

Summary of Proceedings
U.S. 30 RTIP Conference
Hall of Fame Village, Canton, Ohio
October 5th, 2022



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Executive Summary

The “Ohio Opportunity Corridor” and the “American Model” for implementing it are concepts developed by Senator Schuring in collaboration with the late Norman Anderson¹. Together they can transform our highways and their adjacent rights of way from a 1950’s concept – very high-cost single-purpose motor-vehicle driven “deserts” to a concept for the current century – multi-purpose engines for innovation and progress, funded in large part by the private sector and providing “public good” for the communities through which they pass. As noted below, this approach both minimizes public costs and maximizes public benefits. It is fully consistent with recently announced federal policies but requires policy leadership and a non-siloed, holistic approach to demonstrate its feasibility.

This meeting brought together a core group of cutting-edge companies to explore the potential for using this section of the historic Lincoln Highway to demonstrate these concepts’ appropriate role in opening the way for the highways and Opportunity Corridors of the future.² The following is a summary of the discussions which took place.

Project Overview

The Ohio Opportunity Corridor project will upgrade a segment of the US 30 Lincoln Highway expressway east of Canton, Ohio with the long-term goal of creating a multi-use corridor connecting Canton and three RTIP counties with the Greater Pittsburgh and Morgantown metropolitan areas, as well as with the critical Ohio River Port infrastructure and other key infrastructure elements to support the coming Ohio high-tech transition. This highway corridor project is important to promote highway safety, but more importantly, it will improve access to commerce, trade, and quality of life in the Appalachian region.

1. Introduction by Senator Schuring

Senator Kirk Schuring (OH District 29), the Strategic Infrastructure Performance Institute and a core group of advanced infrastructure technology and development companies wrapped up a working meeting in Canton with a commitment to work together to carry out the next stages of the “Ohio Opportunity Corridor Project” with a “New American Model” for infrastructure project delivery that mobilizes private sector expertise and investment to provide public and community benefits through multi-use development of the highway Right-of-Way corridor. Not only to upgrade the road, but also to

provide financing, economic returns and long-term community benefits through intelligent 21st century development of the Ohio Opportunity Corridor.

¹ These concepts, and the innovative infrastructure philosophy behind them, are discussed in Anderson’s book *Vision* [<https://www.amazon.com/Vision-Strategic-Infrastructure-Roadmap-Forward/dp/0578873303>] which charts a path forward for returning the U.S. to its proper position as the country with the World’s best infrastructure

² The Concepts are discussed in some detail on the Institute’s website at <https://www.sipinst.org>

Senator Kirk Schuring (OH District 29) commenced the meeting with an introduction and a statement, “...*big ideas require big tools. This Hall of Fame Village is a manifestation of that*”.

Private sector participants have shown substantial interest in the project, with already committed voluntary assessments to capture unmet potential enhancements in the highway’s surrounding land value. According to Schuring, outreach to the financial community has confirmed that the successful application of the Opportunity Corridor concept can generate hundreds of millions in increased land value.

Attendees heard from Senator Schuring about the economic importance of the Opportunity Corridor RTIP US 30 expressway for Canton and the adjoining rural Ohio communities like Canton, and the many people working hard for a brighter future in Appalachian Ohio—a historically disadvantaged and economically distressed region that has nonetheless experienced more economic improvement per capita than the rest of the state³. Communities in Appalachia are making a real effort to address their own challenges but need a reasserted focus from state policymakers to solve the chronic issues of poverty confronting the region.

Critical maintenance and development needs of the U.S. 30 highway have been the focus of political discourse over several decades, noted Senator Schuring. Among the key challenges U.S. Route 30 has faced in its history of planning and development: siloed governmental programs making it difficult to take into account the broad societal benefits that properly formulated infrastructure should provide, and further, to realize the potential for private sector participation that those benefits can attract.

