MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

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Mayor Jacobs: County Boosts Safety with Cherahala Expansion in Hardin Valley

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Crews are putting the finishing touches on the first phase of the Cherahala Boulevard extension project to improve safety in the Hardin Valley area of Knox County.

"We're almost finished with Phase 1, which extends Cherahala Boulevard about a quarter-mile, so it connects with Coward Mill Road," said Jim Snowden, Knox County director of Engineering and Public Works.

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs thanked the department, adding that "safety is certainly a priority for this administration."

By extending Cherahala Blvd, drivers on Coward Mill Rd will have a convenient and safer route to access Pellissippi Parkway via Hardin Valley Road. The existing Coward Mill Rd intersection with Pellissippi consists of a stop sign where drivers turn directly onto the high-speed parkway.

"Pellissippi Parkway has interstate volumes of traffic with 60,000 to 70,000 cars a day, many running 70 to 80 miles per hour. That's a very hazardous thing," said Snowden. "With this road, you'll be able to turn [onto Cherahala Blvd], go to Hardin Velley Rd, and get on the interchange to hopefully make Pellissippi Parkway much safer. The difference is a stop sign versus an on-ramp."

Phase 1 of the extension is especially important with construction of the new Northwest Elementary School underway on Coward Mill Road. The school is slated to open in fall of 2023. The interchange with Coward Mill Rd will have one lane of traffic in each direction and a center turn lane.

Phase 1 of the Cherahala extension also bolsters safety for pedestrians with a multi-use path.

"There will be a 10-foot-wide asphalt path along the side of the road that'll allow pedestrians to access the new school and go all the way to Hardin Valley Rd," said Snowden. "You can see the county is investing a lot of resources in the Hardin Valley community to make things more convenient and safer for folks."

The first phase of the Cherahala project cost $1.8 million. Future phases will extend Cherahala Blvd to connect with Faith Promise Lane and Horseshoe Bend Lane. The county is also exploring the possibility of future construction to allow Coward Mill Rd to safely cross Pellissippi Parkway.

You can see a video tour of Phase 1 of the Cherahala Blvd extension on YouTube.