

Introduction

To build on the success of US-23 Flex Route Phase 1 from M-14 to just south of M-36 (9 Mile Road), the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will complete design for Phase 2 of the project in November 2022. The project limits, shown in Figure 1, are along US-23 from south of M-36 (9 Mile Road) to Spencer Road.

Construction will begin in spring 2023 and will continue through fall 2025. The work will be completed as listed below, with winter shutdowns where traffic will be in the existing configuration:

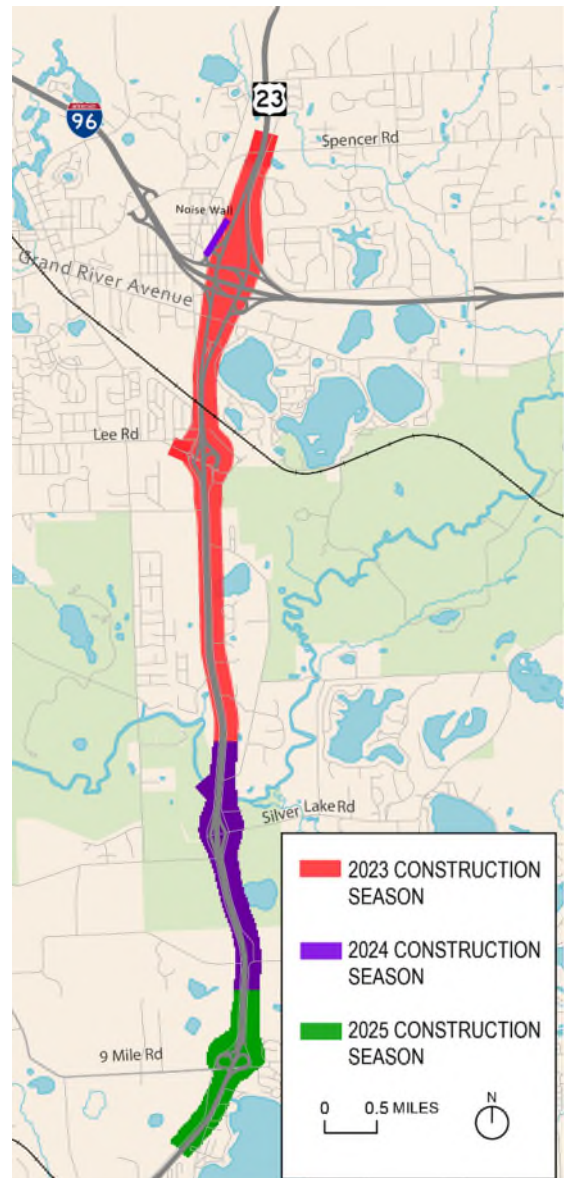
- Year 1: US-23, from north of Huron River to Spencer Road, including:
 - Lee Road interchange road and bridge repairs
 - Grand River bridge repairs
 - Spencer Road bridge repairs
- Year 2: US-23, from north of M-36 to north of Huron River, including
 - Silver Lake Road interchange rebuilding and bridge widening
 - Huron River bridge widening
 - M-36 temporary widening
 - Noise wall building in the northwest quadrant of the US-23/I-96 interchange
- Year 3: US-23, from south of M-36 to north of M-36, including:
 - M-36 interchange reconfiguration and bridge rebuilding

The goal is to build safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation improvements to assure that the corridor will meet the current and future highway traffic and operations with the use of state-of-the-art traffic control measures and improved infrastructure.

MDOT held a public meeting on Jan. 13, 2021, and presented:

- Overview of project and study area
- Preferred Alternative:
 - I-96/US-23 interchange area
 - Bridge work
 - Silver Lake Road interchange
 - M-36 interchange
- Preliminary Environmental Findings
- Project Timeline

Figure 1. Project Study Area





Since that meeting, MDOT has finalized the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, traffic analysis, environmental surveys, and roadway and bridge scoping, and is completing final design and construction plans. This newsletter includes the details of the final design and construction for the corridor.

MDOT looks forward to your involvement in this phase of the project and will continue to keep you informed.

Flex Route Construction

Construction of the Flex Route includes the US-23 Flex Route extension, reconfiguration of the interchanges at Silver Lake Road and M-36 (9 Mile Road), and repair of existing infrastructure on US-23 north of I-96, and at Lee Road, Grand River Avenue and Spencer Road. Changes throughout the corridor are described as follows:

US-23 Flex Route Extension

The existing US-23 Flex Lane is a median shoulder lane that is activated during peak travel times to reduce congestion along the freeway.

