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State Route (SR) 21 and Lake Avenue Intersection Improvements Project

Summary of Comments and Responses

The following comments were received as part of the public involvement activities for the proposed SR 21 and Lake Avenue Intersection Improvements Project, which involves reconstruction of the Lake Avenue intersections with SR 21 and 1st Street in the City of Massillon, Stark County, Ohio. As part of the project development, a traffic study was recently completed to evaluate five preliminary alternatives for improving traffic conditions and safety at these closely spaced intersections:

Alternative 1/No Build: Upgraded traffic signals and maintaining the existing lane configurations at the SR 21/Lake Avenue and 1st Street/Lake Avenue intersections. Signal timings and phasing will be optimized. Construction of a shared use-path and updated crosswalks on the southern side of Lake Avenue.

Alternative 2: Multi-lane roundabout at the intersection of SR 21/Lake Avenue and a roundabout at the intersection of 1st Street/Lake Avenue with two eastbound lanes. Construction of a shared use-path and updated crosswalks on the southern side of Lake Avenue.

Alternative 3: Signalized RCUT at the intersection of SR 21/Lake Avenue and a roundabout with two eastbound lanes at the intersection of 1st Street/Lake Avenue. Construction of a shared use-path and updated crosswalks on the southern side of Lake Avenue.

Alternative 4: Upgrade traffic signals and widen Lake Avenue to add additional turn lanes at the intersections of SR 21/Lake Avenue and 1st St/Lake Avenue. Existing lanes to remain the same on SR 21. Construction of a shared use-path and updated crosswalks on the southern side of Lake Avenue.

Alternative 5: Widen Lake Avenue to add additional turn lanes and an upgraded traffic signal at the intersection of SR 21/ Lake Avenue. Hybrid roundabout with two eastbound lanes at the intersection of 1st Street/Lake Avenue. Existing lanes to remain the same on SR 21. Construction of a shared use-path and updated crosswalks on the southern side of Lake Avenue.



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An open house public meeting was held on December 16, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the Massillon Recreation Center (Community Rooms A and B) to display the proposed alternatives and collect public input. Materials provided at the open house public meeting included a project fact sheet, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) brochure, roundabouts fact sheet, When ODOT Needs Your Property brochure, and a comment sheet.

Project information, including exhibits and handouts from the meeting, was also made available on the dedicated project website hosted by American Structurepoint: (<https://www.structurepointpublic.com/sr21andlakeaveintersectionimprovements>).

The City of Massillon received comments in-person at the public meeting, by mail, email, and through the project website. A total of 51 comments were received. Key concerns raised included:

- Motorist safety when navigating roundabouts on SR 21
- Pedestrian safety when crossing SR 21
- Maintenance of traffic flow and access to local businesses during construction
- Accommodation of large vehicles at intersections and turning locations
- Potential congestion impacts at nearby intersections north or south of the project area

These topics are addressed in the responses below. Responses to all comments will be provided to all individuals who provided their contact information and will also be available on the dedicated project website. Additional public involvement, including project notifications, will take place as the design plans are developed.

The City of Massillon appreciates your interest in this project. This is a major improvement for the City and will ultimately improve safety and traffic operations considerably along the corridor. Based on the results of the traffic analysis and review of the public feedback, Alternative 2 has been selected as the preferred alternative.



