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MSA Thruway Unveiled

A project decades in the making was unveiled Thursday as the ribbon was cut on the MSA Thruway project.

The MSA Thruway connects Interstate 79 to Cranberry Springs, as well as Cranberry Springs to Cranberry Woods. It utilizes roundabouts on each side to keep traffic moving, taking up to 1,350 vehicles off I-79 and 700 vehicles off Route 228 during peak times.

It's not just about traffic, however. The project eliminates the "weave" merge from I-79 to Route 228, as motorists no longer need to cross four lanes of traffic to get to Cranberry Springs, creating a safer commute.

The Thruway, paid for using developer-paid transportation impact fees to leverage federal and state funding, is named after MSA Safety, a longtime business staple in the Township. The company donated much of the land on which the Thruway traverses.

Featuring bike and pedestrian lanes, the project also makes the Route 228 corridor a walkable business center. With that increased connectivity for both motorists and pedestrians, it plans for the anticipated additional growth in the undeveloped area north of Route 228 and the potential creation of thousands of full-time jobs.

The tunnel is expected to open to traffic in the coming weeks.

The ribbon-cutting event featured guest speakers from MSA Safety, Allegheny Excavating, Butler County Commission, the Pittsburgh Penguins, Westinghouse, local and state legislators and the Township's Board of Supervisors.

"This project could not happen without the support of our community, our residents, our business partners, and our government associates," said Dick Hadley, Board of Supervisors Chairman. "When you look at this tunnel, it's much more than just a means to decrease traffic on Route 228 and improving access for motorists and pedestrians. It's a display of what can happen when a community works together."

PHOTO CUTLINES:

1: Cutting the ribbon on the MSA Thruway project Thursday in Cranberry Township are, from left,

Kim Geyer, Butler County Commission; Julia Desantes, representing State Rep. Daryl Metalfe; Dan Santoro, Cranberry Township Manager; Gary Sippel, President of Cranberry Springs Business Park; Mike Manipole, Cranberry Township Supervisor; Bruce Hezlep, Cranberry Township Supervisor; Nish Vartanian, President & CEO of MSA Safety; State Senator Scott Hutchinson; Kevin Boozel, Butler County Commission; Bruce Mazzoni, Cranberry Township Supervisor; and Dick Hadley, Cranberry Township Supervisor Chairman.

2: Guests gather Thursday during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the MSA Thruway in Cranberry Township.