

The NExT Best Way to Improve Ohio's Roads

NExT – the Northeast Expressway Transformation – is the solution designed to systematically address key bottlenecks around the Central Ohio region.



When the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) announced “What’s NExT” in June of 2004, they began one of the most massive and aggressive highway projects in Central Ohio history – the reconstruction of State Route 161 interchanges at 270 and Sunbury Road in Franklin County. A major component of the overall plan to reduce congestion and accidents is by building wider, safer interchanges that can handle more traffic.

To accomplish this, the SR 161/IR270 project’s design was created to eliminate weaving, merging and pinch points by replacing old “cloverleaf” ramps with new “fly-over” ramps which will allow motorists to connect directly with the freeway rather than sharing a lane with those entering or exiting.

It’s a huge project for all those involved – a \$115 million endeavor that will require more than 80,000 cubic yards of concrete poured for the construction of 17 new bridges, 18 ramps and 5 miles (43 lane miles) of highway in a 3-1/2-year time period.

National Engineering & Contracting Co. (NECC), a wholly owned subsidiary of Balfour Beatty Construction Inc. (BBCI), is performing the work under contract with the ODOT.

“From a highway standpoint, this is about as complex as a project gets,” said Richard Tanferno, project manager for NECC. “This is one of our larger and more challenging jobs, and it definitely is the most complex when you consider all the components included.”

Remembering it’s Ohio

“Remember, this is Ohio,” Tanferno added. “We’re dealing with all sorts of variables, not the least of which is weather. There is a lot to consider with each concrete pour we do, and it’s critical

Top and inset: The SR 161/IR270 project’s design was created to replace old “cloverleaf” ramps with new “fly-over” ramps. Project progress as of mid-July 2005 is shown here.

Bottom: Windland Concrete’s truck-mounted concrete boom pump facilitates the successful 1:00 a.m. pour of ODOT’s SR 161/IR270 bridge deck #4.

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that every member of our team is focused on the goals of staying on schedule and on budget.”

Tanferno explained that the bridge deck pours done for this project require a special high-performance concrete mix – as specified by ODOT.

The job’s supplier, Anderson Concrete, is currently operating three of their seven plants to supply the concrete product. Bruce Higginbotham, Anderson Concrete’s vice president heavy/highway, agrees that the concrete portion of the project is, in and of itself, complex.

“The high-performance product has been specified for this job primarily because of its higher strength and its permeability,” Higginbotham reported. “It’s a more durable product that’s better designed to cope with the chloride products used to treat Ohio’s winter snow and ice.”

But Higginbotham is also quick to add that the high-performance product has very special pouring requirements.

“To ensure proper finishing, the high-performance mix has very specific temperature, wind velocity and humidity requirements that must be followed,” he said. “That’s why we typically end up doing our pours at night.”

Picking the pumper

“Having the flexibility to pour at night is vital in our effort to stay on schedule, and we absolutely must work with a concrete pumping sub-contractor who can accommodate the variables we encounter,” NECC’s Tanferno agreed. “That’s why we selected Windland Concrete Pumping, LLC to partner with us on this project.”

Windland, owned and managed by Mary Ann Windland, was selected as a concrete pumping supplier for this project for a variety of reasons according to Tanferno. The contract was awarded to Windland based on their price, reputation and past work experience.

“We’ve worked with Windland before, and we know we can count on them,” he added. “Their pumps are reliable, their crews are consistently on time and they always work to get the job done right.”



Top: The extraordinarily smooth pumping mechanism and operational features of the concrete pump provide a quality pour and crew safety.

Above: The flexibility of the CIFA 5-section RZ boom allows for precise placement of concrete material.

Left: The high performance capacity of the concrete pump allows the system to deliver greater product volume in less time.

Mary Ann Windland is proud of the important role her company is playing in the NExT project.

“We know our pumps are perfect for this project – especially with all the variables that can exist on each specific pour,” said Windland. “The five-section boom design and RZ-boom technology are ideal because of their operational versatility.”

“In addition, we have the added benefit of knowing that our equipment partner and CIFA dealer, Irving Equipment, is available to us whenever we need them – for service and/or technical

support,” added Windland. “Projects like this one really are a team effort.”

With the project well over one year in progress already, the entire NExT construction team is happy to report that, despite the challenges presented by Mother Nature, the SR 161/IR270 project is moving ahead according to schedule. Bridge number four (in the series of 17) was poured on July 19, 2005, and the crew is currently on track to complete bridges five through eight by the end of the year. The entire project is scheduled to be completed by June 2007. □