

SR 162 | Pellissippi Parkway Extension

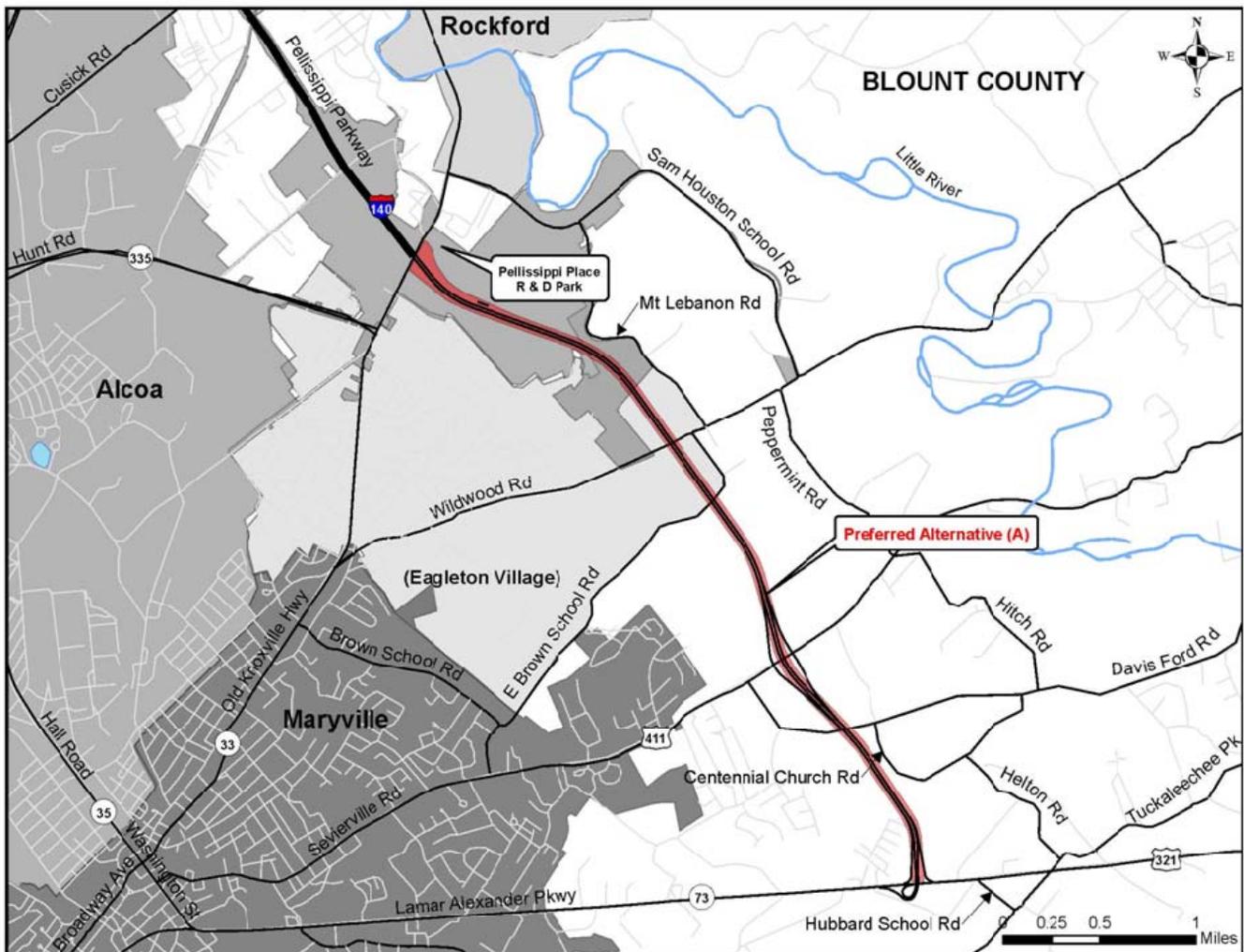
From SR 33 (Old Knoxville Highway) to SR 73 (US 321/Lamar Alexander Highway)



TDOT Announces Preferred Alternative

After careful consideration of input from the public, local officials and regional, state and federal agencies, as well as weighing of the impacts of the project alternatives on the human and natural environment, the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) has selected Build Alternative A (see figure below) as its Preferred Alternative for the proposed project.

The Preferred Alternative is a four-lane divided highway with interchanges at SR 33, US 411/Sevierville Road and US 321/Lamar Alexander Parkway. The proposed right-of-way (ROW) is a minimum of 300 feet, requiring the purchase of new ROW. The roadway would be designed for traffic traveling at 60 miles-per-hour.



Pellissippi Parkway Extension Preferred Alternative (Build Alternative A)

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Project Description

This project involves extending and constructing Pellissippi Parkway (SR 162) from its current terminus at SR 33 (Old Knoxville Highway) to SR 73 (US 321 or Lamar Alexander Highway) in Blount County. The proposed extension would be approximately 4.4 miles. TDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to identify and evaluate the environmental effects of the proposed project and to identify measures to minimize harm.

