OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Mike DeWine, *Governor*
Jack Marchbanks, Ph.D., *Director*

District 4
2088 S. Arlington Road, Akron, OH 44306
330-786-3100
transportation.ohio.gov

May 10, 2021

Subject: **Response to Comments**
Re: **SR 46 and Warren-Sharon Road Intersection Improvement - TRU-46-7.81, PID 109520**

Dear Interested Party,

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) conducted a virtual open house to present 5 alternatives to improve safety at the State Route (SR) 46/Warren-Sharon Road intersection in Howland Township, Trumbull County, Ohio from January 21, 2021 through February 19, 2021. The 5 alternatives presented were: no build (leave intersection as is), Build A: extend three existing left turn lanes and add northbound and southbound right turn lanes, Build B: extend three existing left turn lanes and add northbound right turn lane, Build C: widen SR 46 to 5-lanes with shared thru-right turn lanes, and Build D: convert the existing 4 leg intersection into a roundabout.

Many comments received during the public meeting comment period were concerned about impacts to properties and parking near the intersection, maintaining access to businesses in and around the intersection, traffic and safety impacts, and project costs. Many comments also expressed their approval of the recommended alternative (Build A). ODOT has reviewed the comments from the public and project stakeholders and found that moving forward with the preferred recommended alternative Build A will be an effective measure to improve safety in the project area. Thank you to those that participated in the open house and provided your comments and feedback. Comments received and ODOT's responses have been compiled into a table and included in this letter.

Considering the public's feedback and the current crash data, ODOT's preferred alternative for TRU-46-7.81 (PID 109520) is Build A: extend three existing left turn lanes and add northbound and southbound right turn lanes. This alternative will construct northbound and southbound right-turn lanes and extend the existing northbound, southbound and westbound left-turn lanes. Additionally, the project proposes to reconstruct the existing traffic signal and install Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible pedestrian accommodations.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me by phone at 330-786-4824, or by email at Sean.Carpenter@dot.ohio.gov.

Respectfully,

Sean Carpenter

Sean Carpenter,
District 4 Environmental Specialist

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRU-46-7.81, PID 109520
Public Comments and ODOT Responses

Comment (Some Summarized for Anonymity)	ODOT Response
I am a property owner of a business near the intersection that will be impacted by the additional right only turn lane. I don't feel that there is a need at this point in time to add lanes at the intersection. I think the traffic flows smoothly. I think if anything it will cause more accidents as well as reduce our parking space at our office and make it even harder for our tenants (as well as their clients) to access our buildings. This could have an economic impact on us as far as keeping tenants on our property. I just think the best alternative in this case would be a no-build and leave the intersection as is.	Thank you for your comment. The intersection functions as a major collection and distribution point in the overall area roadway network in this growing area, and currently operates near full capacity with the existing traffic levels. Operational analyses performed determined the need for additional turn lanes at this intersection to accommodate the impact of additional traffic resulting from implementing the necessary restricted movements at the SR 82/Howland-Wilson intersection. We understand your concern about the accessibility of your property. Each property that will be permanently impacted will be contacted separately to make sure impacts are minimized. Access management and driveways into the adjacent properties and parking areas will also be coordinated with property owners individually to make sure clients/tenants/customers can still access the property easily and safely.
Plan A certainly will aid in safety and provide a much-needed improvement in traffic flow in that intersection. It is nice to see that part of a 10-year plan finally coming to fruition.	Thank you for your comment. The proposed intersection improvements will improve safety and help advance community goals.
Lanes west of the intersection are too narrow and need to be widened as well.	Thank you for your comment. Although widening the lanes west of the intersection is not included in this project, your comment has been noted and the project design does include consideration to better accommodate large vehicle turning movements at the intersection.

