

= Wheeling Tunnel =

Twin tunnels form the Wheeling Tunnel in Wheeling , Ohio County , West Virginia . The tunnels are 0 @. @ 27 miles (430 m) long , cutting through Wheeling Hill , and each carries two lanes of Interstate 70 and U.S. Route 250 . The tunnels originally took three years to construct , costing \$ 6 @. @ 9 million . Reconstruction of the tunnel , originally planned to take a total of 6 months , took over three years to complete between 2007 and 2010 , at a cost of \$ 13 @. @ 7 million .

= Overview =

The Wheeling Tunnel sits between exits 1A and 1B on Interstate 70 and U.S. Route 250 , which run concurrent through the city of Wheeling . The tunnel cuts through Wheeling Hill , and has two travel lanes in each tube . Due to the closeness of exit 1A to the western end of the tunnels , the tunnels ' right lanes function as acceleration and deceleration lanes . Through traffic is restricted to the left lane in each tunnel and lane changes are prohibited .

A series of accidents involving semi @-@ trailer trucks prompted local political candidates to push for trucks to be banned from the tunnel , diverting them to the nearby I @-@ 470 .

= Construction =

The twin tunnels , which cost \$ 6 @. @ 9 million (equivalent to \$ 53 million in 2016) to construct , are lined with a total of 13 @, @ 000 square feet (1 @, @ 200 m²) of industrial tile . Then governor William Wallace Barron , and the state roads commissioner broke ground on the tunnel on August 22 , 1963 , which he stated was the largest single construction project in the state 's Interstate Highway program . The construction contract was awarded to C.J. Langenfelter & Son , Inc. located in Baltimore , Maryland . Several workers became ill after being exposed to high amounts of carbon monoxide fumes , which brought construction to a halt in 1964 until ventilation fans were installed . The tunnel officially opened to traffic on December 7 , 1966 .

= Renovations =

Plans for the reconstruction of the tunnel were formed in 2005 , with reconstruction work beginning in January 2007 . Reconstruction of the tunnel was planned to take 3 months , but reconstruction of the eastbound tunnel , which was not totally completed , took over eleven months . After the issues with the reconstruction work , local politicians suggested closing the tunnels altogether , and to just build the freeway over Wheeling Hill , however after opposition from the NAACP and other groups , the suggestions were dropped . Completion of the eastbound tunnel reconstruction begin in July 2008 , when the tiles were replaced for the first time with new tiles fabricated by a German tile manufacturer . The Division of Highways had to award the contract to the German company because no other company could complete the request within the time frame required . The original tiles were made by a now @-@ defunct company based in Cleveland . During the second round of eastbound tunnel reconstruction , the westbound tunnel was also closed overnight for construction work . The eastbound tunnel reconstruction was completed on October 31 , 2008 . The westbound tube was closed in February 2010 , and opened a month ahead of schedule in September 2010 . The total cost of the project was over double the original bid , totaling \$ 13 @. @ 7 million , due to the delays .