

## Project Scope & Timeline

### **Q: What is the purpose of the Commercial Street Bridge Replacement Project?**

A: The project will replace the aging Commercial Street Bridge to improve safety, structural integrity, and traffic flow for local communities. The bridge is a critical link on I-376 with high traffic volumes (about 100,000 vehicles daily). Replacement ensures long-term safety and structural integrity.

### **Q: What makes this project unique?**

A: PennDOT is using Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) with a lateral slide-in method. This innovative approach allows most work to be conducted off-site, reducing the significant traffic impacts from more than four years to approximately 25 days\*, minimizing long-term disruptions for travelers.

***\*Unforeseen issues may arise during the project. While we will do our best to mitigate, these dates are subject to change.***

### **Q: Why use the ABC sliding technique?**

A: We're doing the one-month closure and the complex process of sliding the new structure into place for a very important reason: to avoid a traditional four-year construction project. Conventional methods would require rebuilding the bridge in halves, squeezing all parkway traffic onto one side, and causing continuous lane closures and restrictions—impacting the community and mainline Parkway East motorists every day for four years.

While the one-month closure will still push traffic into nearby neighborhoods, it's far less disruptive than four years of constant congestion. That's why we're sharing information well in advance, giving motorists time to plan alternate routes and even adjust work schedules if needed.

We're completing this work as quickly as possible.

### **Q: When will the I-376 Parkway East closure occur and for how long?**

A: The full closure for the bridge slide-in is scheduled for **25 days on July 10, 2026\***. During this time, work will be happening around the clock (24/7). **The closure and detour are scheduled to begin on July 10, 2026, and reopen on August 3, 2026\***.

***\*Unforeseen issues may arise during the project. While we will do our best to mitigate, these dates are subject to change.***

**Q: How is PennDOT ensuring the work will be completed on time?**

A: There is a monetary incentive available for completing the work early. If the project runs past the 25-day timeline, there are financial disincentives for the contractor.

**Q: Will any simultaneous maintenance occur during the full closure (tunnel projects, paving elsewhere in the closed area, etc.)?**

A: Yes, the Department will take advantage of the closure to the greatest extent possible to address construction activities for this and other future Parkway East projects, as well as any potential tunnel maintenance needs that may arise.

## Commercial Street & Forward Avenue Closure

**Q: When will Commercial Street be closed, and for how long?**

A: Commercial Street and Nine Mile Run Trail are currently closed to pedestrian and vehicular traffic and will remain closed until February 6, 2026, for steel erection activities. Once completed, Commercial Street and Nine Mile Run Trail will reopen until Spring/Summer 2026, when they will once again close in preparation for the bridge demolition and slide.

