



Walnut Street Improvement Project

Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL

1. What is a Road Diet and why is the City proposing one for Walnut Street?

Road Diet is a term used to describe a road project that actually reduces the number of travel lanes.

In the case of the Walnut Street Project, the number of travel lanes reduces from 4 to 3 with 1 lane eastbound, 1 lane westbound, and a center 2-way turn lane.

This reduction of lanes will safely support vehicular traffic while better accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the corridor without significantly encroaching on adjacent property owners.

The City has identified a road diet for Walnut Street for 2 main reasons:

1. Walnut Street is a key transportation corridor connecting the downtown to Evansville's east side. It has several destinations along the corridor, passes through multiple neighborhoods, and is a primary route for METS.
2. Further, identified improvements will improve safety for all users along the corridor, including pedestrians, as well as motorized and non-motorized vehicles.

2. What is a multi-use trail, and how wide will it be?

A multi-use trail is designed to accommodate two-directional travel for pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular travel. The trail being designed for this project is planned to be 10-foot wide with a centerline delineating the two lanes of travel. The trail is planned to have a 3-foot separation from the nearest roadway vehicular travel lane. This space between the trail and roadway can be either a grassy area or additional concrete or asphalt outside.

3. On which side of the Walnut Street is the multi-use trail proposed to be located, and how close will it be to residences throughout the corridor?

The multi-use trail is proposed for the north side of Walnut Street (Lloyd Expressway-side). The desired goal is to fit the whole project, including the multi-use trail (on the north side), the roadway, and the sidewalk (on the south side) within the footprint of the existing sidewalks and roadway.

However, there may be areas where minimal additional right-of-way is needed to accommodate retaining walls or minor strips of property. Additionally, temporary right-of-way may need to be acquired in multiple locations to accommodate replanting and walkway tie-ins. Generally speaking, the multi-use trail and south sidewalk will be approximately the same distance from residences as they are today.

4. When should we expect to see construction activities begin, and when is the project slated to be completed?

The Walnut Street Project will have phased construction activities.



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At this time, the section from US HWY 41 to Weinbach Avenue is slated to be let for construction in January of 2020. In the spring of 2020, Construction activities will commence as weather permits.

Subsequent phases are slated to be let for construction in October of 2020. In November of 2020, construction will begin on those portions as weather permits.

The entire construction effort should last approximately 30 months.

A Maintenance of Traffic Plan will be developed to address road closures, lane restrictions, and pedestrian/vehicular access for local traffic.

5. Will the City be buying additional right-of-way for this project, and how will that take place?

Every effort will be made to minimize the need for additional right-of-way beyond what is owned by the City today. However, there will likely be isolated locations where additional permanent right-of-way will be needed. These areas will be identified as design efforts advance, but likely locations will involve areas where retaining walls are needed or where narrow strips of property are needed to accommodate the project.

Temporary right-of-way will be acquired in locations to accommodate replanting and walkway tie-ins.

The City must adhere to the Uniform Acquisition & Relocation Act for all property acquisition. A copy of the FHWA Acquisition brochure can be found at:

<https://www.in.gov/indot/files/FHWA%20Acquisition%20Brochure%20-%20BLUE.pdf>

6. What will happen with the overhead utility lines and poles along the corridor?

A number of overhead utility poles and lines may be moved as part of this project. However, they will not be buried because the impacts to property owners are too extensive and thus, the project costs are exorbitant.

Utility coordination is an important component of every construction project. Designers will work with impacted utilities to identify relocation plans for poles/lines that will be in conflict with necessary construction activities. Utility easement adjustments may be made when necessary.

7. My property has some existing drainage problems. How will this project address drainage issues and drainage in general?

The goal of the design team is to improve drainage throughout the project. The entire project length contains curb and gutter with storm inlets, and underground conveyance. Project designers will incorporate a similar drainage configuration with a curb and gutter system, inlets, and underground storm water pipes.



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The portion of the project from S. Kentucky Avenue to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard will incorporate green infrastructure drainage improvements. Currently, this area contains a combined storm and wastewater conveyance system. The new design will incorporate drainage treatments that separate and store the storm water for slow release into the groundwater table.

If a property owner has existing drainage problems they are asked to share that information with the design team. To report drainage issues, email Dwayne Sanders at dsanders@lochgroup.com.

8. *I am concerned about safety with the multi-use trail crossing my driveway.*

Properties along the north side of the Walnut Street corridor will see their existing sidewalk replaced with a multi-use trail. Much like a sidewalk, the trail will invite pedestrian traffic. This could include walkers, children in strollers, an occasional small child on a bike, people in wheelchairs, and joggers/runners. Drivers entering or exiting driveways should continue expecting this type of traveler.

The major difference in introducing a multi-use trail is that cyclists who would have more likely used city streets will now be utilizing the multi-use trail. In the end, this facility will be safe if both the multi-use trail users and motorized vehicle drivers watch out for each other.

9. *I am concerned about multi-use trail crossings for pedestrians and cyclists at intersections, especially US Hwy 41 and Vann Avenue.*

Much like with sidewalks today, pedestrians using the multi-use trail must yield to vehicular traffic. Cyclists utilizing the multi-use trail must also yield to motorized vehicular traffic.

Specific to the US HWY 41 crossing, there are pedestrian crosswalks, signalized crossings with time-alert pedestrian warning devices, as well as push-button actuated override signals.

This crossing will be redesigned to accommodate the multi-use trail users with appropriate pushbutton-actuated signals and warning signs.

The Vann Avenue crossing is not currently signalized and does not include pedestrian crosswalks. The new design will introduce a delineated crossing with advanced warning signs and flashing lights. Crossing considerations will be introduced for discussion at future public meetings.