I like Build A, since it extends or builds left turn lanes in all directions. However, I have a couple of concerns. There is an access road on Route 46 running between the BP station and the office building. That road gives access to the Howland Plaza, along with the office building. While I am perfectly comfortable driving all the way to Warren-Sharon. Rd., making the left onto Warren-Sharon Road, and then proceeding to the light to make a left into the Plaza (since I'm usually coming from Niles), other drivers may not be comfortable with this. Will this access road be closed? Also, I'm glad that Build A extends sidewalks and makes the push buttons more accessible. My concern is that with the addition of new lanes, additional time will be needed in order for a pedestrian/wheelchair user to cross the intersection (that might mean allowing as much as twenty-thirty seconds for crossing in the crosswalk). Will it be possible to allow enough time for pedestrians to cross with the additional lanes? Thanks for allowing the public to comment!	Thank you for your comment. The access road from the BP Station into Howland Plaza will remain. Currently, the plaza access point is within the section where the SR46 approach widens from one to two lanes for the northbound left turn lane at the Warren-Sharon Road signal. That situation should be alleviated with the project widening for two full width northbound lanes, effectively increasing the left turn storage length, combined with clear signing and striping to indicate proper lane assignment in this section. We're glad to hear your comments about making improvements to the sidewalks and pushbuttons at the intersection. The timing of the pedestrian pushbuttons will be updated to accommodate for the additional time it will take to cross the intersection with the added lanes.
I use this intersection as often as ten times a day. It appears this will greatly reduce congestion. Thank you!	Thank you for your comment.
Would like Build A.	Thank you for your comment. Build A has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project moving forward.
Plan A seems to be the best option. I have another proposition to fund the project. Fine everyone that are in such a big hurry, that they cross the double yellow line to get to the left turn lanes ahead (this is against the law). I think that this is the biggest cause of the accidents. By "training" the hurried drivers not to break the traffic laws, you may not need to reconstruct the intersection with the exception of the southbound right-hand turn curb area that protrudes too far into the intersection, due to the inadequate lane width at the southbound to westbound lanes. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment. The operational analyses performed also showed left turn lanes being blocked by the queues of through vehicles. The project will extend the length of the designated left turn lanes to account for the length of the through movement queue. This should help cut down on drivers crossing over the double yellow lines. The extension of the left turn lanes and additional right only turn lanes should improve the efficiency of the intersection operation and reduce the frequency of congestion related crashes. Also, the project design does include consideration for large vehicle turning movements and will improve the radius of the northeast corner of the intersection to accommodate these movements.

The crash data presented is all prior to the 2017 restriping. Has there been a change in the number of crashes since the restriping took place? If the number of crashes has been reduced, why is this expenditure necessary? The majority of crashes (more than 50%) were rear-ending crashes caused by drivers following too close. It is unclear how this expenditure will improve the tendency of drivers to follow too close. There are numerous curb cuts near this intersection with there being no real boundary other than a paint stripe at the northeast corner property (Andrew's Hardware) and the adjacent roads. Has the traffic coming and going from these numerous curb cuts been studied and will any changes be made to the number and location of curb cuts as part of this proposed project? Finally, in your existing conditions map which shows the turn lanes you have flipped east and west - the arrow that says Eastbound is pointing westbound and the relative turn arrows need to be switched east and west to accurately reflect the conditions as they exist today. Even though this project will have zero impact on the cause of the greatest number of crashes at this intersection, I am assuming that a project will move forward here, and Option A seems to be the best of the options presented - assuming curb-cuts will be addressed in some manner.	Thank you for your comments. 2017 or more recent crash data was not available when the comprehensive study of this area commenced in late 2016. As the study progressed, data was updated and incorporated in the analysis as it became available. The change in lane assignment on Warren-Sharon Road was a safety improvement done by Trumbull County via their resurfacing project completed in 2017 to achieve a head to head left turn lane alignment to improve sight distance of oncoming through vehicles for left turning drivers' view around an opposing left turn queue. This intersection currently operates near full capacity with the existing traffic level, and the access to existing turn lanes can become blocked by through traffic. Operational analyses performed, which also considered the impact of additional traffic resulting from implementing the necessary restricted movements at the SR 82 and Howland-Wilson intersection, determined the need for the additional right turn lanes and extension of the existing left turn lanes at this intersection. The resulting improvement to the overall operational efficiency of the signal should reduce the congestion related crashes including rear-end and sideswipe crashes occurring here. Access management is also an issue at this intersection that will be addressed with this project. The new sidewalks and curbs to be constructed along portions of the intersection will reduce the number of and provide better definition of appropriate access points for driveways within the project limits. Finally, you are correct regarding the directions indicated in the presentation's existing conditions slide. Apologies for any confusion this may have caused.
Build A seems best	Thank you for your comment. Build A has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project moving forward.
Very much needed improvement to intersection.	Thank you for your comment.

