



**Sandusky St Rehabilitation/Realignment**  
**Mount Vernon, OH**

**KNO-SR13-10.33, PID # 116840**

**Public Comment Summary**

**October 5, 2023**

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, a Public Meeting for the proposed project was held on October 5, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Station Break Senior Citizens Center of Knox County. Representatives from the City of Mount Vernon, GPD Group, Lawhon & Associates, and Ohio Department of Transportation were available to answer project-specific questions and to address comments concerning the proposed State Route 13 improvement project. Thirty-five (35) people signed the sign-in sheet provided at the door in attendance at the public meeting, including thirty-two (32) members of the public.

Comment sheets were received at the meeting and for a period that extended to November 6, 2023. The public was asked to give any comments they had regarding the project. Sixteen (16) comment sheets were received during the comment period. A summary of the comments received and responses to these comments can be found on the following pages.

Comment	Response
<p>Please connect the south side of M.V. to the north side with a path added and hanging on both sides of the Main St. bridge. A large number of cyclists are using the Kokosing Gap and Heart of Ohio trails to access Main St, and the shops (food, coffee, bike shop, hotels). We need a safe path attached to both sides of Main St. bridge, heat the path</p>	<p>Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</p>
<p>Please improve the bridge to include bike lanes on both the west and east sides. The 10' shared use path would have limited value without extending the path across the bridge. This is a necessary addition.</p>	<p>Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sidewalk/bike path needs to extend on viaduct south both sides</li> <li>- Viaduct bridge needs overhaul</li> <li>- Strategic signage MUST be placed especially as South Main cannot continue south as current</li> <li>- Concerned about water drainage on South Sandusky</li> <li>- Please keep in mind that the sidewalk/bike path serves as a conduit for many people who lack other transportation alternatives to needed services located downtown – think Columbus Rd. residents, homeless, etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</li> <li>- The project will add signage to direct southbound S. Main Street traffic to turn right on Ohio Avenue, left on Mulberry Street, and left on Sandusky Street, to continue southbound on S. Main Street.</li> <li>- A new enclosed storm sewer system with curb and gutter inlets will be installed to accommodate the surface drainage on South Sandusky.</li> </ul>
<p>Very much needed and will enhance access for all means of transportation. Semis diverting west while traveling north is great.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>We are very excited! Please make sure we can be involved with developing ideas for the green space in front of Wright Center.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

<p>This is a wonderful idea. We have needed a “bypass” for many years. Is there a way the bypass could be extended from Harcourt Rd around the city on the north and west side? And something similar from Harcourt to East and south side? If Fredericktown can have a beautiful and functional bypass there is no reason Mt.Vernon can’t have one too.</p>	<p>These ideas are beyond the scope of this project, however the City can consider for future projects.</p>
<p>Please let me know if there is a way our delivery trucks can get access to Walnut Alley behind our store (G.R. Smith Hardware) at 101 S. Mulberry St. Someone purchased the old church at 102 West Ohio Avenue in May 2023 and also purchased the vacated alley west of his lot. They were told they can use the vacated alley for parking and plans on using it for parking. This is the only way delivery trucks have access to Walnut alley behind our store. All the other intersections with Walnut alley are too narrow for a semi-truck &amp; trailer to fit thru. We used to have trucks come in from Gambier Street until they damaged one of the buildings trying to make the turn into Walnut Alley. The trucks then started to back into the alley from West Vine Street until a driver was cited for going the wrong way and striking a car that parked while the truck was backing into the alley. The police suggested the trucks should come up Walnut alley to avoid going the wrong way on West Vine and causing an accident.</p>	<p>The problem noted is an existing condition. This is outside of the proposed project area. Walnut Alley’s southern terminus is at Ohio Avenue. As mentioned in the comment, south of Ohio Avenue, the alley has been vacated and sold as private property. This project cannot provide a connection to Walnut Alley from relocated South Sandusky Street because the alley no longer exists in this area.</p>
<p>I am supportive of the efforts to SR 13 with the north bank of the Kokosing river to join with S. Sandusky St. This should continue to encourage the stability and growth of Mount Vernon’s downtown. The multi-use path that will link and facilitate traffic to and from Mount Vernon’s west side is excellent. But a retrofit or rebuild of the South Main St. viaduct is also essential. The narrow walkways are crumbling and otherwise unsafe. Wider paths that include a barrier much like the Mt. Vernon Avenue bridge are absolutely needed to better connect these parts of Mount Vernon.</p>	<p>Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</p>