Figure 2 illustrates the configuration of the US-23 Flex Route. The existing Flex Lane begins and ends along US-23 between M-36 (9 Mile Road) and 8 Mile Road. Through the next phase, MDOT will extend the US-23 Flex Lane north to tie into the I-96 interchange.

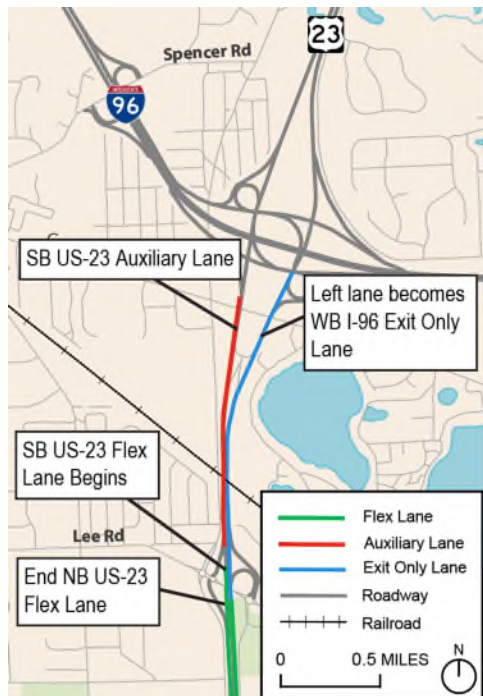
The northbound US-23 Flex Lane will end just north of the Lee Road off ramp and south of the Lee Road bridge. The Flex Lane will transition into an exit-only lane to westbound I-96.

Figure 2. Configuration of US-23 Flex Lane



The southbound US-23 Flex Lane will start just south of the Lee Road off ramp and north of the Lee Road bridge.

Figure 3. US-23 Flex Lane Extension



An [auxiliary lane](#) will be added along southbound US-23 between the eastbound I-96 on ramp and the Lee Road off ramp.

The auxiliary lane will allow vehicles that enter US-23 from eastbound I-96 and exit to Lee Road to stay in the same lane. It will also provide additional time for other vehicles to get into the correct lane.

Figure 3 illustrates the starting and ending points of the Flex Lane and the location of the southbound auxiliary lane. The traffic and safety analysis showed that this configuration reduced congestion along the corridor and improved safety.

The railroad bridge over US-23 will not need to be replaced as part of this project.

The two Grand River Avenue bridges over US-23 will have some repair work but will not be replaced. Due to the median widening, the two bridges over the Huron River will need to be modified.

Lee Road

Lee Road is a series of three roundabouts that will not be replaced as part of this extension project and is shown in Figure 4. The Lee Road bridge over US-23 will have some repair work but will not be replaced. US-23 will be lowered under Lee Road to improve vertical clearance under the bridge. The ramps to and from US-23 will be repaved with an asphalt overlay.

Silver Lake Road

This existing interchange is a tight diamond configuration with closely spaced intersections at Whitmore Lake Road and Fieldcrest Drive. The interchange will be rebuilt with two new roundabouts. This will result in improved traffic flow and increased safety. The new configuration is shown in Figure 5.