The purpose of the proposed project is to:

- Provide travel options for motorists to the County's existing radial roadway network;
- Enhance the regional transportation system linkages;
- Enhance roadway safety on the county's roadway network, including the Maryville core; and
- Assist in achieving acceptable traffic flows (LOS) on the transportation network or not adversely affect traffic flows on the existing transportation network.

The Draft EIS (DEIS) for the project evaluated a No Build Alternative and three Build Alternatives (A, C and D). The DEIS was approved by FHWA on April 16, 2010, and was circulated for public comment. The DEIS Public Hearing was held on July 20, 2010 at the Heritage High School in Maryville, Tennessee. Comments on the DEIS were accepted through August 30, 2010. Copies of the public hearing transcript and the combined public comments received area available for download on the TDOT project website .

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/pellissippi/involvement.htm>

Reasons for Selection of the Preferred Alternative

Build Alternative A was selected as the Preferred Alternative over Build Alternatives C and D for the following reasons:

- It provides a non-radial transportation route in the growing area northeastern Blount County where such a route has been lacking.
- It completes Pellissippi Parkway (SR 62/I-140) as envisioned by local and regional plans.
- It provides substantial improvement in delay in most of the intersections in the Alcoa / Maryville core.
- It displaces the least number of residences (5) and businesses (1) in comparison to Alternatives C and D.
- It has the greatest physical distance/separation from Little River, a designated Exceptional Tennessee Water, when compared to Alternatives C and D, and has the least amount of perpendicular floodplain impacts (7 acres).
- It has the support of local officials. Resolutions received in October 2011 from the legislative bodies of City of Maryville, City of Alcoa, and Blount County stated support for the selection of Alternative A as the preferred alternative.

Preferred Alternative Meets Need and Purpose

TDOT has determined that the Preferred Alternative meets the need and purpose of the proposed project, in that it would:

- Enhance regional transportation system linkages, by completing Pellissippi Parkway as envisioned in long range plans. This alternative would provide a four-lane connection between I-40 and the east side of Maryville on US 321 as envisioned in the 1986 Urgent Needs Highway Plan.

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- Improve circumferential mobility, by providing a new four-lane route in northeastern Blount County that would allow motorists to avoid congested downtown Maryville routes. Travel times would be improved by about 56%.
- Enhance roadway safety on the roadway network, including the Maryville core. The new route would result in a reduction of traffic volumes on existing routes with the highest crash rate by 2035; with the reduction in traffic volumes comes the potential for reduction in crashes given less volume on the roadway compared to the No-Build Alternative. It also provides a safer route for travelers in northeastern Blount County compared with the existing network of disconnected two-lane roads.
- Assist in achieving acceptable traffic flows, with the substantial improvement in the level of delay at five key intersections.

Additional Traffic Analysis Conducted

In response to public and agency comments received during the DEIS comment period in 2010, TDOT determined the need to prepare more detailed traffic forecasts for Build Alternative D to bring it to the same level of analysis as Alternatives A and C. These revised forecasts included the data necessary to calculate the levels of service. The additional traffic analysis was conducted prior to the selection of the Preferred Alternative.

The updated traffic analysis demonstrated that overall, Build Alternatives A and C shows a substantial reduction in delay compared to the No-Build Alternative at most study area intersections (between 10 and 140 seconds less than the No-Build). It also demonstrated that Alternative D would cause a moderate increase in delay for most key intersections, generally ranging from a 1-second increase to a 128-second increase over the No-Build.

The results are reported in the updated traffic report, *SR 162 (Pellissippi Parkway Extension) Addendum to the Traffic Operations Technical Report*, June 30, 2011. The report can be found on the project website (see below).

Project Timeline

Summer/Fall 2012

Additional Technical Studies for Archaeology, Noise, Indiana Bats, and Hazardous Materials for the Preferred Alternative

Fall 2012

Preparation of the FEIS Documentation

Winter 2013

Approval of FEIS by FHWA

Spring 2013

Record of Decision by FHWA

For More Information:

Visit:

www.tdot.state.tn.us/pellissippi/default.htm

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Preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

TDOT is now preparing the Final EIS (FEIS) to address the impacts of the Preferred Alternative. The following additional technical studies will be conducted during Summer 2012 and will be reported in the FEIS:

- *Archaeology* – Phase II investigations on five sites are necessary to determine whether the sites are eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. If one or more sites are determined to be eligible for the National Register, TDOT and FHWA will consult with Native American tribes and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and a mitigation plan.
- *Hazardous Materials* – A Phase II Contamination Assessment is required for one site along the Preferred Alternative to verify or refute potential contamination concerns.
- *Threatened and Endangered Species (Indiana Bat)* – Subsequent to the approval of the DEIS, the US Fish and Wildlife Service notified TDOT that additional investigations would be necessary to determine whether the federally listed endangered Indiana bat is present in the project area. TDOT will conduct a survey for the Indiana bat during the summer season 2012.
- *Noise* – As a result of TDOT's new Noise Policy (2011), an updated noise abatement analysis will be conducted for the Preferred Alternative.

You may notice TDOT representatives in the project area completing these updates during the Summer of 2012.

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