What are the cost estimates for each of the build alternatives?	Thank you for your comment. The cost estimate for Build A is $3.74 million dollars. Exact costs were not estimated for the other build alternatives. Build B would not construct the additional right turn lane and would therefore be slightly less than Build A. The roundabout (Alt. D) and the five-lane alternative (Alt. C) have substantially greater property, building, and utility impacts through the intersection and SR 46 corridor. Both the roundabout and five-lane alternatives were eliminated from further consideration due to the high cost and infeasible impact resulting in lower crash reduction benefit to project cost ratios for these alternatives in the safety analyses.
Excellent presentation, and I look forward to the improvements. But there is one issue that I did not see addressed. In my experience, one of the biggest causes for the northbound on 46 left turn lane backup is someone trying to turn left into the Howland (Giant Eagle) plaza using the entrance about 200 feet south of the traffic light. This causes traffic trying to turn left onto Warren-Sharon to either sit and wait for the car to turn or swing around right to go around. Both actions increase the danger in the intersection. An obvious solution would be to close off that entrance and provide an entrance to the plaza from Brewster Drive. This would allow folks to go in via Willow/Brewster, and would also allow ingress/egress to Warren-Sharon via the light at the Brewster intersection. The fact that this does not already exists means there are probably issues I don't know about preventing it, so I'm not sure what the right answer would be, but I think the 46-entrance issue needs to be considered when developing an overall plan.	Thank you for your comment. Currently, the plaza access point is within the section where the SR46 approach widens from one to two lanes for the northbound left turn lane at the Warren-Sharon Road signal. That situation should be alleviated with the project widening for two full width northbound lanes, effectively increasing the left turn storage length, combined with clear signing and striping to indicate proper lane assignment in this section.

I reviewed the proposed plan for Howland Corners and think it is a good one. Suggestion: to take the enormous amount of traffic off 46 that heads South to the Mall is that the bypass should have an outlet after crossing Market street (82) that follows the creek on an elevated highway (because of wetlands) and it ends into the parking lot of the Mall near the ballpark! I know your reply will be costly but look at the savings that could have been if done when bypass was constructed, but I think it is still a good plan.	Thank you for your comment. A north-south connector from SR82 to the Mall was considered and evaluated in a prior study completed in 2005 (TRU-422 Corridor Study). You are correct, it had much higher costs and substantive environmental impacts to the wetlands. Also, the comprehensive traffic analyses done in that study showed that even with the creation of a parallel route, substantial improvements were needed along the SR 46 corridor.
I have reviewed the materials on the proposal for the State Route 46/Warren-Sharon Road Intersection Improvement Project. I have questions based on the information provided. I understand that the total estimate for the project is $3.74 million. What is the estimated cost of Build A, Build B, Build C, and Build D? Surely, they must all have different costs associated with them. I understand that the materials are favoring Build A, but why is this over C or D. I understand that C and D are more disruptive, but which option is best for the folks that live and travel through the area? Which will cause fewer traffic jams and delays? I must fully understand all of the aspects that led to the decision that Build A should be the preferred alternative. One key reason stated is that it maximizes signal efficiency. Considering that Build D has no signals, how could Build A be more efficient than Build D? On the surface the material is written to show that cost is not the driving factor leading to Build A over the other options. But let's be honest, cost must be driving the decision to choose Build A over the appealing design of Build D. With the increase in traffic that closing Howland Wilson and 82 will bring to 46, I need more information to understand which is best!	Thank you for your comment. All alternatives were evaluated considering the added traffic redistributed from the Howland-Wilson closure. Each alternative was configured (number of lanes, widths, inscribed diameters, etc.) as necessary to achieve an acceptable operational level of service at the intersection based on the traffic volume capacity analyses done. The resulting configuration required of both the roundabout (Alt. D) and the five-lane alternative (Alt. C) have greater property, building, and utility impacts through the intersection and the SR 46 corridor. Both the roundabout and five-lane alternatives were eliminated from further consideration due to the high cost and infeasible impact resulting in lower crash reduction benefit to project cost ratios for these alternatives in the safety analyses.

