

Southern Beltway US-22 to I-79

Frequently Asked Questions &

ANSWERS



Keeping Our Commitments

What is the current status of this project?

On September 3, 2008 the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued the Record of Decision (ROD) for this project and identified the B2 Alternative as the Selected Alternative. Issuance of the ROD allows the Commission to proceed with the Design Process and right-of-way acquisition. It is anticipated that property acquisition process will begin in October, 2008 and continue through 2010 for total take properties. These are properties that the Turnpike would need to acquire in their entirety.

Why is the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission building this road?

In 1985 the Pennsylvania General Assembly enacted Act 61, which assigned a number of new roads within the Commonwealth to be built and operated by the Turnpike Commission. The three Southern Beltway projects were added to the list of Act 61 projects in 1991. This 13-mile US Rt. 22 to I-79 Project, part of the 32-mile Southern Beltway system, was included in order to reduce congestion on the local roadways, to provide access to rural areas for development, and to improve mobility from the Mon Valley to the Pittsburgh International Airport.

When will construction start?

If the Commission is able to procure funds, construction may begin as early as the fall of 2011. Opening day may be as early as the fall 2014.

Where does the Southern Beltway begin and end?

A six-mile section of the Southern Beltway, Turnpike 576, has been open to traffic since October 2006. It begins near the Pittsburgh International Airport; and ends via ramps onto US Rt. 22 between the Bavington and McDonald interchanges. The western end of the US Rt. 22 to I-79 project (13 miles) will involve a connection to that existing portion of Turnpike 576 by completing a bridge over US 22 and the two additional ramps to complete the US 22 interchange. The eastern end of the project will connect to Interstate 79 between the Southpointe and Bridgeville interchanges. The third section, also 13 miles, between I-79 and the Mon/Fayette Expressway is nearing the end of the environmental stage. The Recommended Preferred Alternative is the Green Alternative, Option 1A in section 1 and the Tan/Red in section 2.

How many miles will it be from I-79 to the airport?

The entire corridor from I-79 to the Pittsburgh International Airport is 19 miles.

What occurs during the final design phase?

The detailed engineering necessary to advance the project to construction is completed during the final design phase. Project team members will be visible in the project area as final design activities are conducted. Building upon the work completed in the preliminary design phase, the project team will continue to refine plans, impacts, and mitigation components of the project. Right-of-way needs will be finalized. Extensive coordination with utilities, regulatory agencies, environmental agencies, municipalities, and emergency service providers will take place throughout this phase. This coordination is essential to minimizing disruption of services during construction. Signing and lighting will be incorporated into the plans, and necessary permits will be obtained. The final design phase results in the development of the plans, specifications, and estimates from which construction contractors will ultimately build the project.

How can I find out if all or part of my property will be required for the project's right-of-way?

When the process advances to the stage where property required for the highway is known and acquisition begins, you will receive a letter informing you that the Turnpike has to purchase some or all of your property. A negotiator, an appraiser, and if necessary, a relocation adviser will personally visit you. All questions regarding property acquisition should be directed to Joe Agnello at (724) 755-5262 or jagnello@paturnpike.com.

If the Turnpike Commission needs to acquire my property for the project, what should I know about the right of way acquisition process?

The Turnpike Commission will provide the full measure of just compensation to all who are entitled under the law. There are numerous protections afforded to individuals, renters as well as owner-occupants and businesses that will be displaced. For more details, request a copy of the publication "Property Owners' & Tenants' Guide" by clicking [here](#).

What if I have to move because of the project?

It will be the Turnpike Commission's responsibility to assist you in finding replacement housing and to cover all reasonable and legally recognized expenses associated with your relocation.

How will the Commission assist me in moving?

