

As some of you are likely aware, PennDot is currently engaged in rehabilitation of much of I-279 North. As some portions of the upcoming work will likely result in delays and congestion, I will share some of the key points of the project for your reference:

- The total project is intended to repair and rehabilitate 19 miles of I-279 North from the Fort Duquesne Bridge / PNC Park north to approximately the Bellevue exit.
- Phase I, consisting of work on the HOV lanes only, has been completed.
- Phase II began on August 4<sup>th</sup> and involves work on the southbound lanes of I-279 going into the city. This second phase will last approximately 42 calendar days and end sometime in early September.
- Once Phase II is completed, Phase III will involve approximately 56 calendar days of work to the northbound lanes of I-279 and will wrap up this construction season.
- Throughout the project, the contractor will maintain 2 lanes of travel between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. During other hours of the day the contractor may restrict traffic to one lane, though most single lane situations will occur at night and on weekends. **No complete closure of the roadway is anticipated to occur at any time barring accidents, emergencies, etc.**
- The contractor will also maintain two lanes of travel during any scheduled events such as Steeler games, the Pittsburgh triathlon, etc.
- **For a period of several weeks during the Phase II southbound / inbound rehabilitation (i.e. mid to late August), mainline I-279 South will be permanently restricted to 1 lane for 24 hours a day in the McKnight Road interchange area.** This is to accommodate bridge work and no other alternatives are available. Due to the traffic volume on the roadway, this may cause significant congestion particularly in morning rush hour times.
- **During the limited single lane situation, the HOV lanes will be open 24 hours a day inbound to ALL traffic.** PennDot and the Pennsylvania State Police will have personnel and signage available to direct traffic to the HOV lanes prior to Perrysville once this portion of the project begins.
- At all other times during the project, the HOV lanes will not have a vehicle occupancy requirement in effect. **ALL vehicles will be able to utilize the HOV lanes in the direction they are open throughout the project.**
- Because the northbound lanes are wider, no single lane situation is anticipated to occur during Phase III.
- Only the section closed near McKnight Road will have concrete barriers erected, i.e. the rest of the project area will not have wall barriers only barrels, cones, etc.
- **PennDot has advised that this project is necessary to maintain the roadway for future use.** Incidentally, repairs to the concrete roadway will facilitate eventual overlay with a more maintenance friendly asphalt surface. Thereafter the roadway will simply be milled and repaved when necessary, a process not involving lengthy shutdowns or lane closures. This is the type of surface now present on the Parkway East and West.

- The project also includes important safety repairs to bridges throughout the project area including the bridge cracks discovered during the HOV repairs that have been addressed.
- **PennDot has thoroughly studied the project and its effects and will do everything to reduce congestion and delay as much as possible** including limiting lane closures to the hours outlined above, using accelerated setting high strength concrete, and working with the Penn. State Police and local emergency agencies when accidents occur.
- Once again, the project should be completed by winter. Next summer, the work will move north to the section of I-279 from Camp Horne Road to I-79. Of note, the 2009 project will address the congestion where I-279 merges onto I-79 North.

Hopefully, this provides enough of an overview for most questions you may have. Of course, should you have additional questions please contact my district office at (412) 630-9466 and my staff will assist you. Thank you for your patience and concern.