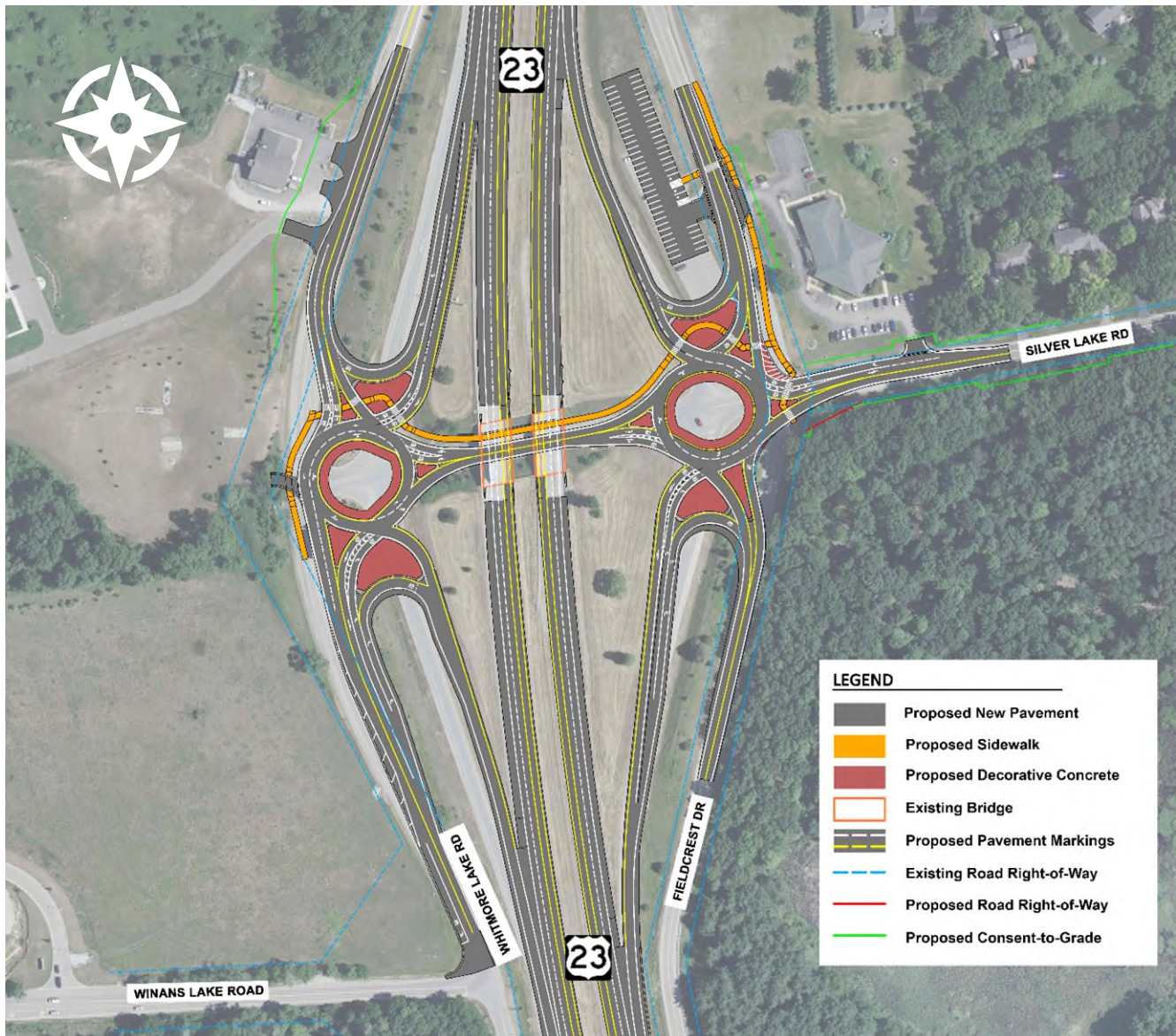
The park and ride lot, located off Fieldcrest Drive north of Silver Lake Road, will be slightly reconfigured to accommodate the new ramp and Fieldcrest Drive alignment.

The two US-23 bridges over Silver Lake Road will be widened to accommodate the US-23 Flex Lane. A right-turn only lane will be added along southbound Whitmore Lake Road at Winans Lake Road. In coordination with Green Oak Township, MDOT will build a 10-foot pathway through the limits of the Silver Lake Road interchange.