<p>I appreciate (as a cyclist and walker) the addition of the 10-foot proposed walk/path next to the highway. It will be a much-needed improvement for the city. My concern is the South Main Street bridge. The sidewalks across the bridge are too narrow for walkers, wheelchairs or cyclists. They are unsafe singularly, and to pass or oppose each other is near impossible without stepping onto the highway. Now would be a great time to fix this safety hazard and connect to the new proposed walk/path.</p>	<p>Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</p>
<p>Extend project to include bike lanes (10' wide) on each side. Also a new concrete bridge deck over the entire bridge would be a great thing!</p>	<p>Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</p>
<p>I am an avid cyclist, and ride the Heart of Ohio Trail, the connector to the Kokosing Gap Trail, and the KGT frequently. I am in favor of, and advocate for a 10-foot shared-use path to be built on the river side of the SR 13 reroute that would link the HOOT and KGT with the north side of Mt. Vernon. Mt. Vernon is a beautiful town and should be made easily and safely accessible to all modes of transportation and degrees of mobility. It also would be nice if the South Main Street Bridge be retrofitted with bike lanes added to both sides of the bridge. This would be a huge benefit to cyclists and pedestrians wanting to stay off the roadway and crossing the river to and from downtown.</p>	<p>Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</p>
<p>The crosswalks are nice. As someone who has tried to cross with a lot of little kids, I appreciate them.</p>	<p>Ladder style crosswalk lines will be installed at all project crosswalks. Pedestrian signal heads and pushbuttons will be installed at all signalized project intersections.</p>

<p>I like the idea of expanding the area for bikes on the bridge, as well as other modifications (electric heat especially because it gets icy). As someone learning to drive though, the new intersections look more difficult than they were and more likely to cause crashes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bridge improvements are beyond the scope of this project, however, the City is pursuing funding for a separate bridge improvement project that would provide a shared-use path connection across the bridge, along with other improvements.</li> <li>- The comment isn't specific about which intersection they are concerned with. The proposed improvements are simplifying the geometry at South Main Street by limiting access to right-in/right-out, which should reduce crashes. All other project intersections will continue to operate in a similar manner as they do currently.</li> </ul>
<p>When planning the improvements, ask that you not only prioritize car and truck traffic, but also pedestrian and bicycle access. As a frequent bicyclist I find travelling from Ohio St. south on Main St. to be especially hazardous.</p> <p>I am also concerned that this enlargement of Sandusky St. will cut off and isolate the west side neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Agreed. The improvements are enhancing both vehicular and pedestrian/bicyclist movements through the corridor.</p> <p>The proposed 3-lane roadway is not eliminating any access points or intersections for cross traffic to/from the west side neighborhoods.</p>
<p>Property at the NE corner of Sandusky St and Gambier St consists of several apartments and is the only residential structure impacted by the proposed project. The increase in vehicular traffic as a result of this project will make our property less desirable as a primary residence as well as to our tenants. If this project is approved you have already taken our property. How will we be compensated for this decrease in value and loss of rental income? The increase in traffic from this project, both in vehicles and pedestrians from the mixed-use path also poses safety concerns for our tenants. We are concerned about how parking will be accommodated during construction.</p> <p>A specific concern is the handling of semi-truck traffic at this intersection and how the proposed project will impact the overall safety of our tenants and property. Over</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The property owner will be compensated for the proposed temporary right of way take through the right of way acquisition process.</li> <li>- Parking in the rear of the building will not be affected by construction.</li> <li>- Signage is being provided for the re-routed State Routes through the City. Including a "no right turn semi-trucks" for westbound Gambier St. at Sandusky St.</li> <li>- In response to this comment, the City is investigating making Norton Street and Gambier Street intersection an alternate right turn location.</li> <li>- From a traffic perspective the current ADT (average daily traffic) is 6,920 and the opening year ADT is 10,270. Traffic studies show that opening year</li> </ul>

