Strategic Transportation & Development Analysis



APPENDIX D

Columbus-West Virginia Focus Corridor

Ohio Department of Transportation

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

While the Strategic Transportation and Development Analysis analyzes statewide and regional trends and forecasts, and current and future needs and risks across the state, focus corridor needs assessments take a deeper dive into six individual corridors identified based on risks associated with reliable and safe interregional mobility. Each focus corridor needs assessment examines outputs around population change, development, congestion, and statewide travel at the corridor level. This condensed review is paired with an examination of the status of the facility itself, including traffic composition, origin-destination data, geometric conditions, access control, safety statistics, and other study areas, including existing and programmed Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) projects.

This effort contributes to the overall goal of identifying transportation system projects to support statewide economic growth, as stated in House Bill 23 (H.B. 23). In addition to two focus corridors specified by H.B. 23 (Toledo-Columbus and Sandusky-Columbus), four other corridors were elevated through analysis of 33 markets and 38 corridors on the Study network for economic value, performance risk, and risk of potential barriers to the interregional movement of people and goods. **Chapter 3** of the Study Report provides more information on this process. This Study Report appendix details the needs assessment process and findings for the Columbus-West Virginia (WV) focus corridor.

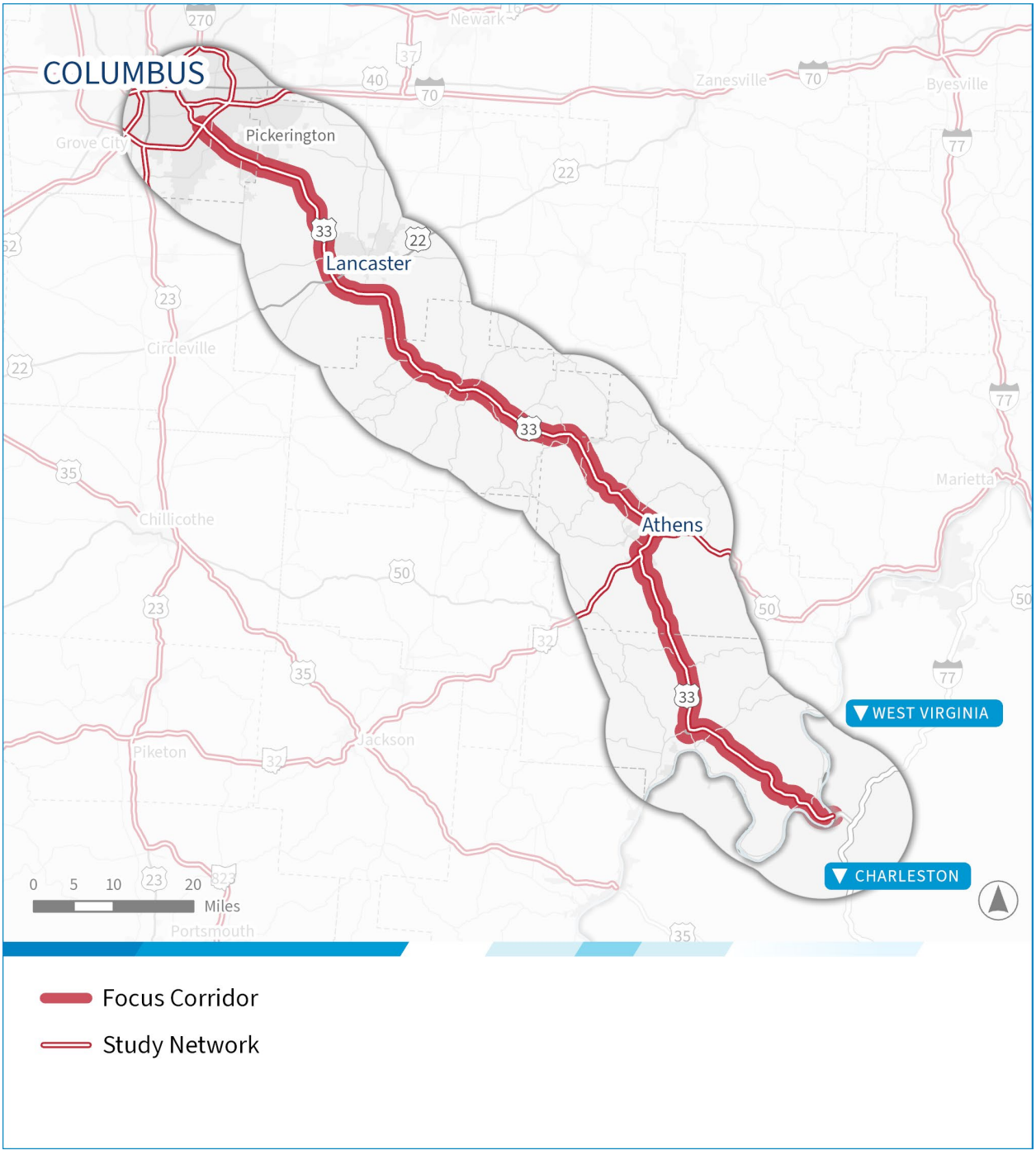
CONTEXT AND TRENDS

Transportation

The Columbus-WV focus corridor comprises US33 and connects Central Ohio with Southeast Ohio and West Virginia. **Figure 4** presents the extent of the corridor, the Study network, and the primary cities. The Columbus-WV focus corridor connects Columbus and its southeast suburbs of Groveport and Canal Winchester and travels along the south edge of Pickerington. This segment of US33 is a four-lane highway with partial access control. The corridor routes around the western edge of Lancaster and serves a series of small communities and rural areas in Fairfield County.

South of Lancaster, the corridor continues into Hocking Hills and communities such as Logan and Athens, home of Ohio University. The northern section of the US33 corridor is heavily influenced by the Rickenbacker International Airport and its associated railyard. The corridor also serves as a key conduit for tourism to Wayne National Forest and Hocking Hills State Park, among other recreational destinations. This section of US33 has mostly been upgraded to a divided four-lane facility. The corridor is predominately a four-lane facility with 80.5 miles of four-lane roadway out of the 106-mile corridor. Segments south of Athens to the unincorporated community of Darwin and from SR733 to the Ohio River are two-lane undivided facilities. The corridor crosses the Ohio River into West Virginia at the small town of Ravenswood and terminates at I-77.

FIGURE 1—COLUMBUS-WV FOCUS CORRIDOR



The corridor includes a mix of interchanges and at-grade intersections. ODOT has several major projects planned for the US33 corridor, including upgrading the remaining two-lane sections to four-lane facilities. The 106-mile Columbus-WV focus corridor is comprised of two functional classification categories: 57 miles of Principal Arterial Freeway and 49 miles of Principal Arterial Other.

The US33 corridor begins with a mix of interchanges and at-grade intersections between I-270 and the High Street/ Winchester Road interchange near the Village of Carroll. Next, access is controlled along US33 around the City of Lancaster to the Tarkiln Road interchange. Between the Tarkiln Road interchange and the SR180 interchange, there are several private drive access points and at-grade intersections. The section from the SR180 interchange to the east side of the City of Nelsonville again becomes access controlled before experiencing more private drive access points, and at-grade intersections until just west of the City of Athens. Access is controlled through and slightly beyond the City of Athens, where US33 changes to a two-lane undivided section near Pleasant Hill Road. West of SR681 is where US33 becomes a four-lane divided highway again and experiences a mixture of interchanges and at-grade intersections until just east of the SR7 interchange. US33 then switches back to a two-lane undivided highway with several at-grade intersections until terminating at the Ohio River.

Initial observations of the Columbus-WV focus corridor conditions include:

- 26 existing grade-separated interchanges, 45 existing at-grade intersections
- 14 private driveway access points, 19 railroad crossings within a half mile of the corridor
- Acceptable horizontal and vertical alignment
- 26 segments and three intersections on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) top 100 locations

Development

The adjacent land uses along the US33 corridor that are contributing to growth, especially in the northern portion of the corridor, involve suburban residential growth east and south of Columbus and several areas of industrial growth around Rickenbacker International Airport, Groveport, and Canal Winchester. The corridor has the highest category of truck traffic growth per Ohio's Freight Plan, and much of this truck traffic growth can be attributed to Rickenbacker International Airport, Rickenbacker railyard, and expanding warehouse and logistics development.

There are pockets of growth farther south along the corridor Lancaster, Logan, and Athens. The remainder of the corridor outside these growth areas traverses rural and natural areas. US33 is the only major highway providing access for tourists visiting Hocking Hills and its recreational and commercial destinations. Local officials estimate 7 million visitors annually and expect continued growth, making tourism an essential component of the Hocking County economy.

Future conditions along the Columbus–WV focus corridor will be influenced primarily by how development patterns and employment continue to move southeast from Columbus along US33. The highest growth areas on US33 will be near the north end of the corridor, with higher growth projected near Pickerington and Lancaster in Fairfield County. Areas south of Lancaster are expected to continue to experience slow population declines. Growth rates in the larger urban counties at the north end are expected to offset decreases in the smaller rural areas.

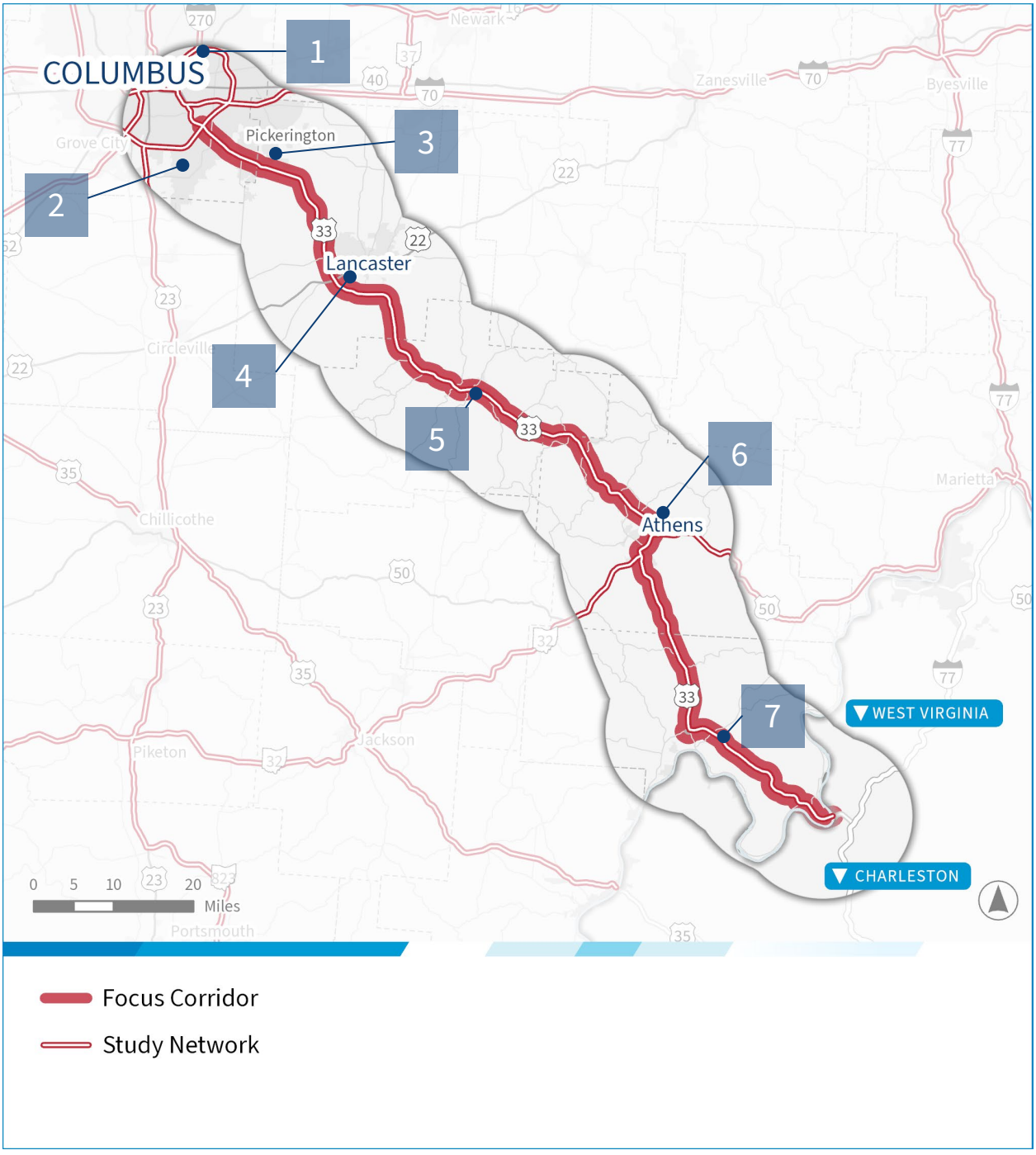
Concerns about the decline in population and workforce availability in rural areas are growing. A mismatch between jobs and available skills and a lack of affordable housing pose risks to business growth. Workers will continue to relocate farther from Columbus along the US33 corridor to seek affordable housing. Given longer commutes, it is unclear how far outside Franklin County workers will move along the US33 corridor.

Corridor context and trend insights are summarized in **Table 1** and located in **Figure 2**.

TABLE 1—CORRIDOR INSIGHT SUMMARY

Map Key	Corridor Insight
1	• Strong economic growth in Columbus and the southeast suburbs of Franklin County is expected to continue in the future. • Columbus will remain the primary employment destination at the north end of the corridor.
2	• Rickenbacker International Airport, Rickenbacker Railyard, and adjacent logistics-related businesses are major regional employment and truck traffic generators.
3	• Pickerington has experienced substantial population and employment growth over the last 20 years. • Forecasts indicate continued development growth in the area as residents move farther from Columbus in search of affordable housing.
4	• Population growth is extending south to Lancaster along US33 in search of affordable housing. • There is uncertainty regarding how far south Columbus commuters will move. Forecasts for Fairfield County indicate moderate population growth.
5	• The area south of Lancaster is very rural with low population and sparse land use density.
6	• Athens has experienced modest population growth over the last 20 to 30 years as Ohio University continues to anchor the local economy, but there is an opportunity to expand and diversify commercial activity. • Development forecasts reflect uncertainty related to other growth prospects in the area.
7	• The US33 corridor south of Athens has experienced population and employment declines over the last several decades. • The Ohio River is an asset for its recreational tourism potential, including multi-use trail activity. • Topography and the Ohio River limit development in Southeast Ohio.

FIGURE 2—CORRIDOR INSIGHTS MAP



CONDITIONS AND INVESTMENT

Corridor Conditions

US33 is predominantly a four-lane divided facility throughout the 106-mile corridor. Inside paved shoulders vary from 4 to 12 feet wide, and outside paved shoulders vary from 8 to 12 feet wide. A grass median typically separates the four lanes.

There are two remaining two-lane undivided sections south of Athens. One of these two-lane undivided sections starts just west of Pleasant Hill Road, Athens County, and continues eastward to just west of SR681, Meigs County. This section of a two-lane undivided roadway is approximately 9.75 miles long. The second segment of the two-lane undivided roadway is a 15.2-mile segment located in Meigs County that runs from just east of the SR7 interchange and continues eastward to the West Virginia state line on the two-lane bridge over the Ohio River. These remaining two-lane sections are scheduled to start construction in 2025 to upgrade to a four-lane facility.

The existing alignment of the US33 corridor was not found to have any apparent horizontal or vertical curve issues, given the current speed limits on the corridor. There are currently no congestion hotspot areas on most of the US33 corridor from Canal Winchester near the US33 Business Route (US33BR) split southward to Great Bend Road, just north of the Ohio River bridge. The congestion risk areas of the US33 corridor are on the northern third of the 106-mile corridor. These congestion issues can partially be attributed to growth spurred by Rickenbacker International Airport and housing development growth, particularly in southeast Franklin and northwest Fairfield counties. The US33 corridor has the highest category of truck traffic growth per Ohio's Freight Plan, and much of this truck traffic growth can be attributed to the Rickenbacker International Airport and nearby warehouse and logistics development.

Access along the corridor switches between partial and full control. There are 26 interchanges, 45 at-grade intersections, and 14 private driveways observed along the corridor. The highest concentration of access points, driveways, and intersections occurs within an 8.75-mile segment between the Tarkiln Road interchange in Fairfield County and the SR180 interchange in Hocking County. This area experiences, on average, 2.4 access points per mile due to the 11 private driveways and 10 at-grade intersections.

Corridor Investments

Since 2010, projects that have been completed together with those currently in construction represent an investment of almost $12 million in the corridor. Completed projects are those that have been fully executed and finished since 2015. These include a major rehabilitation of the US33/US50 interchange and an access management project. In-construction projects are projects currently underway with active construction. One project is under construction, a cable barrier installation along US33 in Franklin and Fairfield counties.

An additional $664 million is proposed for projects currently in development; of that amount, almost $362 million has been committed. In-development projects are in the planning or design stages, where concepts are being developed for future construction. These include expansions from two to four lanes in Athens and Meigs counties and from four to six lanes in Franklin County, access management projects in multiple counties, interchange and intersection projects, and bridge deck projects. ODOT has also identified $200 million in proposed projects. Proposed projects are those that

have been identified but have not yet started. One project that meets these criteria is the proposed expansion of the bridge over the Ohio River.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment considers congestion-related "hotspots" along the corridor. It expands on key takeaways in the Corridor Conditions section related to development growth pressures, safety, access and geometric issues, and other considerations such as railroad crossings. These findings are summarized in **Figure 3**.

Congestion

The Columbus–WV focus corridor has three congestion risk hotspots on US33, one existing and two forecasted. These hotspots were organized into a single grouped hotspot as part of the regional hotspot analysis in **Chapter 3** of the Study Report. US33 from I-270 to South Hamilton Road in Franklin County currently experiences severe congestion during the weekday peak period. Through 2055, these segments are predicted to have a medium congestion risk, US33 from I-270 to Canal Winchester, and a low congestion risk from Canal Winchester to the US33BR.

Roadway Geometry and Operations

US33 is predominantly a four-lane divided facility throughout the 106-mile corridor, with inside paved shoulders varying from four to 12 feet wide and outside paved shoulders varying from eight to 12 feet wide. There are two remaining two-lane undivided sections located south of Athens. Given the current speed limits on the corridor, the existing alignment of the US33 corridor was not found to have any apparent horizontal or vertical curve issues. Depending on the segment's access control, the posted speed limit varies from 55 mph to 70 mph throughout the corridor.

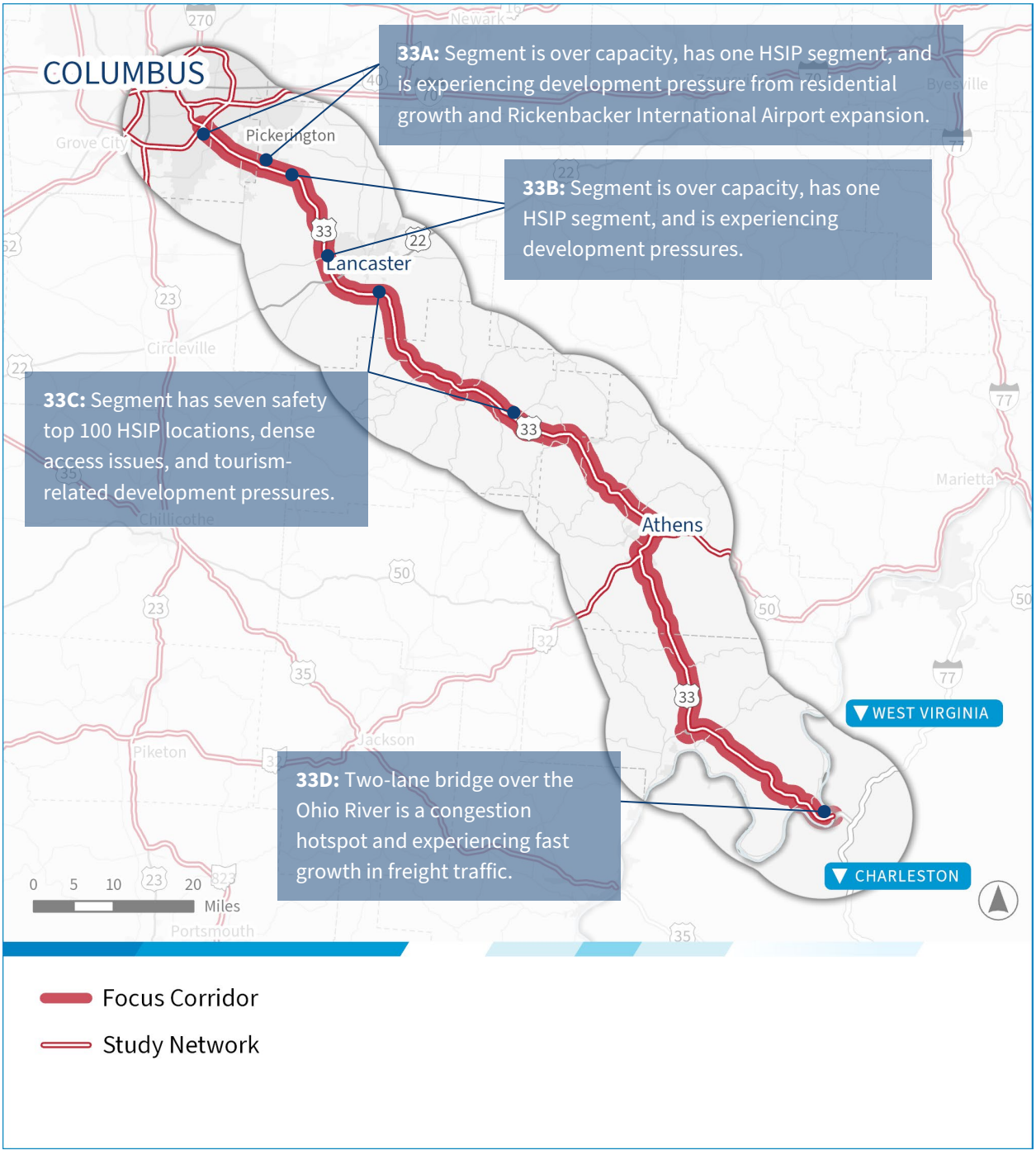
Safety

The US33 corridor from I-270 to the Ohio River contains 29 HSIP high-crash locations. Most of the HSIP locations are located on the northern third of the corridor from I-270 to SR664 in Logan. The concentrations of crash listings are located from the I-270 interchange south to the Hamilton Road (SR317) interchange, from Diley Road south to the Village of Carroll, and from Sharp Road in Sugar Grove south to the SR664 interchange in Logan.

Access Control and Development

Access varies between partial and full control along the US33 corridor. The corridor begins as partially controlled, with interchanges and at-grade intersections between I-270 and the High Street/Winchester Road interchange near the Village of Carroll. Access transitions to full control along US33 around the City of Lancaster to the Tarkiln Road interchange. The segment from SR180 to Elm Rock Road on the east side of the City of Nelsonville again becomes fully controlled, then partially controlled until SR682 just west of the City of Athens.

FIGURE 3—CORRIDOR NEEDS SUMMARY



Corridor Findings

The corridor needs presented in the previous section were compared with ODOT-sponsored projects to assess how the existing projects address these needs. The most important gap within the corridor is expanding sections 33A and 33B. These two sections have a funding gap of nearly $485 million. The funding gap for all the existing projects listed above is estimated at nearly $765 million. The projects that are proposed to address the identified concerns are listed below.

33A. I-270 to SR317/South Hamilton Road

Section 33A covers the limits from the I-270 interchange with US33 to the Diley Road interchange in Fairfield County. Three ODOT projects are addressing this section: FRA-270/33-45.808/24.375 (PID 121812), FRA-33-27.44 (PIDs 76687 and 121814), and FRA/FAI-33-22.99/0.00 (PID 121811). The total cost for all projects combined is estimated at $249,813,311, leaving a gap of $235,400,000.

33B. Diley Road to Lancaster Bypass (US33BR)

Section 33B covers limits on US33 from the Diley Road interchange to the Lancaster Bypass US33BR in Fairfield County. This section has one programmed ODOT project within its limits: FAI-33-2.64 (PID 77555). The Pickerington Road interchange project is fully funded at an estimated cost of $76,930,161 and is scheduled for construction in 2025. The estimated cost of the US33 widening is $250 million.