I am a homeowner in Howland Township and I travel through the Howland Corner intersection numerous times per day. I agree with your project A. I do feel that right turn lanes are needed as well as a longer left turn lane on Warren Sharon Road trying to turn south, left, onto State Route 46. My suggestion would be to also put in an additional lane on Warren Sharon Road going west (on the west corner). A reconfiguration was completed not too long ago but it only made one lane going west bound on Warren Sharon Road. I have experienced and seen larger vehicles, trucks and semi-trucks trying to turn from the north and south of State Route 46 onto the one west bound lane with much difficulty. The existing lane is too narrow to maneuver from Route 46. I realize that you only have so much room to work with but I feel this situation has caused traffic issues and hazards. It would avoid additional traffic inconvenience and additional costs if this issue was addressed at the same time as the other planned construction.	Thank you for your comment. An additional lane going west on Warren Sharon Road, would have substantive property/right-of-way impacts. The radii of the intersection will be improved with the project which will reduce some of the impacts the larger trucks have at the intersection.
I don't see a need for sidewalks here – not enough walkers to warrant the expense! There are probably less than 10 people a month walk along here on busy route 46!	Thank you for your comment. Sidewalks are proposed in the preliminary layout in coordination with Howland Township's 2010 Comprehensive Community Plan, which identified SR 46 from North River Road to US 422 as a "Primary Pedestrian Corridor." The existing intersection has sidewalks on several approaches, and the proposed improvements include sidewalks and other modifications to bring the intersection into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
Why was there no discussion of the obvious solution here: 4-lane SR 46 from North River Road to SR 82? Other Ohio cities have long had 4 lane highways to move traffic and eliminate bottle necks which cause impatient drivers to "run" caution lights and prevent safety services form serving the residents and businesses!	Thank you for your comment. The corridor of SR 46 north of Warren-Sharon Road is outside of the current study area. Additional lanes on SR 46 from North River Road to SR 82 would have substantive property/right-of-way impacts. Existing congestion near North River Road is primarily driven by inefficiency at the SR 46/Warren-Sharon Road intersection. The proposed improvements at the SR 46/Warren-Sharon Road intersection should reduce congestion in this northern section, without the need for additional widening.
I would like Build A (preferred alternative).	Thank you for your comment. Build A has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project moving forward.
Build A makes the best of an awkward situation. I'm concerned the extension lanes aren't long enough for the future 10-12 car capacity.	The extension of the existing left turn storage lanes and the storage lengths of the added right turn lanes were determined in the comprehensive intersection operational analyses performed that included consideration of additional traffic resulting from implementing the necessary restricted movements at the SR 82 and Howland-Wilson

