**Summit County’s High Level Bridge Facts**

* The High Level Bridge, also known as the North Main Street Bridge over the Cuyahoga River, stands over 200 feet above the Cuyahoga River and connects the two largest cities in Summit County. The structure is owned and maintained by the Summit County Engineer’s office. The bridge is the largest and most expensive piece of infrastructure owned by the County.
* An average 17,000 vehicles per day travel the bridge.
* The bridge is 909 feet long, 67 feet wide (carrying four lanes of traffic and two pedestrian sidewalks) and spans 220 feet above the Cuyahoga River Valley and the Summit Metro Parks High Bridge Trail.
* The structure is classified as fracture critical and functionally obsolete. A fracture critical bridge means that if one member or part of the bridge fails, the entire bridge fails. This is the same classification of bridge as the I-35W Bridge in Minnesota that suffered a catastrophic collapse. A new bridge will be constructed with “redundancy” built in, so in the case of a beam failure the entire bridge would not be at risk. At least $100,000 is spent per year inspecting and maintaining the current bridge to ensure the safety of motorists and pedestrians utilizing the bridge.
* The average annual revenue for the Summit County Engineer's office is $19 million and the necessary cost to design and construct and replacement bridge is $58.6 million, which is almost 3 times the County Engineer’s annual revenue. Even painting the current bridge to prevent further deterioration is estimated to be $5 million, nearly one third of the County Engineer’s annual budget.
* The current estimated planning and design costs for this bridge, the amount we are asking for in this request, is $8.2 million, which is about half of the County Engineer’s annual budget.
* Designing and replacing the High Level Bridge simply cannot be done on local funds alone. Eventually this bridge, that connects the two largest cities in Summit County, will have to be load rated, restricting commercial traffic, at best, or closed, at worst, as local funds are not enough to keep up with the needed repairs.
* In addition to the economic importance of keeping the two largest cities in Summit County connected, a safe and open bridge is critical for recreation activity in the area with the bridge being the main feature for hikers and bikers of the Metro Park’s High Bridge Trail. Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, and the Metro Parks have submitted letters of support for the project.