33C. Tarkiln Road to SR180 interchange

Section 33C covers limits from Tarkiln Road in Fairfield County to SR180 in Hocking County. This section is being addressed by ODOT project HOC-33-0.00 (PID 121463, in development, and PID 115635, under construction). ODOT has programmed this project to address 10 existing at-grade intersections throughout this segment. This project will address existing safety and operational concerns throughout this segment. The project is partially funded with $8 million already committed for the preliminary engineering, detail design, and right-of-way acquisition. There is still a funding gap of $80 million for the construction phase.

33D. US33 crossing over the Ohio River

Section 33D includes the bridge over the Ohio River in Meigs County. Although the State of West Virginia technically owns and maintains the bridge, ODOT has programmed a project to begin a feasibility study to replace and widen it. Project MEG-33-28.00 (PID 120478) is a $600,000 feasibility study to widen the bridge to four lanes. No other phases are currently funded for this project; the funding gap is estimated to be in the $200 million range.

Introduction

OBJECTIVES

Context and Report Purpose

The Strategic Transportation and Development Analysis analyzes statewide economic, demographic, and transportation trends, forecasts travel needs, identifies transportation links and future potential risks to the transportation system, and develops actionable recommendations.

H.B. 23 requires the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to critically evaluate both the Sandusky-Columbus and Toledo-Columbus corridors. ODOT refers to evaluating these corridors as focus corridor needs assessments. Additional focus corridors were identified through an analytical process relying on assessing economic value, performance risk, corridor volume growth, and access control. This analysis was conducted across 33 markets and 38 corridors on the statewide network to identify the corridors with the highest performance risk and economic value. Additional analysis was performed to identify interregional corridors at risk of becoming barriers to the efficient and safe interregional movement of people and goods.

Based on the focus corridor analysis, four additional market-to-market connections were selected for the Study: Columbus-KY/WV, US23 South; Columbus-WV, US33 South; Dayton-Cincinnati, I-75; and Canton/Youngstown-WV/PA, US30/SR11. The focus corridor needs assessments to identify current and conceptual projects to address congestion risks and hotspots creating potential barriers to economic growth. This document synthesizes findings for the **Columbus-West Virginia (WV) corridor**.

Report Organization

This report presents corridor-level perspectives on the transportation facilities, travel characteristics, existing and future conditions between Columbus and West Virginia, and the communities those markets serve. Additionally, it outlines current and proposed ODOT project investments in the corridor, future performance risks, and actionable recommendations for addressing those risks in the next 10, 20, and 30 years.

H.B. 23 Language

"A statewide study of the Ohio transportation system, in collaboration with the Department of Development and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation. The study shall:

- *Analyze **statewide and regional demographics**, investigate **economic development growth opportunities**, examine **current transportation systems and capacities.***
- *Forecast **passenger and freight travel needs** over a ten-, twenty-, and thirty-year timeframe.*
- *Identify **current and future transportation links**, evaluate and rank **current and potential risks of future system congestion**.*
- *Make **actionable recommendations** for **transportation system projects** to **support statewide economic growth**, including improving links between Toledo and Columbus and between Sandusky and Columbus.*

At any time, individual hotspot locations may receive advanced analysis of conceptual remedies with planning level costs.

The study shall be completed by December 31, 2024."

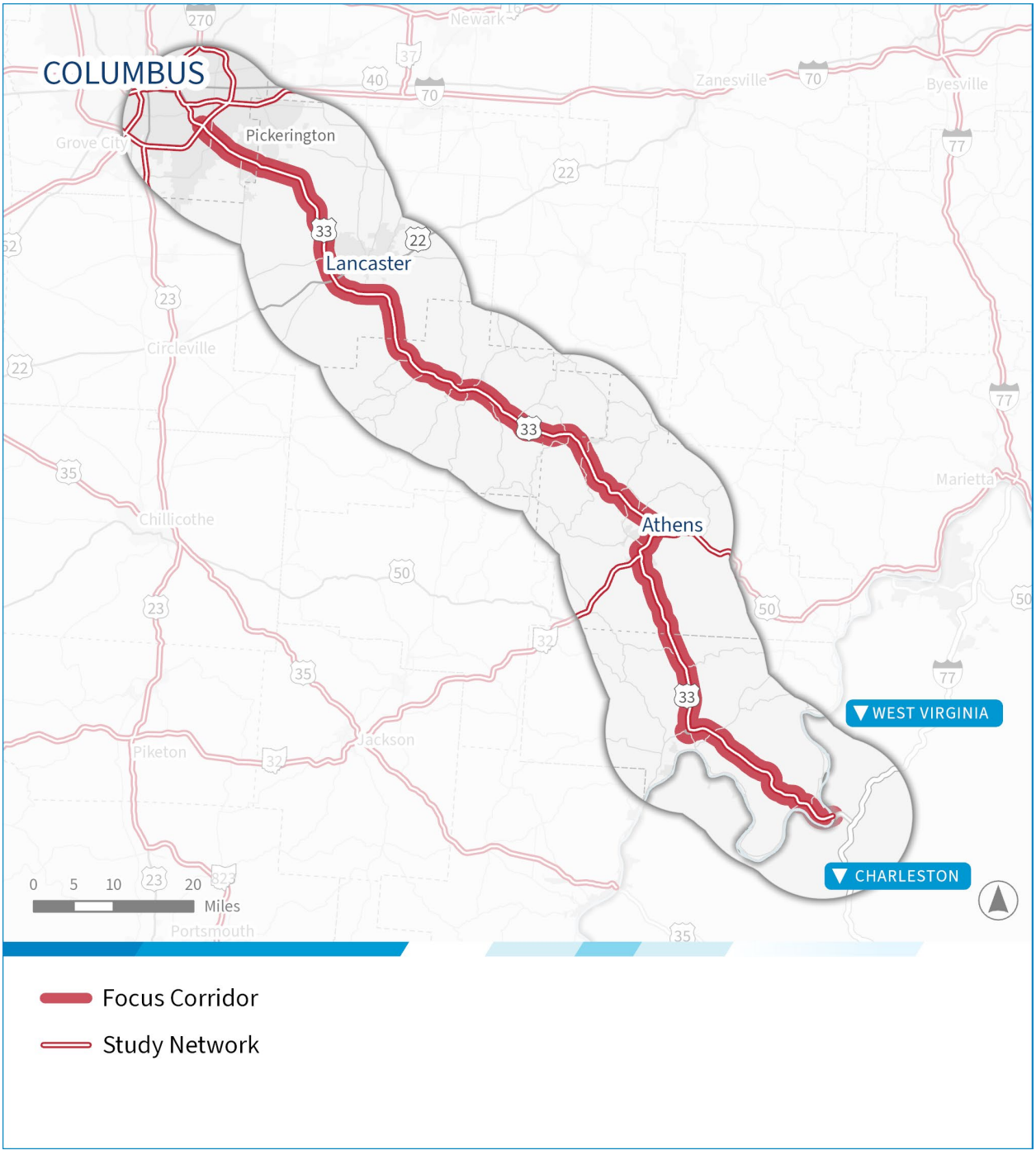
This analysis is **Appendix D** of the Study Report, and **Chapter 5** includes recommendations for this focus corridor.

CORRIDOR DESCRIPTION

The Columbus-WV focus corridor comprises US33 and connects Central Ohio with Southeast Ohio and West Virginia. **Figure 4** presents the extent of the corridor, the Study network, and the primary cities. The Columbus-WV focus corridor connects Columbus and its southeast suburbs of Groveport and Canal Winchester and travels along the south edge of Pickerington. This segment of US33 is a four-lane highway with partial access control. The corridor routes around the western edge of Lancaster and serves a series of small communities and rural areas in Fairfield County.

South of Lancaster, the corridor continues into the Hocking Hills and communities such as Logan and Athens, which is the home of Ohio University. The northern section of the US33 corridor is heavily influenced by the Rickenbacker International Airport and its associated railyard. The corridor also serves as a key conduit for tourism to Wayne National Forest and Hocking Hills State Park, among other recreational destinations. This section of US33 has mostly been upgraded to a divided four-lane facility. However, segments south of Athens to the unincorporated community of Darwin and from SR733 to the Ohio River are two-lane undivided facilities. The corridor crosses the Ohio River into West Virginia at the small town of Ravenswood, WV, and terminates at I-77.

FIGURE 4—COLUMBUS-WV FOCUS CORRIDOR



Corridor Context

This section summarizes demographic, economic, land use, and development trends that primarily drive transportation demand and performance along the Columbus-WV focus corridor. The assessment was developed based on the statewide and regional analysis in **Chapter 2** and **Chapter 3** of the Study Report and localized research tied to system opportunities, trends, and forecasts specific to the corridor.

POPULATION, DEMOGRAPHIC, AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Columbus-WV focus corridor traverses a range of communities with various demographic and economic strengths and challenges. **Figure 5** presents the population changes along the corridor since 1990. **Figure 6** shows employment locations in 2021, and **Figure 7** presents the change in employment since 2002. **Table 2** summarizes the population and employment of each city along the corridor and identifies major industries and large employers with significant operations.

TABLE 2—POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, MAJOR EMPLOYERS

City	Population (2022)	Employment (2021)	Major Industries/Employers
Columbus	909,000	539,220	The Ohio State University, local, county, and state government, healthcare, Nationwide Insurance, financial and professional services
Groveport	9,100	14,400	Rickenbacker International Airport, warehousing and distribution centers, healthcare
Pickerington	23,200	6,000	Healthcare, local government, retail
Lancaster	40,600	18,200	Healthcare, manufacturing
Logan	7,200	4,600	Healthcare, manufacturing
Athens	22,700	12,200	Ohio University, healthcare, manufacturing

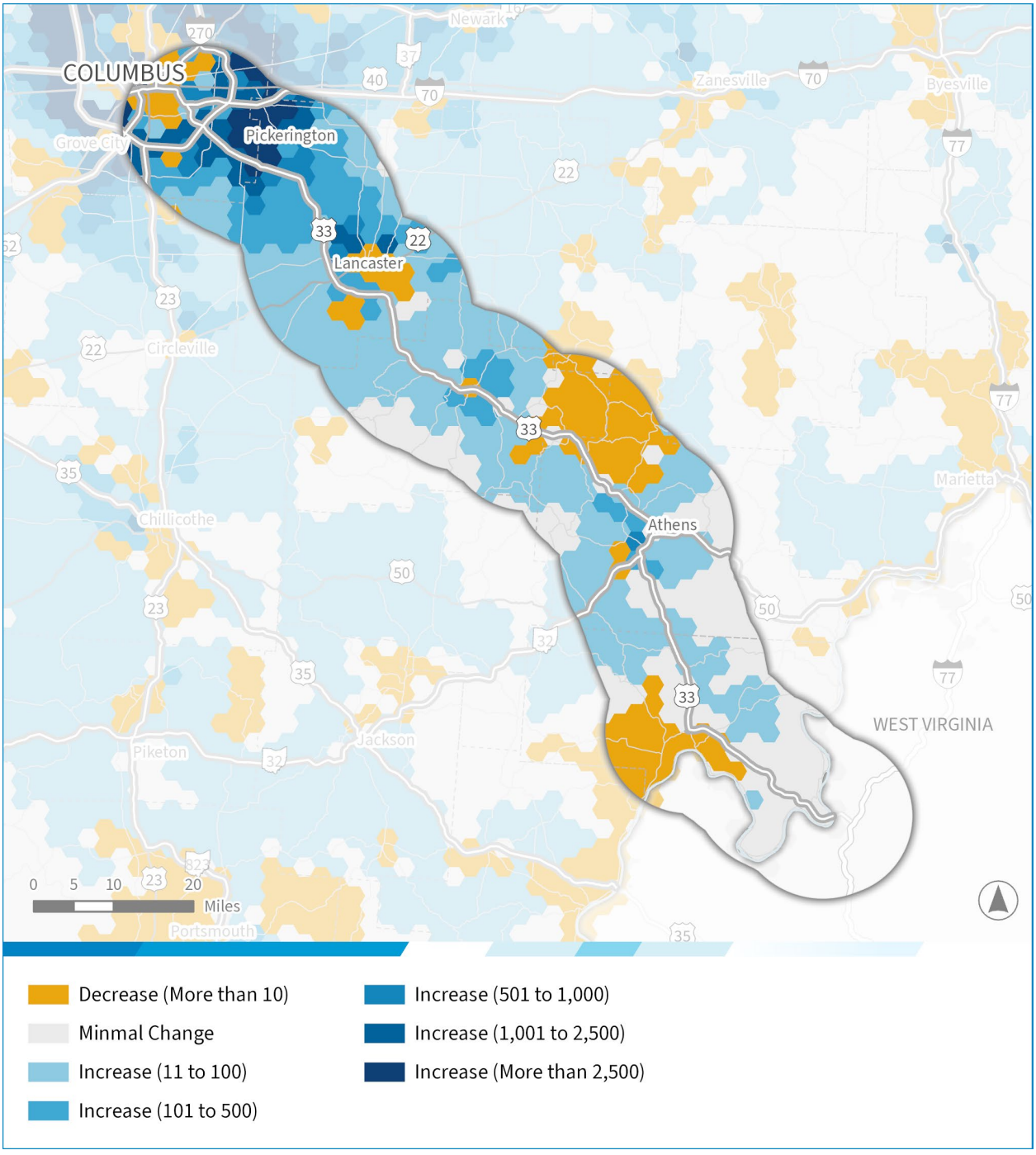
Source: US Census American Community Survey, LEHD, Ohio Major Employers Report (2022)

At the northern end of the corridor, Columbus, Groveport, Canal Winchester, and areas near Pickerington and Lancaster have experienced moderate-to-high population growth over the past 30 years. These communities have grown because of their proximity to the diverse Columbus economy and convenient access to US33. Population growth has spread southeast as suburban development has continued toward Lancaster, with pockets of growth around Athens. Population growth for the rest of the corridor varies from low growth to slight population declines, especially in areas within Hocking Hills and near the Ohio River.

Employment is mainly concentrated at the corridor's northern end, as Franklin County and Columbus have experienced strong population and employment growth relative to other areas of the state. Central Ohio has benefited from the global shift to a knowledge-based economy. It is supported by the state's flagship research university, investments in high-technology industries and services, and the area's large state and county employment base. The corridor's southern end is more rural, with smaller employment centers widely distributed along US33.

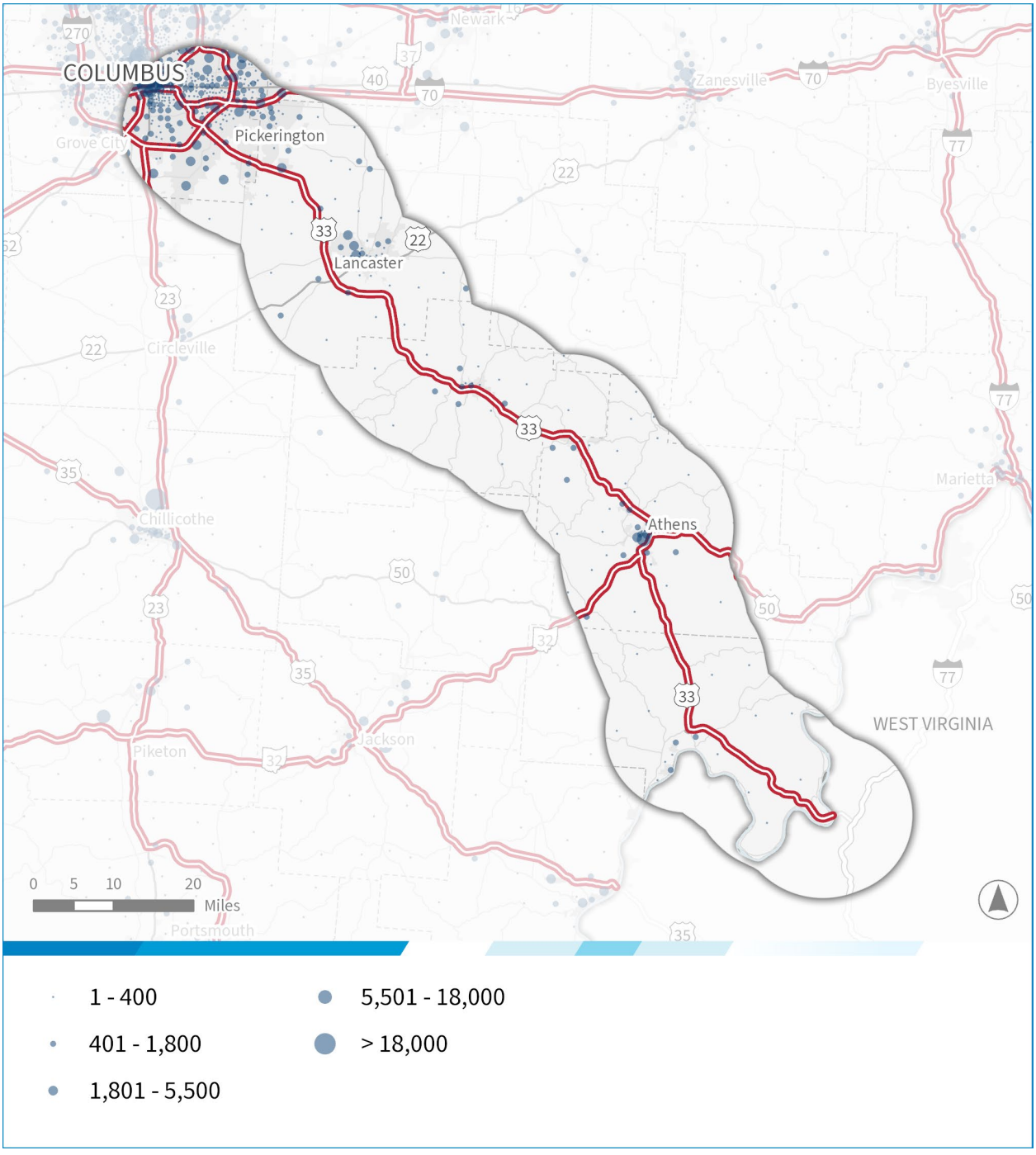
Rickenbacker International Airport, its associated railyard, and adjacent businesses have created a major logistics hub southwest of US33, generating employment and truck traffic across the Columbus region. Ohio University, with approximately 20,000 students and 4,000 employees in Athens, is a major employer and economic generator in Hocking Hills. The university supports a range of local businesses and related commerce along the corridor.

FIGURE 5—POPULATION CHANGE, 1990 TO 2020



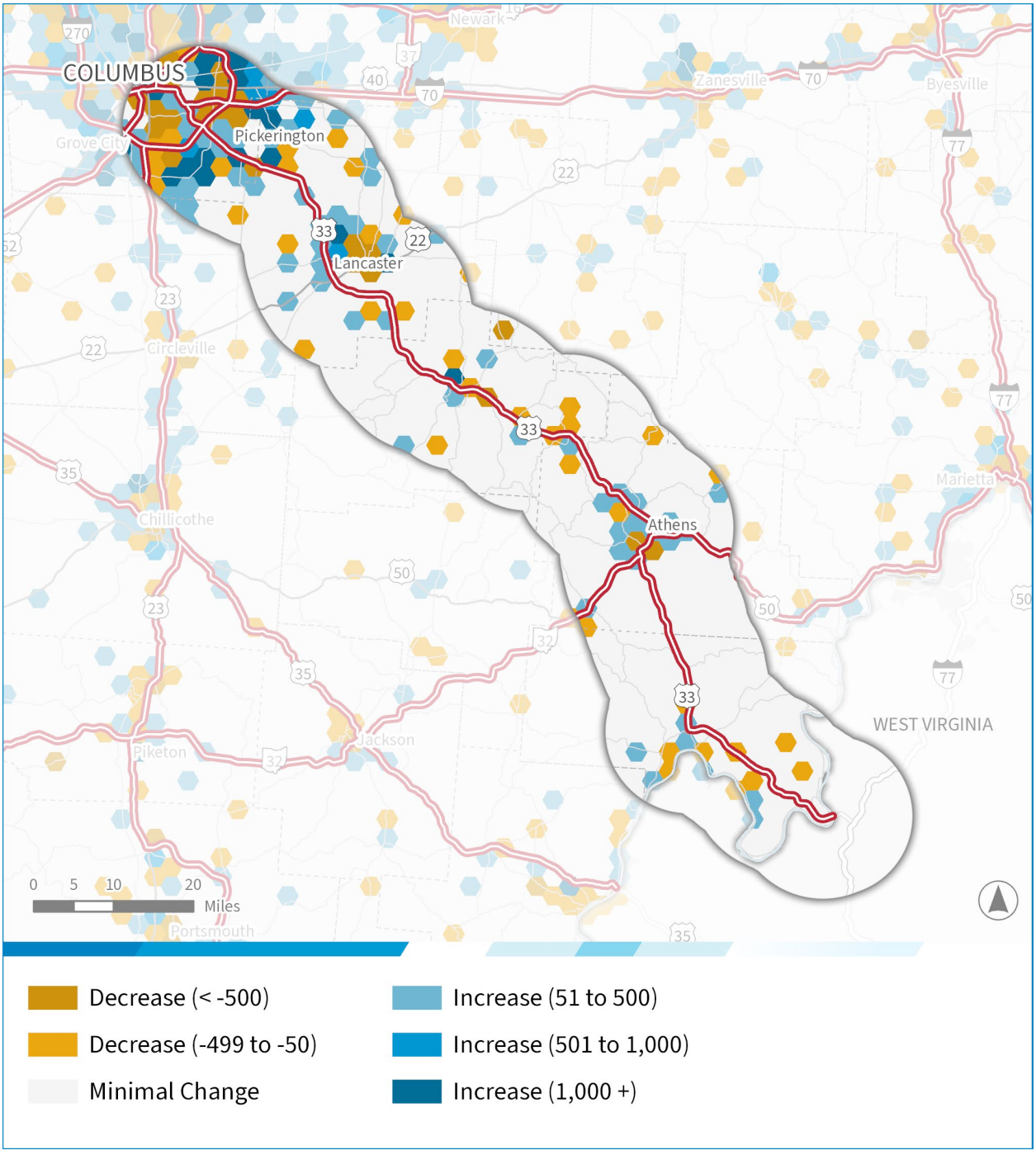
Source: IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, www.nhgis.org. U.S. Decennial Census, 1990, 2020

FIGURE 6—TOTAL JOBS BY WORK LOCATION, 2021



Source: US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) OnTheMap https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/

FIGURE 7—EMPLOYMENT CHANGE, 2002 TO 2021



Source: US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) OnTheMap https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

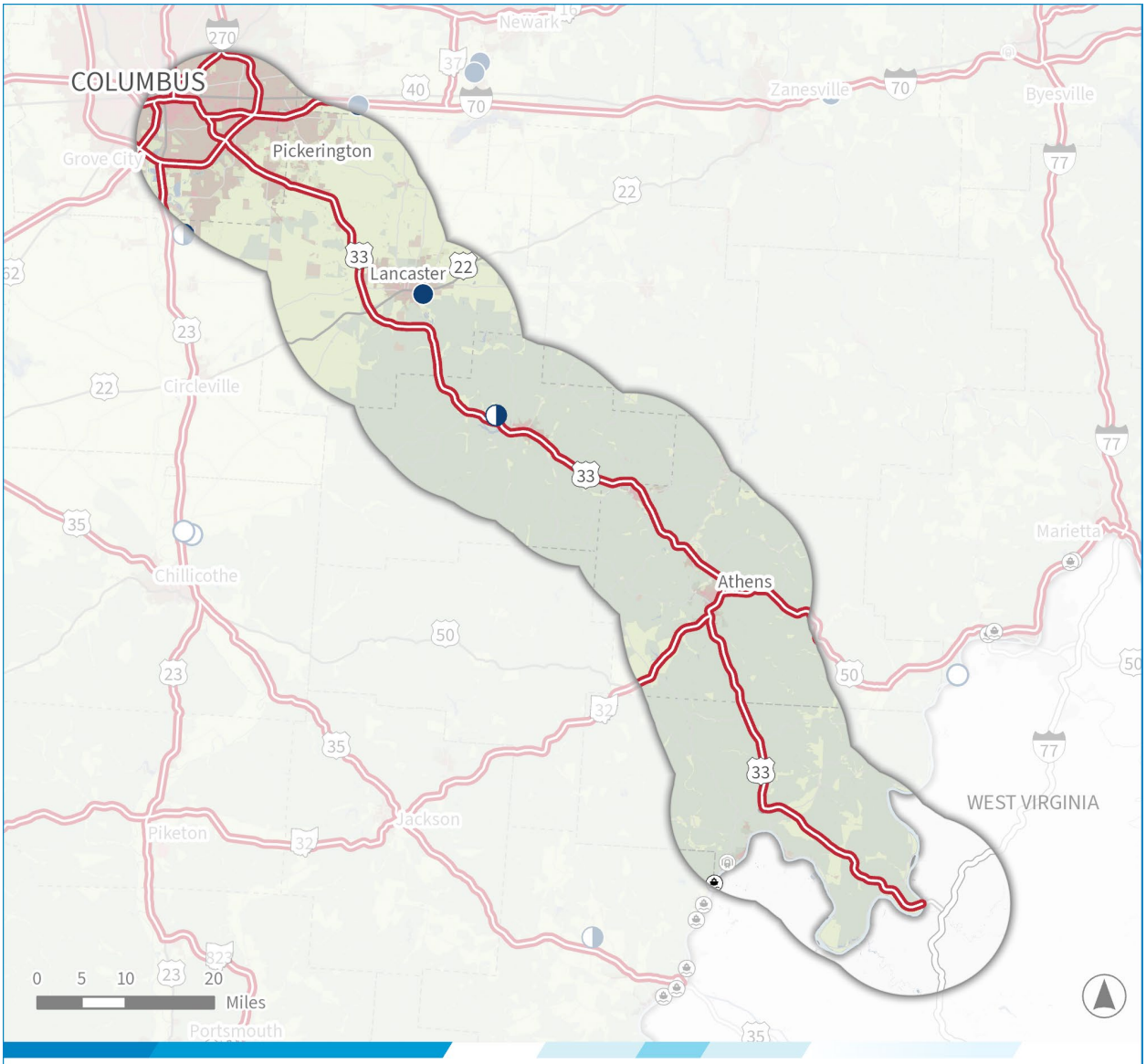
Land use and development trends are key drivers of Ohio's transportation needs. The patterns of how, where, and to what extent Ohio's land develops impact the types and levels of economic activity, which translate to travel demand. Existing and future development activity can influence choices about the suitability and need for future transportation system investments. Since 1990, widespread land use changes in Ohio have occurred primarily in urban and suburban counties, particularly around Columbus and Cincinnati.