	intersection in addition to the projected traffic growth in the area.
Why not a roundabout to keep traffic flowing and force big trucks to 82/11?	Thank you for your comment. A roundabout intersection was evaluated as part of this project. The roundabout demonstrated greater operational improvements compared to Build A or B, but the roundabout had substantially greater impacts (footprint, buildings, utilities) and a lower benefit to cost ratio. Existing topography and necessary downstream improvements also presented challenges and increased project footprints, leading the roundabout to be eliminated from further consideration.
I think Build-A – Preferred Alt will take care of the traffic flow and turn lanes that are needed.	Thank you for your comment. Build A has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project moving forward.
My interest is the least down time, least costly – No build or Build A.	Thank you for your comment. Build A has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project moving forward.
I favor Build A (preferred Alternative) which will be the safest alternative for this area. I'm against the roundabout in this specific area.	Thank you for your comment. Build A has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project moving forward.
The extra turn lanes are needed. Road widening will aid traffic flow. Pedestrian crossing need improved. Right turn on red make pedestrians in danger of being hit. There are very few pedestrian crossings on the 4 lane Market Street. This encourages jaywalkers and accidents.	Thank you for your comment. We're glad to hear your comments about making improvements to the sidewalks and pushbuttons at the intersection. This will create a safer crossing for pedestrians in the project area.
I agree with the proposed project and feel it would make travel daily easier and safer. I understand that when this project starts there will be some temporary inconvenience with how to get around, but the long-term results outweigh the short term inconvenience.	Thank you for your comment and understanding of the temporary changes that may occur during project construction.
This is a good idea if it makes the crossroads safer!	Thank you for your comment.
No doubt build A is the preferred plan.	Thank you for your comment.
Why would you do this? It's not going to cut down on the traffic or congestion. Do the roundabout that was talked about before. Change the traffic!	Thank you for your comment. A roundabout intersection was evaluated as part of this project. The roundabout demonstrated greater operational improvements compared to Build A or B, but the roundabout had substantially greater impacts (footprint, buildings, utilities) and a lower benefit to cost ratio. Existing topography and

	necessary downstream improvements also presented challenges and increased project footprints, leading the roundabout to be eliminated from further consideration.
Hate the circle. Traffic will go through the neighborhoods making them unsafe for our children. We vote A.	Thank you for your comment. Build A has been selected as the preferred alternative for the project moving forward.
I am concerned about customers and patients getting into the office.	Thank you for your comment. We understand your concern about the accessibility of your property. Each property that will be permanently impacted will be contacted separately to make sure impacts are minimized. Access management and driveways into the adjacent properties and parking areas will also be coordinated with property owners individually to make sure clients/tenants/customers can still access the property easily and safely.
We are property owners on Howland Corners and at this time we DO NOT feel there is any reason to add and extend turning lanes on route 46 or Warren Sharon Road. We feel that this would not be an improvement but cause more issues as well as accidents. It would also cause issue with access to our property for us as well as our tenants and their clients and affect us being able to rent our commercial property and sustain our businesses. This would also hinder access to our parking lot as well as take away from the parking we have available now which is already strained. There is already an issue due to added left hand turning lane going east to north on route 46 from East Market St.(Warren Sharon Road).We feel that this would not be an improvement would cause more issues as well as more accidents. It would also cause issues with access to our property for us as well as our tenants and their clients and affect us being able to rent our commercial property and sustain our businesses. There is already an issue due to added left-hand lane going east to north on Route 46 from East Market St. warren Sharon Road which we felt was a bad idea to begin with. Larger vehicles such as school buses as well as emergency vehicles and larger vehicles making a turn at this intersection going west from Route 46 to E. Market St., Warren Sharon Road. At this time we feel adamantly that the best alternative is a NO BUILD!!!!	Thank you for your comment. The no build option does not satisfy the project's purpose and need to improve safety. The build alternatives were evaluated considering the added traffic redistributed from the Howland-Wilson closure. Each alternative was configured (number of lanes, widths, turn lane lengths, etc.) as necessary to improve the signal operation efficiency to achieve an acceptable operational level of service at the intersection based on the capacity analyses done including the redistributed traffic volumes. From a safety perspective, reducing vehicular delay and congestion by constructing northbound and southbound right turn lanes, and extending the existing northbound, southbound and westbound left turn lanes to meet expected queue storage lengths will reduce the frequency of rear end crashes and crashes caused by cars maneuvering around queues to reach blocked turn lanes. Throughout the detail design process, ODOT has mindfully sought to minimize impacts to all the properties in the project limits, while ensuring appropriate design standards are applied including accommodations for the turning movements of the larger trucks, emergency vehicles and buses using this intersection. The alternative selected is the most operationally efficient alternative with the least amount of impacts that satisfies the project's purpose and need to improve safety.