To address these issues, Senator Schuring explained that the RTIP structure and ‘New American Model’ broadens the scope of the project plan, design, and development effort, making the surrounding communities more equal participants and utilizing the multi-purpose functions of a properly planned corridor to bring in private sector financing and performance capabilities.

If developed within traditional DOT financing structures, the project would focus almost entirely on vehicular transportation. Though it might provide real advantages to the urban centers it connects, it is questionable whether this “transportation only” focus will benefit the rural communities through which the highway will pass and derive maximum economic and social benefits. In fact, prior experience suggests that interstate highways can drain vitality from rural communities and exacerbate the urban/rural conflict that is such a factor in our current national dialogue.

2. Welcome by Hall of Fame Village

Conference attendees were greeted by Michael Crawford, CEO of the Hall of Fame Resort & Entertainment Company, who pointed to the Hall of Fame and HOF Village as examples of successful collaboration between the community and the private sector to build an engine for economic

³ Data compiled by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

development—a smart destination driven by advanced data and analytics, connectivity and efficiency achieved through infrastructure integration—which will ultimately result in a premier sports and entertainment destination for millions of visitors to Canton, Ohio.

“Infrastructure is critical to a community like ours... [the Hall of Fame Village project] gave us an opportunity to validate our thesis around synergy: bringing in a collection of assets that will create a destination from an economic point of view”, said Crawford. “..I’m hopeful that this [RTIP] investment and related legislation will yield a productive and beneficial economic development and real community benefits. We’re projecting by 2026, \$100M of economic development for the City of Canton. That [Highway 77] near us has about 32 million cars traveling every year, and U.S. 30 is becoming a lot safer and more efficient. For us, it makes a lot of sense for transportation infrastructure as well as ancillary uses to continue developing”.

3. Goals for the Meeting: Participant Introductions and Objectives

The objectives of the meeting, along with the participant introductions, were presented by Anand Hemnani, Senior Advisor at the Institute. The purpose of this meeting -- to commence a master planning effort and associated feasibility study that factors in the technology and potential appetites of equity providers under an RTIP structure—featuring joint interest public/private enterprise, incorporating the thoughtful consideration of all viable revenue streams, and an emphasis on community benefits as well as private sector profits.

The meeting, hosted by Senator Kirk Schuring and the Strategic Infrastructure Performance Institute, brought together a core group of advanced infrastructure technology and development companies working meeting in Canton with the objective of obtaining a commitment to work together to carry out the next stages of the Ohio Opportunity Corridor Project.

Attendees introducing themselves included both national and international company representatives from Bancorp, Farmers Bank, Amazon, Intel, Oracle, Lattice Industries, Worley, Mears (a division of Quanta Services), the Federal Infrastructure Bank (Infra-BK, LLC, pending Congressional approval), and large, advanced European construction and transmission companies—among others. Their introductory statements, and active participation throughout the meeting emphasized:

- *The need for streamlining and increased efficiency*
- *The innovations coming online and the challenge of implementing them*
- *The value of data and the need to capture/monetize it*
- *How intelligent advance planning can increase the value of ROW*
- *The importance of community engagement*
- *Inevitable trends in digitization and electrification*
- *The challenge of supporting major new developments in the region*

- *The problems created by tunnel vision regulation*
- *The difficulty of structuring a P3 capital stack and allocating project risks*
- *The challenge of aligning incentives in the construction value chain*

Building on this discussion, Hemnani noted that, although this project has been around for a few decades, new technologies, approaches, and ways of thinking allow the Ohio Opportunity Corridor to be reconceived as a fresh project for consideration by the Administration, the operator community, the investor community, and the technology community. “...those of us here who are familiar with this project know how important it is. It’s more than one project; it’s about a new model that we’re trying to create”.

“The idea behind bringing everyone together today is to roll up our sleeves and see if we can create a master plan with a feasibility study that factors in the technology and potential appetite for equity providers under an RTIP structure with cross-ownership”, explained Hemnani. “We need to break down the silos and revise the tunnel-thinking that delays critical infrastructure projects and prevents the kind of collaboration we need for projects like this one”.