Land use and development patterns within the Columbus–WV focus corridor study area are influenced by expanding development east and south of I-270, most of which is a mix of suburban residential and commercial. This development has followed Franklin County commuters who continue moving farther from Columbus for affordable housing. Pockets of growth also exist around Lancaster, Logan, and between The Plains and Athens. **Figure 8** presents the land use and development context along the corridor and includes the location of major land use destinations and development sites identified in the Study Report. The map also shows the locations and readiness ratings of priority development sites along the corridor included in the 78 sites assessed in the statewide report.

Figure 9 presents a bivariate analysis comparing the change in two variables: the changes in impervious surface since 2011 and population and jobs since 2010. Growth in population, employment, and impervious surface increase as development occurs and is represented by 5-square mile-colored hexagons. Understanding changes in impervious surface area relative to population and employment growth can provide insight into development patterns and pressures, economic vitality, and environmental sustainability. Where population and employment grow faster than impervious surfaces, denser development could occur. Areas with greater impervious surface growth relative to population and jobs may be a leading indicator of future growth pressures or lower-density urban sprawl.

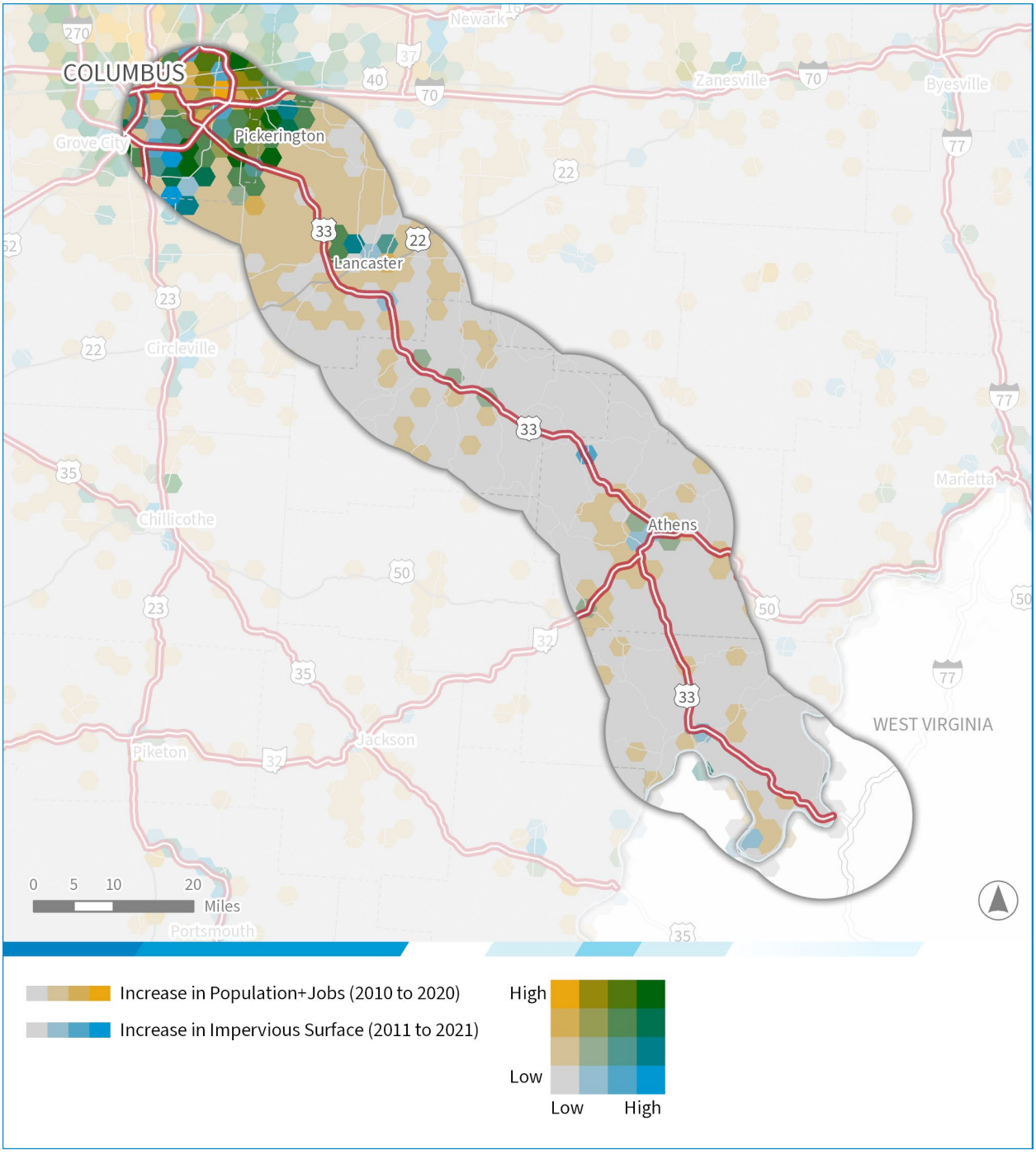
This information on land use change and development provides a critical context for where Ohio is projected to continue to change in the coming decades and the impact of that development change on travel demand and transportation system performance. **Chapter 2** and **Chapter 3** of the Study Report provide a comprehensive land use and development assessment that identifies future development trends and site development readiness across Ohio. The assessment incorporated the Ohio Department of Development's (ODOD's) population growth forecasts, ODOT's land use and transportation models, perspectives on-site development readiness across 78 priority development sites tracked by ODOT's Office of Jobs and Commerce, and insights on priority development locations from local comprehensive plans and stakeholders participating in Study engagement from January to March 2024.

FIGURE 8—DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT



Source: Study Team, SiteOhio, ODOT

FIGURE 9—INCREASE IN POPULATION+JOBS AND IMPERVIOUS SURFACE



Source: Study Team, National Land Cover Database, US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) OnTheMap https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/

FUTURE CHANGE

Future conditions along the Columbus–WV focus corridor will be influenced primarily by how development patterns and employment continue to move southeast from Columbus along US33. **Figure 10** shows the projected future population change from ODOD's baseline scenario, which assumes current fertility, mortality, and migration rates remain unchanged. The map shows the highest growth areas near the north end of the corridor, with higher growth projected near Pickerington and Lancaster in Fairfield County. Areas south of Lancaster are expected to continue to experience slow population declines, as indicated in **Table 3**. These forecasts reflect concerns voiced during the statewide listening sessions regarding the ongoing population decline in many areas of the state. The population along this corridor is expected to increase overall. Growth rates in the larger urban counties at the north end are expected to offset decreases in the smaller rural areas.

TABLE 3—POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2025 TO 2055, BASELINE SCENARIO

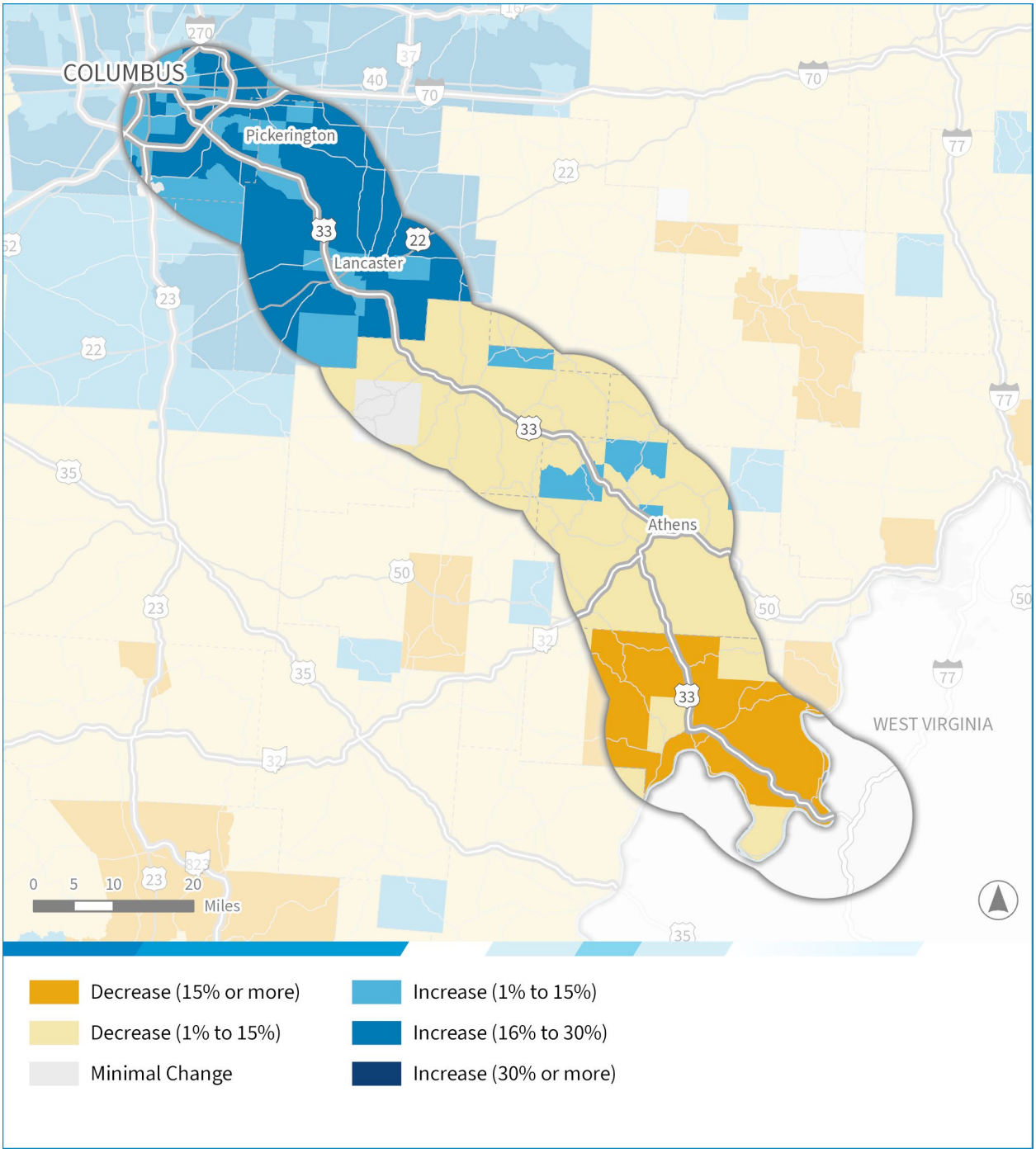
County	Population			
	2025	2055	Change	Percentage Change
Franklin	1,371,832	1,502,692	130,860	9.5%
Fairfield	163,369	185,267	21,898	13.4%
Hocking	27,474	24,240	-3,234	-11.8%
Athens	62,400	54,748	-7,652	-12.3%
Meigs	21,175	14,894	-6,281	-29.7%
Total	**1,646,250**	**1,781,841**	**135,591**	**8.2%**

Source: Ohio Department of Development (ODOD)

Key takeaways on future growth potential along the corridor include:

- Central Ohio and Columbus are forecast to be the primary drivers of demand along the corridor.
- Concerns are raised about the decline in population and workforce availability in rural areas. Listening session participants see a mismatch between jobs and available skills and a lack of affordable housing as factors that risk business growth.
- Workers will continue to relocate farther from Columbus along the US33 corridor to seek affordable housing. Given longer commutes, it is unclear how far outside Franklin County workers will move.
- Areas along the corridor's rural agricultural segments will continue to experience modest population declines, with the steepest decreases forecasted for areas closer to the Ohio River.

FIGURE 10—FUTURE POPULATION CHANGE, 2025 TO 2055, BASELINE SCENARIO



Source: ODOD and ODOT, Ohio Statewide Model

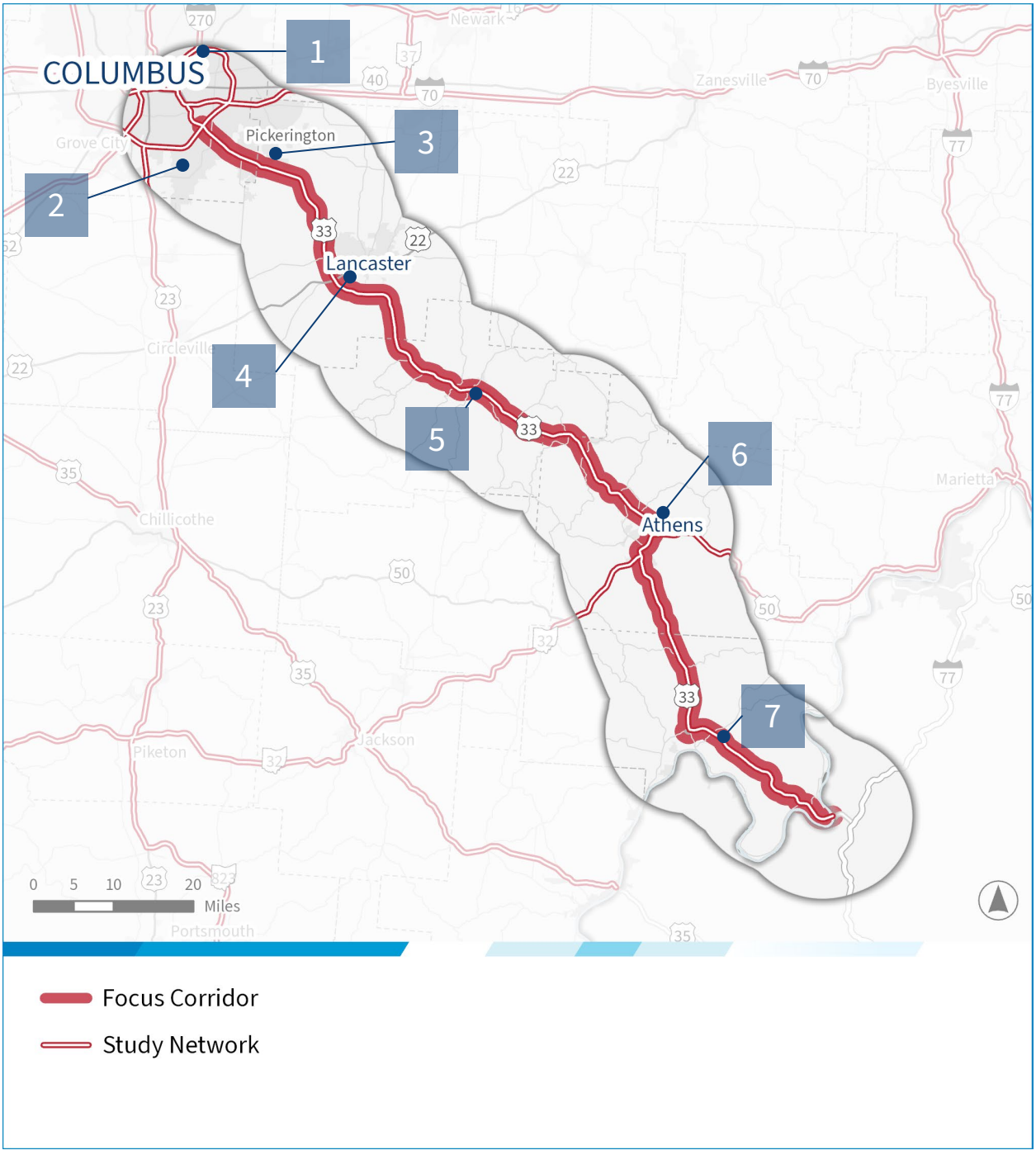
CORRIDOR INSIGHTS

This section summarizes the key insights shaping the corridor today and highlights potential issues that could impact future transportation performance and mobility. **Figure 11** and **Table 4** summarize corridor-specific insights that are important considerations for the Columbus-WV focus corridor transportation conditions in the following sections.

TABLE 4—CORRIDOR INSIGHT SUMMARY

Map Key	Corridor Insight
1	• Strong economic growth in Columbus and the southeast suburbs of Franklin County is expected to continue in the future. • Columbus, at the north end of the corridor, will remain the primary employment destination.
2	• Rickenbacker International Airport, the Rickenbacker railyard, and adjacent logistics-related businesses are major employment and truck traffic generators.
3	• Pickerington has experienced strong population and employment growth over the last 20 years. • Forecasts indicate continued development growth in the area as residents move farther from Columbus in search of affordable housing.
4	• Population growth is extending south to Lancaster along US33 in search of affordable housing. • There is uncertainty regarding how far south Columbus commuters will move. Forecasts for Fairfield County indicate moderate population growth.
5	• The area south of Lancaster is very rural with low population and sparse land use density.
6	• Athens has experienced modest population growth over the last 20 to 30 years as Ohio University continues to anchor the local economy, but there is an opportunity to expand commercial activity and diversify. • Development forecasts reflect uncertainty related to other growth prospects in the area.
7	• The US33 corridor south of Athens has experienced population and employment declines over the last several decades. • The Ohio River is an asset for its recreational tourism potential, including multi-use trail activity. • Topography and the Ohio River limit development in southeastern Ohio.

FIGURE 11—CORRIDOR INSIGHTS MAP



Corridor Conditions

This section summarizes the key physical, geometric, and operational characteristics that influence how the Columbus-WV focus corridor currently functions for traffic flow and safety and examines the anticipated impacts of future growth and development in the region. This assessment was based on data gathered from ODOT's Transportation Information Mapping System (TIMS) service and supported by visual observations to validate and supplement the base data.

The Columbus-WV focus corridor is entirely made up of US33. It traverses 106 miles from the I-270 interchange in Columbus southward to the West Virginia state line, crossed by a two-lane bridge over the Ohio River at Ravenswood, WV. This corridor connects central Ohio to I-77, which links Ohio to the southern states through the extensive interstate system.

The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volume on US33 varies along the corridor. In the northern part of the corridor from I-270 to the Diley Road interchange, traffic volumes range from around 88,600 AADT at I-270 to 63,000 AADT near the Diley Road interchange. Traffic volumes decrease to 46,500 AADT from the Diley Road interchange southward to the US33 Business Route (US33BR) in Lancaster. The segment of US33 from Lancaster to SR93 in Logan has an AADT of 27,000. Traffic volumes are 25,000 AADT from SR550 (Columbus Road) to the US50 interchange. The remainder of the US33 corridor south of SR550 to the West Virginia state line carries an AADT of less than 10,000.

The adjacent land uses along the US33 corridor that contribute to growth, especially in the northern portion of the corridor, are suburban residential growth east and south of Columbus and several industrial growth areas around the Rickenbacker International Airport, Columbus, Groveport, and Canal Winchester. Farther south on the corridor are pockets of growth in communities such as Lancaster, Logan, and Athens, which involve residential, industrial, and commercial growth. The remainder of the corridor outside these growth areas are rural and natural land uses. It is also important to consider tourism to the Hocking Hills recreational region, primarily accessed via US33. It is the only major highway providing access for visiting tourists. These destinations are typically served by at-grade intersections with US33, with traffic peaking during weekends.

The Columbus-WV focus corridor is a four-lane facility for 80.5 miles of the 106-mile corridor. Two-lane sections, approximately 25.5 miles, remain in Athens and Meigs counties. The corridor has a mix of interchanges and at-grade intersections. ODOT has several major projects planned for the US33 corridor, which are discussed in the Corridor Investments section.

No bridge vertical clearance issues were identified during field assessments of the corridor or by ODOT District staff.

Initial observations of the 106 miles of the Columbus-WV focus corridor conditions include:

- 26 existing grade-separated interchanges
- 45 existing at-grade intersections
- 14 private driveway access points
- Acceptable horizontal and vertical alignment

- Significant weekend traffic due to tourism draw
- 26 segments on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) top 100 locations
- Three intersections on the HSIP top 100 locations
- 19 railroad crossings within a half mile of the corridor

CONGESTION AND RELIABILITY

Existing and Future Congestion

Two measures are used to assess congestion on the Columbus-WV focus corridor: volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c) and ODOT's Traffic Operation Assessment Systems Tool (TOAST), shown in **Figure 13** and **Figure 14,** respectively. This analysis was also confirmed through field review, as highlighted in the photos in **Figure 12**. TOAST assigns scores to every segment of ODOT's road network based on a composite measure of bottlenecks, travel time performance, crash severity, rear-end crash percentages, traffic volume, and freight volume. The lower the score, the worse a segment is performing. **Figure 15** and **Figure 16** convey segments in the corridor prone to slower speeds due to congestion in the morning and afternoon peak periods.

One corridor section is currently over capacity: US33 from the I-270 interchange to SR317. Beyond this interchange, US33 is nearing capacity almost entirely from SR317 through Groveport and Canal Winchester to the US33BR split in Fairfield County. The only other segment of this corridor nearing capacity is between Great Bend Road and across the Ohio River into West Virginia.