<p>the last 20 years, there have been numerous collisions and other incidents at this intersection, primarily involving semi-trucks making a right hand turn from Gambier St onto Sandusky St. that have caused cable, telephone, and electrical lines to be ripped out of our siding, significant damage to utility poles carrying high voltage wires, prolonged power outages as well as routine damage to our landscaping from vehicles coming up over the curb. Debris thrown from the roadway has broken windows of our residence as well as damaged vehicles parked along the street. This project will only exacerbate these type of issues.</p> <p>Semi-trucks are already prohibited from making this right hand turn, but that signage is regularly disregarded and never legally enforced. Daily observation reveals that this route is preferred by semi-trucks regardless of the signage. We feel the proposed project presents a tremendous opportunity to address the issue of truck traffic on Gambier St and find a workable solution by widening Gambier St. to add a truck turn lane. We understand that our property would need to be purchased to make this feasible. We would be interested in selling our property to better accommodate the project and make the outcome more functional for Mount Vernon residents.</p>	<p>traffic allows the Sandusky Street and Gambier Street signal to operate at acceptable levels of service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At this time, the City does not have the need to acquire this building for the project improvements. The City is willing to revisit making this a truck turn in the future after this project is completed and they have a better feel for the traffic and the effects of the Intel site.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The curbed grass median unnecessarily restricts access for emergency vehicles to and from the south of Mount Vernon.</li> <li>- The planned highway configuration concentrates all of the highway traffic through one intersection that consists of two two-way streets, unnecessarily restricting the flow of traffic through Mount Vernon and hence unnecessarily reducing the level of service at that one intersection and adjacent streets and intersections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Medians are not uncommon on three lane roads. The longest median is 240'. This is a short distance for public vehicles to continue before pulling over to allow space for the emergency vehicle to get through. In the rare occurrence where a vehicle breaks down, emergency vehicles will use the travel lane on the opposite side of the median.</li> <li>- While any proposed configuration changes may result in slightly reduced delays at the referenced intersection, the proposed configuration achieves all goals of the study, which was to make the downtown Mount Vernon roadway network more pedestrian and bicycle-</li> </ul>

- The planned highway configuration dead-ends Howard St. short of S. Main St although simultaneously having the crossover of S. Sandusky St. aligned with Howard St. westwardly, unnecessarily prohibiting direct access from Howard St. to North Ohio 13.

friendly while eliminating trucks from downtown and providing acceptable operations in the future years. Acceptable Levels-of-Service are anticipated to be provided at the study intersection in the Design Year 2044 conditions, which is based on calculations and traffic projections approved by two public agencies.

The option shown in this comment would also create a traffic pattern for State Route 229 that requires vehicles to drive one block past their desired street location and then backtrack a block. While, in theory, this would help to spread traffic out, it would not be driven as such in the field by local motorists who know the roadway network or any other motorists who are using GPS guidance.

- The proposed configuration does sever the connection of Howard Street to S. Main Street. However, this configuration was found to be the safest and most efficient way to achieve the goals set forth with this project.

The configuration shown in the diagrams of this comment creates safety and sight distance issues at the Sandusky Street / S. Main Street intersection and makes the movement from NB State Route 13 onto NB S. Main Street more difficult and would reduce more traffic from S. Main Street and downtown Mount Vernon than the proposed improvements. Traffic making the right turn from S. Main Street onto Sandusky Street would be at a significant skew to Sandusky Street, making it more difficult for drivers to look over their shoulders to ensure an adequate gap in traffic exists on NB Sandusky Street to enter the traffic stream.

Additionally, during peak hours, traffic attempting to make the right turn from S. Main Street onto Sandusky Street could queue block the intersection of S. Main Street and Howard Street.

This queue block could then impact the ability of traffic traveling NB on State Route 13 to access NB S. Main Street, creating a queue that would create a sight distance issue and back up traffic onto State Route 13 NB across the viaduct. This configuration could create an unnecessary and very dangerous situation that is avoided by the configuration proposed.

Furthermore, the fact that the S. Main Street to Sandusky Street movement is not a physical turn but a straight movement is anticipated to increase the number of motorists that would not stop at the stop sign as they had just stopped at the intersection prior, which is in very close proximity due to driver inattention and distraction (which is one of the leading causes of crashes in the State of Ohio and one of ODOT's emphasis areas). This configuration creates an unsafe condition that could lead to an increase in angle-type crashes at the intersection and would be avoided in the proposed project.