

11/13/84

OHIO TURNPIKE COMMISSION

Resolution Relating to Completion of Environ-
mental and Engineering Studies Prepared for
the Commission as Authorized by
Resolution No. 13-1979

WHEREAS, the Commission adopted Resolution No. 13-1979 on July 10, 1979, and authorized funding for and authorized the executive director, in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, to retain consultants on behalf of the Commission to prepare Environmental and Engineering Studies concerning improvements and modifications of the Ohio Turnpike to operate as a toll-free segment of the Interstate Highway System; and

WHEREAS, these studies have been under way for the past five years and now have been completed and copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Section 4 (f) Evaluation-Ohio Turnpike Upgrading have been distributed for comment by affected agencies; and

WHEREAS, the studies were initiated on the premise that the turnpike would become toll-free in the mid 1980's and also on the expectation that under then existing Federal law and funding programs the turnpike would be eligible for substantial Federal aid for improvements and modifications identified by the studies; and

WHEREAS, there have since been significant changes in the Federal Interstate funding programs that reduce the amount of aid eligible for use on the turnpike even if it were now toll free; and

WHEREAS, as a result it has been determined that tolls will be continued on the turnpike at least through 1990, during the period of refunding bonds issued by the Commission in September 1984, and that, while certain improvements and modifications identified in the Environmental and Engineering Studies will be performed by the Commission during the period of the refunding bonds using toll revenues and other funds available to the Commission, certain other elements contained in the studies are not now desirable or feasible, particularly the construction of most of the thirteen additional interchanges identified in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and, in fact, the Commission believes that one of the proposed thirteen interchanges, namely the one between the Turnpike and I-475, which at one time was dropped from the studies and then reinstated at the request of other agencies, should not be constructed under any circumstances because of its excessive estimated cost and other serious detrimental impacts and effects; and

WHEREAS, the Commission desires to make every practical and reasonable use of the studies which it has funded and in which it has been a primary and active participant, and it also desires that other affected agencies should benefit from the studies to the full extent possible; and

WHEREAS, the Commission nevertheless does not want to imply that by having funded, performed, participated in and distributed the studies, it endorses every aspect and element and therefore wishes so to state during the final comment period specified by Federal law and regulations for the studies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Commission hereby recognizes the completion of the aforesaid Environmental and Engineering Studies and the distribution of copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement to affected and interested agencies, which distribution was accomplished both by the Ohio Department of Transportation to some of the agencies and by the Executive Director of the Commission to the remainder of the agencies.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Commission hereby accepts most of the elements and conclusions of the studies and acknowledges it already is using the results as guidelines in the extensive repair and improvement program which the Commission has undertaken and pledges to continue to utilize the studies to the extent they are consistent with the objectives, goals and obligations of the Commission.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Commission hereby expresses its opposition to the construction of an interchange between the Turnpike and Interstate Route 475, either by the Commission as a toll interchange or by others as a free interchange in the event tolls are removed.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Executive Director hereby is directed to convey to appropriate officials and agencies a certified copy of this resolution and is authorized to include such other documentation he deems proper to serve as the Commission's official comments concerning the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

(Resolution No. 15- 1984 adopted November 13, 1984)