

BUSINESS COURIER

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I 75's ceaseless to include new interchanges Line between Dayton and Cincinnati blurs

Business Courier of Cincinnati – by Jon Newberry

In the midst of a deep and dark recession, the Interstate 75 corridor between I-275 north of Cincinnati and I-675 south of Dayton is dotted with points of light.

From GE Aviation's office complex at Union Centre Boulevard to the planned Austin Pike interchange just north of the Warren County line, numerous private and public construction projects are under way that are pumping billions of dollars into the economies of Butler, Warren and southern Montgomery counties.

In between, a rash of new hospitals and health care facilities have opened in recent months amid new retail outlets, distribution centers, manufacturing and office facilities.

"What's driving development along I-75 is what's driving on 75," said Leonard Robinson, president and owner of Robinson Inc. Realtors in Middletown. Development follows transportation arteries, whether it's rivers, railroads or highways, he said. "Our time happens to be now."

Growth has been burgeoning since the Union Centre Boulevard interchange opened in December 1997 - the first new I-75 interchange in Southwest Ohio since the interstate opened to traffic in 1960. Since then development has marched northward to the Tylersville Road exit and then Monroe and Middletown, Robinson said. Meanwhile, development is also pushing south from Dayton, a process that will get a boost with the completion of another new interchange at Austin Pike, just south of I-675 in Montgomery County.

Existing I-75 interchanges in Springboro and Franklin are well developed but still have land available along and near I-75. Austin Pike, meanwhile, should open up thousands of additional acres and spur even more growth.

Joe Kramer, executive vice president of Lebanon-based developer Henkle Schueler & Associates, referred to the Austin Pike area as "Dayton's West Chester." After the new interchange opens late next year, economic activity should pick up over the next five years and spill over into Springboro and Franklin to the south, he said.

Some businesses come to the area to serve the Cincinnati and Dayton markets. Other businesses are increasingly attracted by the people living there - people who like the

ability to work in either metro area or, in the case of two-income families, both. They can also take advantage of access to cultural and entertainment attractions in both markets, said Martin Russell, deputy director of the Warren County Economic Development Department.

“The corridor provides a lot of options. We’re fortunate to be at the center,” Russell said.

**€ Exit 19
Union Centre Boulevard, West Chester:**

The main action at the south end of the corridor is a new 404,000-square-foot office complex for GE Aviation, whose corporate headquarters is down the road in Evendale. The \$55 million project by Duke Realty is expected to be ready for occupancy by fall. GE plans to relocate 1,400 engineering and management employees to the site. Space is available for future expansion. The Assured Group meanwhile is preparing ground on an adjacent site for a 129-acre office and retail complex along the northbound lanes of I-75. Across the highway, Ikea opened a year ago in the interchange’s southwest quadrant, drawing customers from across the region and several states.

**€ Exit 21
Cincinnati-Dayton Road, West Chester:**

Neyer Properties’ Highlands retail complex is anchored by Walmart and Fitworks. Several older properties are boarded up, awaiting redevelopment.

**€ Exit 22
Tylersville Road, West Chester:**

A busy interchange already populated by major big-box retailers such as Lowe’s, Meijer, Home Depot and Kroger, it has new life these days as a result of the West Chester Medical Center. The 160-bed hospital opened earlier this year. It’s operated by the Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati. The facility has already spurred construction of medical office condos and other ancillary office buildings. Miami University’s new Voice of America Learning Center, where classes began in January, is nearby across Cox Road.

**€ Exit 24
Butler County Veterans Highway and Liberty Interchange, West Chester and Liberty Township:**

The Liberty Interchange opens up 600 additional acres for development. An extension of Cox Road is already built into the cornfields, ending at the Green Crest Golf Course. Across the interstate is Children’s \$83 million Liberty Campus off Yankee Road.

€ Exit 29

Ohio State Route 63, Monroe:

Perhaps the busiest interchange, this exit is the home of Trader's World flea market, the Solid Rock Church's 62-foot-tall "Touchdown Jesus," and Chelsea Property's soon-to-open Premium Outlets mall. The 800-acre Corridor Park master development site also includes Vandercar Holdings' 440-acre Corridor 75 Logistics Park, home to Home Depot's Monroe distribution center.

€ Exit 32

Ohio State Route 122, Middletown:

The interchange is the longtime home of the Towne Mall, which was joined more recently by Middletown Crossing. Development is now focused to the east, where the Atrium Medical Center anchors a 190-acre health campus, the centerpiece of a 1,250-acre master development known as the Renaissance District. Al Neyer Inc. is developing much of the land along Route 122, including the East Pointe office park.

€ Exit 36

State Route 123, Franklin:

Development sites are available at Schumacher Dugan Construction Co.'s Franklin Interstate Commerce Park west of the interstate and at Henkle Schueler's Franklin Business Park east of the interchange.

€ Exit 38

State Route 73, Springboro and Franklin:

Henkle Schueler has sites available at the Heritage Industrial Park, where Dayton Daily News, Burrows Paper and Faurecia have facilities. It also has land abutting I-75 on the east side of the interstate.

€ Exit 40

Austin Pike, Springboro and Miamisburg:

Planned interchange in Montgomery County. It should open up thousands of acres for development after it opens in 2010. Springboro has joined Miamisburg, Montgomery County and Miami Township in a joint economic development district to split tax revenues generated by projects in the area.