



News Release

National Road Tunnel Rehab Project City of St. Clairsville, Belmont County

ODOT Project No. BEL-National Road Tunnel Rehab (PID: 108774)

The City of St. Clairsville proposes to rehabilitate and improve the National Road Bikeway Tunnel under U.S. Route 40, the bikeway trestle bridge crossing State Route 9, and the trail pavement. Work will include a 90-foot-long tunnel extension to the south, new concrete retaining walls at both tunnel entrances, and rehabilitation of the metal stairs at the north end of the tunnel. Work will also include replacement of the timber retaining walls around the plaza overlook with concrete block retaining walls and repaving the entire National Road Bikeway trail. To improve access to the tunnel, a new parking lot with an entrance from National Road (U.S. 40) will be constructed. This parking lot will connect to the plaza overlook. At the trestle bridge over SR-9, a timber retaining wall will be replaced with concrete block wall and boards/planking on the trestle will be replaced.

In order to construct the various improvements, portions of the National Road Bikeway will be closed with detours provided as shown on the attached map. Most of the work will be on City owned property or within existing rights-of-way. However, it will also be necessary for the City to acquire some additional property near the tunnel including roughly 0.2 acres of permanent right-of-way from two parcels, about 0.2 acres of temporary right-of-way from two parcels, and about 0.5 acres of slope easement from seven parcels. Access to businesses and residences will remain open during construction. Substantial traffic disruptions are not expected during project construction. The project will not have any impacts on streams or wetlands, community facilities, hazardous waste sites, or underserved populations. Some trees will need to be removed to stabilize the slopes near the tunnel entrances and to construct the new parking lot and entrance along National Road (U.S. 40). This project will have no effect on the St. Clairsville Historic District. The National Road Bikeway Tunnel has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the Ohio State Historic Preservation has agreed that the project will have no adverse effect on this historic property.

The project is necessary to improve access to the tunnel and the trail from the National Road (U.S. Route 40) and to address maintenance/safety concerns related to earthen/rock slope failures at the tunnel ends, deteriorated timber walls at the existing stairs to the tunnel, deteriorated timber walls and wooden planking at the trestle over State Route 9, and deteriorating pavement on the National Road Bikeway. Construction is currently scheduled to begin after July 1, 2024 and land acquisition is expected to begin July 1, 2023. Total project construction cost is \$3,325,705.

April 20, 2023