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	Question	Response
1.	How will traffic be maintained through the corridor during construction?	Precise maintenance of traffic plans will be developed as design progresses. However, the intent is to construct the project as quickly as possible while minimizing disruption throughout construction.
2.	Do Alternatives 2 and 5 accommodate the turning movements for semi-trucks and vehicles with trailers onto the east-side driveway of the Marathon gas station?	Under all design alternatives, turning movements and turning radii would accommodate large vehicles, including semi-trucks and vehicles with trailers.
3.	In Alternative 4, will the traffic signals at the Lake Avenue/SR 21 and Lake Avenue/1st Street intersections be coordinated?	Yes, the signalized alternatives were analyzed with upgraded signal timing and coordination.
4.	Will the Cherry Road NW, Earl Road NW, and 17 th Street NW intersection be updated?	The project limits extend along Lake Avenue between the intersections of 1 st Street and SR 21. Intersections and roadways outside of these limits are not part of the project scope.
5.	Would a roundabout at Lake Avenue and 1st Street result in backups at 1st Street and McCadden Avenue?	A roundabout at Lake Avenue and 1 st Street is anticipated to improve congestion at the 1st Street/McCadden Avenue intersection. While some queuing may still occur along 1 st street, the overall queuing lengths and delays are expected to improve.
6.	Would it be possible to add a short connecting path from Lake Avenue to the cul-de-sac on Kracker Street to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians? From Kracker Street, trail users could then access the Ohio & Erie	Currently, a sidewalk on the north side of Lake Avenue near Kracker Street is not being proposed due to right-of-way constraints at the northwest quadrant of Lake Avenue/ 1 st Street. However, this connection will be evaluated further as design progresses.



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	<p>Canal-Towpath Trail via Towpath Court, providing a safer connection.</p> <p>Has an underpass or overpass for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing SR 21 been considered?</p>	<p>An underpass or overpass for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing SR 21 has been discussed. However, due to funding limitations it is not part of the project scope at this time.</p>
7.	<p>Will the proposed project widen Lake Avenue from 1st Street to Wales Road NE?</p>	<p>The project limits extend along Lake Avenue between the intersections of 1st Street and SR 21. Lake Avenue will not be widened between the intersections of 1st Street and Wales Road NE.</p>
8.	<p>Will larger and upgraded flashing signals be installed on SR 21 near the intersection?</p>	<p>Additional approach signage and flashing signals will be evaluated as final design progresses. It is anticipated that additional advanced warning features will be implemented.</p>
	<p>Will rumble strips be placed on SR 21 and Lake Avenue near the intersection?</p>	<p>Rumble strips are being evaluated on SR 21 along with several other speed control countermeasures.</p>
9.	<p>Rather than roundabouts at Lake Avenue/SR 21 and Lake Avenue/1st Street, has the project considered the following options?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add a right-turn lane from SR 21 North to eastbound Lake Avenue (keep "No Turn on Red") 2. Add a right-turn lane from eastbound Lake Avenue to SR 21 South 3. Restrict westbound Lake Avenue travelers from turning left into Ernie's Bicycle Shop exit lane 	<p>The suggested improvements were all considered during the design phase. However, these improvements were found to provide only minor capacity improvements and did not address traffic operations or safety performance at both intersections.</p>



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	<p>4. Add a right-turn lane from eastbound Lake Avenue to southbound 1st Street</p> <p>5. Add a right-turn lane or access ramp from westbound Lake Avenue to SR 21 North, similar to the SR 21 North access ramp from Cherry Road</p> <p>6. Add an additional left-turn lane Lake Avenue to SR 21 South and operate left-turn movements under a dedicated traffic signal phase, separate from through and right-turn traffic</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Alternatives 1 and 4 are most compatible with users of the Ohio & Erie Canal-Towpath Trail users.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Has the project design considered a dedicated right-turn lane from westbound Lake Avenue to northbound SR 21 to improve traffic flow?</p>	<p>Within Alternative 4, an additional westbound right-turn lane was considered at the Lake Avenue/SR 21 intersection. The capacity analysis results of this alternative found that with the additional right-turn lane, the signalized intersection is expected to operate with less overall delay and queuing; however, the queue length is minimally reduced, and this alternative will not significantly improve operations between these two intersections.</p>



