



News from the Ohio Turnpike

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Modernization of the Ohio Turnpike Continues with Lane Conversions and Removal of Gates at Toll Plazas

Motorists are urged to obey the 10-mph speed limit in all toll lanes for the safety of travelers and turnpike employees.

BEREA, Ohio (Aug. 19, 2022) – Many customers who travel on the Ohio Turnpike are beginning to see a glimpse of the new Toll Collection System (TCS)—from the lane conversions and the removal of gates at toll plaza interchanges to the new construction and renovation of four mainline toll plazas that will permit *E-ZPass* open road tolling.

“We are currently undertaking the largest construction project in the history of the Ohio Turnpike since the years leading up to its completion in 1955,” said Ferzan Ahmed, executive director of the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission. “The modernization of the turnpike will enable *E-ZPass* open road tolling and gateless low-speed conventional lanes to enhance the driving experience for our passenger car and commercial truck customers.”

The lane conversions – which includes the installation of new electronic tolling equipment, the removal of all entrance gates, and the removal of gates from only *E-ZPass* exit lanes – are currently underway at four toll plaza interchanges, which include:

- Toll Plaza 52 (Toledo Airport-Swanton/S.R. 2);
- Toll Plaza 71 (Stony Ridge-Toledo/S.R. 420 and I-280);
- Toll Plaza 151 (North Ridgeville-Cleveland/I-480); and
- Toll Plaza 173 (Cleveland/S.R. 21 and I-77).

In all, 20 interchanges from toll plazas 52 to 209 along the Ohio Turnpike will be converted under the TCS modernization plan, which includes a reduction of toll plazas from 31 to 24.

“All of the entry gates in the converted lanes will be removed for the benefit of our *E-ZPass* customers. However, non-*E-ZPass* customers will have to stop to get a ticket,” Ahmed added. “In addition, we urge all motorists to obey the 10-mph speed limit in all toll lanes for the safety of travelers and turnpike employees. This is especially important as we begin to remove the entry gates as part of our new system conversion.”

FOLLOW THE SIGNS

The Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) on the gantry above the converted entrance lanes will still depict “TICKETS/*E-ZPASS*” and “*E-ZPASS* ONLY” or “TICKETS ONLY,” so as motorists approach a toll plaza they can enter the appropriate lane, says Laurie Davis, director of toll operations for the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission.

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To further assist motorists in getting accustomed to the new system, new Patron Dynamic Message Signs (PDMS) will be installed at eye level at each of the converted lanes. The PDMS will provide the customer with messages, such as “*E-ZPASS* ACCEPTED,” which indicates an account is in good standing; or “*E-ZPASS* ACCEPTED, LOW BALANCE, CHECK ACCOUNT,” which indicates an account balance is getting low; or “TAKE TICKET” if an *E-ZPass* transponder was not read properly or there’s another issue.

“If you go through the toll plaza and your *E-ZPass* does not read properly, the machine will issue a ticket. Pull the ticket and take it with you. Upon exit go to ticket lane, give your ticket and transponder to the toll collector so that your *E-ZPass* account is properly charged the exact toll rate,” Davis added. “If your transponder is properly mounted, you will likely not have this issue. If you wave the transponder, you may experience this problem.”

***E-ZPASS* OPEN ROAD TOLLING**

The newly constructed mainline toll plaza at milepost 49 in Swanton was the first of four new or reconstructed mainline toll plazas necessary for the implementation of the new TCS and *E-ZPass* open road tolling.

Construction of Toll Plaza 49 was substantially completed in late 2021. It is currently being used for testing components of the new system.

Construction of the new mainline Westgate Toll Plaza in Edon at milepost 4 and mainline Toll Plaza 211 in Newton Falls are underway and will continue through 2022. Eastgate Toll Plaza in Springfield Township at milepost 239 will be renovated.

“These four mainline toll plazas will have state-of-the-art *E-ZPass* lanes,” Ahmed added. “*E-ZPass* customers will be able to travel the full length of the Ohio Turnpike non-stop at highway speeds without toll plaza lane gates. Customers without an *E-ZPass* will still have the option to take a ticket and pay using cash or a credit card.”

The capital cost for the entire TCS project is estimated at about \$232 million. The new TCS is expected to save about \$257 million in operating costs over 30 years.

The operational savings is a result of the reduction in the number of toll plazas from 31 to 24; the addition of automatic toll payment machines at all toll plazas; the elimination of toll gates at all entry lanes; and a projected increase in *E-ZPass* usage.

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