



Pennsylvania Turnpike Celebrates Opening of Southern Beltway Section

New 13-mile section will ease congestion and boost region's economy.

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP, WASHINGTON COUNTY, PA (OCT. 14, 2021) — Today, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC), along with state and local officials and transportation and construction partners, celebrated the long-awaited opening of Southern Beltway (PA Turnpike 576) with a ribbon-cutting ceremony one day before the roadway opens to traffic.

The 13-mile section of the Southern Beltway between U.S. Route 22 and Interstate 79 connects to the existing, six-mile beltway section known as the Findlay Connector. The new Southern Beltway leads to I-79 at the Allegheny-Washington County line.

"It is not often, in the world of transportation, that we are able to construct brand-new highways," said PA Turnpike Chair Yassmin Gramian. "At this event, we commemorate this section's completion. With tomorrow's opening, it will ease congestion and create economic opportunities in Findlay, Robinson, Mount Pleasant, Cecil and North and South Fayette townships. Investment in transportation has historically paid for itself in greater prosperity and thriving communities."

The Southern Beltway has been in development since the State Legislature passed Act 61 of 1985 and Act 26 of 1991 elevating the priority of building the Southern Beltway and Mon/Fayette Expressway to improve highway access and mobility in the region. With the passage of Act 89 in 2013, a new funding stream was created to accelerate the progress of these projects.

"Without a doubt, the Southern Beltway will serve as an economic catalyst for the Greater Pittsburgh region," affirmed PA Turnpike CEO Mark Compton. "It will provide better access to sites being developed along the Energy Commerce & Innovation Corridor (ECIC) which is 52 miles of largely untapped private, commercial and industrial lands near the Pittsburgh International Airport. This, in turn, will support new employment in this area."

This \$800 million project is significant news for motorists in the corridor because it will help ease congestion on arteries like the Parkway West, I-79, and State Route 50. Additionally, it will provide emergency-response vehicles, businesses, and the public with a safer alternative to rural, two-lane roads.

Roadway Opening and Tolling

The actual opening of the toll road will take place in phases throughout the day on Oct. 15 as crews open ramps and uncover signage. It is anticipated that the roadway will be fully open by late afternoon.

On Friday, motorists traveling eastbound on the Southern Beltway will be able to exit and go southbound on I-79, while drivers heading northbound on I-79 will be able to enter the Southern Beltway and travel west toward the airport. Roadway construction will continue at the I-79 interchange until spring 2022, when the full interchange will be open to traffic. For more information on the Southern Beltway project click [here](#).

Since this is an entirely new roadway, wildlife has been spotted throughout the stretch. Drivers are asked to use caution in the area. As always, dial *11 to report an emergency or roadway incidents.

PA Turnpike 576 should be available via GPS, but some systems may not recognize the new roadway yet. Drivers can get up-to-the-minute roadway conditions via the 511PA smartphone app or the website at <http://www.511pa.com/>.

There will be three toll points on the Southern Beltway, which is an open-road tolling system that utilizes overhead toll gantries to charge customers. Turnpike customers will be charged via their E-ZPass accounts or the PA Toll By Plate program, which takes a picture of the license plate and sends an invoice to the registered owner of the vehicle.

For more information on E-ZPass and the PA Toll By Plate Program click [here](#). For information on toll rates for the beltway, click [here](#).

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