



Improved Interchange at I-71 and U.S. 36/SR 37 and Proposed Sunbury Parkway

NEWSLETTER
ISSUE #3
Dec. 1, 2023

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) wishes to thank the public for their continued interest in the project. Newsletter #3 summarizes the results of the June public meetings and addresses frequently asked questions from public comments.

Outcome from the Public Meetings

In June 2023, ODOT hosted multiple public meetings for the Project:

- 1 in-person meeting on June 13: 200 attendees
- 2 virtual meetings on June 14 & 15: 77 participants

The meetings presented the alternatives being considered for the proposed improvements, including the alternative being recommended as “Preferred”.

General public feedback supports the Recommended Preferred Alternative that was presented during the meetings and as shown on the project website. This is the Green Alternative to the west and the Southern (yellow) Alternative to the east.

ODOT Responses to Questions and Comments

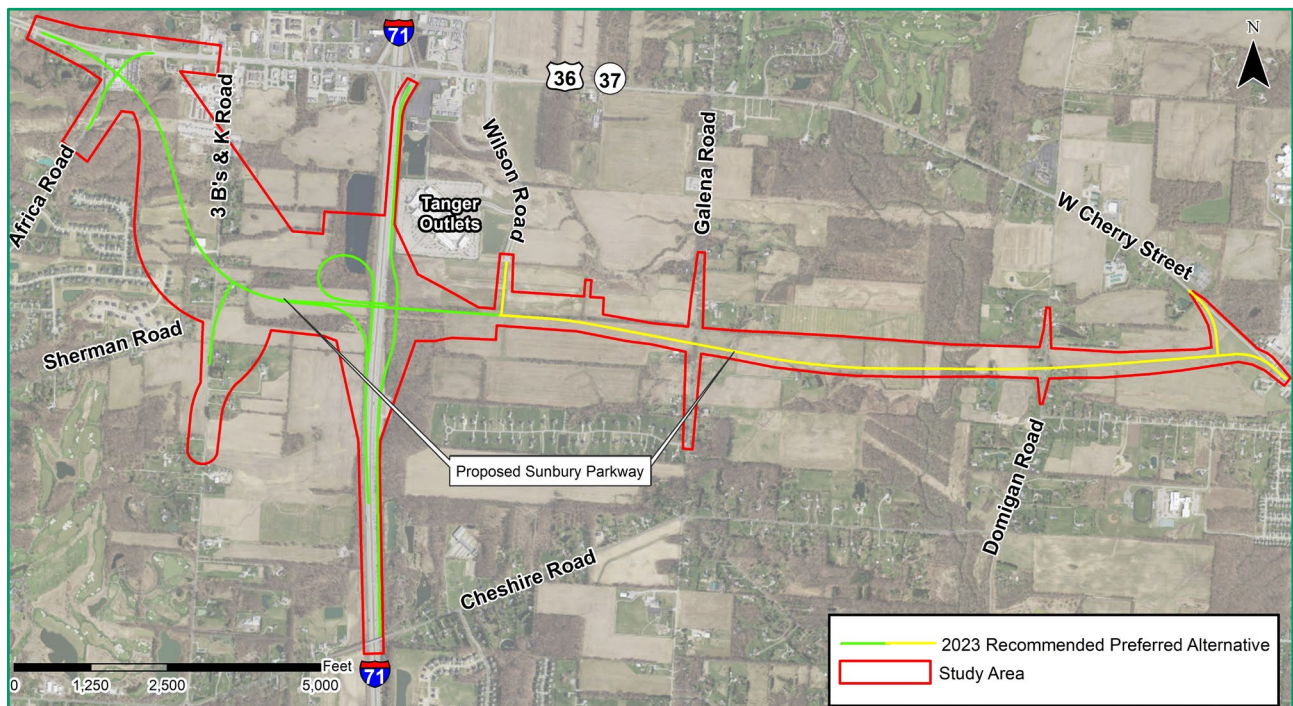
Over 175 public comments were received. ODOT has prepared responses to all comments, which are available on the Project Website (see next page). **The following are responses to the most frequently asked questions.**

What is the Recommended Preferred Alternative?