In support of this proposition, Hemnani pointed to quantitative studies conducted by The Institute to rank the top 100 infrastructure projects in the U.S. and globally—the so-called “Strategic 100” list, which U.S. 30 has been on for the last two years. This methodology employs algorithmic databases to identify priority projects, and, tracks the spectrum of revenues currently generated and potentially capturable by a wide range of infrastructure asset classes—including highway, water, energy, and high-speed rail.

The benchmarking index supports strong reason to believe there are at least nine different revenue streams that can help fund the initial part of this project, and more importantly, that it can be seen as a platform for long-term reinvestment. These revenue streams include the management of carbon credits and carbon reducing programs, fiber optic development, natural gas pipelines, 5G towers and aggregated data sales, express lanes/managed lanes, dedicated autonomous vehicle (“AV”) lanes, electric vehicle (“EV”) charging, lighting poles, digital billboards, service stations, plastic manufacturers, advanced 3D manufacturers, and electric utilities.

Several of these revenue streams have been successfully implemented to capture ancillary value with infrastructure projects in countries such as Australia, the UK, and Mexico—offering a meaningful alternative to toll road revenues and other conventional, more palpable monetization sources. The model proposed by the Institute not only de-risks the project by monetizing what would otherwise be value captured only by private developers and users, but also works to monetize *recurrent* ancillary revenues that allow for inflation adjustments over the course of a project’s life span.

4. Goals for Meeting and Creating the “New American Model”

The principles of the “New American Model” were elaborated by Gordon Arbuckle, who co-founded The Institute, Chairs 2025 Law and Policy and has worked closely with Norman Anderson and Anand Hemnani at The Institute to create this model for infrastructure finance, design and development.

Arbuckle emphasized that “if we’re going to finance and build infrastructure in a different way and for the benefit of the public, we need to prioritize getting both the community and private sector involved in this project from the very beginning.” This is a phased project that involves distinct processes for acquiring, planning for, and developing Rights-of-Way for targeted segments of the historic Lincoln Highway between Ohio points west of the City of Canton and the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Region (as well with critical ports and infrastructure locations).

“When this concept works—finances and builds this project and produces the community benefits we expect -- it will change the way we look at big infrastructure projects in this country—particularly highways”, said Arbuckle, “...Senator Schuring is considering legislation that will allow us to create a new sort of enterprise that will be state-chartered as a joint stock corporation and allow the participating companies to provide early equity financing”.

The Institute’s vision of the *Opportunity Corridor* objectives and potential strategies for implementing them was summarized as follows:

- **Objectives:** Demonstrate that the “American Model”:
 - Gets projects authorized, procured and constructed ***FASTER*** – Completion of highways in the United States is slower than anywhere else in the world and it is increasingly obvious that delays increase costs and defer environmental and other benefits. The *Opportunity Corridor* project will *speed up the* process by digitalizing every aspect of the process—from community participation to project design and environmental analysis to project management. Early Community Acceptance and Transparency achievable through digitalization will minimize litigation delays.
 - Makes the projects ***MORE USEFUL*** – Recognizing that public projects must create *public good*, the *Opportunity Corridor* Approach will utilize the entire right of way--not just to facilitate transportation -- but to *maximize community benefits*--thus maintaining strong community buy in and support and maintaining project momentum.

- **LOWERS PUBLIC COSTS** – By managing the resource value of the Corridor to bring in private sector investment, the *American Model* will make major reductions in the public cost of building *and maintaining* the highway infrastructure resource.
- **PROMOTES INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCE AND CARBON REDUCTION** – By bringing together advanced infrastructure innovators in a continuous data-driven performance improvement system-- implementing a holistic, profit-driven design concept focusing on all right-of-way resources.
- **MAXIMIZES COMMUNITY BENEFITS** – Through management structures designed to assure continuous sharing of management authority and commonality of interests between private and public sector participants.