Figure 4. Lee Road



Figure 5. Silver Lake Road Preferred Alternative

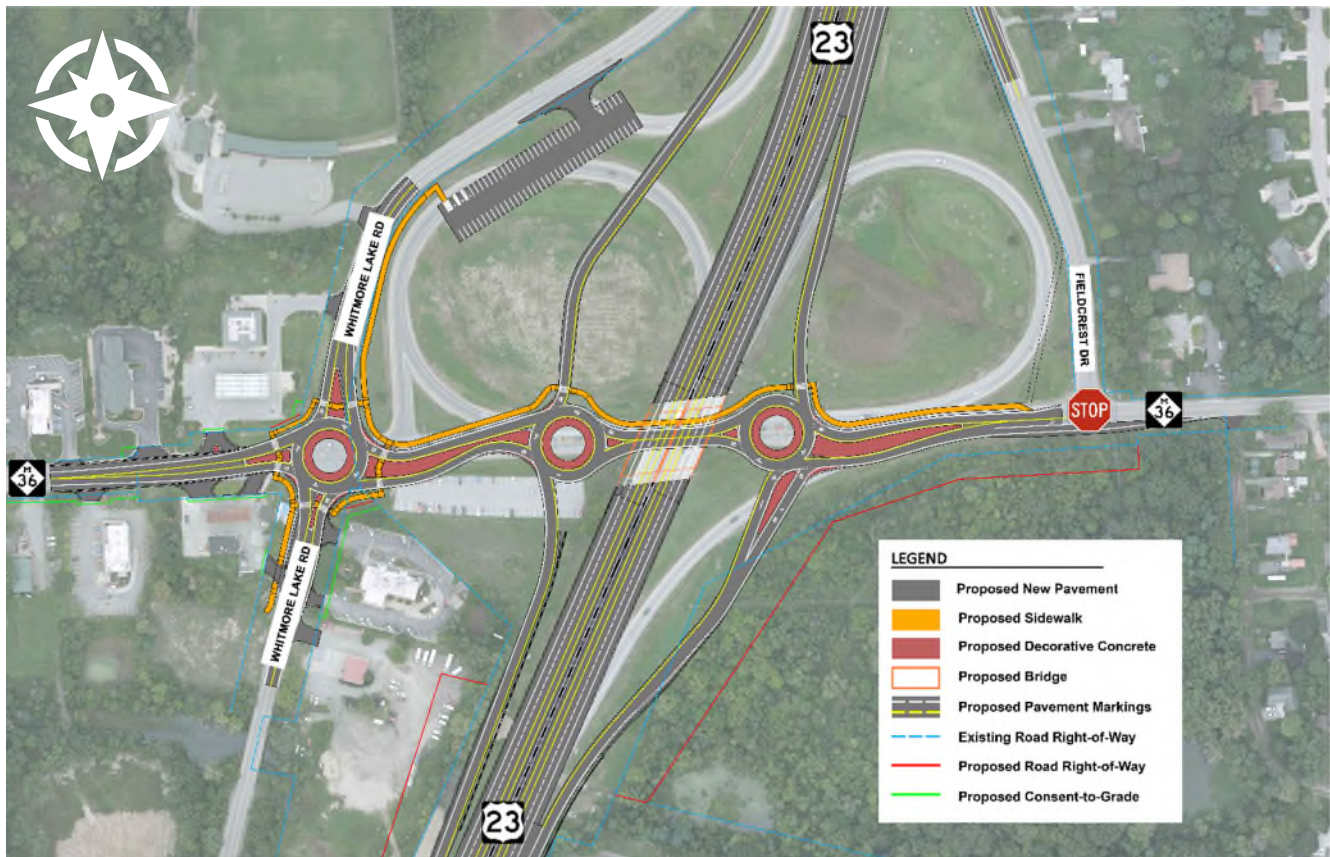


M-36 (9 Mile Road)

The existing interchange is a partial cloverleaf configuration with loops and directional ramps. The interchange will be rebuilt with a series of three roundabouts as shown in Figure 6.

The park and ride lot that is located along M-36 will be relocated to Whitmore Lake Road, just north of M-36. The two US-23 bridges over M-36 (9 Mile Road) will be removed and replaced with a single wide bridge to accommodate the US-23 Flex Lane. M-36 (9 Mile Road) will be lowered to increase vertical clearance under the new bridge. In coordination with Green Oak Township, MDOT will build a 10-foot pathway through the limits of the M-36 (9 Mile Road) interchange.

Figure 6. M-36 (9 Mile Road) Preferred Alternative



Environmental Results

A mussel survey was conducted and found federally protected Snuffbox mussels in the Huron River. MDOT has coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the mussels were relocated outside the limits of construction in late summer 2022.

A wetland delineation, which evaluates the study area for the presence of wetlands, has been completed. There are several wetlands and watershed areas within the corridor. There are minor impacts on wetlands, surrounding streams, lakes, and drains, and the floodplain. During the design process, mitigation measures were developed to minimize impacts. Coordination with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is ongoing to obtain a permit for impacts to wetlands.

Air quality and noise analyses were completed for the new configuration and the results are documented in the NEPA documentation and on [MDOT's website for the project](#).



Project Timeline

Design for the project will be complete by the end of November 2022. The project plans and specifications will be advertised for a bid letting in March 2023. Construction will begin in April 2023. The anticipated project timeline is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Project Timeline



*DURING THE WINTER SHUTDOWN PERIOD, CONSTRUCTION ON US-23 WILL BE LIMITED, AND TWO LANES OF TRAFFIC WILL BE IN EXISTING LANES ON NORTHBOUND AND SOUTHBOUND US-23 AND ALL INTERCHANGE RAMPS WILL BE OPEN.

*This timeline is subject to change.

Next Steps

MDOT will be hosting an in-person public meeting at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2022, at the Green Oak Charter Township Building at 10001 Silver Lake Road, Brighton, MI, 48116. There will be exhibits illustrating the proposed construction and maintenance of traffic during work. MDOT representatives will be available for questions and answers.

Accommodations can be made for persons with disabilities and limited English-speaking ability. Large print materials, auxiliary aids or the services of interpreters, signers, or readers are available upon request. To make a request, contact Monica Monsma by phone at 517-335-4381 or by e-mail at MonsmaM@Michigan.gov at least seven days before the meeting. To accommodate those who lack the technology or access to technology, MDOT can provide the presentation and a transcript for your review and comment. Please contact Monica Monsma at MonsmaM@Michigan.gov

For project updates and more information:

Michigan.gov/MDOT/Projects-Studies/US-Route-Construction/US23-Flex-Route