences and 37 commercial properties were occupied. The remainder are vacant, non-occupied, or non-improved properties.

The new 10-lane expressway will be along an existing transportation corridor which helped to keep the number of displacements low. A project of this size generally impacts considerably more residential and commercial locations.

Coates Field Service will continue acquiring commercial property along the new I-40 corridor to complete the right-of-way phase, which could possibly be as early as the end of the year.

"This is a big step toward getting ready for construction," explained Project Development Engineer John Bowman. "Our relocation program is designed to assist families and avoid disputes which can produce lengthy delays."

The corridor already looks different, with demolition started on some houses with more anticipated over the next several weeks. Wrecking work to clear the properties begins as they become ready.

The Federal Highway Administration's approval of the project last May allowed ODOT to move forward with design, right-of-way acquisition and construction. A general estimate of time is approximately two years for design and right-of-way acquisition and approximately six years for construction. It will be around 2010 before all construction is completed. The existing Crosstown will continue to be used while the new facility is being built, resulting in very few construction-related delays for motorists.

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