Segments with low TOAST scores mirror locations already over or near capacity. There are two segments of US33 with moderate scoring that should be noted as areas of concern:

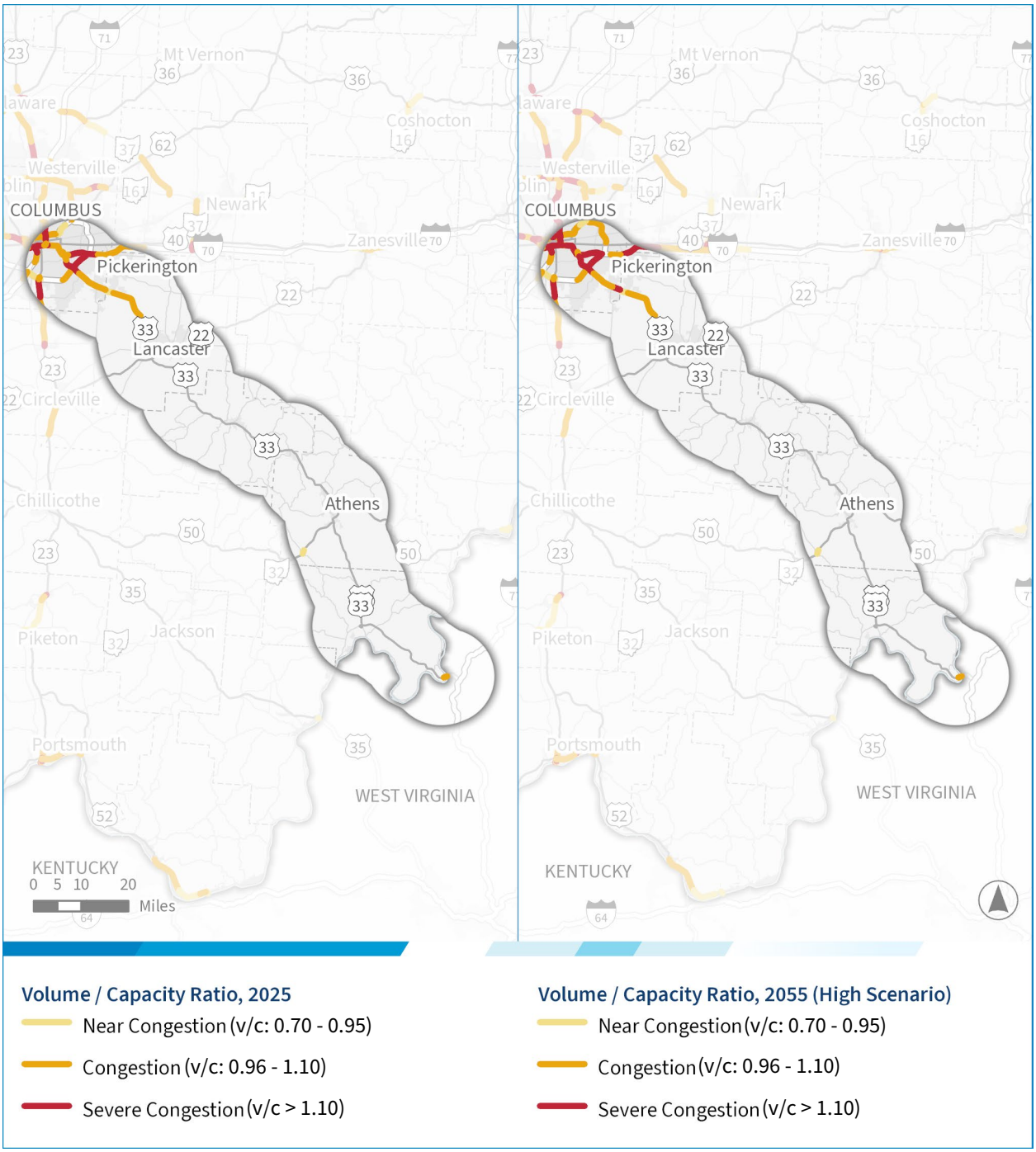
- US33 from Sharp Road/Main Street in Sugar Grove to Lockhead Road in Logan, moderate TOAST score
- Within the US33 and SR7 interchange, moderate-low TOAST score

In the future, many of these segments are predicted to pose similar congestion risks. Based on a congestion risk (CR) analysis of projected travel and development data to 2055, these corridor segments are predicted to have a risk of congestion. Segments along US33 that are noteworthy for their CR ratings include I-270 to Canal Winchester, which has a moderate CR, and the segment from Canal Winchester to the US33BR, which has a low CR.

FIGURE 12—CONGESTION ON US33 NEAR I-270 INTERCHANGE

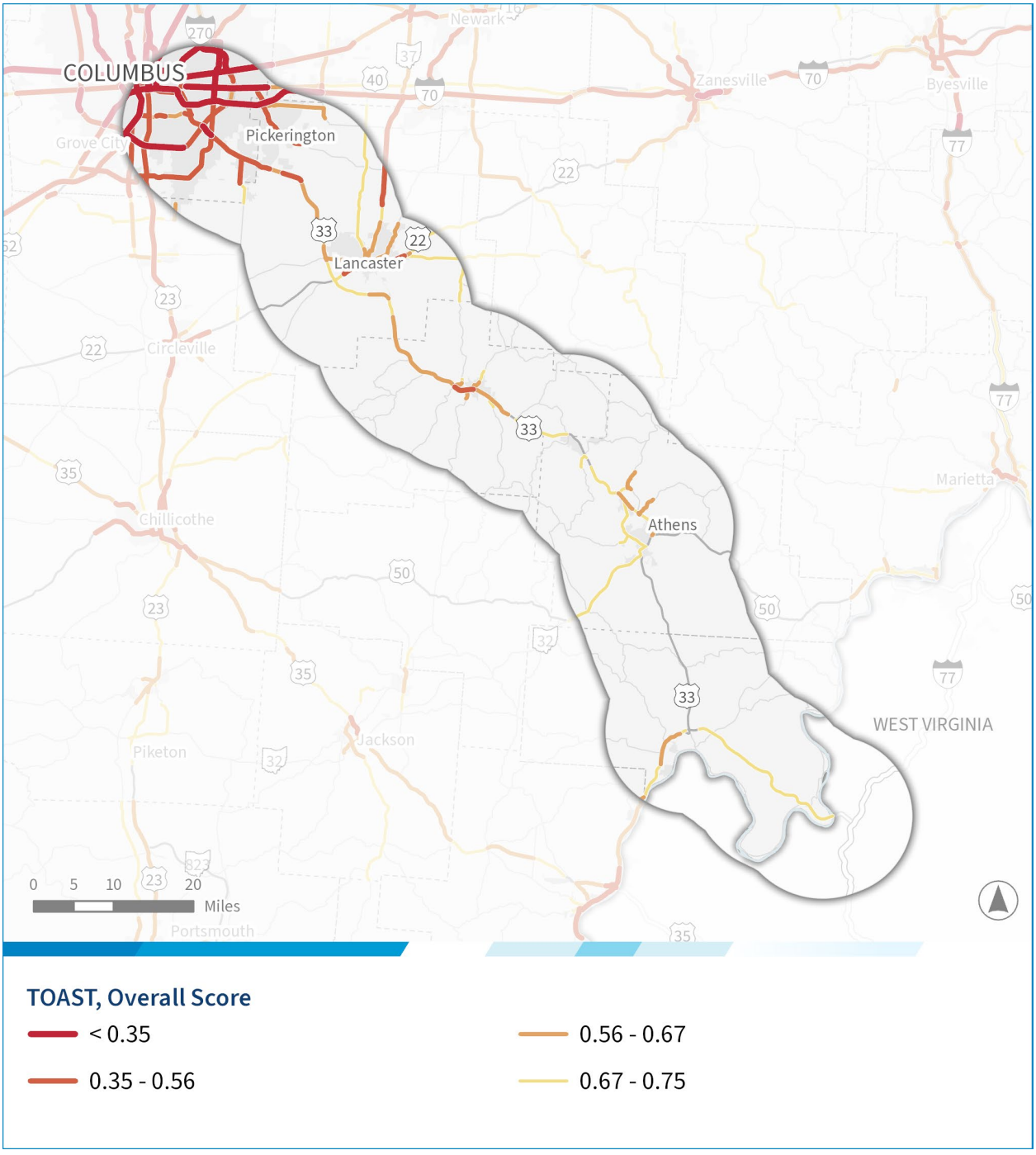


FIGURE 13—EXISTING AND FUTURE CONGESTION (PEAK PERIOD VOLUME TO CAPACITY RATIO)



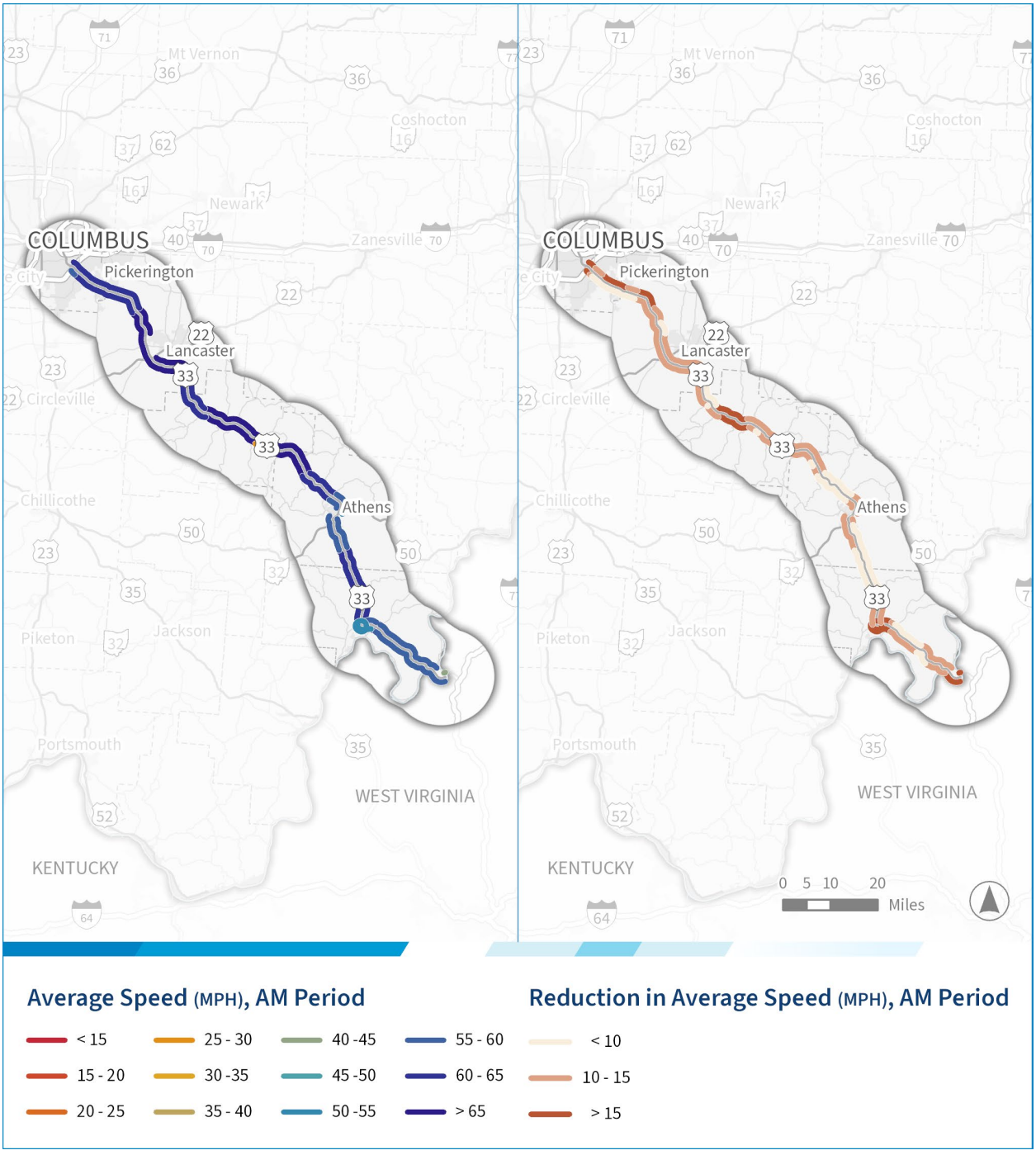
Source: Study Team (ODOT, Ohio Statewide Model)

FIGURE 14—TRAFFIC OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS TOOL (TOAST)



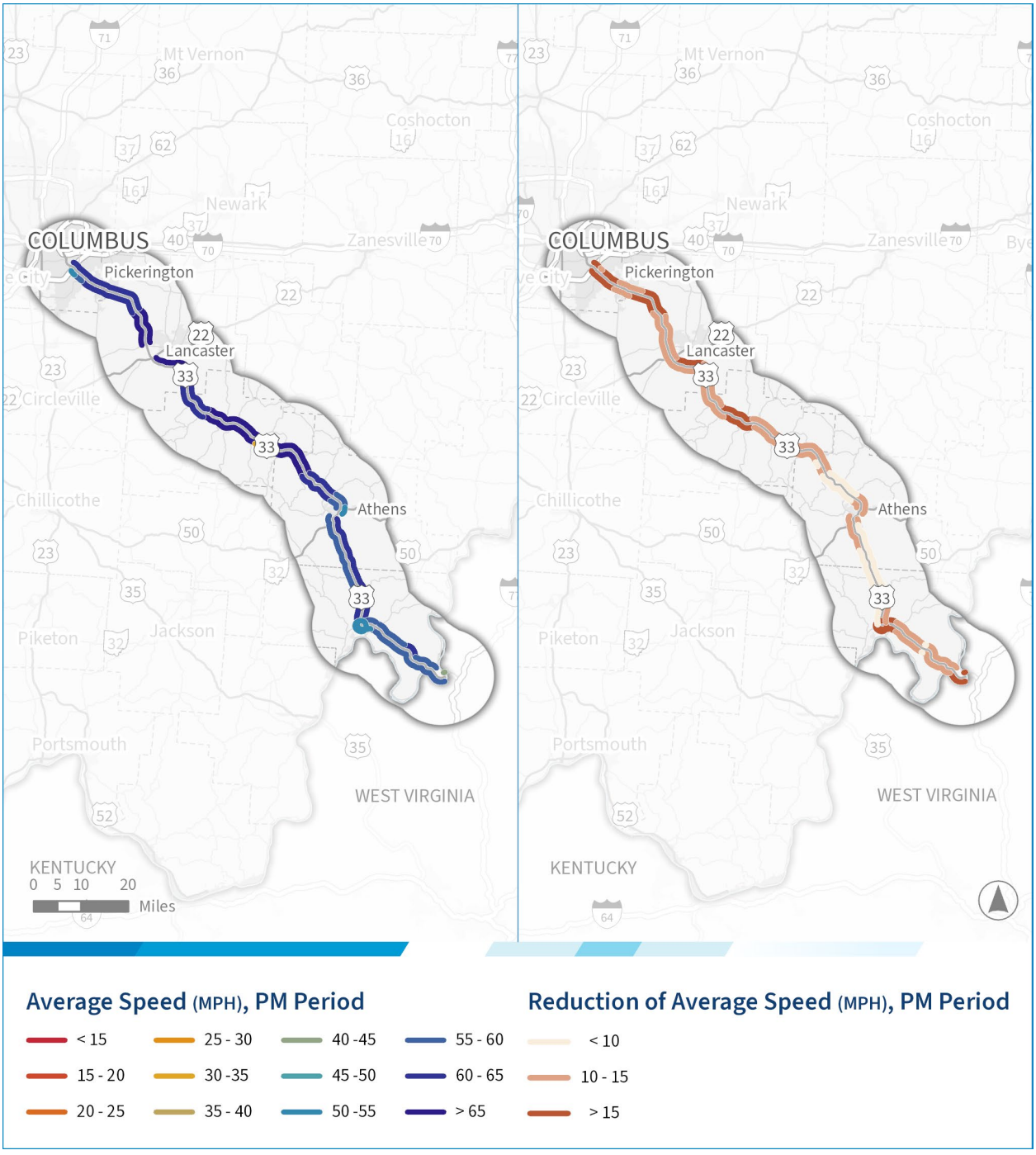
Source: ODOT

FIGURE 15—CONGESTION, AM PERIOD, 2022



Source: INRIX, NPRMDS, Study Team

FIGURE 16—CONGESTION, PM PERIOD, 2022



Source: INRIX, NPRMDS, Study Team

Local Development

The primary portion of the Columbus-WV focus corridor that is anticipated to have the highest growth and truck traffic growth, per Transport Ohio, Ohio's Freight Plan, is in Franklin County between the I-270 interchange and Canal Winchester. This is due to several factors, including growth driven by Rickenbacker International Airport, Rickenbacker railyard, expanding adjacent warehouse and logistics development, the new Intel semiconductor chip manufacturing plant under construction, and the growth of housing developments.

US33 is the gateway to the Hocking Hills recreational region. The state parks and forests that comprise the Hocking Hills region draw many visitors from within Ohio and beyond. Local officials estimate there are 7 million visitors annually and expect continued growth, making tourism an essential component of the Hocking County economy. It has been found that the peak traffic period is 3 p.m. on Saturday afternoons due to tourism. This adds 25% more weekend traffic versus weekdays as tourism traffic accesses the recreational region via the at-grade intersections on US33 in Hocking County.

TRAFFIC COMPOSITION

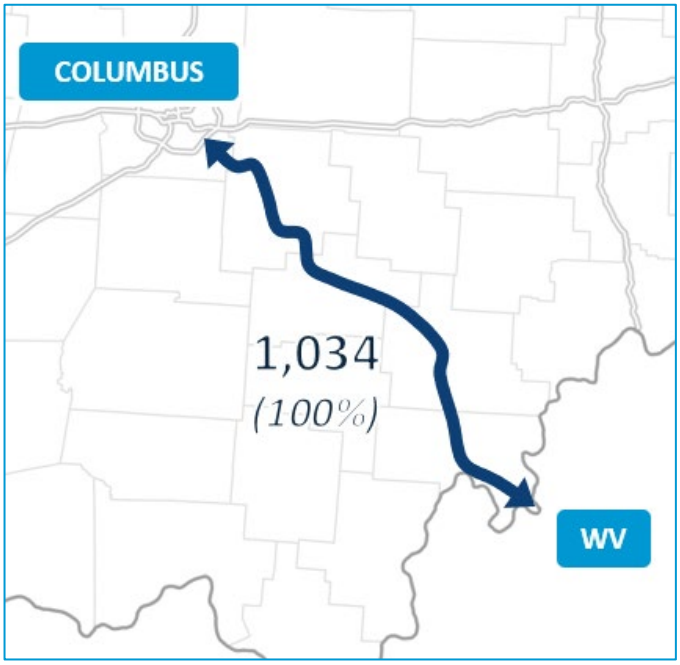
Existing Traffic Patterns

This section describes existing travel patterns and traffic composition along the Columbus-WV focus corridor. The analysis utilizes origin and destination (O-D) data for vehicle trips through the StreetLight application. StreetLight is a transportation "big data" analytics platform using GPS trace data from connected vehicles, commercial trucks, location-based services on mobile devices, and other sources to generate vehicle trip flows on the roadway network. The StreetLight data was used to estimate AADT for 2023 between the major O-D gateways for roadways along the corridor. The StreetLight AADT data includes bi-directional auto and truck volumes for trips that travel through at least one of the gateways to the markets at the endpoints of the corridor to provide a market-to-market analysis. The StreetLight AADT numbers shown here do not include trips in the corridor that do not originate in at least one of the market gateways and are not intended to be compared with traffic counts collected in the field. Truck volumes were estimated using truck percentage splits calculated from the count segments used in the Ohio Statewide Model (OSWM).

The analysis focuses on market-to-market vehicle trips that travel the entire length of the US33 corridor from Columbus to the Ohio River crossing into West Virginia. Truck flows were estimated by utilizing the truck percentages at the start and end of the corridor. The analysis also identifies the major diversion gateways where vehicles enter or exit the corridor. **Figure 17** presents the AADT O-D flows between Columbus and West Virginia on US33 in 2023.

The StreetLight data indicates an AADT volume of 1,034 between the two markets. Truck percentages between Columbus and West Virginia average 10% to 12%, indicating that 100 to 125 trucks travel the length of the corridor daily.

FIGURE 17—MARKET-TO-MARKET AADT ORIGIN-DESTINATION FLOWS



SAFETY

The existing traffic safety and crash characteristics along the corridor, shown in **Figure 18**, reveal a significant number of high-priority segments and intersections, particularly in rural, urban, and suburban areas. These locations have been identified based on detailed crash analyses, including heat maps and hot spot locations for all crashes, injury crashes, and fatal/serious injury crashes.

Corridor safety was assessed using crash data gathered from ODOT's GIS Crash Analysis Tool (GCAT) for calendar years 2020–2023. Data was filtered to include only crashes which occurred on mainline US33. Most safety hotspots in the US33 corridor occur from the I-270 interchange southward to Logan. Several notable segments where clusters of crash hotspots occur include:

- US33 from the I-270 interchange south to the Hamilton Road (SR317) interchange
- US33 from Diley Road south to the Village of Carroll
- US33 from Sharp Road in Sugar Grove south to the SR664 interchange in Logan

The segments of highest safety concern are primarily found in the urban area of US33 from I-270 to Canal Winchester. Several safety locations along US33 are also in suburban and rural areas from Carroll to Logan. The most common safety issues on the corridor are fixed object crashes at 29%, rear-end collisions at 28%, sideswipes from passing vehicles at 22%, and angle crashes at 5%. The most common types of crashes in Franklin and Fairfield counties on US33 involve rear-end crashes, which would be expected given congestion is more of an issue on the corridor in these two counties. In Hocking, Athens, and Meigs counties, the most common type of crash involves fixed objects.

ODOT's 2024 HSIP listings include 29 HSIP locations on 26 segments and three intersections on the US33 corridor from I-270 to the West Virginia state line. Of the 29 HSIP locations, 17 were listed in the Top 100 HSIP locations, including 16 segments and one intersection.

TABLE 5—HSIP SUMMARY 2023

Route	HSIP Segments	Top 100 Segments	HSIP Intersections	Top 100 Intersections
US33	26	16	3	1

To supplement HSIP locations, the corridor was also categorized using the Relative Severity Index (RSI) for the combined crashes. RSI represents the relative cost to society of a specific type of crash, e.g., head-on, rear-end, or angle. The types of collisions on the roadways are relevant to safety performance, as some crash types are more likely to result in severe injuries and higher societal costs. For instance, on an urban freeway in Ohio, the average head-on crash, perhaps caused by a vehicle crossing the median, costs around $101,000, while the average cost of a rear-end crash, typically associated with congestion, is estimated at $31,000. Mapping a combination of RSI and HSIP priority locations creates a metric of various crash types that point to the potential for serious injury and high-crash locations, especially on facilities with lower volumes.

FHWA's Safe System Approach prioritizes improvements that can eliminate the opportunity for high-severity impacts, e.g., head-on, fixed object, right angle, focusing on speed and angle of impacts in motor vehicle collisions, even if that improvement still provides the potential risk of slower and less-impactful angles of collision. One example is implementing roundabouts to remove the potential for high-speed right-angle collisions while potentially leading to low-speed rear-end or sideswipe collisions. The RSI provides higher costs to those types of crashes and helps to prioritize corridors with a Safe System lens.

Vulnerable Road User (VRU) safety concerns tend to concentrate in downtown areas where pedestrians and bicyclists frequently use the roadway alongside motor vehicles. These locations typically have adjacent sidewalks but do not provide dedicated bicycle facilities. Larger cities and towns pose a greater risk to these users due to higher traffic volumes of both motor vehicles and VRUs. There are no locations on the corridor that ODOT has identified as high and critical-priority segments for pedestrian safety improvements. However, several communities have high and critical-priority segments on adjacent or intersecting roadways that typically pass over or under US33.

The crash data from GCAT identified four VRU crashes, two involving pedestrians and two involving bicyclists, see **Table 6**, on mainline US33. ODOT's Safety Map Viewer tool was used to determine where the crashes occurred with respect to the Pedestrian Priority Segments in the Systemic Priorities section.