As shown in the exhibit below, the proposed design would combine the existing interchange at U.S. 36/SR 37 with proposed Sunbury Parkway, to be located about 4,000 feet to the south (similar to the configuration at Gemini/Polaris Parkway). This combined interchange allows the two locations to work in relation to each other.

Existing U.S. 36/SR 37 would be realigned and “T” into the new Sunbury Parkway at Africa Road on the west end and W. Cherry Street on the east end. Additional details about the proposed Sunbury Parkway include:

- Design: 2-3 lanes in each direction with a center grassy median and 50 mile-per-hour (mph) speed limit. (It will transition from 60 mph on the west end and to 45 mph on the east end).
- Shared Use Paths: To be installed on both sides of Sunbury Parkway.
- Signalized Intersections: Planned at Africa Road, S. Three B's & K Road, the on and off ramps from I-71, Wilson Road, S. Galena Road, Domigan Road, and W. Cherry Street.
- Unsignalized intersections: may be permitted in other locations, but access may be restricted. See Figures 12 & 13 of the 2023 Feasibility Study (on the Project Website) for more information.



How were the Green and Southern Alternatives Selected?

The Green Alternative had been identified as the Preferred Alternative in 2017. The current updated studies have also confirmed the Green Alternative as the Recommended Preferred Alternative. This alternative meets the purpose and need for the project while having the fewest residential relocations and impacting the least number of properties.

The Southern (yellow) Alternative has been selected as the Recommended Preferred Alternative because it meets the purpose and need of the project, while avoiding increased flooding risks for properties and pole relocations on the Ohio Edison transmission line.

Additional information on the evaluation of all alternatives is included on the project website and in the 2023 Feasibility Study (see the Documents Section on the project website).

Why Build the Interchange and Why to the South?

The existing I-71 and U.S. 36/SR 37 interchange is unable to support the growing travel demands of the region, resulting in traffic backups and crashes. ODOT has made short-term improvements to keep the interchange functioning; but the long-term fix would require a larger interchange footprint that would remove adjacent businesses and limit access for many remaining businesses. In addition, there would be substantial impacts to traffic during such a reconstruction. With these challenges in mind, ODOT chose to consider other alternatives.

Studies indicate that most travelers through the interchange are heading south on I-71 during the morning and thus returning from the south in the evening. By constructing the combined interchange to the south, these travelers would be diverted from the existing interchange, thus reducing congestion. This improved interchange design, along with the new Sunbury Parkway, supports planned community growth and development and will minimize traffic disruptions during construction.

Can Trucks be Directed to the Existing Interchange?

No, Sunbury Parkway is planned as a public roadway that is required to accommodate all traffic, including trucks. By diverting through-traffic (both cars and trucks) to Sunbury Parkway, congestion will be reduced and safety will improve at the existing U.S. 36/SR 37 interchange.

Will the Project Impact Traffic in Sunbury?

The proposed improvements are not expected to increase traffic on W. Cherry Street in the City of Sunbury.

What about Noise?

A noise analysis is currently being prepared for the project. The analysis follows Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and ODOT requirements. Once complete, the results will be made available on the project website.

What is the Schedule for Construction?

The project has been divided into 7 phases, with the first phase (Phase A) expected to begin construction in 2025. Depending on funding, the last phase (Phase G) could begin in 2035. Construction dates are shown on the Draft Project Phasing Diagram on the project website. The timeframes are estimates and may change as funding for each construction phase is secured.

What's Next?

We plan to complete all environmental studies over the next few months. In early 2024, we will be asking the public to comment on the re-evaluation of the environmental document and the Recommended Preferred Alternative. Visit the project website for more information and to subscribe to project updates.

How can I Learn More about the Project?

You can learn more at the project website, shown below. This website contains the project schedule, mapping of the proposed project area, alternatives that were studied as part of the 2023 Feasibility Study, and other study information. The website also provides the full list of responses to public comments.

Project Website:
PublicInput.com/SunburyParkway



Scan the QR code to the right,
or visit the link above.

SCAN ME

Website Access:

If experiencing issues with accessing the website, please notify the ODOT project manager:

(Donald) Richard Ortman, P.E.
Ohio Department of Transportation District 6 Office
400 E. William St., Delaware, Ohio 43015
Donald.Ortman@dot.ohio.gov
(740) 833-8256