

Henry County Commissioners

Henry County Office Complex, 1853 Oakwood Avenue, Napoleon, OH 43545

Phone: 419-592-4876 Fax: 419-592-4016 E-mail: commissioners@henrycountyohio.com



Board of County Commissioners:

Robert E. Hastedt
Glenn A. Miller
Thomas H. VonDeylen

Clerk:

Kristi Schultheis

Administrative Assistant:

Cathy Behnfeldt

Office Hours:

8:00 am to 4:30 pm
Monday - Friday

Web Site:

henrycountyohio.com

The majority of the development in Henry County is located in the City of Napoleon. Napoleon is home to the world's largest Campbell's Soup Plant, and many industrial businesses have developed to service Campbell's operational needs. Of those industrial businesses almost all exist in two separate areas, one south of the river and the other north of the river. Currently these industrial areas are not connected and exist as two separate regions. Building a new bridge could link these two separate areas into one large industrial region opening the door for future development.

Not only would an additional bridge provide the two industrial areas access to each other it would also provide a direct route to the recently completed U.S. 24., which is the most heavily traveled highway in Henry County. It links Ft. Wayne to Toledo and is expected to be a corridor for long-term economic growth. Joining the industrial area south of the river to this highway artery is vital to attract and foster future economic growth and development for Henry County.

Having only one bridge creates health and safety concerns as well. There have been incidents in the past when the bridge had to be closed. The closest detour adds 8 miles and according to a 2003 purpose and need study costs users an estimated \$3,600 an hour. A closure would add 8 miles to an emergency personnel's response route as well as add additional miles for emergency medical vehicles taking patients to the hospital. All this extra mileage lengthens emergency response times and drastically reduces the community's health and safety coverage. The construction of a new bridge would provide a closer river crossing to the Henry County Hospital. This would provide quicker access to the hospital for emergency response vehicles, possibly saving lives.

There are also traffic congestion concerns at the Perry Street river crossing. Currently many of the tractor-trailers from Campbell's plant cross the river bridge to get to U.S. 24 or to the warehouses and cold storage facilities located in the industrial area on the north side of the river. These trucks, in addition to other traffic, create congestion across the bridge as well as downtown. The traffic congestion is particularly bad when the Campbell's plant and the schools let out. A new river bridge would alleviate much of the congestion and provide a new route for employees, trucks, and school buses to cross the river.

We believe it would be in the best interest of the Henry County citizens' health, security, and economic prosperity if a new river bridge were constructed. We recognize the need for a new river bridge and realize the opportunities and safety enhancements a new bridge could provide. We ask for your support in funding the construction of a new bridge and look forward to working with you on this project.

Sincerely,

Glenn A. Miller
Henry County Commissioner

Robert E. Hastedt
Henry County Commissioner

Tom VonDeylen
Henry County Commissioner