TABLE 6—SUMMARY OF VULNERABLE USER CRASHES 2020–2023

Crash Type	Critical	High	Medium	Low	None
Pedestrian	–	–	–	–	2
Bicycle	–	–	–	–	2

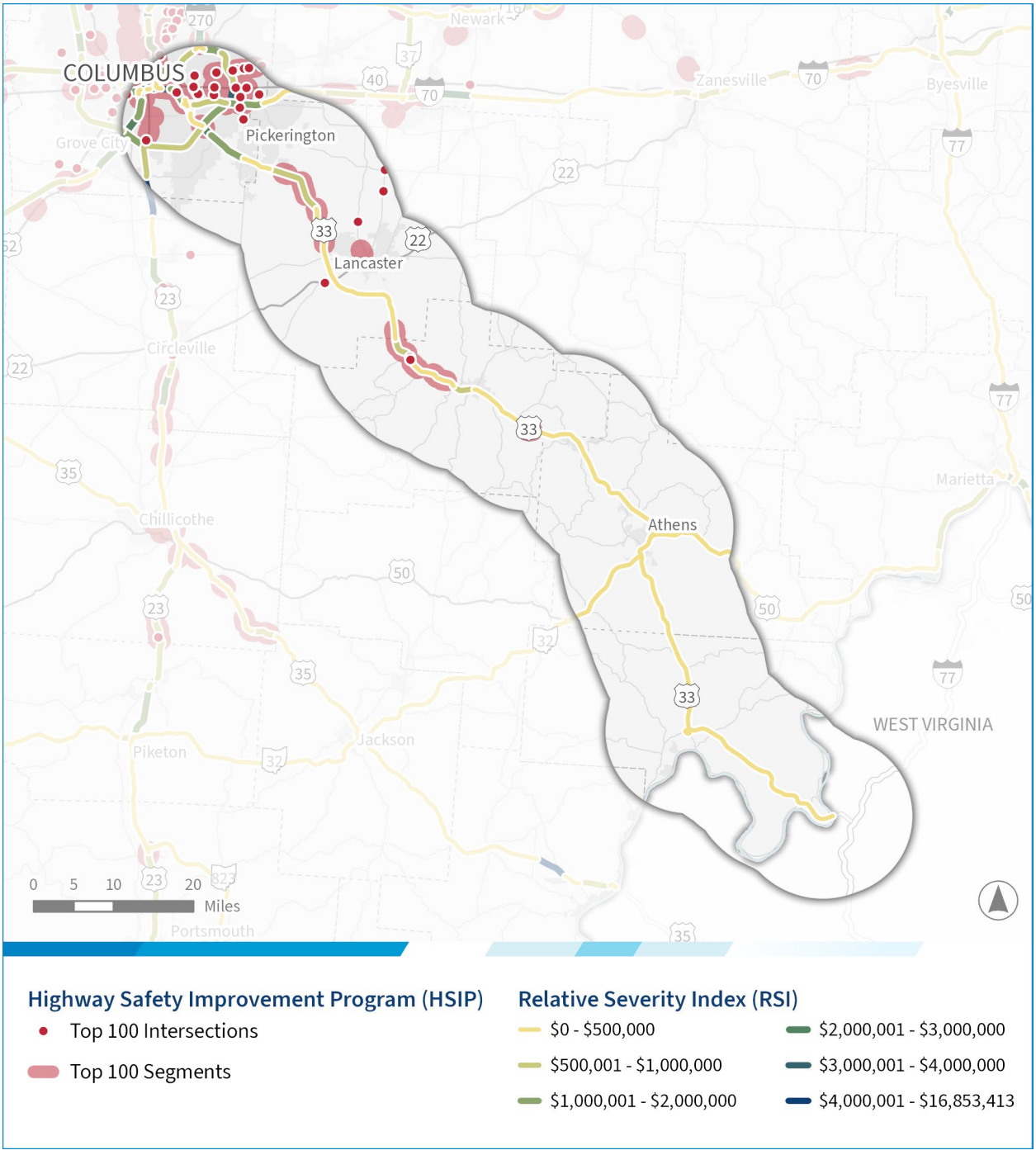
The four VRU crashes occurred at the following locations:

- Pedestrian crash just north of US22 interchange in Fairfield County (No priority segment)
- Bicycle crash just south of Sharp Road in Fairfield County (No priority segment)
- Pedestrian crash just south of Rockridge Road in Hocking County (No priority segment)
- Bicycle crash at intersection with Pleasanton Road in Athens County (No priority segment)

Key Safety Takeaways

- The majority of HSIP locations are located on the northern third of the corridor.
- The more significant RSI values occur from the I-270 interchange to Lancaster.
- From 2020 to 2023, there were four VRU-involved crashes on the 106-mile corridor.

FIGURE 18—CORRIDOR SAFETY LOCATIONS



Source: ODOT, Study Team

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

No significant environmental hazards along the Columbus-WV focus corridor contribute to recurring safety issues such as rock falls or landslides. Some sections of the corridor may be subject to flooding during heavy rain events where waterways are adjacent or intersect with US33.

GEOMETRIC

Mileage by Functional Classification

The 106-mile Columbus-WV focus corridor comprises two functional classification categories, including 57 miles of principal arterial - freeway and 49 miles of principal arterial - other, as shown in **Table 7.** The principal arterial - freeway classification is primarily found from the I-270 interchange southward to Pleasant Hill Road, just south of the City of Athens. Within this segment of US33, three sections are not principal arterial - freeway but are instead classified as Principal Arterial Other located at:

- Diley Road interchange to Allen Road
- Sharp Road to SR180 (Chieftain Drive)
- New Floodwood Road to Upper River Road

The remainder of the US33 corridor from Pleasant Hill Road southward to the West Virginia state line is classified as Principal Arterial Other.

TABLE 7—SUMMARY OF FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS BY LINEAR MILES

US33 from I-270 (Columbus, OH) to West Virginia (Ravenswood, WV)	Centerline Mileage
Principal Arterial—Interstate	0 miles
Principal Arterial—Freeway	57 miles
Principal Arterial—Other	49 miles
Minor Arterial	0 miles
Major Collector	0 miles
Minor Collector	0 miles

Mileage by Ownership

In general, ODOT owns and maintains interstate, US, and state routes in Ohio. Due to Ohio's status as a home-rule state, ownership and maintenance of US and state routes within municipal boundaries are typically devolved to the

local municipality, see **Table 8**. Interstate routes are owned and maintained by ODOT or the Turnpike Commission, regardless of their location.

On the Columbus-WV focus corridor, ODOT is responsible for approximately 88% of the US33 mainline, 93.8 of the 106.2 miles. The US33 route travels through various entities comprised of five counties, seven cities, and one village that include:

- Franklin, Fairfield, Hocking, Athens, and Meigs counties
- Cities of Columbus, Groveport, Canal Winchester, Lancaster, Logan, Nelsonville, and Athens
- Village of Carroll

TABLE 8—ROADWAY OWNERSHIP BY AGENCY

County	Ownership	Centerline Mileage
Franklin County	ODOT	2.7 miles
	Columbus (City)	1.5 miles
	Groveport (City)	0.4 miles
	Canal Winchester (City)	2.2 miles
Fairfield County	ODOT	22.5 miles
	Canal Winchester (City)	0.6 miles
	Carroll (Village)	0.7 miles
	Lancaster (City)	1.1 mile
Hocking County	ODOT	18.2 miles
	Logan (City)	1.8 miles
Athens County	ODOT	21.3 miles
	Nelsonville (City)	2.3 miles
	Athens (City)	1.8 miles
Meigs County	ODOT	29.1 miles

TYPICAL SECTION

Lanes and Shoulders

As shown in **Figure 20** and **Table 9**, US33 is predominately a four-lane divided facility throughout the 106-mile corridor with inside paved shoulders varying from four to 12 feet wide with outside paved shoulders varying from eight to 12 feet wide. There are two remaining two-lane undivided sections located south of Athens. One of these two-lane undivided sections starts just west of Pleasant Hill Road in Athens County, see **Figure 19**, and continues eastward to just west of SR681, Meigs County. This section of a two-lane undivided roadway is approximately 9.75 miles long. The second segment is a 15.2-mile segment located in Meigs County that runs from just east of the SR7 interchange and continues eastward to the West Virginia state line on the two-lane bridge over the Ohio River.

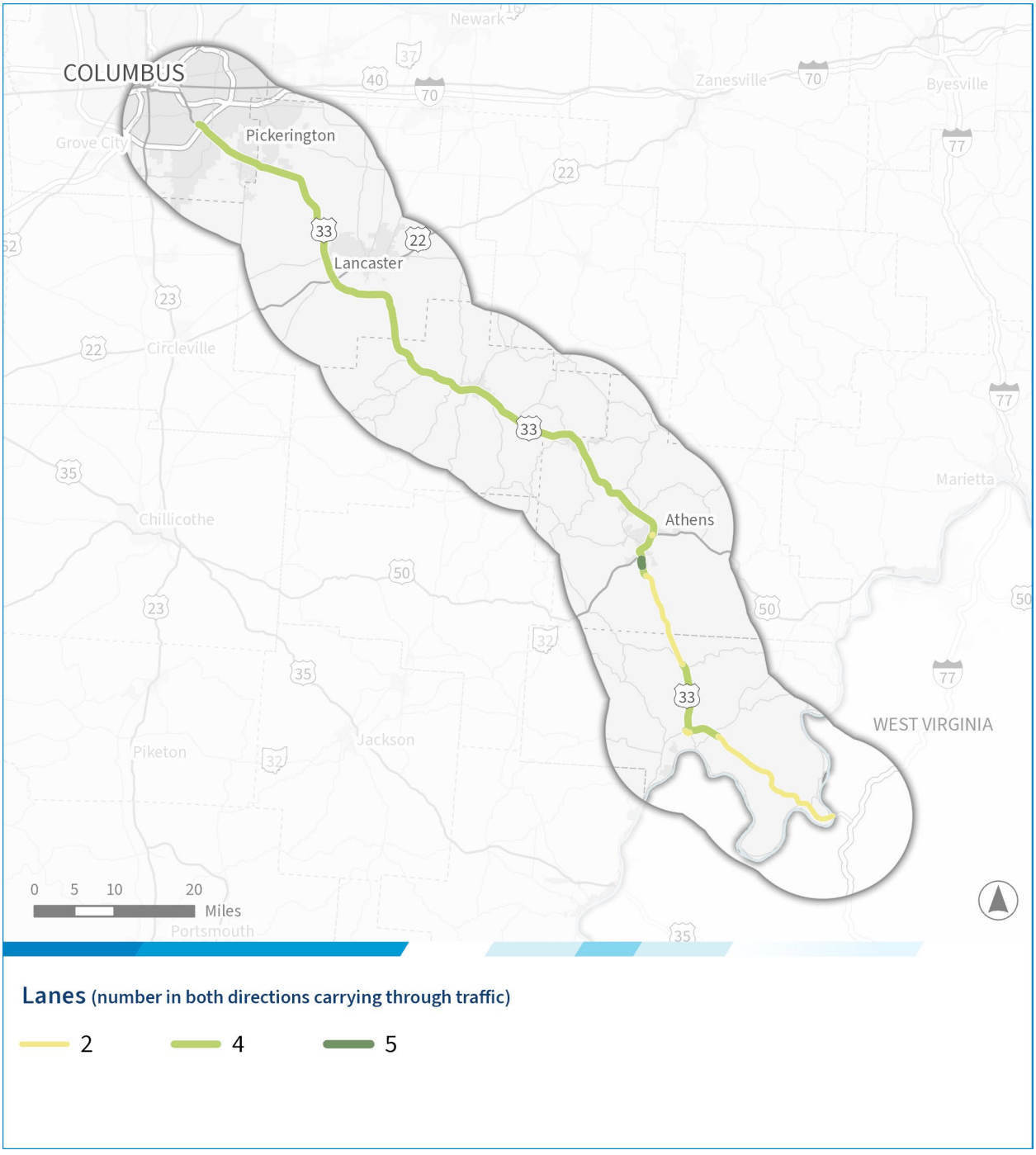
TABLE 9—CORRIDOR SEGMENT LANES

Corridor Segment	Through Lanes
US33, I-270—Franklin County to West of Pleasant Hill Road in Athens County	4
US33, west of Pleasant Hill Road in Athens County to West of SR681 in Meigs County	2
US33, west of SR681 to East of SR7 in Meigs County	4
US33, east of SR7 in Meigs County to the Ohio-West Virginia state line	2

FIGURE 19—TRANSITION FROM FOUR-LANE TO TWO-LANE SECTION OF US33 NEAR PLEASANT HILL ROAD (ATHENS COUNTY)



FIGURE 20—NUMBER OF LANES



Source: ODOT, Study Team

Median Treatments

US33, within the focus corridor study scope, is predominately a four-lane divided facility throughout the 106-mile corridor. The four lanes are separated by a grass median ranging from approximately 50 feet but narrowing to 16 feet in some areas. Two-lane undivided sections are present east of the City of Athens to the west of SR681 in Meigs County and from just east of SR7 to the Ohio-West Virginia state line in Meigs County.

ROADWAY ALIGNMENT

Horizontal and Vertical Curves

The existing alignment of the US33 corridor was not found to have any apparent existing horizontal or vertical curve issues, given the current speed limits on the corridor. However, there are gradual inclines and declines, as depicted in **Figure 21.**

FIGURE 21—ELEVATION CHANGES OCCUR ON PARTS OF US33 CORRIDOR BUT ARE GRADUAL INCLINES AND DECLINES



ACCESS

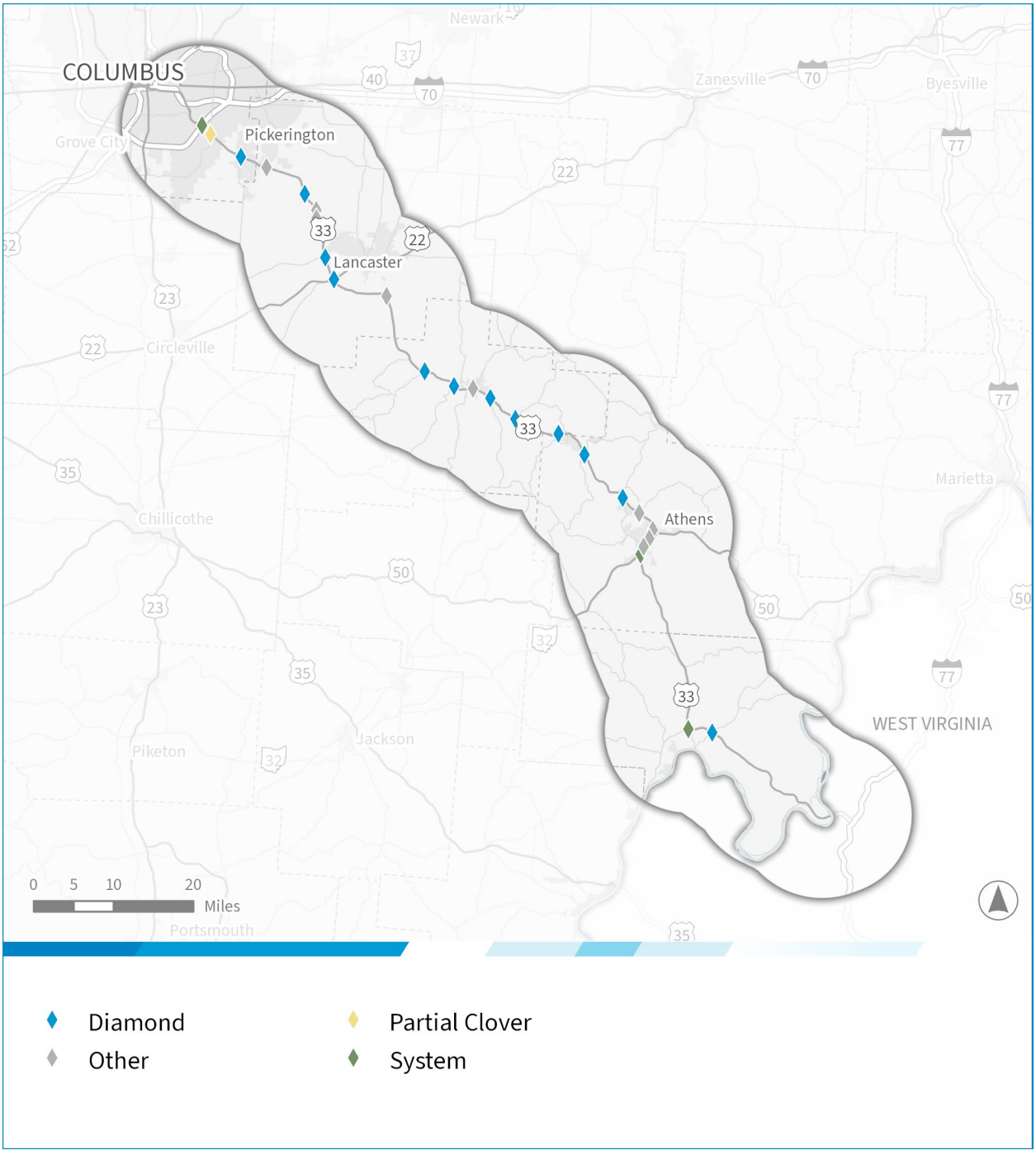
Major Access

There are 45 at-grade intersections and 26 interchanges, see **Figure 23**, on the Columbus-WV focus corridor. The corridor begins with a mix of interchanges and at-grade intersections between I-270 and the High Street/Winchester Road interchange near the Village of Carroll. Then, access is controlled along US33 around the City of Lancaster to the Tarkiln Road interchange. Between the Tarkiln Road interchange and the SR180 interchange, there are several private drive access points and at-grade intersections. The section from the SR180 interchange to the east side of the City of Nelsonville again becomes access controlled before experiencing more private drive access points, as seen in **Figure 22**, and at-grade intersections until just west of the City of Athens. Access is controlled through and slightly beyond the City of Athens, where US33 changes to a two-lane undivided section near Pleasant Hill Road. West of SR681 is where US33 becomes a four-lane divided highway again and experiences a mixture of interchanges, as displayed in Figure 23, and at-grade intersections until just east of the SR7 interchange. US33 then switches back to a two-lane undivided highway with several at-grade intersections until terminating at the Ohio River.

FIGURE 22—PRIVATE DRIVE ACCESS TO FOUR-LANE SECTION OF US33 (FAIRFIELD COUNTY)

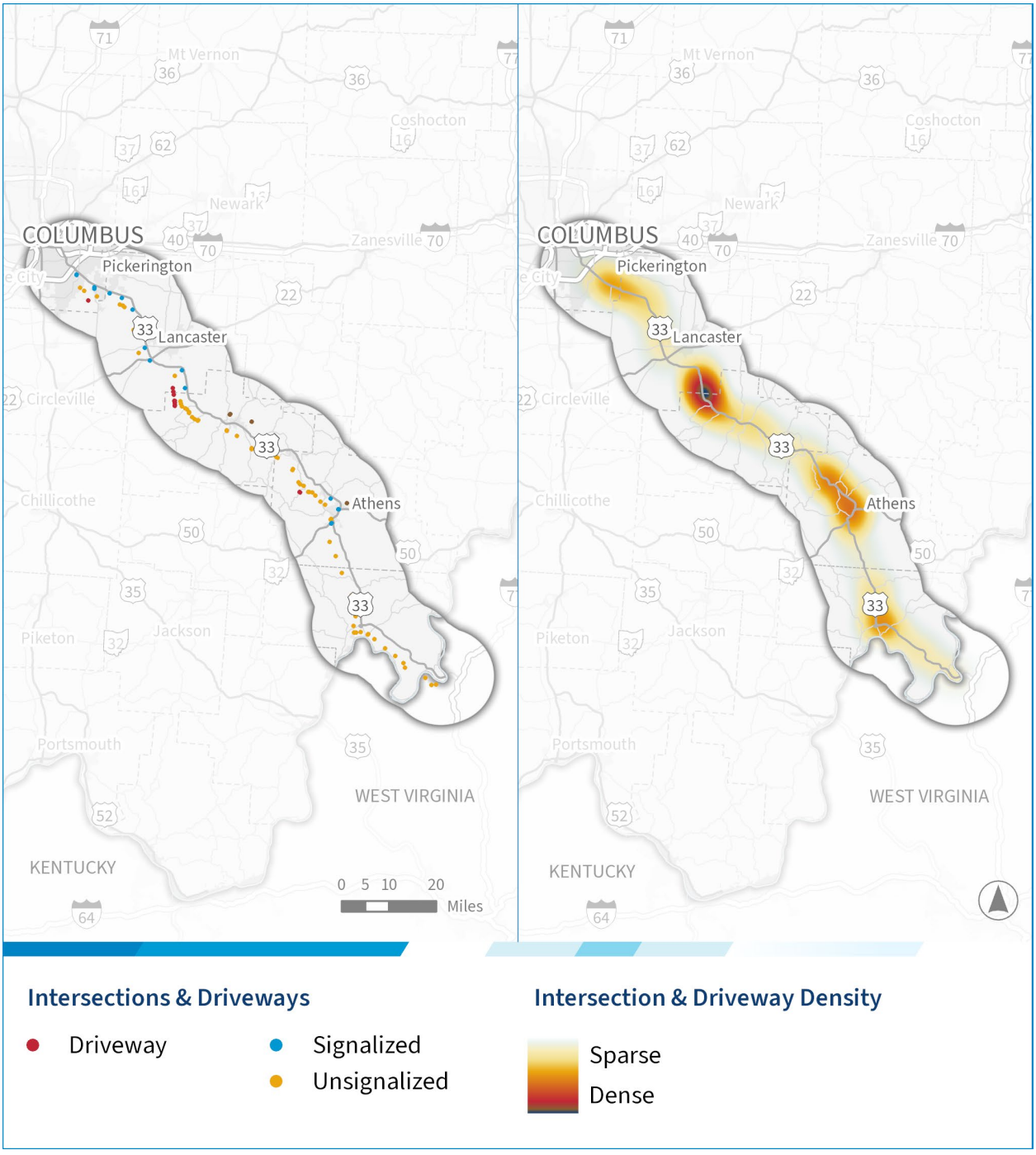


FIGURE 23—CORRIDOR INTERCHANGES



Source: Study Team

FIGURE 24—CORRIDOR INTERSECTIONS/DRIVEWAY HEATMAP



Source: Study Team

Driveway Access

As illustrated in **Figure 24**, 14 private drive access points are observed along the US33 corridor. Nine of these driveways provide access to agricultural properties. The remaining five service commercial properties, the Wayne National Forest headquarters facility shown in **Figure 25**, and an undetermined property use. There are 11 driveways located within a stretch of approximately 3.5 miles east of the Tarkiln Road interchange.

FIGURE 25—WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST HEADQUARTERS WELCOME CENTER PRIVATE ACCESS ON US33 (ATHENS COUNTY)



Access Management and Local Development

The Columbus-WV focus corridor is predominately a four-lane divided facility. However, two segments remain a two-lane undivided highway. Access along the corridor switches between partial and full control. As stated in previous sections, there are 26 interchanges, 45 at-grade intersections (see **Figure 26)**, and 14 private driveways observed along the corridor. The highest concentration of access points, driveways and intersections, occurs within the 8.75-mile segment between the Tarkiln Road interchange in Fairfield County and the SR180 interchange in Hocking County. This area experiences, on average, 2.4 access points per mile due to the 11 private driveways and 10 at-grade intersections.

Access control types in **Table 10** and **Figure 27** are defined by the ODOT Technical Services and Roadway Information GIS (RIGIS) and were field-verified as part of the corridor's development. Access control is categorized as:

- **Full Access Control:** Preference is given to through-traffic movements by providing interchanges with selected public roads and by prohibiting crossing at-grade and direct driveway connections, e.g., limited access to the facility.

- **Partial Access Control:** Preference given to through-traffic movement. In addition to interchanges, there may be some at-grade crossings with public roads, but direct private driveway connections have been minimized using frontage roads or other local access restrictions. Control of curb cuts is not considered access control.
- **No Access Control:** No degree of access control exists, i.e., full access to the facility is permitted.

The corridor begins as partially controlled, with interchanges and at-grade intersections between I-270 and the High Street/Winchester Road interchange near the Village of Carroll. Then, access becomes fully controlled along US33 around the City of Lancaster to the Tarkiln Road interchange. There is a high concentration of access points between the Tarkiln Road and the SR180 interchanges. The segment from SR180 to Elm Rock Road on the east side of the City of Nelsonville again becomes fully controlled, then partially controlled until SR682 just west of the City of Athens. Access is fully controlled through the City of Athens, then US33 reduces to a two-lane undivided section near Pleasant Hill Road. The two-lane section between Pleasant Hill Road and SR681 is partially controlled, with some grade-separated intersections and three at-grade intersections widely spaced along this 9.7-mile section. At SR681, US33 becomes a four-lane divided highway once again but remains partially controlled and experiences a mixture of interchanges and at-grade intersections until the SR7 interchange. US33 returns to a two-lane undivided highway with a few grade-separated intersections and sporadically spaced at-grade intersections until terminating at the Ohio-West Virginia state line.

