

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary documents the public involvement program implemented for the proposed SH-74 bridge over I-35 replacement/interchange improvement project in McClain County, JP 29571(04) after a previously-documented 2022 virtual open house to present the five (5) design alternatives and solicit public input.

In July 2024, an update flyer was posted on ODOT's website. This flyer provided notification of ODOT's Preferred Alternative and included a graphic showing additional design features that were not originally presented in the October 2022 virtual public involvement.

In October 2024, another virtual open house was held to present the ODOT selected Preferred Alternative and request input on the selection and its features.

After the public meeting, comments were received from seven (7) agencies and fourteen (14) members of the public. These comments were categorized into seven (7) comment categories, as seen in **Table ES.1**, with ODOT providing responses to these comments.

TABLE ES.1: 2024 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

Comment #	Comment Description	# of Comments
1	Safety concerns regarding the Tapered Slip Ramp Option	6
2	Support for/dislike of a roundabout at W. Frontage Road, SH-74, and I-35 southbound entrance and exit ramps (2 comments for and 4 comments against a roundabout at this intersection)	6
3	Desire for a roundabout at SH-74 and Center Road	1
4	Support for sidewalks or clarification if sidewalks/bicycle lanes are part of the project	2
5	Support for a previously presented Alternative other than the Preferred Alternative	3
6	Suggestion for improved roundabout signage	1
7	Support for the project	2

Responses to Comments

Comment #1: Safety concerns regarding the Tapered Slip Ramp Option

ODOT Response: Please refer to ODOT's previous determinations, as documented in the March 2023 Public Involvement Summary Report (Pgs. ES6 – ES7) and posted on ODOT's website. One of these determinations reads as follows:

"ODOT has decided to replace the southbound slip ramp and considered several factors regarding slip ramp configuration and location. [...]. The tapered option requires less right-of-way and better meets current driver expectation. Additionally, the tapered option was preferred by public comment. The decision was made to move forward with the tapered option."

The proposed taper ramp (near Burr Oak Road) has improved geometric design (better curve design and increased length) than the existing taper ramp. This will improve driver safety when exiting. The proposed taper ramp is located further north from the I-35 southbound exit ramp which allows more space and time for driver decision-making, slowing down, and weaving maneuvers (changing lanes) regarding the two separate exits. Additionally, the tapered option was preferred by a majority of the public.

Considering all these factors, ODOT's decision will remain as replacing the existing southbound slip ramp with one located further north tying to the frontage road with a tapered ramp configuration.

Comment #2: Support for/dislike of a roundabout at W. Frontage Road and I-35 southbound entrance and exit ramps

ODOT Response: ODOT has decided to replace the existing intersection at W. Frontage Road, SH-74, and I-35 southbound entrance and exit ramps with a roundabout. The roundabout option was chosen due to the associated lower construction costs and increased safety. Traffic moving through the roundabout must slow down to navigate properly, thus reducing the chances of severe crashes.

Traffic studies performed by ODOT predict that the roundabout option will improve the existing traffic congestion and accommodate the future projected traffic through the intersection. Truck traffic was considered in these studies. These studies also indicate that the largest volume of traffic is southbound on the W. Frontage Road to southbound SH-74. This is why a bypass lane was added in the Preferred Alternative to better accommodate these traffic volumes by channeling traffic away from the inner circle of the roundabout.

Comment #3: Desire for a roundabout at SH-74 and Center Road

ODOT Response: The SH-74 and Center Road intersection is not included as part of this particular project, but as a related intersection study, ODOT is conducting an intersection control evaluation (ICE) of the SH-74 and Center Road intersection to identify optimal solutions for future traffic management.

Comment #4: Support for sidewalks or clarification if sidewalks/bicycle lanes are part of the project

ODOT Response: ODOT met with the Town of Goldsby and will accommodate sidewalks wherever possible as part of a future project. Sidewalks and bicycle lanes are not part of the project as proposed. Right-of-way impacts, cost, and constructability concerns (the ability to construct the project) did not make sidewalks or bicycle lanes practical or reasonable for the proposed project.

Comment #5: Support for a previously presented Alternative other than the Preferred Alternative

ODOT Response: Please refer to ODOT's previous determinations, as documented in the March 2023 Public Involvement Summary Report (Pgs. ES6 – ES7) and posted on ODOT's website. One of these determinations reads as follows:

“ODOT reviewed the operations, impacts, comments from the public, and the overall bridge & interchange analysis. The decision was made to move forward with Alternative 5

– 53° bridge skew. [...]. From the alternatives matrix overall, Alternative 5 (both A and B options) has the best combination of geometric design improvements, intersection capacity, and least environmental impacts. It also has comparable utility relocation impacts, right-of-way acquisition impacts, and overall costs to the other alternatives. The bridge skew of 53° and minimal impact to Airport Road has strong support from the public and from the Town of Goldsby, supporting the features in Alternative 5.”

An overall comparison of all the alternatives and options presented at the public involvement event held October 10 – 31, 2022 was developed and reviewed by ODOT based upon public input, the geometric design, intersection capacity, environmental impacts, utility relocations, right-of-way acquisitions, and total cost opinions.

Based on public comments and these various design measures and constraints from the October 2022 public involvement event, Alternative 5B was carried forward as the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative 4A and 4B (preferred by some commenting members of the public) were not selected due to anticipated impacts to Airport Road and the airport property.

Comment #6: Suggestion for improved roundabout signage

ODOT Response: Roundabouts, where utilized, will be signed in accordance with current Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidance with an emphasis on clarification of which lane is to yield.

Comment #7: Support for the project

ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment. ODOT values your participation in this process and your comment has been included in the project record.