➤ **Strategies** - To achieve the objectives, the “New American Model” will:

- **OPERATE LIKE A BUSINESS** – An old-fashioned business that considers community values. The RTIP will be empowered to charter and sell equity interests in *The Enterprise*—a joint ownership organization which will manage development of the right of way resources. Commonality of ownership will result in commonality of interest. Private sector participants will be continuously consulted on precise elements of the Enterprise structure.
- **TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF PUBLIC/PRIVATE STATUS** -- The commonality of interest between RTIP, the Investors and the Communities, together with the advance planning associated with efficient management and monetization of right-of-way resources, maximizes the potential for coordinating and expediting local and regional land use controls and permitting—a significant advantage in the current regulatory environment.
- **INTEGRATE THE PRIVATE SECTOR** – Participants and potential investors in the *Corridor* are recruited from within and beyond the Institute’s expert network based on their advanced capabilities in the skills and technologies expected to be most relevant to optimal development of the *Corridor’s* right-of-way resources The intent is to fully utilize and continuously upgrade those capabilities and skills throughout the life of the *Corridor* and make full use of them in maximizing profits and community benefits.
- **ASSURE TRANSPARENCY AND MEASURE PROGRESS** – In light of the unique relationships between the RTIP, the Community, the Investors, the Contractors and project sponsors, it is essential that the roles of the RTIP and the Enterprise be clearly delineated and that the operations of both be fully transparent (though the Enterprise

- must be able to operate efficiently.) Digital access will be emphasized and maximized, and clear milestones and performance measures will be established.
- ***DIGITALIZE, DIGITALIZE, DIGITALIZE*** – Digitalization is the key to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, but, also and probably even more so, the key to the American Model and virtually all of its objectives, from community engagement to project design and environmental analysis, to expedited procurement, to transparency and progress measurement, to project management.

5. Foundational Concepts for The Model

Kelly Edmonton from Worley—a global provider of a broad range of cutting edge professional services in the energy, chemical and resources sectors—discussed a major study completed in collaboration with Princeton University ([worley-from-ambition-to-reality-2.pdf](#)) which provides important foundational concepts for the Ohio Opportunity Corridor.

As one of the largest engineering firms in the world, Worley brings to this project expertise in developing decarbonization and net-zero infrastructure solutions, financial planning analytics, digital workflow management and standardized assessment frameworks to connect all stakeholders and assets on secure digital platforms, and working with project stakeholders to broaden project value: delivering more than just financial value—and focusing on communities at the heart of the transition.

“Communities are becoming a much more important part of what we do. The social license piece is becoming critical—and we’ve seen that digital technology can enable the transparency we need to inform publicly accessible data [about project decisions and outcomes]”, remarked Ms. Edmonton.

She notes that the Ohio Opportunity Corridor Project is a perfect example to showcase the synergistic applications of all these pieces coming together to enable a digital ecosystem in which project data can flow openly across the construction value chain. Including the measurement of decarbonization practices, use of emerging technology (i.e., blockchain) to unlock capital allocation, and incorporating a holistic design that accounts for a multi-dimensional data environment.

Attendees discussed the study’s emphasis on data and framework standardization (unbuckling the conflict between standardization and innovation on a go-forward basis), Worley’s clients’ history with monetizing carbon capture and minimization opportunities, and the potential to utilize shale reserves in Ohio for natural gas as a catalyst for hydrogen energy production (this is important for places like Ohio that sit on top of shale reserves generating revenues on the order of \$100B annually).

There was a strong suggestion from the floor that, for purposes of the American Model, focus needs to be broadened from primarily “net zero” to take into account the need to optimize value for the affected communities at the hyperlocal level. Arbuckle remarked, “...[we] can’t maximize community benefits unless we preserve the ability to use the resources that the community has”.