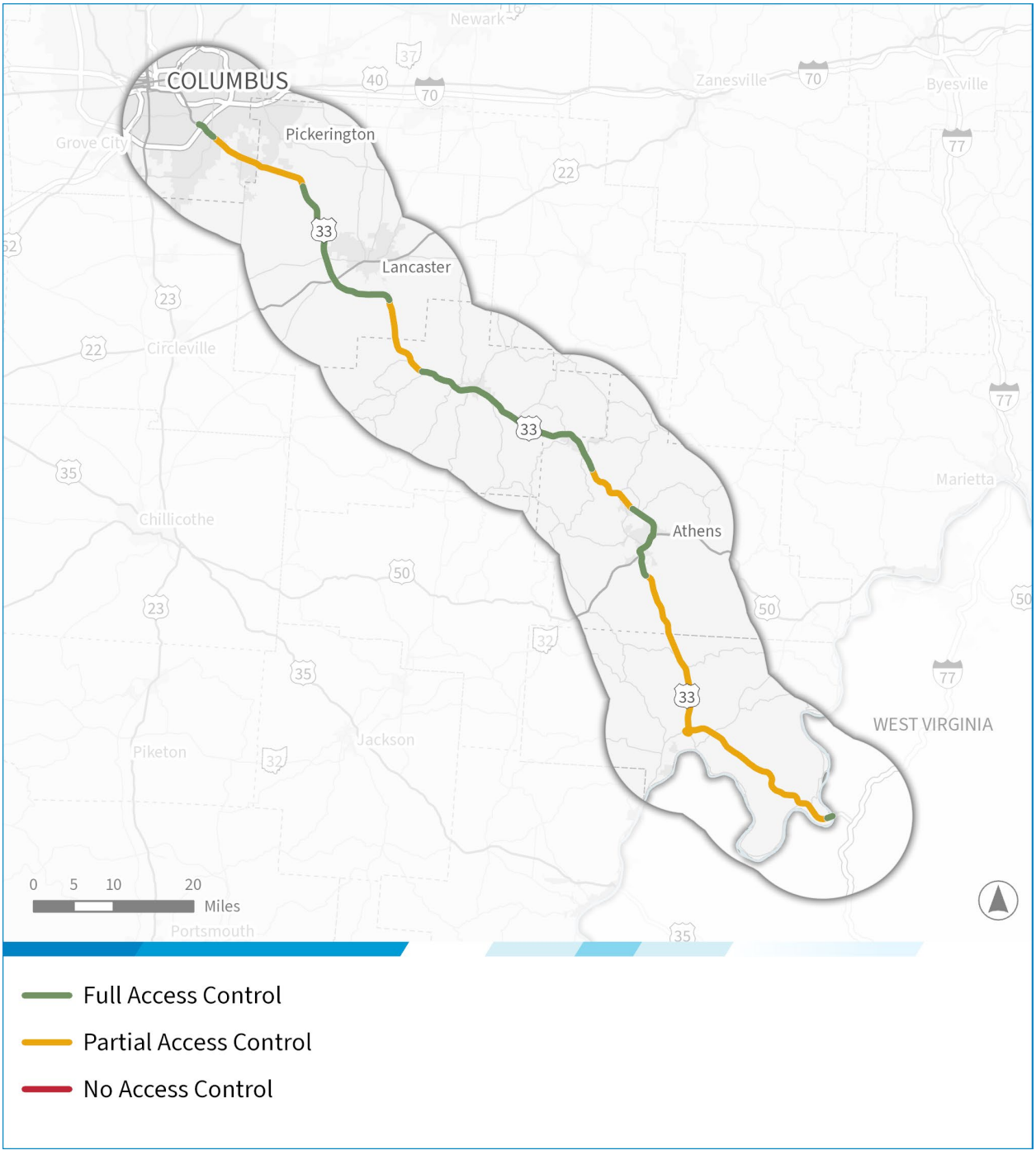
FIGURE 26—US33 AND SUGAR GROVE ROAD AT-GRADE SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION (FAIRFIELD COUNTY)



TABLE 10—ACCESS CONTROL SUMMARY

US33 from I-270 (Columbus) to West Virginia (Ravenswood)	Centerline Mileage	Access Control
I-270 in Franklin County to High Street/Winchester Road in Fairfield County	12.7 mile	Partial Access Control
High Street/Winchester Road to Tarkiln Road in Fairfield County	14.7 mile	Full Access Control
Tarkiln Road in Fairfield County to SR180 in Hocking County	8.8 mile	Partial Access Control
SR180, Hocking County to Elm Rock Road in Athens County	21 miles	Full Access Control
Elm Rock Road to SR682 in Athens County	3.9 mile	Partial Access Control
SR682 to Pleasant Hill Road in Athens County	9.7 mile	Full Access Control
Pleasant Hill Road in Athens County to SR681 in Meigs County	9.7 mile	Partial Access Control
SR681 to SR7 in Meigs County	10 miles	Partial Access Control
SR7 to the Ohio-West Virginia state line in Meigs County	15.6 mile	Partial Access Control

FIGURE 27—CORRIDOR ACCESS CONTROL



Source: ODOT, Study Team

Rail Crossings

Table 11—Railroad Crossing Summary lists the 19 railroad crossings within a half mile of the corridor or that US33 crosses over. Thirteen of these railroad crossings are located within Fairfield County. Seven of the railroad crossings are grade-separated, leaving 12 that remain at-grade crossings. There are three at-grade railroad crossings, see **Figure 28**, located on a side road that intersects a frontage road to the US33 corridor. Several adjacent at-grade railroad crossings could be challenging in projects that intend to remove nearby intersection access at US33.

TABLE 11—RAILROAD CROSSING SUMMARY

Crossing	Location	Crossing Type
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with SR674/Gender Road	Franklin County	At-Grade (within ½-mile of US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with N. High Street	Franklin County	At-Grade (within ½-mile of US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Diley Road	Fairfield County	Roadway Over Railroad (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Pickerington Road	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Thorn Lane	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Allen Road	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Allen Road	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Winchester Road	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33, intersecting frontage road)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Carroll-Southern Road	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33, intersecting frontage road)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with US33	Fairfield County	US33 Over Railroad (mainline of US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Coonpath Road	Fairfield County	Roadway Over Railroad (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Horns Mill Road	Fairfield County	At-Grade (within ½-mile of US33, intersecting frontage road)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Sugar Grove Road	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Private Driveway	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with Private Driveway	Fairfield County	At-Grade (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with SR93	Hocking County	Roadway Over Railroad (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with SR328	Hocking County	Roadway Over Railroad (adjacent to US33)
Indiana & Ohio Railroad with US33	Hocking County	US33 Over Railroad (mainline of US33)
Kanawha River Railroad with US33	Athens County	US33 Over Railroad (mainline of US33)

FIGURE 28—RAILROAD CROSSING IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO US33 AT PICKERINGTON ROAD (FAIRFIELD COUNTY)



Key Railroad Crossing Takeaways

- All rail crossings of US33 are already grade-separated facilities.
- The remainder of the documented railroad crossings are within a half mile of US33, and several adjacent railroad crossings are within several hundred feet of mainline US33.
- Railroad crossings immediately adjacent to US33 create design issues when at-grade intersections are upgraded to interchanges or when the US33 corridor is widened.

OPERATIONAL

The Columbus-WV focus corridor is a four-lane facility for approximately 80.5 miles of the 106-mile corridor. The two remaining two-lane sections, approximately 25.5 miles, are in Athens and Meigs counties. There is a mix of interchanges and at-grade intersections throughout the corridor on the roadway's four-lane and two-lane sections. Engagement with the ODOT Districts 5, 6, and 10 provided input on various proposed projects to reduce congestion, increase capacity, and enhance safety along the US33 corridor. These projects and their details will be discussed further in the Investments section.

Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO)and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

ODOT has installed and maintained nine cameras along the corridor. Six are installed within interchange areas; the other three are at major intersections or parallel to the mainline. Two ITS message boards are operating and ready to relay important traffic information to passing motorists when necessary. One message board is between the I-270 and SR317/Hamilton Road interchanges, and the other is just west of the SR550 interchange near the City of Athens.

Lighting

Highway lighting is mainly present in urban interchange areas, the four rest areas along the corridor, and the final section of the highway between the Great Bend Road intersection and the Ohio River bridge. It primarily consists of conventional cobra head luminaires, with some tower lighting installed at the newly constructed interchanges.

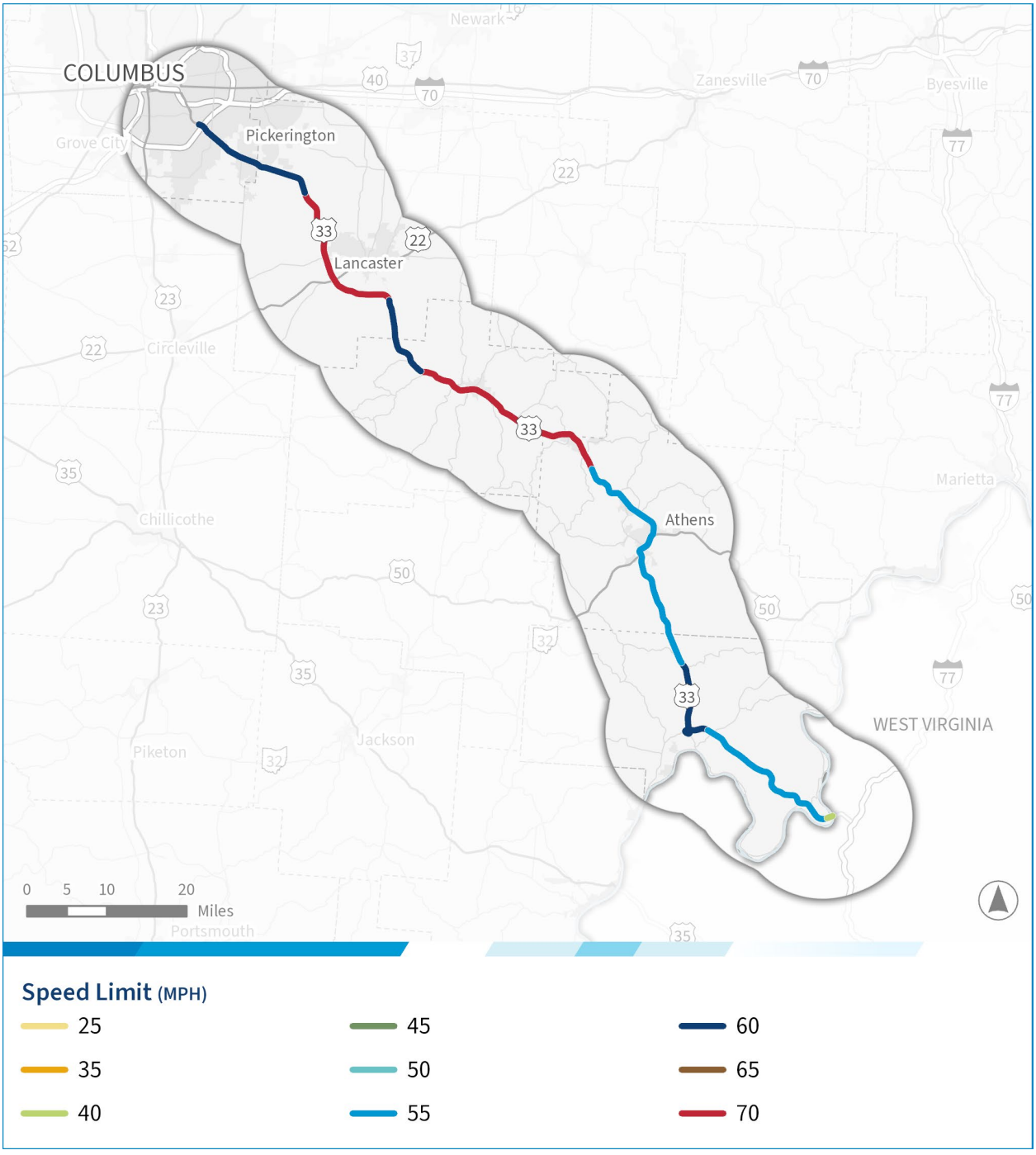
Speed Limits

Figure 29 illustrates the varying speeds along the focus corridor. The posted speed limit along the corridor is 60 mph from the I-270 interchange to approximately one mile west of the High Street/Winchester Road interchange, where it increases to 70 mph, see **Figure 25.** The speed limit decreases back to 60 mph near the east end of the Tarkiln Road interchange and remains so until just after the Dalton Road / Risch Road intersection, where it increases to 70 mph once again. The speed limit remains 70 mph until it decreases to 55 mph, approximately three-quarters of a mile west of the Elm Rock Road intersection near Nelsonville. The speed limit increases to 60 mph near the SR681 at-grade connector intersection and remains so until just west of the SR7 interchange, where once again it reduces to 55 mph. The final speed limit transition occurs near the Cleek Road/Great Bend Road intersection, where it reduces from 55 mph to 40 mph before crossing the Ohio River bridge into West Virginia.

Key Operational Takeaways

- The congestion risk areas of the US33 corridor are on the northern third of the 106-mile corridor.
- These congestion issues can partially be attributed to growth being spurred by the Rickenbacker International Airport, the new Intel semiconductor chip manufacturing plant under construction, and the growth of housing developments.
- According to Ohio's Freight Plan, the US33 corridor has the highest category of truck traffic growth. Much of this growth can be attributed to Rickenbacker Inland Port and the expanding adjacent warehouse and logistics businesses.

FIGURE 29—CORRIDOR SPEED LIMITS



Source: ODOT with field verification by Study Team

MULTIMODAL

Multimodal Characteristics

Four public transit bus services provide public transportation opportunities along parts of the US33 corridor. These public transit agencies serve the Columbus and Canal Winchester areas, the Pickerington, Carroll, and Lancaster areas, the Nelsonville and Athens areas, and the Hocking County area. The public transit services are described in **Table 13** below.

Intercity Bus Service

In addition to the public transit services on the US33 corridor, the GoBus service also provides city-to-city bus services in Ohio, as shown in **Figure 30.** The GoBus service has seven bus stops adjacent to the corridor, as outlined in **Table 12** below.

TABLE 12—INTERCITY BUS SERVICE

GoBus Stops	Mileage on Corridor	Cities Served
Athens Community Center		Athens
Ohio University in Athens		Athens
Hocking Technical College in Nelsonville		Nelsonville
Main Street in Logan	67.8 Miles	Logan
Coonpath Road near Lancaster		Lancaster
Columbus Greyhound Bus Depot		Columbus
John Glenn Columbus International Airport		Columbus

FIGURE 30—GOBUS TRANSPORTATION SERVICE IN OHIO



Source: GoBus, 2023 Route Map, https://ridegobus.com/routes/

Public Transit Service

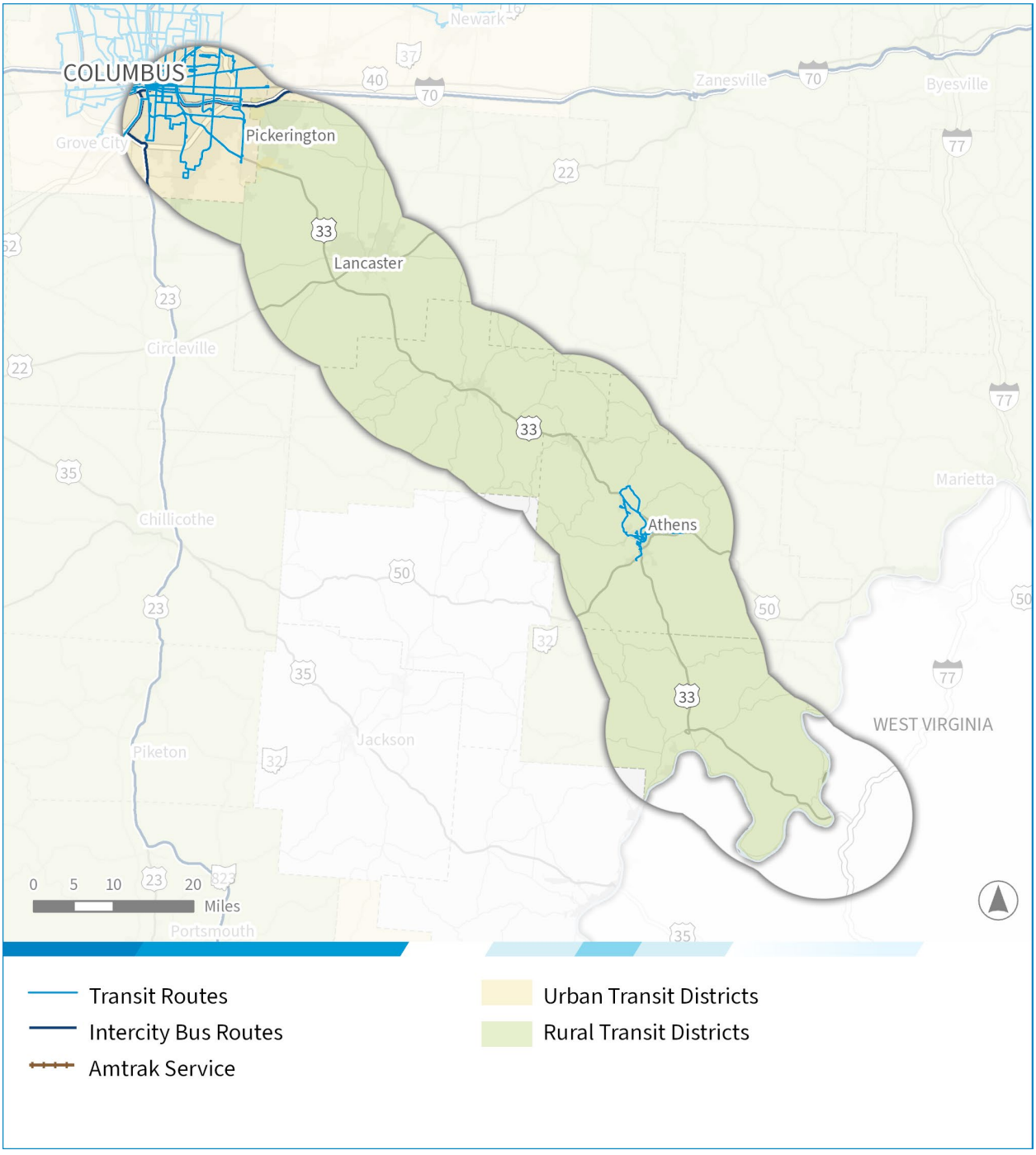
Three public transit services, Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit, and Athens Public Transit, have routes on US33. The routes are illustrated in **Figure 30.** In addition to these transit services on US33, Logan Public Transit, a demand response-based service for Hocking County, is shown in **Table 13**.

- COTA
  - COTA Line 52 provides rush hour service on US33 from I-270 to Gender Road (SR674) in Canal Winchester
- Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit
  - Carroll Route and North Route travel on US33 from Pickerington to Lancaster
- Athens Public Transit
  - Route 7N travels on US33 between Nelsonville and Athens

TABLE 13—PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE

Transit Service Description	Mileage on Corridor	Areas Served
COTA Line 52, rush hour service line on US33 from I-270 to Gender Road (SR674) in Canal Winchester	5.0 miles	Columbus and Canal Winchester
Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit on US33 from Pickerington to Lancaster, Carroll Route, and North Route	9.6 miles	Pickerington, Carroll, and Lancaster
Athens Public Transit on US33 from Nelsonville to Athens, Route 7N	8.9 miles	Nelsonville and Athens
Logan Public Transit, demand response public transportation	N/A	Hocking County

FIGURE 31—CORRIDOR TRANSIT ROUTES AND DISTRICTS



Source: ODOT, National Transit Database

Intersecting Bike Facilities

State and US bike routes are illustrated in **Figure 32**. Three state bike routes (SBRs), SBR33, SBR65, and SBR20, cross the US33 corridor from I-270 southward to Athens. These bike routes cross US33 at seven locations, as outlined below. Six of seven crossings are grade-separated, and one is an at-grade intersection. In addition to these state bike routes, the Alum Creek Multi-Use Trail is located along the west side of US33 just north of the I-270 interchange, just outside the US33 study limits. The Big Walnut Creek multi-use path is adjacent to US33 near the Gender Road interchange.

SBR33 crosses the US33 corridor at the following location:

- Diley Road, overpass, in Canal Winchester

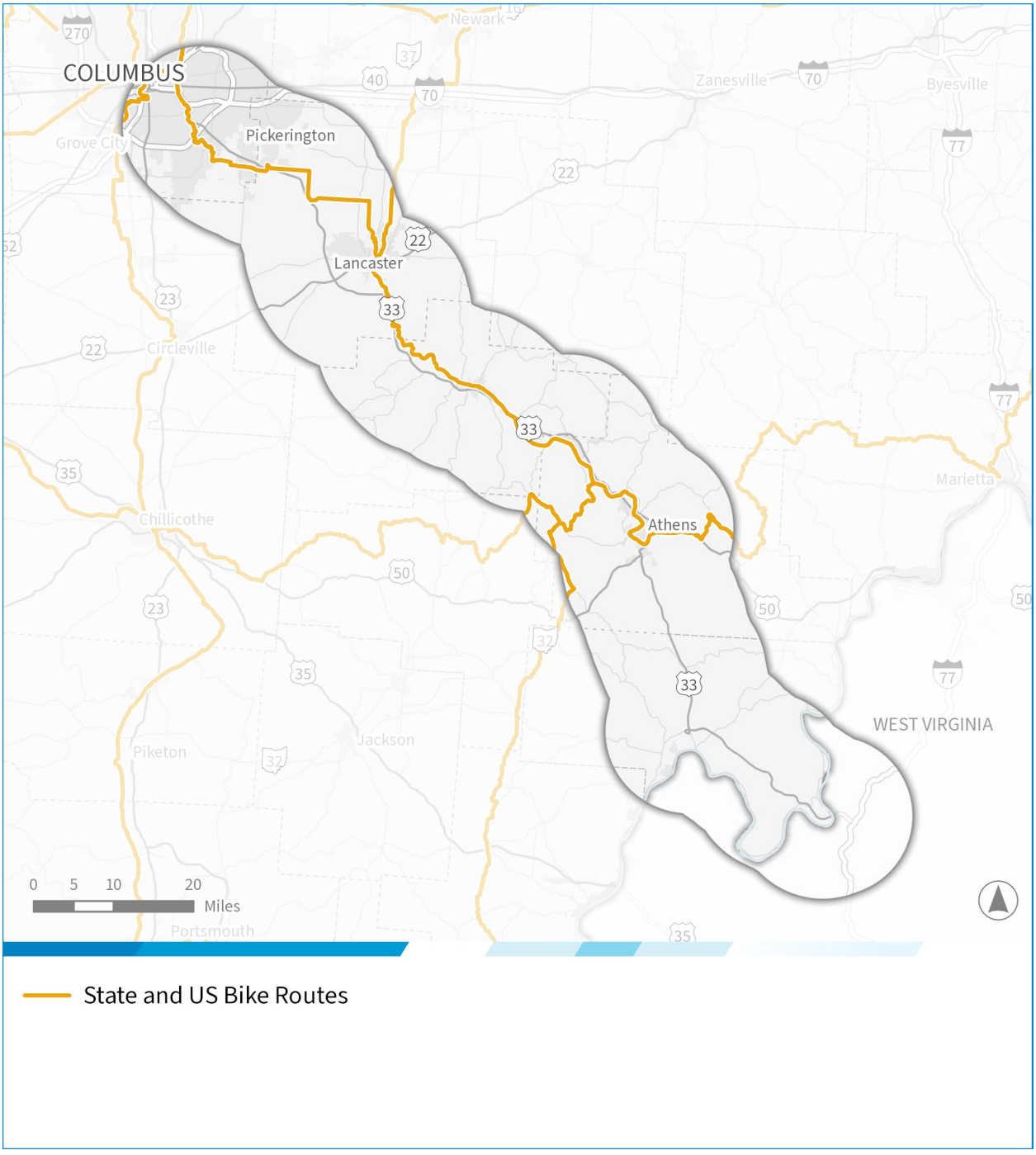
SBR65 crosses the US33 corridor at the following locations:

- Tarkiln Road, underpass, near Lancaster
- Sharp Road/Main Street, at-grade intersection, in Sugar Grove
- Haydenville Road/SR595, overpass, in Haydenville

SBR20 crosses the US33 corridor at the following locations:

- Hamley Run Road, underpass, in Beaumont, SBR20 passes under US33
- Overpass of Railroad in The Plains, SBR20 passes under US33
- Overpass of Hocking River in Athens, SBR20 passes under US33

FIGURE 32—CORRIDOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION



Source: ODOT

Adjacent Pedestrian Facilities

No sidewalks are adjacent to the Columbus-WV focus corridor throughout its 106-mile length. Generally, sidewalks are in the suburbs, small towns, and villages along the corridor. The ODOT Safety Map Viewer indicates that many of these communities, and on the roadways that pass over or under US33, have medium to high pedestrian priority segments needing pedestrian facility safety enhancements. As the remaining at-grade intersections are revised to interchanges or access is cut off, the design of these facilities should incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities into them where feasible to allow improved access for these vulnerable roadway users.