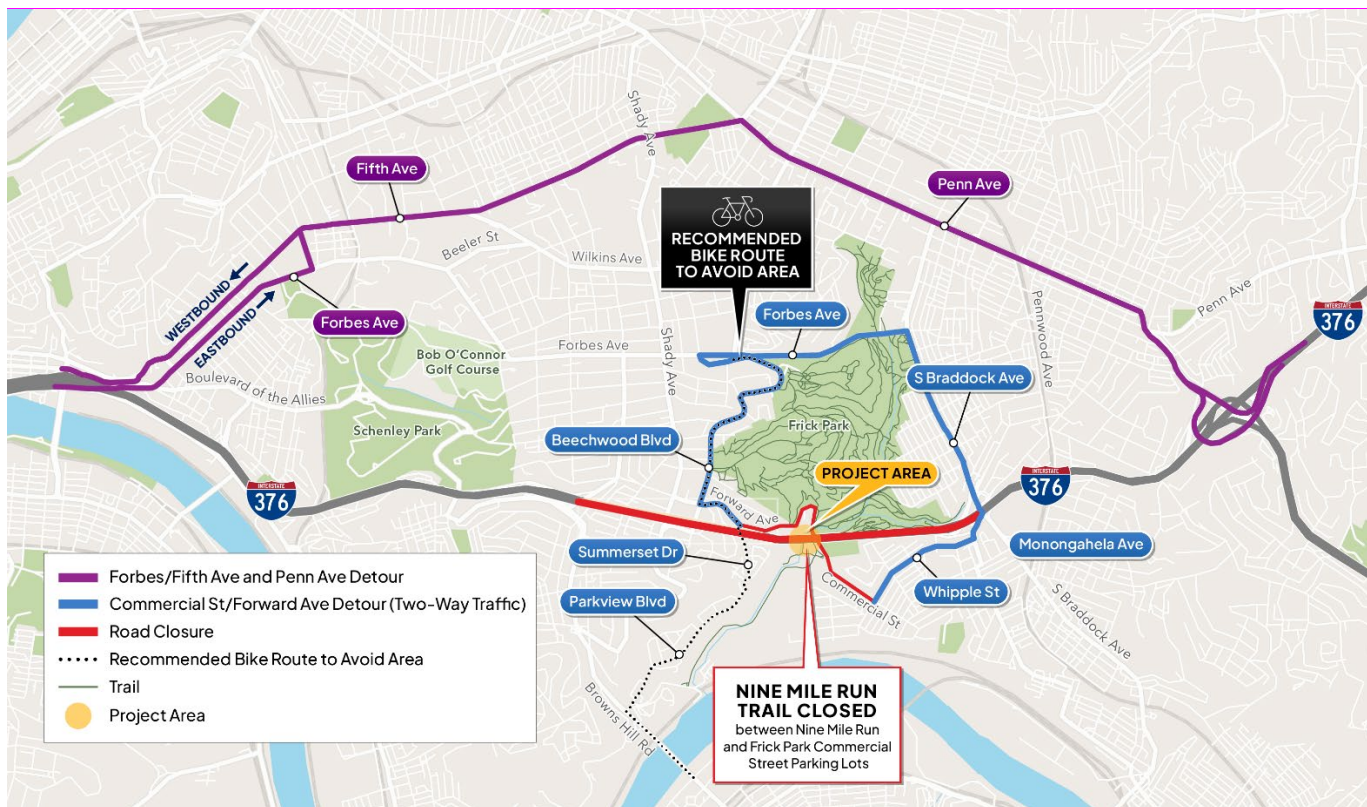
**Q: Can you provide the locations of the two endpoints for the closing of Commercial Street and Forward Avenue?**

A: Forward Avenue is closed in the vicinity of Summerset Drive in Squirrel Hill, while Commercial Street is closed at Whipple Street in Swisshelm Park. "Road Closed Local Traffic Only" signs are placed at these locations.

## Traffic & Detours

### Q: Where will I-376 be closed in July 2026?

A: All I-376 thru traffic must exit at Wilkinsburg (Exit 78B) and Forbes Ave/Oakland (Exit 72A). Single lane access will be provided to Squirrel Hill/Edgewood for local traffic only.



### Q: What should drivers expect during the closure?

A: Significant delays are anticipated on detour routes. If travel in the area is absolutely necessary, motorists should plan extra travel time and consider alternate routes, as shown above on the project map.

## Navigating the Closure

### **Q: Do you have any tips to make the closure easier on me?**

A: Significant delays are anticipated. Commuters are encouraged to:

- **Plan Ahead:** Review detour maps and allow extra travel time if you must drive in the area. Expect heavy delays.
- **Use Remote Work Options:** If your employer offers teleworking or flexible schedules, take advantage of these options to reduce traffic demand.
- **Carpool or Use Transit:** Explore public transportation alternatives to reduce congestion.
- **Be Prepared:** Have all supplies you will need while waiting in heavy traffic, including plenty of gas for your vehicle, snacks and water for your passengers, good music or an audiobook to listen to, comfortable clothing, sunglasses, and anything else that allows you to drive comfortably.

### **Q: Has coordination with local communities been done to ensure that construction on local roads being utilized for the detour routes is avoided?**

A: Before implementation of detour routes on local roads, coordination will be done with local communities, utilities, etc., to make sure no work is performed on these roads while the detour is in place (emergency work notwithstanding). Additionally, the traffic signals along these routes have been analyzed and modified to accommodate the revised traffic flow, and off-duty uniformed police officers will be stationed at critical signalized intersections to assist with maintaining and protecting traffic.

### **Q: Will most of the construction vehicles entering the site travel down Forward Avenue or go westward on Commercial Street? Will material transportation be done on local roads and, if so, which ones?**

A: Most deliveries will be made either directly from I-376 to an access road entering the construction site or from Forward Avenue. Transportation via Commercial Street is expected to be minimal. Note: No steel deliveries will be made utilizing local roads.

### **Q: How will traffic during the closure be managed?**

A: Signal timing will be adjusted at key intersections, and portable message signs will provide real-time updates. Off-duty police officers will be stationed at various locations along the detour. Real-time updates will be available through the 511PA app, [511PA.com](http://511PA.com), and message boards. However, congestion will be unavoidable due to high traffic volumes.