6. Enhancing and Capturing Increases in Land Value

As demonstrated by Mr. Crawford’s experience with the Hall of Fame Village (section 2 above), the facility in which this conference was held is, itself, an example of the opportunity for public-private collaboration to leverage economic synergies around a collection of integrated assets. It is, as well as an example of the enhanced outcomes yielded by an opportunity for property owners to participate in capital project planning as an incentive for landowner buy-in, and the availability of federal programs to leverage such commitments.

The U.S. interstate highway system has caused significant investment in some areas, and a heavy disinvestment in others. Many rural communities have had limited access to infrastructure investment, and this project aims to address that problem by making sure that the corridor itself delivers lasting value through the increased value of usable land adjacent to the highway and the recovery of a significant portion of those values for both the landowners and the affected communities.

In the conventional system for designing and financing highways, the increases in land value are initially realized in developers’ profits. While these profits are likely taxed when realized and may increase the overall tax base, they may not make the affected communities more sustainable or economically viable in the long run. The American Model’s creation of common public-private interest, installation of digitalized processes, integration of planning with land use regulation, and the incorporation of community engagement as critical elements of project financing and implementation creates an environment where value recovery by property owners and affected communities can be multiplied, enhancing private sector profit potential. The existing federal programs need to be refocused to allow critical early stage planning and digitalized community participation. State programs need to be refocused to more fully empower and support entities like the RTIP and the new approach suggested here. An important part of this discussion addressed ways to be creative enough to capture the value increase of equity and keep it in the corridor to continue its trajectory of long-term expansion and re-investment.

7. Developing Rights of Way --Broadband and other Purposes

Brandt Whisenant and Rick Schiavinato, representatives of Mears Group (a subsidiary of Quanta Services), presented an assessment of the broad range of right-of-way development opportunities

presented by the Ohio Opportunity Corridor project. While their primary emphasis was on the great value which the Corridor might have as a broadband cable route, they saw a range of other opportunities for application of a number of other innovative technologies which their company is advancing.

Mears and its parent, Quanta Services, Inc are specialty contractors with the largest skilled labor force in North America, providing fully integrated infrastructure solutions for electric power, underground utility, and communications industries. Their slate of capabilities extends end to end from engineering and design to project management. Mears' participation in the project's core group of advisors will offer access to key risk mitigation components including economies of scale, self-performed construction, a single point of contact and integrated infrastructure solutions for the corridor, essentially providing a platform to de-risk market challenges including a competitive labor market, supply chain issues, and scalable quality control. The firm is also committed to add value to the local community workforce in Canton.

As a liaison between development teams, the Mears Group can prioritize early involvement in the Ohio Opportunity Corridor construction project to deliver future-proof applications and promote the implementation of technology programs including solutions for EV charging and supporting system infrastructure, edge computing integration, and long-haul fiber network deployment comprised of transport and distribution routes to provide a scalable and sustainable Fiber Optic Network.

These capabilities enable companies like Quanta and Mears to operate within the American Model framework to deliver solutions which accelerate time to revenue, mitigate supply chain issues, reliably predict trends, and consistently maintain a scalable dimension of quality control.

8. Data and Data Centers

Lattice Industries discussed the critical importance of digitalizing the Opportunity Corridor, monetizing the valuable data which can be collected by a system of Corridor-located sensors and the ancillary business development which such a system might create. The creation of a data exchange would provide an information marketplace for the benefit of public and private stakeholders. In addition to monetizing the data generated by the Ohio Opportunity Corridor, the project would extend the digital opportunity to rural communities, often negatively impacted by highway projects designed in the past.

Lattice Industries would be available to coordinate a team of experts to manage the design, build, operation, and management of new regional data interchange systems. Technologists, data scientists, public-private finance professionals, and governance/policy experts would work with the system developers to design operational network node systems that use high processing, co-location data centers with data management teams. These facilities host and manage the corridors' digital

Infrastructure operations facilitate edge computing for autonomous supply chain solutions and provide a facility for public data reporting and carbon credit certification.