Intermodal Points

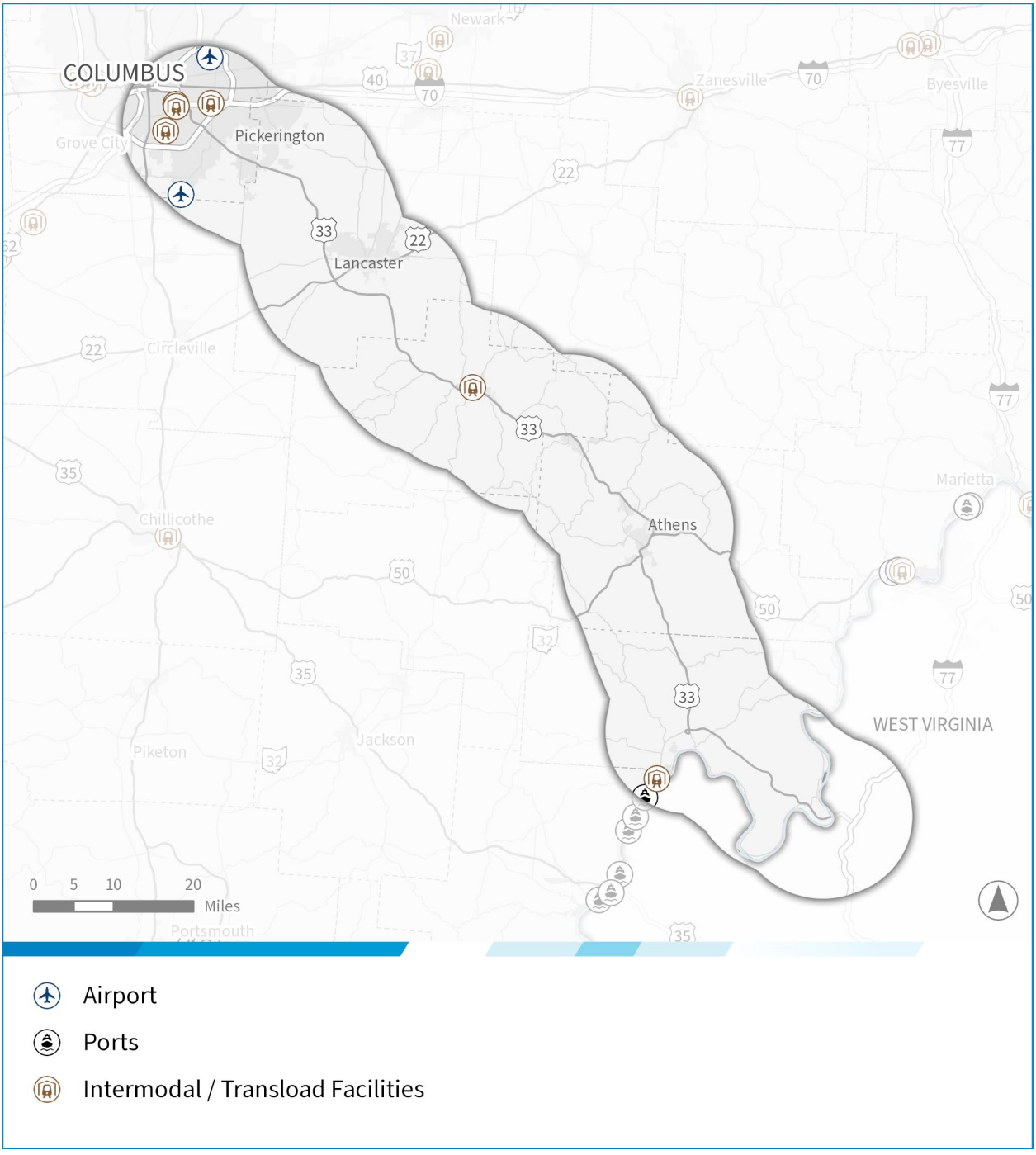
The corridor has two intermodal sites, as noted in **Table 14** and shown in **Figure 33**, that utilize US33. These include the Rickenbacker International Airport and Inland Port, located just west of the northern portion of the corridor and served by the US33 and SR317 (Hamilton Road) interchange. The intermodal facility ships goods between airplanes, trucks, and rail. The US33 corridor has the highest category of truck traffic growth per Ohio's Freight Plan, and much of this truck traffic growth can be attributed to the Rickenbacker International Airport and the expanding use of the Inland Port facilities.

The second intermodal facility adjacent to the US33 corridor is the Keynes Brothers Grain Elevator in Logan. This facility is served by both trucks and trains. Truck traffic for the grain elevator accesses US33 via the interchange at SR93 (Mulberry Street).

TABLE 14—INTERMODAL SERVICE

Intermodal Points	Type	Location
Rickenbacker International Airport and Inland Port	Airport / Truck / Rail	Columbus
Keynes Brothers Inc. Grain Elevator	Truck / Rail	Logan

FIGURE 33—INTERMODAL POINTS



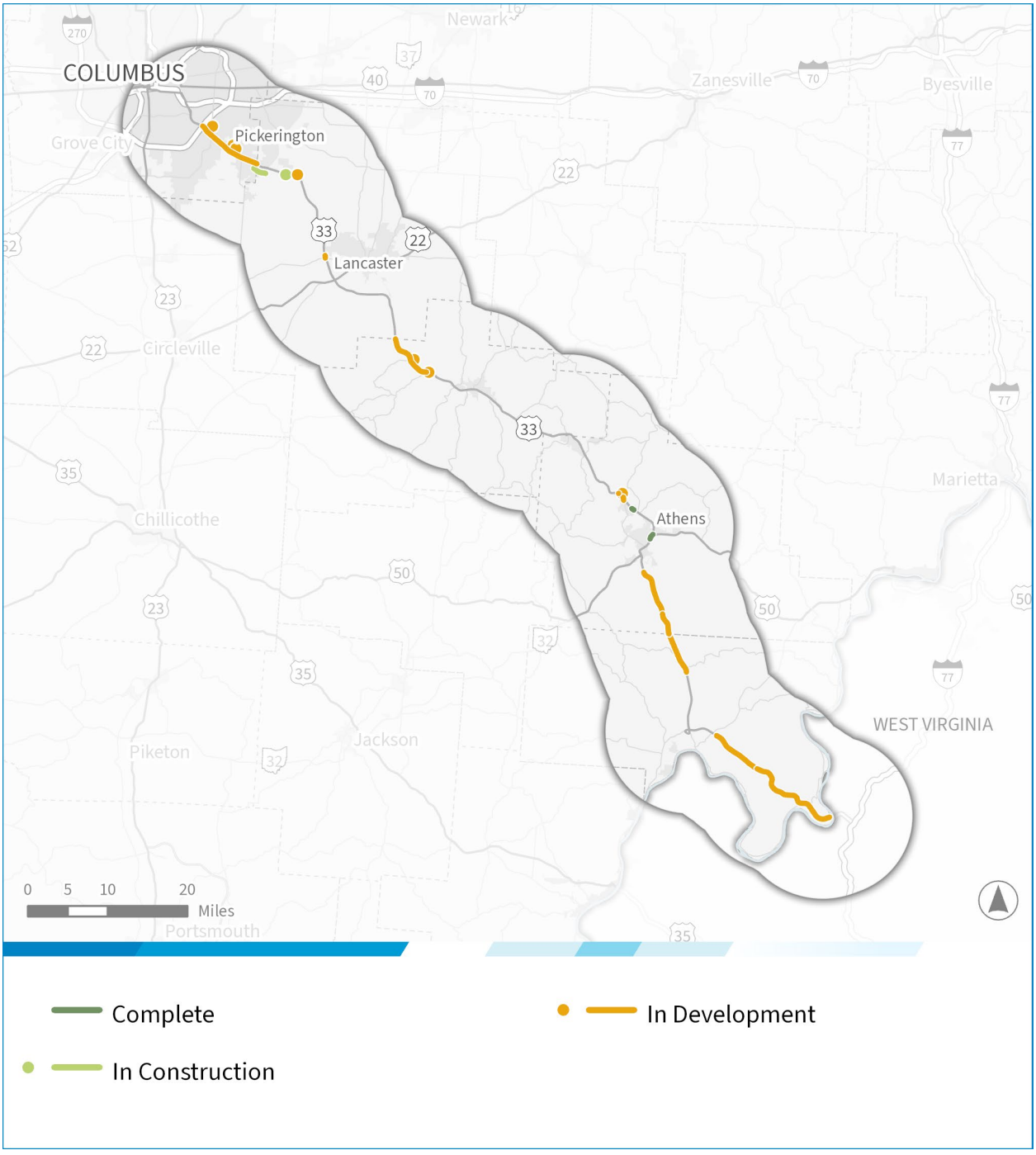
Source: ODOT, Study Team

Corridor Investments

PROJECT LOCATION MAP

The corridor investments section summarizes the totality of ODOT investment, completed, in construction, in development, and proposed, in the Columbus-WV corridor. This assessment was based on project data gathered from ODOT databases in August 2024 and verified through ODOT Districts in the corridor. **Figure 34** visually represents the number of projects between Columbus and West Virginia by phase. This representation may not directly compare with the projects in the subsequent summary tables due to the additional grouping of projects used to assess hotspot analysis in the Needs and Project Gaps section.

FIGURE 34—PROJECT LOCATION MAP



Source: ODOT

IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY

The Columbus-WV focus corridor encompasses 19 projects with an investment of approximately $878 million, shown by phase in **Table 15.** These projects are located along the US33 corridor, starting from I-270 in Columbus to the Ohio-West Virginia border at the Ohio River. Projects proposed over the past 10 years, between 2015 and 2024, are categorized based on their current phase.

- **Completed:** Projects that have been fully executed and finished since 2015. Projects before 2015 were not included.
- **In Construction:** Projects currently underway with active construction.
- **In Development:** Projects in the planning or design stages, where concepts for future construction are being developed.
- **ODOT Proposed:** Projects that have been considered but have not yet started.

Projects included in regional long-range plans were also collected and considered within the gap analysis.

TABLE 15—PROJECTS BY PHASE

Project Phase	Number of Projects	Funding Amount
Completed Projects	2	$11 million
In Construction	1	$1 million
In Development	14	$664 million
ODOT Proposed	1	$201 million
TOTAL	**19**	**$877 million**

Completed Projects

Two projects, one major and one minor, along the US33 corridor between Columbus and the Ohio River, have been completed and are open for use, as shown in **Table 16**. Both projects are in Athens County and focused on safety and interchange rehabilitation. The total investment for these improvements was $10.6 million.

TABLE 16—COMPLETED PROJECTS

Project Name (PID #):	**ATH US 33 14.400 (PID 1106553)**				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Year of Completion:**
Athens County	10	Southeast	Roadway Minor Rehab	Complete	2024
Project Description: Major rehabilitation of ATH-33/50 interchange.					
Funding Status	**Project Cost**		**Funded**		**Unfunded**
Fully Funded	$10,427,800		$10,427,800		$0

Project Name (PID #):	**ATH US33 10.800 (PID 113229)**				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Year of Completion:**
Athens County	10	Southeast	Intersection Improvement (Safety)	Complete	2021
Project Description: Access Management / Safety Closure of US33 median, removal of existing left turn lanes, and disconnect CR 7, Johnson Road, from US33. The intersection with River Road will remain as right in, right out. ATH US33 10.80-11.06 and ATH CR 7 1.00-1.06.					
Funding Status	**Project Cost**		**Funded**		**Unfunded**
Fully Funded	$184,098		$184,098		$0

Projects In Construction

Table 17 describes the construction project along the US33 corridor between Columbus and the Ohio River. This minor project implements roadside safety median improvements in Franklin and Fairfield counties. Its cost is just over $1 million.

TABLE 17—IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Project Name (PID #):	FAI/FRA US33 0.00/30.06 (PID 115526)				
Location:	ODOT District:	JobsOhio Region:	Work Category:	Project Status:	Estimated Year of Completion:
Fairfield County and Franklin County	5 and 6	Central	Roadside / Median Improvement (Safety)	In Construction	2024
Project Description: Cable barrier installation along US33 in Franklin and Fairfield counties.					

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$1,020,207	$1,020,207	$0

Projects In Development

Fifteen projects along the US33 corridor between Columbus and the Ohio River project are in development and described in **Table 18.** These projects are actively being developed, with design, environmental, and/or right-of-way tasks underway. They are in Athens, Fairfield, Franklin, Hocking, and Meigs counties. Nine projects in development are major projects, and seven are minor projects. Five of the major projects are widening projects that will add capacity to US33. The other four projects are interchange improvements that provide capacity-related improvements. Four of the minor projects address safety and capacity-related intersection improvements. The other two are bridge preservation projects. The total investment in projects under development is just over $576 million.

TABLE 18—IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Project Name (PID #):	ATH/MEG US33 18.70/0.00 (PID 119141 and 120684)				
Location:	ODOT District:	JobsOhio Region:	Work Category:	Project Status:	Estimated Year of Completion:
Athens County and Meigs County	10	Southeast	Add Through Lane(s)	In Development	2025
Project Description: Converting Super 2 Lane sections to a four-lane divided highway on ATH 33 18.70-25.39 and MEG 33 0.00-4.09. All existing at-grade intersections will be removed. PID 120684 is for tree cutting.					

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$82,508,809	$82,508,809	$0

Project Name (PID #):	ATH/MEG US33 23.28/0.00 (PID 119142)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Athens County and Meigs County	10	Southeast	Add Through Lane(s)	In Development	2025
Project Description: Converting Super two-lane sections to a four-lane divided highway on ATH 33 23.28-25.39 and MEG 33 0.00-4.09. This PID is for construction only. All existing at-grade intersections will be removed.					

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$61,662,720	$61,662,720	$0

Project Name (PID #):	MEG US33 13.96-19.11 (PID 119143 and 120685)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Meigs County	10	Southeast	Add Through Lane(s)	In Development	2025
Project Description: Converting Super two-lane sections to a four-lane divided highway on MEG 33 13.96-19.11. The existing at-grade intersections will remain. PID 120685 includes tree cutting.					

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$34,314,430	$34,314,430	$0

Project Name (PID #):	MEG US33 19.21 (PID 119144)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Meigs County	10	Southeast	Add Through Lane(s)	In Development	2025
Project Description: Converting Super 2 Lane sections to a four-lane divided highway on MEG 33 19.11-28.74. The existing at-grade intersections will remain. The SR124 intersection will be turned into an RCUT.					

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$61,130,906	$61,130,906	$0

Project Name (PID #):	FAI US33 12.53 (PID 120166)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Fairfield County	5	Central	Interchange Improvement (Safety)	In Development	2025

Project Description: Installation of turn lane and signalization on the eastbound off-ramp at the US33/SR188 interchange.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$836,216	$836,216	$0

Project Name (PID #):	FRA/FAI-33-22.99/0.00 (PID 121811)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Fairfield County and Franklin County	5 and 6	Central	Add Through Lane(s)	In Development	2026

Project Description: Widen US33 from two to three lanes in each direction from I-270 in Franklin County to Diley Road (TR-207) in Fairfield County.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Partial Funding	$160,150,000	$5,000,000	$155,150,000

Project Name (PID #):	FRA US33 27.44 (Bixby Road) (PIDs 76687 and 121814)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Franklin County	6	Central	Interchange Expansion	In Development	2028

Project Description: To improve traffic flow, reduce two intersections on US33 in Franklin County.
1) Convert Bixby Road (TR 229) intersection into an interchange.
2) Convert Rager Road (TR 231) intersection into cul-de-sacs.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Partial Funding	$54,563,311	$6,413,311	$48,150,000

Project Name (PID #):	FAI US33 02.64 (PID 77555)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Fairfield County	5	Central	Interchange Expansion	In Development	2028

Project Description: Replace the existing US33 and Pickerington Road intersection with an interchange and remove the Allen Road intersections.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$76,930,161	$76,930,161	$0

Project Name (PID #):	I-270/US33 Interchange Modification (PID 121812)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Franklin County	6	Central	Interchange Improvement (Safety)	In Development	2027

Project Description: I-270, south outerbelt at US33, southeast freeway, reconfigure slip, loop and/or directional interchange ramps.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Partial Funding	$35,100,000	$3,000,000	$32,100,000

Project Name (PID #):	ATH SR682 6.07 Roundabout (PID 118465)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Athens County	10	Southeast	Intersection Improvement (Safety)	In Development	2025

Project Description: ATH 682-6.07 to 6.41, ATH 33-8.88 Includes the EB and WB US33 ramp intersections from controlled stop to modern roundabouts.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$5,682,407	$5,682,407	$0

Project Name (PID #):	HOC US33 0.00 (PID 121463) (PE, DD and R/W acquisition), (PID 115635) (Const)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Fairfield County and Hocking County	5 and 10	Southeast	Intersection Improvement (Safety)	In Development	2035

Project Description: Address safety and access management concerns for nine intersections along HOC US33 0.00-4.75. HOC 374 25.00-25.154, HOC 180*IC 0.09-0.166. HOC 180 16.49-16.54 and one intersection in Fairfield County, Sharp Road at Sugar Grove. A preferred alternative has been selected for the Hocking County section. Stakeholder consultations for a preferred alternative are ongoing for the Fairfield County section.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Partial Funding	$88,000,000	$8,000,000	$80,000,000

Project Name (PID #):	ATH-33-8.88 (PID not assigned)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Athens County	10	Southeast	Intersection Improvement (Safety)	In Development	2026

Project Description: Remove the Chauncey Cutoff, SATHUS00033*AC, at-grade intersection. Removal to occur after the interchange improvements under PID 118465 are done in 2025. Possible operations project.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Unfunded	$200,000	$0	$200,000

Project Name (PID #):	HOC-93-12.48 (PID 120273)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Hocking County	10	Southeast	Bridge Preservation	In Development	2027

Project Description: Replace the deck on the bridge over the I&O Railroad within the US33/SR93 interchange. Will affect ramp traffic during construction. Communicate with the City of Logan about coordinating with their Gateway project.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$1,872,500	$1,872,500	$0

Project Name (PID #):	HOC-93-12.34 (PID 77727)				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Hocking County	10	Southeast	Bridge Preservation	In Development	2028

Project Description: Bridge deck overlays for the bridge over the Hocking River and the bridge over US33 within the US33/SR93 interchange. Will affect ramp traffic during construction. Communicate with the City of Logan about coordinating with their Gateway project.

Funding Status	Project Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Fully Funded	$1,875,000	$1,875,000	$0

ODOT Proposed Projects

Proposed projects, listed in **Table 19**, are in the idea or concept phase and are being evaluated for feasibility and funding. ODOT is currently proposing one project with an assigned PID for the US33 corridor between Columbus and the Ohio River. This major project, located in Meigs County, would construct a four-lane bridge on the US33 alignment as a new crossing of the Ohio River. The project cost is estimated at $201 million.

TABLE 19—PROPOSED PROJECTS

Project Name (PID #):	**MEG-33-28.00 (PID 120478)**				
Location:	**ODOT District:**	**JobsOhio Region:**	**Work Category:**	**Project Status:**	**Estimated Year of Completion:**
Meigs County	10	Southeast	Add Through Lane(s)	Future Study	2035
Project Description: Feasibility study to provide a four-lane US33 crossing of the Ohio River. Current study is $600,000. The estimated cost to build the project ranges from $150 million to $200 million.					

Funding Status	**Project Cost**	**Funded**	**Unfunded**
Partial Funding	$200,599,924	$599,924	$200,000,000

COMMITTED FUNDING

The funding status for ODOT projects with assigned PIDs along US33 between Columbus and the Ohio River for each of the four project categories is shown in **Table 20**. Projects shown as fully funded reflect the commitment of all funds expected to be required for the project. Partially funded projects have a portion of the funds needed or committed. Unfunded projects have no funds committed for the project. Of the US33 corridor projects not yet complete, 12 projects along the corridor are fully funded, five are partially funded, and two are not yet funded.

TABLE 20—SUMMARY OF COMMITTED FUNDING

Project Phase	Fully Funded		Partially Funded			Unfunded	
	#	Funded Amount	#	Funded Amount	Unfunded Amount	#	Unfunded Amount
Completed Projects	2	$11 million	–	–	–	–	–
In Construction	1	$1 million	–	–	–	–	–
In Development	9	$327 million	5	$22 million	$315 million	1	$200,000
ODOT Proposed	-	–	1	$600,000	$200 million	–	–
TOTAL:	**12**	**$339 million**	**4**	**$23 million**	**$515 million**	**1**	**$0 million**

Investments Summary

Since 2010, projects that have been completed, together with those in construction, represent an investment of almost $12 million in the corridor. An additional $664 million is proposed for projects that are currently in development. Of that amount, nearly $362 million has been committed. ODOT has also identified $200 million in proposed projects. Of the 19 projects identified for the US33 corridor between Columbus and the Ohio River, three are complete or under construction, 14 are in development, and one is proposed with an ODOT PID assigned.

The projects focus on capacity and safety improvements, reflecting growth along the corridor. A breakdown of the scope focus areas is summarized below:

- $600 million is identified for six projects that will add through lanes to US33. Four of these projects are funded by Connect 4 Ohio.
- $46 million is identified for two projects classified as interchange expansion and capacity improvements.
- $226 million is identified for seven projects addressing interchange and intersection safety and access management improvements.
- $3.7 million has been identified for bridge preservation deck replacement.

Individual project costs range from roughly $200,000 to $200 million. Requisite funding for projects completed and in construction has been committed, $12 million. Of the $877 million identified to fund projects in development or proposed, nearly $362 million, or 41%, has been committed. The remaining $515 million, or 59% of the required funding, has not yet been secured; $200 million of the funding gap is for one project, a proposed new bridge over the Ohio River along the US33 corridor.

Corridor Needs Assessment

OVERVIEW

This section presents recommendations for the corridor based on a comprehensive assessment of corridor needs, an analysis of existing projects, and identified gaps in addressing specific needs. This section includes:

- **Needs Assessment:** The needs assessment incorporates results from the detailed corridor-specific "hotspot" analysis presented below; findings from the statewide congestion risk analysis; and insights from the corridor scans and District input related to spot location congestion risks, safety, geometric, operational, and development-related risks that could limit or constrain existing and/or future interregional passenger and freight-related mobility.
- **Project Overlap Analysis:** The needs assessment findings are compared with existing ODOT projects (construction, in development, proposed, etc. to identify if there are any full or partial gaps along the corridor in addressing these needs. The analysis will also acknowledge other projects from MPO/RTPOs that have the potential to address corridor needs.
- **Corridor Recommendations:** The needs assessment and project overlap analysis are utilized to identify the most critical full and partial gaps along the corridor for consideration as part of the actionable recommendations.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment considers congestion-related "hotspots" along the corridor. It expands on key takeaways summarized in the Corridor Conditions section related to development growth pressures, safety, access and geometric issues, and other considerations such as railroad crossings.