### **Q: Will there be dedicated truck detour routes?**

A: Yes, truck-specific detours will be clearly marked to avoid residential streets and maintain safety.

**Q: Will my phone's map app (Google, Waze, etc.) show the detour route?**

A: All project closures will be documented in the mapping services. The app will provide an alternate route based on your travel settings.

## Emergency Services

**Q: How will emergency services be accommodated during the closure?**

A: Emergency responder meetings have occurred, and coordination efforts are ongoing with other boroughs to support areas impacted by the closure and detours. This includes Swissvale, Swisshelm, Edgewood, Wilkinsburg and the City of Pittsburgh.

**Q: What coordination is happening with local police and fire departments?**

A: Regular coordination meetings are being held to address response times and traffic control needs.

**Q: How will hospitals and critical facilities be notified and supported?**

A: Hospitals and critical facilities have been included in coordination meetings and will receive real-time updates during the closure.

## Public Transit & Regional Coordination

**Q: How will Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) routes be impacted?**

A: PRT routes using Commercial Street will be detoured; updated schedules will be posted on PRT's website and shared with municipalities. Various bus routes will be impacted by the main detour. PennDOT is working with PRT to minimize impacts.

**Q: Are temporary Park & Ride locations being considered?**

A: Yes, options are being evaluated to support commuters during the closure, including additional Park & Ride locations and routes.

**Q: How is PennDOT coordinating with the City of Pittsburgh and other regional agencies?**

A: PennDOT is working closely with the City's Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) and regional partners to align detour plans and minimize disruptions. Regional partners include Westmoreland County Transit, Fullington Trailways, Greyhound, and para-transit agencies.

## Environmental Considerations

**Q: How will the demolition debris field be contained so that nearby homes won't be damaged?**

A: Demolition will be performed via a combination of conventional and blasting methods. When blasting, wraps will be placed around the bridge for debris containment.

**Q: Will the trail parking lot be closed at all during the project?**

A: The trail parking lot will remain open during the project. However, as the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) intends to utilize this parking lot as an access point for their project, care and caution should be exercised for entering and exiting construction vehicles.

**Q: How will green spaces and trails (e.g., Nine Mile Run) be restored after construction?**

A: Restoration of trails and landscaping is part of the project's final phase, ensuring full access and environmental compliance.

**Q: Was Upstream Pittsburgh consulted regarding the environmental impacts of the bridge replacement and the regular use of salt on Nine Mile Run?**

A: Yes, Upstream Pittsburgh was consulted during the design of this project, and they reviewed all plans associated with the temporary disturbance of Nine Mile Run underneath the bridge structure during construction (i.e., construction vehicle causeway crossover), as well as the final restoration of the creek to make sure it is returned to equal or better conditions than exist today. Regarding salt runoff, the drainage from this area enters a rain garden, which helps filter the water before it enters the stream.

## Construction Details

**Q: Where will the new retaining wall be located?**

A: Upon exiting the Squirrel Hill Tunnels (heading eastbound), the new retaining wall will be located to the right just before the bridge structure is approached. This is being constructed to shore up the interstate shoulder for roadway realignment purposes.

**Q: Will the existing bridge foundations be completely removed or just covered over?**

A: The existing bridge foundations will be removed to a depth of several feet below the final grade; however, due to their excessive depth, they will not be excavated in their entirety.

**Q: Is locally made steel being utilized?**

A: The large structural steel bridge members are being made and procured from domestic suppliers, while smaller steel pieces are being produced and provided from local suppliers.

## Communication & Updates

**Q: Where can officials and residents find real-time updates during the closure?**

A: Updates will be posted on PennDOT's project webpage, [pa.gov/CommercialStBridge](http://pa.gov/CommercialStBridge). Travelers are highly encouraged to download the 511PA app and visit [511PA.com](http://511PA.com) for the latest traffic information.

**Q: Will FAQs and outreach materials be available in multiple languages?**

A: Yes, select materials will be translated into Spanish to ensure accessibility for residents. The project website also allows you to view translated content in 18 languages.

**Q: How can I share feedback or request additional information?**

A: The project team can be contacted at [CommStBridgeProject@pa.gov](mailto:CommStBridgeProject@pa.gov). If you have additional feedback or need additional assistance, please contact 1-800-FIX-ROAD. In case of an emergency, contact 911.

**Q: How can municipalities share feedback or request additional information?**

A: Municipal leaders can contact the project team via [CommStBridgeProject@pa.gov](mailto:CommStBridgeProject@pa.gov).