

I-376 Banksville Interchange Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Will the median access at the south portal of the Fort Pitt Tunnel be eliminated as part of the project?

No, this access will remain. It is needed to allow access for tunnel employees and equipment to the eastbound and westbound lanes.

Will the project eliminate the need for the signals just prior to the Fort Pitt Tunnel entrance?

This signal will remain in order to safely remove overheight vehicles that fail to exit at the new Route 51 exit ramp, and to safely transition between shifts for tunnel employees.

However, the project will install additional overheight signing and overheight vehicles will be required to exit at the new Route 51 exit ramp, so it is anticipated that the signals will be triggered less frequently.

Will there be additional backups on Banksville Road due to merging both inbound Banksville Road lanes into one lane prior to merging with the Parkway West?

Using current signal timings along Banksville Road, the Banksville Road inbound travel time is projected to increase based on traffic analysis performed to date. However, this project is only the first phase in a series of interchange improvements to be undertaken along the Parkway West. Future improvements planned for the Green Tree and Carnegie Interchanges will also have positive impacts on Parkway travel times that may also attract more Banksville Road commuters to the Parkway – thus mitigating negative impacts to Banksville Road commuting time that may occur.

How will eastbound traffic on the Parkway West access Banksville Road?

Traffic traveling eastbound on the Parkway West that wants to access Banksville Road will take the new Route 51 exit ramp, then continue to the Rte. 51 north ramp (Exit 69C). Once on Rte. 51, traffic will get in the left lane and take the I-376 West

(Carnegie/Pittsburgh Int'l Airport) exit. From there, traffic will take the Rte. 19 South exit to Banksville Road.

Is it possible to assign route numbers to lanes entering the Fort Pitt Tunnel – SR 376 East for the right lane and SR 279/SR 28 for the left lane – to prevent weaving on the bridge?

This was considered. However, forcing traffic into designated lanes prior to the tunnel may cause significant backups along the Parkway. Furthermore, lane shifts, and weaving will still occur on the Fort Pitt Bridge due to the on-ramp from Carson Street that merges just after exiting the tunnel.

Will construction on this project conflict with the construction for the replacement of the Commercial Street Bridge?

Construction of the Commercial Street Bridge project is anticipated to begin in Spring 2023 and be completed by Summer 2025. While there will be overlap in the project schedules, the Commercial Street project will utilize advanced construction techniques to minimize impacts to the Parkway East, including “sliding in” the new bridge. There is a planned closure for the Parkway East while the bridge is moved into position for approximately a two to three-week period; this, however, will be closely coordinated with many stakeholders and other major construction projects.

Is it possible to construct a ramp from Banksville Road that ties into the left lane of the Parkway West to help with Banksville Road traffic that needs to be in the left lane on the Fort Pitt Bridge?

Unfortunately, the roadway grades and the geometry between Banksville Road and the Fort Pitt Tunnel cannot accommodate this type of ramp.

Where widening is done, how will the hill slopes be stabilized?

Where practical, slopes will be cut back. Where this is not possible, retaining walls will be utilized.

Will the existing loop ramp be reshaped at all?

The curvature of the loop ramp will not be changed. However, a section of the ramp will be reconstructed in order to increase the vertical clearance under the Parkway bridge.

Will connecting the Parkway Center on-ramp with the new Route 51 exit ramp create a new weave area?

It is not anticipated that the new ramp will create an appreciable traffic weave area due to the significant distance between entrance and exit ramp. There should be sufficient room for vehicles from Parkway Center to merge onto the Parkway West prior to traffic exiting onto the new Route 51 ramp.

Will there be any changes to the ramp going from Woodville Avenue/Saw Mill Run Boulevard to I-376 West? Right now, it merges into one lane causing a bottleneck.

Yes, this ramp will have two lanes to alleviate the bottleneck. The right lane will lead to I-376 West and the left lane will lead to the loop ramp and Banksville Road.

How will the loop ramp allow motorists access to the Parkway?

The loop ramp will operate similar to how it does today. You will still be able to access both the Parkway and Route 51 northbound and southbound. With the project, the loop ramp will open up to two lanes. Vehicles wishing to get on the Parkway toward the Fort Pitt Tunnel will get in the left lane and merge with Banksville Road traffic, then merge onto the Parkway. Vehicles wishing to go to Route 51 will get in the right lane and merge with traffic coming from the new Parkway exit ramp and Banksville slip ramp.

Will the new bridge on the Parkway exit ramp to Route 51 have salt brine sprayers?

Yes, the new bridge will have an anti-icing system.

Will the existing runaway truck ramp be affected by the project?

The runaway truck ramp will not be affected by the project and will remain. The new Parkway exit ramp to Route 51 is located prior to the runaway truck ramp.

Will there be truck speed warning signs for the new Parkway exit ramp to Route 51?

The design team is currently evaluating the necessary signing needed for the project. Any warranted signing will be included in the final design.

When traffic backs up at the Fort Pitt Tunnel, many vehicles exit onto Route 51. Are any additional traffic control devices to be installed along Route 51?

At this time, no additional traffic control devices are anticipated to be installed along Route 51. The project improvements should help traffic flow along the Parkway entering the Fort Pitt Tunnel.

Are any capacity improvements to the Fort Pitt Tunnel being studied?

At this time, no capacity improvements to the tunnel are being studied, and none are anticipated in the foreseeable future.