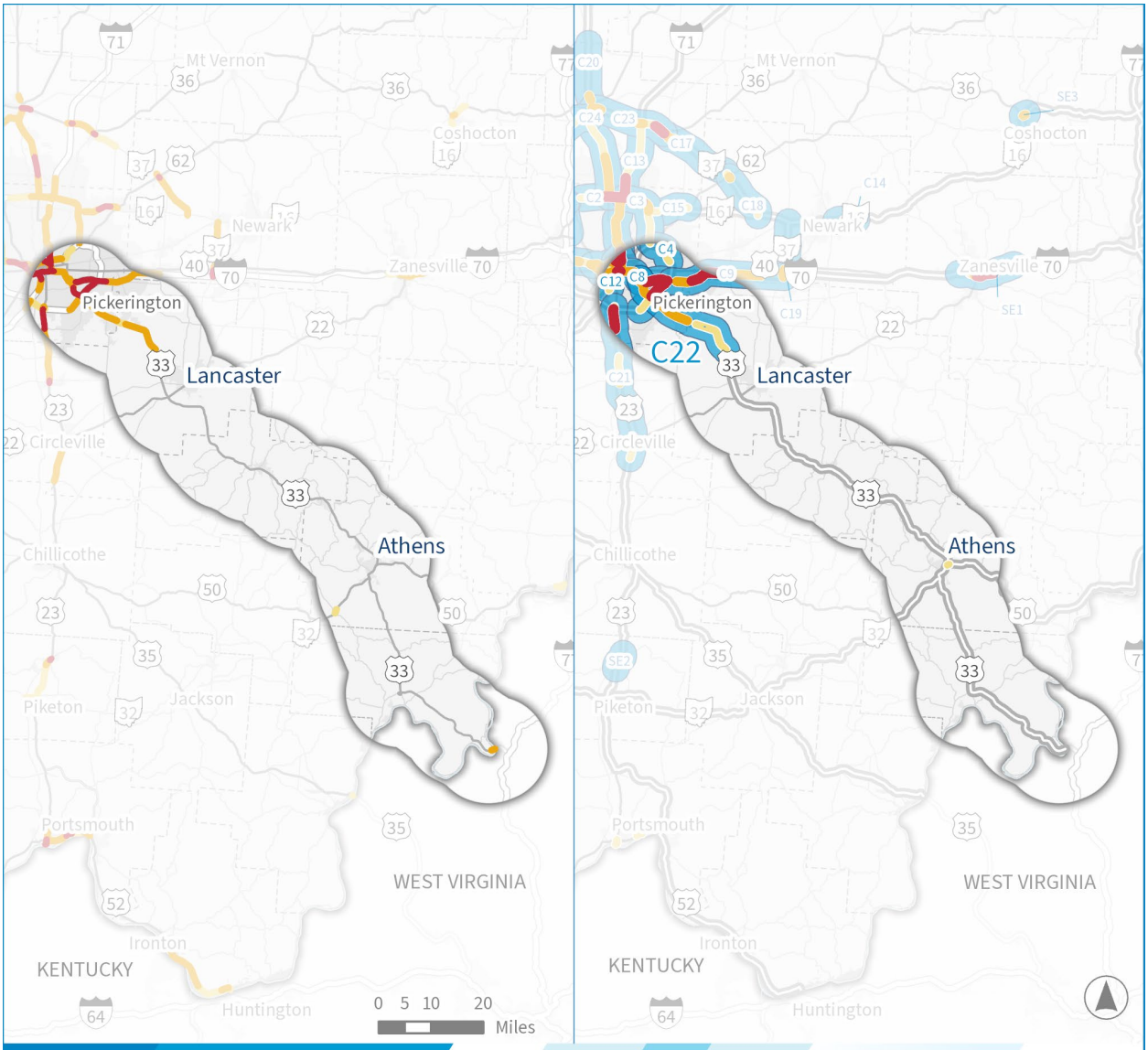
Congestion

H.B.23, Section 203.47 states that the Study shall identify current and future transportation links, **evaluate and rank current and potential risks of future system congestion**, and make actionable recommendations for transportation system projects to support statewide economic growth. This analysis of existing and future congestion risk along the corridor is utilized to identify hotspots. Hotspots are then grouped based on proximity to nearby segments with congestion or other risks to identify areas to focus on actionable recommendations.

Figure 35 presents the 2025 congestion levels based on v/c ratios and the 2055 congestion risk hotspots for segments along the corridor and on nearby segments of the Study network. The 2025 hotspot analysis examined segments of the statewide network with immediate or near-term a v/c that is nearing 0.95-1.0 or exceeding 1.1+ roadway capacity. The 2055 congestion risk is a composite score from 0 to 4 that aggregates risk across five elements of congestion: peak period severe congestion that disrupts the flow of people and goods on the Study network; site development, which captures the impacts of site trip generation; workforce access, which focuses on the loss of access to workers within a 40-minute commute due to congestion; business and logistics efficiency, which focuses on total daily truck delay; and quality places, which focuses on access management and projected development.

Table 21 presents the hotspots and groupings along with the 2025 v/c ratios and 2055 congestion risk. The Columbus – WV focus corridor has three congestion risk hotspots on US33, one existing and two predicted. These hotspots were organized into a single grouped hotspot as part of the regional analysis in Study Report **Chapter 3**. US33 from I-270 to South Hamilton Road in Franklin County is already at 1.52 v/c, with parts of the corridor nearing 1.1 v/c from South Hamilton Road to the US33BR split in Fairfield County. These segments are also predicted to have a medium congestion risk at US33 from I-270 to Canal Winchester and a low congestion risk from Canal Winchester to US33BR in 2055.

FIGURE 35—2025 / 2055 HOTSPOTS AND HOTSPOT GROUPING MAP



Source: ODOT, Study Team

TABLE 21—CONGESTION RISK HOTSPOT LOCATIONS AND HORIZON YEAR

Grouped Hotspot	Hotspot Start Point	Hotspot End Point	2025 v/c	2055 Congestion Risk
C22	I-270, Franklin County	South Hamilton Road, Franklin County	1.52	Moderate Congestion Risk
C22	South Hamilton Road, Franklin County	Franklin – Fairfield County Line	1.06–1.07	Moderate Congestion Risk
C22	East of US33 and Hill/Diley Roads, Fairfield County	US33 Business Route Split, Fairfield County	0.99	Low Congestion Risk

Roadway Geometry and Operations

US33 is predominately a four-lane divided facility throughout the 106-mile corridor, with inside paved shoulders varying from 4 to 12 feet wide and outside paved shoulders varying from 8 to 12 feet wide, and median, which typically separates the four lanes. There are two remaining two-lane undivided sections located south of Athens. One of these two-lane undivided sections starts just west of Pleasant Hill Road in Athens County and continues eastward to just west of SR681 in Meigs County. This section of a two-lane undivided roadway is approximately 9.75 miles long. The second segment of the two-lane, undivided roadway is a 15.2-mile segment located in Meigs County that runs from just east of the SR7 interchange and continues eastward to the West Virginia state line on the two-lane bridge over the Ohio River. The existing alignment of the US33 corridor was not found to have any apparent existing horizontal or vertical curve issues, given current speed limits on the corridor.

The posted speed limits along the corridor vary, with 60 mph beginning at the I-270 interchange to approximately one mile west of the High Street/Winchester Road interchange, where it increases to 70 mph. The speed limit decreases back to 60 mph near the east end of the Tarkiln Road interchange and remains so until just after the Dalton Road/Risch Road intersection, where it increases to 70 mph once again. The speed limit remains 70 mph until it decreases to 55 mph, approximately three-quarters of a mile west of the Elm Rock Road intersection near Nelsonville. The speed limit increases to 60 mph near the SR681 at-grade connector intersection and remains so until just west of the SR7 interchange, where once again it reduces to 55 mph. The final speed limit transition occurs near the Cleek Road/Great Bend Road intersection, where it reduces from 55 mph to 40 mph before crossing the Ohio River bridge into West Virginia.

Highway lighting is mainly present within urban interchange areas, the four rest areas along the corridor, and the final section of the highway between the Great Bend Road intersection and the Ohio River bridge. Lighting is primarily conventional cobra head luminaires, with some tower lighting installed at the newly constructed interchanges.

ODOT has installed and maintained nine cameras along the corridor. Six of these are installed within interchange areas, and the other three are at either major intersection major intersections or parallel to the mainline. Two ITS message boards are operating and ready to relay important traffic information to passing motorists when necessary. One message board is between the I-270 and SR317/Hamilton Road interchanges, and the other is just west of the SR550 interchange near the City of Athens.

Three grade-separated railroad crossings are on mainline US33, where the roadway passes over railroads. No at-grade crossings are found on mainline US33. Several adjacent railroad crossings on side streets immediately adjacent to the US33 corridor can be problematic. Traffic turning onto the side streets where these crossings are located can cause queuing on mainline US33. Some crossings are 100 feet or less between US33 and the at-grade crossing on the side street.

Safety

The US33 corridor from I-270 to the West Virginia State line has 29 HSIP high-crash locations, including 17 locations, 15 segments, and two intersections.

Crashes were also categorized by RSI, representing the relative cost to society of a specific type of crash, e.g., head-on, rear-end, angle. The types of collisions on the roadways are relevant to safety performance, as some crash types are more likely to result in severe injuries and higher societal costs. Mapping a combination of RSI and HSIP priority locations creates a metric that speaks for a variety of crashes that point to the potential for serious injury, in addition to seeing high-crash locations, primarily on facilities that may have lower volumes.

Table 22 summarizes the roadway safety locations. The key takeaways of the HSIP listings and the RSI data revealed the following:

- The majority of HSIP locations are located on the northern third of the corridor from I-270 to SR664 in Logan.
- The top 100 HSIP locations on the US33 corridor included 17 locations, 15 segments, and two intersections.
- More significant RSI values occur from the I-270 interchange to Lancaster, where congestion hotspot occurs.
- The concentrations of crash listings are located at:
  - I-270 interchange south to Hamilton Road (SR317) interchange
  - Diley Road south to the Village of Carroll
  - Sharp Road in Sugar Grove south to the SR664 interchange in Logan

TABLE 22—ROADWAY SAFETY LOCATIONS

Location	HSIP Top 100 Ranking	Hotspot Overlap
US33 southbound at I-270 from near Watkins Road to Big Walnut Creek in Franklin County	#46 (Urban Non-Freeway Segment)	Yes, C22
US33 northbound from Pickerington Road to near Amanda Northern Road in Fairfield County	#6 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	Yes, C22
US33 southbound from near Allen Road to Lockville Road in Fairfield County	#58 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	Yes, C22
US33 northbound from near Pleasantville Road to Allen Road in Fairfield County	#57 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	Yes, C22
US33 southbound from north of Miller Farm Run to the south of Miller Farm Run in Fairfield County	#33 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	Yes, C22
US33 southbound from Columbus-Lancaster Rd Split to near railroad overpass in Fairfield County	#2 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	Yes, C22
US33 northbound from near Wilson Road to Lithopolis Road in Fairfield County	#15 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 southbound from south of Sharp Road to the north of Hocking-Fairfield County line in Fairfield County	#53 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 southbound from south of Fairfield Road to the south of Sharp Road to north of Opossum Hollow Road in Hocking County	#96 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 northbound from north of Rockbridge A Road to Buena Vista Road in Hocking County	#5 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 and Logan Road intersection in Hocking County	#36 (Rural Intersection)	No
US33 and SR374 intersection in Hocking County	#24 (Rural Intersection)	No
US33 southbound from south of SR374 to south of Miller Road in Hocking County	#11 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 northbound from Hocking Rest Area to north of Miller Road in Hocking County	#10 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 northbound from south of Antioch Road to north of Antioch Road in Hocking County	#59 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 northbound from north of SR664 to south of Antioch Road in Hocking County	#60 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No
US33 southbound from near Company Road to south of Company Road in Hocking County	#81 (Rural Non-Freeway Segment)	No

Access Control and Development

Access varies between partial and full control along the 106-mile US33 corridor. A total of 26 interchanges, 45 at-grade intersections, and 14 private driveways exist along the corridor. The corridor begins partially controlled, with interchanges and at-grade intersections between I-270 and the High Street/Winchester Road interchange near the Village of Carroll. Access transitions to full control along US33 around the City of Lancaster to the Tarkiln Road interchange. The segment from SR180 to Elm Rock Road on the east side of the City of Nelsonville again becomes fully controlled, then partially controlled until SR682 just west of the City of Athens.

Access is fully controlled through the City of Athens, then US33 reduces to a two-lane undivided section near Pleasant Hill Road. The two-lane section between Pleasant Hill Road and SR681 is partially controlled, with some grade-separated intersections and three at-grade intersections widely spaced along this 9.7-mile section. At SR681, US33 becomes a four-lane divided highway once again but remains partially controlled and experiences a mixture of interchanges and at-grade intersections until the SR7 interchange. US33 returns to a two-lane undivided highway with a few grade-separated intersections and sporadically spaced at-grade intersections until terminating at the Ohio-West Virginia state line.

The highest concentration of access points, driveways, and intersections occurs within the approximately 9-mile segment between the Tarkiln Road interchange in Fairfield County and the SR180 interchange in Hocking County. Varying access control creates non-uniform travel and reduces safety and mobility performance. There are 14 total private drive access points observed along the US33 corridor. Nine of these driveways provide access to agricultural properties. The remaining five service commercial properties, the Wayne National Forest headquarters facility, and an undetermined property use. There are 11 driveways within a stretch of approximately 3.5 miles east of the Tarkiln Road interchange.

Table 23 summarizes the access control and development issues along the corridor.

TABLE 23—ACCESS CONTROL AND DEVELOPMENT

Location	Access Control	Development
US33 from Tarkiln Road interchange (FAI) to the SR180 interchange (HOC)	Partial Access Control on this 8.8-mile segment of the US33 corridor that contains a mix of interchanges, at-grade intersections, private drives, and farm field access drives	The primary land use development along this segment of the corridor involves adjacent farmland; small pockets of residential areas; small communities; and tourist attraction destinations in Hocking County, with over 7 million visitors a year

Needs Assessment Summary

Figure 36 displays the needs' locations along the corridor, a map label, and a summary. **Table 24** provides additional detail on each need and whether it is associated with congestion, geometric, operational, safety, access, or development issues.

FIGURE 36—CORRIDOR NEEDS SUMMARY

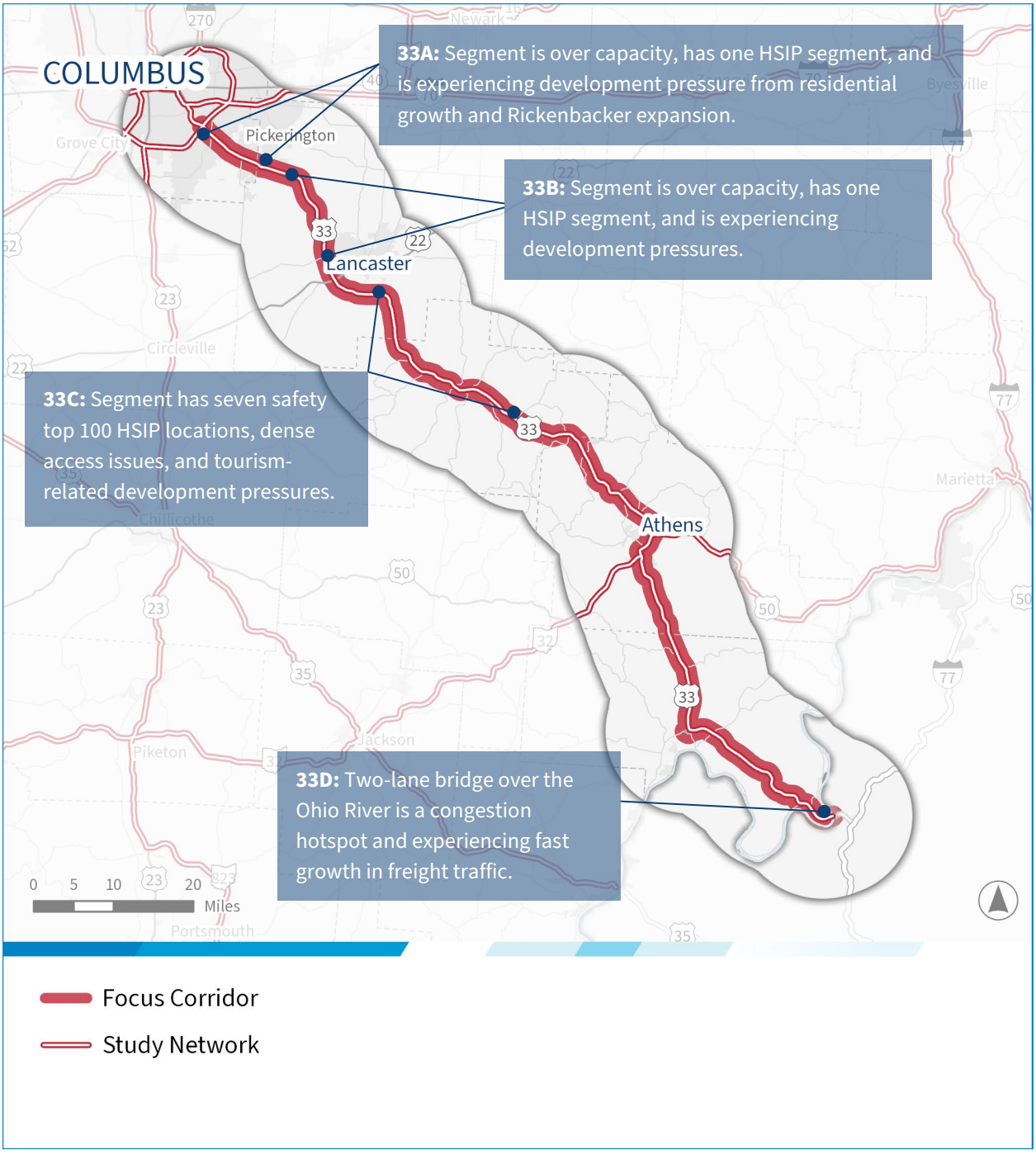


TABLE 24—CORRIDOR NEEDS SUMMARY

Map ID	Location	Congestion		Geometric	Operational	Safety		Access and Development
		Statewide Hotspot	Corridor Hotspot			HSIP Top 100	RSI	
33A	US33 from I-270 to South Hamilton Road/SR317 in Franklin County	X	X		X	X		X
	This segment is **over capacity, includes one HSIP segment, and experiences development pressures** from Rickenbacker Airport and Inland Port, Intel plant development, and increased residential/commercial growth.							
	US33 from Sout Hamilton Road/SR317 in Franklin County to the Franklin-Fairfield County line	X	X			X		X
	This segment is **over capacity, includes one HSIP segment, and experiences development pressures** from Rickenbacker International Airport and Inland Port, Intel plant development, and increased residential/commercial growth.							
33B	US33 from Diley Road to SR188 in Fairfield County		X			X		X
	This segment is **over capacity, includes one HSIP segment, and experiences development pressures** from Rickenbacker International Airport and Inland Port, Intel plant development, and increased residential/commercial growth.							
33C	US33 from Tarkiln Road in Fairfield County to SR180 in Hocking County					X	X	X
	This segment has **seven safety Top 100 HSIP locations, dense access issues, and development pressures** from tourist attractions, which generate over seven million visitors annually to the Hocking Hills recreational area.							
33D	US33 crossing over the Ohio River in Meigs County		X	X				
	This segment involving the Ohio River Crossing is currently a two-lane facility and is a **congestion hotspot. It experiences one of the fastest freight traffic growth rates** in Ohio per Transport Ohio.							

NEEDS AND PROJECT OVERLAP ANALYSIS

The corridor needs presented in the previous section were compared with ODOT-sponsored projects to assess the extent to which the existing projects address these needs. **Table 25** lists ODOT-sponsored projects for each corridor needs to be presented in the previous section. The columns in the table indicate the status of each project and include the following:

- **Addressed:** Fully funded projects in construction or in sold/active status that will fully address the need location
- **Partially Addressed:** Partially funded projects that will fully address the need location when constructed and open to traffic, or fully funded projects in construction or in sold/active status that will partially address the need location
- **Ongoing Planning:** Recent or ongoing/proposed study or ODOT proposed project in the PDP planning phase anticipated to address the need location
- **Planning Gap:** No current ODOT project or study to address the need location

Current projects are described after the table.

TABLE 25—NEEDS AND PROJECT OVERLAP SUMMARY

Map ID	Location (County)	Project Count by Status				Overlap/ Gap
		Construction	Development	Proposed	Study	
33A	US33 from I-270 to S. Hamilton Road/SR317 in Franklin County		PID 121812 PID 76687			Partially Addressed
	US33 from S. Hamilton Road/SR317 in Franklin County to Fairfield County line		PID121811			Partially Addressed
33B	US33 from Diley Road to Lancaster Bypass (US33BR) in Fairfield County			PID 77555		Planning Gap
33C	US33 from Tarkiln Road in Fairfield County to SR180 in Hocking County		PID 121463			Partially Addressed
33D	US33 crossing over the Ohio River in Meigs County				PID 120478	Ongoing Planning

33A – I-270 to SR317/South Hamilton Road

Section 33A covers limits from the I-270 interchange with US33 to the Diley Road interchange in Fairfield County. Three ODOT projects are addressing this section:

- FRA-270/33-45.808/24.375 (PID 121812): This project proposes to modify the ramp configuration at the I-270/US33 interchange to increase operability and safety.
- FRA-33-27.44 (PIDs 76687 and 121814): This project proposes converting an existing at-grade intersection at Bixby Road to an interchange. It will address safety and operational issues in the area.
- FRA/FAI-33-22.99/0.00 (PID 121811): This project is slated to add lanes on US33 from I-270 to Diley Road to address the existing and projected congestion. This project will directly address an identified hotspot. This project will also address the remaining at-grade intersections within its limits.

All projects are currently in the preliminary development phase and determining the final scopes of proposed work. The preliminary development, detailed design, and right-of-way phases of all projects are currently funded at $14,413,311. The total cost for all projects combined is estimated at $249,813,311, leaving a gap of $235,400,000.

33A – US33 from I-270 to Diley Road: Partially Addressed

There are multiple partially funded projects in the needs area with $235,400,000 uncommitted funding. All these projects are advancing through NEPA and final design, and will be ready for construction once funding is authorized.

33B – Diley Road to Lancaster Bypass (US33BR)

Section 33B covers limits on US33 from the Diley Road interchange to the Lancaster Bypass (US33BR) in Fairfield County. This section has one programmed ODOT project within its limits: FAI-33-2.64 (PID 77555). This project addresses an existing at-grade intersection and proposes to upgrade it to an interchange at Pickerington Road and US33. The project increases operability and safety. In addition to the programmed project, the MPO has proposed to widen this section of US33 from Diley Road to the Lancaster Bypass. This proposal would directly address an identified hotspot. This proposal would also address the remaining at-grade intersections within its limits. The Pickerington Road interchange project is fully funded at an estimated cost of $76,930,161 and is scheduled for construction in 2025. The estimated cost for the US33 widening is $250,000,000.

33B – US33 from Diley Road to Lancaster Bypass (US33BR): Planning Gap

The $76,930,161 Pickerington Road Interchange project is fully funded. The MPO-proposed project to widen US33 is unfunded.

33C – Tarkiln Road to SR180 Interchange

Section 33C covers limits from Tarkiln Road in Fairfield County to SR180 in Hocking County. This section is being addressed by ODOT project HOC-33-0.00, PID 121463 for preliminary engineering, detail design, and right-of-way acquisition, and PID 115635 for Construction. ODOT has programmed this project to address 10 existing at-grade intersections throughout this segment. This project will address existing safety and operational concerns throughout this segment. The project is partially funded with $8 million already committed for the preliminary engineering, detail design, and right-of-way acquisition. There is still a funding gap of $80 million for the construction phase.

33C – US33 from Tarkiln Road in Fairfield County to SR180 in Hocking County: Partially Addressed

One project is partially funded with $8 million of total committed funding and $80 million that is uncommitted. The project is advancing through NEPA and detailed design and scheduled for construction in 2027 once full funding is authorized.

33D – US33 Crossing Over the Ohio River (Meigs County)

Section 33D includes the bridge over the Ohio River in Meigs County. Although the State of West Virginia technically owns and maintains the bridge, ODOT has programmed a project to begin a feasibility study to replace and widen the Ohio River bridge. Project MEG-33-28.00 (PID 120478) is a feasibility study to widen the Ohio River bridge to four lanes. The project is currently funded for $600,000 for a feasibility study. There are no other phases currently funded for this project. It is estimated that the funding gap is in the range of $200 million.

33D – US33 Crossing Over the Ohio River in Meigs County: Ongoing Planning

ODOT has initiated a feasibility study to determine the scope and schedule for a new Ohio River bridge, and committed $600,000 for the study. Although the bridge is technically owned by West Virginia DOT, ODOT will assist in finding the estimated $200 million needed to fund its replacement.

CONCLUSIONS

The US33 corridor has always been envisioned as a four-lane divided expressway dating back to the 1960s and 1970s when most of the four-lane divided right-of-way was purchased. ODOT has steadily committed significant resources to address the corridor's current and future needs. ODOT has recently funded construction projects that will upgrade the remaining two-lane sections to four-lane divided highway sections. The total investment for these projects is $240 million. Once these projects are complete, the entire corridor from I-270 to the Ohio River bridge crossing in Meigs County will be a four-lane divided expressway with sections of freeway interspersed throughout. The most important gap within the corridor is expanding sections 33A and 33B. These two sections have a funding gap of nearly $485 million. The funding gap for all the existing projects listed above is estimated at nearly $765 million.