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12.	How will semi-trucks and other large vehicles with lowboy trailers navigate the proposed roundabouts in Alternatives 2, 3, and 5?	All roundabout alternatives include construction of a mountable truck apron designed to accommodate the turning radii of semi-trucks and other large vehicles with trailers.
13.	Has the project considered whether traffic at the SR 21 and Cherry Road intersection might increase under Alternative 3 if drivers divert to that intersection instead of the proposed Alternative 3 one?	<p>A traffic diversion was identified as a potential effect under Alternative 3, with the possibility of increased traffic volumes at the Cherry Road intersection. However, the capacity analysis did not assume diversion of traffic from the Lake Avenue intersection in order to provide a conservative evaluation in the event no traffic diversion occurs.</p> <p>Additionally, traffic counts were conducted at the SR 21 and Cherry Road intersection. Based on the collected data, the intersection appears to have sufficient available capacity to accommodate any potential trip diversion associated with Alternative 3.</p>
14.	Can the City of Massillon use the money for the proposed project elsewhere?	While the City of Massillon could elect to use its funds elsewhere, the City considered the intersections at SR 21/Lake Avenue and 1 st Street/Lake Avenue as a priority for improvement. Additionally, the federal funds on this project cannot be allocated to another Massillon project without approval.
15.	Will the proposed alternatives include the installation of new lighting?	Yes, newly upgraded street lighting will be provided as part of this project.



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16.	In the event of an accident, how would the proposed roundabouts allow for continued flow of traffic?	Similar to any intersection, delays are expected if there is a crash at this location. The City of Massillon safety forces are committed to responding quickly to traffic issues and clearing the intersection as fast as possible.
17.	How will the project maintain access to businesses and recreational access points west of the SR 21/Lake Avenue intersection during construction?	The contractor will maintain access to recreational and commercial properties during construction. The City will provide additional details prior to construction.
18.	Has the project considered safety concerns under Alternative 3, given that an RCUT would require travelers to cross SR 21 twice and increase potential conflict points?	An RCUT is a non-traditional intersection designed to enhance safety at crossings along multi-lane divided highways and are effective at reducing left-turn conflicts that often result in serious injury. However, the two proposed signalized RCUT locations along SR 21 under Alternative 3 have the potential to create additional conflict points compared to Alternative 2, and therefore Alternative 3 is not preferred.
19.	Will the project include runoff management, as well as stormwater and wastewater improvements? Overflow issues currently exist between Ernie's Bicycle Shop and SR 21.	Yes, under Alternative 2 the SR 21/Lake Avenue intersection will be curbed, and a new closed storm sewer will be installed to collect roadway runoff. This alternative will significantly reduce runoff to Ernie's Bicycle Shop.
20.	Will existing guardrails between Ernie's Bicycle Shop and SR 21 be maintained at the southwest corner of SR 21 and Lake Avenue?	Yes, the guardrail will be maintained under Alternative 2.



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21.	Will Alternative 2 accommodate the large vehicles exiting Ernie's Bicycle Shop onto Lake Avenue?	Yes. Under all design alternatives, turning movements and turning radii would accommodate large vehicles, including semi-trucks and vehicles with trailers.
22.	Will Alternative 5 remove the sidewalk extending from the Lake Avenue bridge to the Ohio & Erie Canal-Towpath Trail?	The sidewalk will be reconstructed under Alternative 5.
23.	Before selecting an alternative, can the City of Massillon coordinate and sync the traffic signals along Lake Avenue to see if congestion issues are resolved?	Alternative 1 retains the existing lane geometries but would install new, fully coordinated traffic signals. The capacity analysis indicates that queuing between the two intersections would remain problematic and is expected to worsen as projected traffic volumes increase.
24.	Will the Marathon gas station access points be altered?	Under all five alternatives, the existing access point on the south side of the Marathon gas station would be closed. The two access points along the eastern and western sides of the gas station would retain their current designs. Driveway locations will be further refined as design progresses.
25.	What are the benefits of a roundabout compared to a traffic signaled intersection?	Roundabouts improve safety and traffic flow by reducing conflict points and severe crashes while keeping vehicles moving rather than stopping at signals. They also have lower long-term maintenance costs, reduce emissions from idling, and provide safer pedestrian crossings.



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26.	I prefer Alternative 1/No Build.	Thank you for your comment.
27.	I prefer Alternative 2.	Thank you for your comment.
28.	I prefer Alternative 4.	Thank you for your comment.
29.	I prefer Alternative 5.	Thank you for your comment.