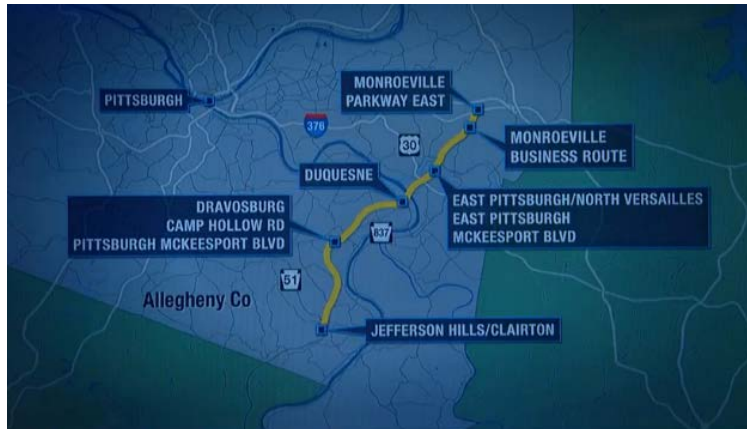




Proposed Mon-Fayette Expressway worries residents in its path

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ALLEGHENY COUNTY, Pa. - With the Pennsylvania Turnpike's announcement of the proposed Mon-Fayette Expressway, concerns have been raised by residents who lay in its path.

Turnpike officials said they will need to take ownership of hundreds of surrounding properties to make the expressway a reality.

"All they're thinking about is the money. That's all they're thinking about. They're not thinking about the people," resident James Davis said.

Proponents of the expressway agree it's about money, but said it's also about jobs and an economic boom that they believe the project will bring.

"All of this translates to companies having more opportunities to grow and revitalize the valley," said Joe Kirk, coordinator of the Expressway Completion Campaign.

Supporters recently unveiled a new study that claims the 14-mile expressway, from Route 51 to Interstate 376, would create 6,000 jobs during construction and then another 13,000 when it's complete.

"If you're a welding firm in Duquesne, all of a sudden you have a whole other area you can serve because you can get to those locations quicker and safer," Kirk said.

Duquesne Mayor Phil Krivacek believes the expressway will rise beyond expectations.

"It's about the economy and building the economy. And that's what I'm hoping for. It brings it back, so we don't have to struggle," Krivacek said.

But impacted residents, including Davis Evins and Michelle Evins, said it would be a struggle for them to find another place to live.

"I'm liking this neighborhood. It's quiet. We're trying to make a change in our neighborhood," Michelle Evins said.

Turnpike officials said they need 600 to 650 properties to finish the project, and said that areas like Duquesne and Dravosburg will be most affected. The project is slated to start in 2022.