The Commission offers the following services to both owners and renters:

- Information on available properties
- Information on low-rent housing subsidized by the government
- Help with inspecting your proposed replacement home, assessing required housing standards, and determining whether the home meets federal and state guidelines
- Information on suitable locations for businesses, farms, and non-profit organizations
- Transportation to potential replacement properties
- Information on federal and state regulations that might affect your relocation benefits

What does the appraisal process involve?

You will receive fair market value for any property you own, including land or buildings. To determine the fair market value, a certified appraiser will evaluate your property. The appraiser considers recent property sales in your community, as well as building costs and land values. During the on-site inspection, you may want to accompany the appraiser to point out any features or to provide information that you think may help determine its value. Once the appraisal is completed, it is reviewed and approved by an independent appraiser. At this point, negotiations may begin.

How are negotiations conducted?

A Turnpike Commission representative will visit with you to explain the project and the amount of property required, along with any temporary or permanent easements that will be needed. The representative will tell you the amount of the appraisal and discuss with you how it was calculated. Your offer to purchase will be at the appraised value. You will have time to consider the offer, and the representa-

tive will contact you again to discuss the offer and to answer any questions you may have.

Can I hire my own appraiser?

The Commission will reimburse you up to \$4,000 for any reasonable expense incurred for an appraiser, engineer, or attorney you may hire to evaluate your claim.

What if I decide to accept the Commission's offer?

If you decide to accept the offer, you will sign a binding sales agreement. Signing this means that you agree to sell your property to the Commission for the amount of the offer, and it commits the Commission to pay you that amount. A Commission representative will arrange for a real estate closing to be held within 90 days. At the closing, you will sign the deed and receive a check.

What happens if I do not accept the offer?

If the Commission is unable to purchase the right of way through amicable negotiations, the Eminent Domain Code requires the Commission to initiate court proceedings (commonly called condemnation) to acquire the necessary land and buildings from the property owner. The Commission will file a Declaration of Taking in the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the property is located. You would then have the opportunity to make the argument in County Court that the Turnpike Commission should be paying you more for your property. Under no circumstance would you receive less than our offer.

Will the Southern Beltway reduce property values of residential and commercial sites?

Overall, the Beltway should have a positive effect on property values. In general, properties with convenient access to interstate and primary arterial roadways are more desirable and increase in value compared to similar properties lacking efficient highway access.

Will I be able to see the highway from my house?

It may be possible to see the highway. The Commission takes into consideration not only the view from the driver's eye but also the views of the property

owners along the corridor and shields the highway where possible with earth berms and landscaping.

How will construction of this project affect local road conditions, including road closures and detours?

During construction some local roads will be subject to short term and long term closures. Detours will be posted, and informational material will be made available through the news media and this project website.

How will the Beltway be designed to lessen impacts to communities?

The Commission is committed to working as a partner with all affected municipalities to lessen the project impacts on neighborhoods and to support ongoing redevelopment efforts. Commitments made in the Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision will be tracked and must be fulfilled through design and construction.

Will the Beltway increase noise in residential neighborhoods?

As part of the environmental studies, noise monitoring was done for properties that would be close to the proposed roadway. More studies will be done in final design and where noise levels exceed federal and state noise criteria noise walls will be evaluated.

How much money will I pay at the toll booth?

This decision has not been made because the toll revenue studies have not been completed. The toll rates will be finalized close to the opening date.

Where will I have to stop to pay a toll?

It depends on your entrance and exit points. As on other Turnpike Beltway and Expressway Projects, there will be a barrier type of toll plaza east of the Reissing Road Interchange and collection booths on some of the ramps. Of course, if you have an E-ZPass account, you won't have to stop to pay the toll. If you would like to enroll in the E-ZPass program, please [click here](#).

For more information:
www.paturnpike.com/monfaysb
mfbsinfo@paturnpike.com
1-800-585-2996

Tom Fox
Public Involvement Manager
Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission
Western Regional Office
2200 North Center Avenue
New Stanton, PA 15672-9602
Phone: (724) 755-5260
Fax: (724) 755-5142