

**I-75 Modernization Project**  
**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**  
**October 2015**

**Question #1: What are the key features of the project?**

**Answer:** MDOT will be reconstructing the existing three lanes and adding an additional left lane in each direction of I-75 in the project area. The new lane will be a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane that requires two or more people in a vehicle using the lane. The HOV lane will be in effect for peak hours of travel only, generally on weekdays from 7 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m. During all other times, anyone will be able to use the HOV lane.

New carpool lots will be developed and existing carpool lots will be enhanced to encourage and support carpooling. All road and pedestrian bridges will be replaced and a new drainage system will be constructed.

The interchanges at 12 Mile Road, 14 Mile Road and Square Lake Road will be improved and modernized. Geometric improvements will be made at the M-102 (Eight Mile Road) ramps in Hazel Park and near the I-696 service drive and 11 Mile Road exit areas.

Aesthetic improvements that were developed in collaboration with the community will be constructed as well.

**Question #2: Who benefits from this project?**

**Answer:** Everyone. This portion of I-75 currently carries up to 174,000 vehicles per day, which includes residents, commuters, carpoolers, local businesses, intrastate and interstate commercial vehicles, and tourists. Since this freeway was originally built in the 1960s and has never been rebuilt, modernization is greatly needed. The addition of the HOV lane will help ease the increasing congestion.

Improving this aging segment of freeway infrastructure will increase safety and provide an improved driving surface and experience.

**Question #3: Can significant changes be made to the project at this time?**

**Answer:** During the project's development and environmental analysis phase (1998-2006), all reasonable transportation alternatives were studied, evaluated, reviewed, documented and shared with the public. The preferred alternative set of improvements was developed and selected based on information gathered, technical analyses and input from stakeholders.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the 2006 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which includes identification of the preferred alternative. The project must be built as shown and approved in the EIS, and particularly within the footprint of the project. Deviating from this would require additional analysis and a restudy that could take several more years and millions more dollars to complete. The cost of the original feasibility and environmental studies has already exceeded several million dollars due to the comprehensive requirements of federal analysis, documentation and public coordination activities required.

**Question #4: Will MDOT take into consideration new developments and other changes that have taken place within the project area?**

**Answer:** Yes. MDOT understands that communities are always changing, and that transportation modes and traffic patterns may change over time. As this is a large, regionally significant, and complex project that will take many years to complete, MDOT will continue to review the project area and proposed improvements to ensure that they are valid under the current conditions.

**Question #5: Will there be money available to start the project soon?**

**Answer:** The current funding plan provides for rebuilding the pavement and bridges, and constructing the other improvements in eight construction segments, starting in 2016 and concluding in 2030. Each of the construction segments will average \$200 million or less and will be started in the even years. Funding in the odd years will be allocated to other major regional projects.

Project schedule:

- 2016: from north of Coolidge Hwy to north of South Boulevard.
- Braid/2018: from north of I-696 to south of 12 Mile Road.
- 2020: from north of Wattles Road to north of Coolidge Hwy.
- 2022: from north of Rochester Road to north of Wattles Road.
- 2024: from north of 13 Mile Road to north of Rochester Road.
- 2026: from south of 12 Mile Road to north of 13 Mile Road.
- 2028: from north of 9 Mile Road to I-696.
- 2030: from north of M-102 to north of 9 Mile Road.

**Question #6: Why is construction starting in the so-called wealthier neighborhoods first?**

**Answer:** The first construction segment from north of Coolidge to north of South Boulevard was initially funded several years ago and has nothing to do with socio-economics of the corridor. This 2.69-mile section is the least costly segment of the overall project and does not require property acquisition, which often adds years to a project. Additionally, the Square Lake Road interchange will be modernized with right-hand exits and entrances, which will significantly improve the current outdated design. The improved interchange will be safer and operate more efficiently, with less opportunity for crashes. It will be easier for motorists to enter, drive through, and exit.

This segment can be built and can operate independently of the other project improvements.

**Question #7: What areas will be most affected by the project?**

**Answer:** All motorists and communities in the corridor will be impacted. Improvements include 18 miles of freeway through Hazel Park, Madison Heights, Royal Oak, Troy, Bloomfield Township, and Auburn Hills, with impacts at different times as indicated in the project schedule.

**Question #8: Is every effort being made to decrease sound levels?**

**Answer:** Yes. Per federal guidelines, all federally funded projects that improve the roadway by adding capacity are required to be studied to determine the reasonableness and feasibility of noise protection. If any area qualifies for noise protection by the FHWA, it will be built as part of the project.

**Question #9: Are there any plans to build an interchange at Maple Road?**

**Answer:** No. Due to federal interchange spacing requirements and design constraints, including the existing environment, it is not conceptually feasible nor a part of this project.

**Question #10: Can you just expand the Adams Road carpool lot?**

**Answer:** The carpool lot at Adams Road will be expanded and upgraded with aesthetics and improvements to support carpoolers using the HOV lane. This lot was already expanded in 2008, so further expansion as part of this project will be minimal so as to not intrude on the surrounding community.

**Question #11: Will you be addressing the drainage issues at Squirrel Road?**

**Answer:** Yes. This project includes constructing a new drainage system that will be better able to handle water and drainage in the project area.

**Question #12: Will improvements be made at the Big Beaver Road overpass to increase pedestrian safety?**

**Answer:** MDOT has worked and will continue to work with the city of Troy to provide better crossings within the project limits to make it safer for nonmotorized travel, including pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Question #13: Will the new roadway be asphalt or concrete?**

**Answer:** The material of the roadway will be determined during the design process. The MDOT Soils and Materials engineer will perform thorough analysis and determine the best material for construction.

**Question #14: Will any trees be removed during construction? Will there be plantings?**

**Answer:** It is expected that some trees will be removed during construction. However, they will be replaced, and in some cases with more trees than what was originally in place. Additional opportunities for landscaping are also included within the project.

**Question #15: How is MDOT going to address mobility issues with the stamped concrete surfaces?**

**Answer:** Stamped concrete surfaces have been installed around the state and region, and have not created mobility issues for those with disabilities. As always, surfaces are and will continue to be designed and constructed to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). During construction, inspections will be performed to ensure surfaces are properly installed.