A future thinking, regionalized approach to digitalizing roadways removes data silos and promotes interoperability and innovation. Original manufacturers, supply chain operators, first responders, insurance companies, and other innovators can leverage storage, security and network services for a discount based on economies of scale. The secure co-location data center becomes a regional network node for local connectivity and provides an information marketplace for its stakeholders and subscribers.

Data analytic services could be provided to institutional members and regional subscribers at a discounted rate, with utility-like operations that provide multiple revenue streams that are financeable. More important, they could act as the operational command center for the Corridor, providing governance and policy guidance for users of the system and can monitor access and use based on a common set of engagement rules for Corridor stakeholders.

9. The Need for Infrastructure Banks

We take for granted the critical role that the conventional banking system plays in channeling private monies into loan financing for private projects but do not recognize the absence of a similar system for using private monies to fund loans to projects for the public good. Thus, at a time when the world is floating in monies looking for a safe and convenient place to go and where the need for public infrastructure funding is beyond the capability of governments, the destinations for monies from pension funds insurance company reserves and other major sources limited to higher risk equity investments and more cumbersome bond finance. While there is, in the U.S., an established network of State Infrastructure Banks which are an important source of expertise, advice and some financing, they do not often serve as a conduit for private money funded loans. They are usually dependent on public funding and their scope of lending and bonding authority is often narrow. There is currently no Infrastructure Bank at the national level.

William T. Nolan, President of Infra-Bk, LLC (an organization promoting legislation to establish a privately funded National Infrastructure Bank) discussed the benefits that such an entity could bring to projects such as the Corridor:

- The National Infrastructure Bank would be a constant source of funding for infrastructure such as the Corridor and ancillary projects in the right of way development plans
- Borrowers, especially State Infrastructure Banks, will have ready access to the Infrastructure Bank as a strong partner and major source of infrastructure funds

- The Bank will be a wholesale lender to and a clearing house for infrastructure projects throughout the USA, both directly and through state and local governments

The consensus from the floor was that these functions could expedite and greatly magnify the community benefits derived from the Opportunity Corridor and similar projects. There was strong support for the concept.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Outreach to the financial community has confirmed that successful applications of the Ohio Opportunity Corridor concept along U.S. 30 can generate hundreds of millions of dollars in increased land value. It can also enable right of way leases for high-speed internet connectivity that will service advanced manufacturing and also provide valuable internet availability to underserved part of Ohio. Additionally, the right of way leases will facilitate telecommunications cables and towers, advanced 3D manufacturing, extension of utilities as well as support for autonomous vehicles and other cutting edge transportation technology. Attendees were anxious to break down the federal silos that delay progress on innovations such as this project—the “New American Model” --and enthusiastic to come back together to push the highway development forward.

A common interest enterprise, led by the RTIP, will allow the project to take maximum advantage of the public-private capital stack: getting permits and authorizations on a more expedited basis aligning the incentives of project stakeholders, and getting real property owners and community representatives in adjacent areas to participate in developing the project plan.

Ultimately, this project aims to facilitate major expansion of emerging technologies that will deliver economic value, as well as benefitting surrounding communities around the highway.

In closing, participants agreed to work together as a core constituency to support the next steps toward making this project a reality:

- Relaxing strictures on use of the 2019 Build Grant and other pending grant financing that limits the planning and community engagement activities that are key at the project’s early stages
- Assessing and applying innovative technologies to enhance community benefits
- Discussing with the Infrastructure Working Group, U.S. DOT and cognizant federal agencies the need to eliminate silos and unnecessary restrictions which might impede the project
- Collaborating with Senator Schuring and the State of Ohio to perfect the State’s legislative and administrative framework for the project
- Soliciting voluntary property assessments from existing businesses that will be positively impacted by the Opportunity Corridor

The Institute will continue working to advance these objectives and will keep the group advised of progress.

Questions, Comments and Suggestions may be addressed to:

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