

PLEASANT STREET CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

Frequently Asked Questions

The City of Noblesville is planning for the future growth and potential redevelopment of a central part of the community in anticipation of east-west transportation improvement projects. These planning efforts include preparing a sub-area plan to guide this future growth and redevelopment. Referred to locally as the Planning and Economic Development Component of the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvement projects, the Central Hub Sub-Area Plan will be incorporated into the city's community-wide comprehensive plan. Unlike the Noblesville East-West Corridor project that will ultimately aid in the selection of the final route and alignment for the public investment piece, the sub-area plan aims to identify and recommend the land use and development policies and regulations that the city will need to effectively govern the properties within the Central Hub sub-area, over the long-term.

Included below are the answers to the most frequently asked questions pertaining to the Planning and Economic Development Component, specifically, as well as a number of frequently asked questions (and answers) to the transportation engineering, design and environmental components. This is due in large part to the fact that it is nearly impossible to separate land use, development type or patterns, and economic development from transportation, or in this case transportation improvements. Individual responses, in whole or in part, will be updated as more information becomes available. In the meantime, we encourage you to direct any additional questions or concerns to the Planning Department at plandept@noblesville.in.us.

1. What is the purpose of the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements; the public investment piece?

The official purpose of and need for the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements won't be known until the completion of the Noblesville East-West Corridor project, which currently includes the Pleasant Street Corridor as an option. Not only will the Central Hub Sub-Area Plan inform the preliminary and final design of the public investment piece, its primary purpose is its ability to help guide growth and (re)development along the Pleasant Street Corridor over the next 10 to 20 years.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

2. Will the public have an opportunity to weigh in on the design of the Pleasant Street Corridor and its components?

Past planning efforts and studies were informed by various public outreach and engagement efforts on the part of city (and in some cases county) agencies. Public outreach and engagement efforts continue to serve as the cornerstone of a number of current and on-going long-range planning efforts. The project team is developing an online survey that will provide the opportunity to offer feedback on what might be most appropriate for the corridor. It is anticipated that this online survey will be available through this website through the month of April 2018.

There will also be a number of opportunities for the public to obtain more information and ask questions of one or more representatives from the design team that is preparing the preliminary design and construction drawings (e.g. [roadway cross-sections](#)) in the summer and/or fall of 2018, and throughout the Environmental Assessment phase (refer to the current [Public](#)

Information Plan). The preliminary plans for the project, which are currently being developed, will illustrate all of the various **cross-sections** of the impacts to the public **rights-of-way**, utilities to be relocated, pavement design, as well as the proposed signage and landscaping treatments, among others. For the most recent information about these and other major milestones related to the project, refer to the overall project timeline.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

3. Is it true that Pleasant Street is going to become a bypass?

Some residents consider **transportation improvements** to the Pleasant Street Corridor to mean that Pleasant Street will become a “**bypass**.” This is due in large part to the fact that the city is seeking to reduce **thru traffic**, meaning **motorists** and truck drivers who simply pass through Downtown Noblesville, along the Conner Street / SR 32 corridor.

There are several types of **roadways**, including: **streets, roads, boulevards, bypasses** and **highways**. And all **roadways** fit into one of three broad functional classifications: **primary, secondary** and **tertiary**. The Federal Highway Administration, an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that supports state and local governments in the design, construction, and maintenance of the nation’s highway system, maintains a **roadway** classification system to account for all **roadways**, specifically the following: **interstates; expressways / freeways; principle arterials; minor arterials; major and minor collectors**, and **local streets**. Their function is expressed in terms of the **level of service** they provide. Pleasant Street (from Union Chapel Road to the White River), for example, is a **minor arterial**. The **level of service** of Conner Street/SR 32, Pleasant Street, and some of the connecting thoroughfares is something that is being studied as part of the Noblesville East-West Corridor project. In roadway classification terms, no. The Pleasant Street corridor is not being designed to serve as a **bypass**.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

4. What is the city doing to determine what the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements will be?

The Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements will be determined by a number of planning, economic development, environmental, and engineering components (refer to the Project Components infographic). Of particular importance to the public are the various opportunities that exist to participate in the Central Hub Sub-Area Plan process (*refer to question #2*), the environmental assessment phase (refer to the current copy of the Public Involvement Plan), and the engineering and design processes.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

5. When will we know what the final **alignment will be, and when can we expect construction to begin?**

Assuming that the Pleasant Street Corridor is determined to be the **locally preferred alternative, transportation improvements** throughout the Pleasant Street Corridor are expected to take several years to complete and is dependent on a variety of factors, most of important of which is funding. There are a number of phases that come before the construction phase. Each of these key phases is marked by the completion of one or more studies / documents / drawings and includes one or more project milestones illustrated in the project timeline.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

6. Will Pleasant Street replace Conner Street/SR 32 as the official (state) truck route?

The Indiana Department of Transportation is responsible for designating official **truck routes** throughout the State of Indiana, including SR 32 through Downtown Noblesville. Because of this, the city cannot say for certain if Pleasant Street (or any other route) would replace Conner Street/SR 32 as the official truck route through the city. However, city leaders predict that truck drivers and **motorists** passing through Noblesville will, under their own will, stay on SR 32 for direct access to US 31 or State Road 37.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

7. Will the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements cut off existing streets preventing direct access onto Pleasant Street in the future?

Should the Pleasant Street Corridor become the **locally preferred alternative** (as determined by the Noblesville East-West Corridor project), the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements would require some reconfiguration of the existing **roadway network** west of 8th Street. At this time, the city cannot say for sure if any **residential streets** will be closed off; only that there will likely be some impacts in this regard. The city anticipates enhancing the corridor with a landscaped median for its ability to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the look and feel of the corridor. To do so would mean that some lower volume side streets and alleys would become right-in, right-out only.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

8. What will each intersection look like?

The type of intersection and way in which it is configured (e.g. roundabout or traffic signal) are currently being analyzed; however they have not been fully vetted or examined in detail. (*Refer also to questions 9 and 10 below.*)

Last revised: 03/27/2018

9. When will the city share the final designs for the entire Pleasant Street Corridor?

It is anticipated that the preliminary design phase will be substantially complete by the middle of 2018. For the most recent information about these and other major milestones related to the project, refer to the current [project timeline](#).

Last revised: 03/27/2018

10. What is the difference between the preliminary (roadway) design phase and subsequent design phases, including the final design?

According to the Federal Highway Administration, the dividing line between preliminary design and final design is not always clear. Preliminary design includes the design and engineering information and activities needed to develop final construction plans and detailed specifications. Final design, therefore, often means any design activities following preliminary design. Preliminary design comes to an end when an alternative is selected and a declaration of Initiation of Final Design has been made. Final design includes the preparation of construction plans and detailed specifications for the construction work to be performed; however, the preliminary design phase is where key decisions about the general project location, design concepts, time and cost effectiveness, and environmental responsibility are made.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

11. Are the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements intended to move the congestion in Downtown Noblesville to the residential neighborhoods to the south?

No, although **congestion** is something that the city is looking into and may ultimately play a part in the **transportation improvements** the city will need to consider. The purpose for the public investment piece is being considered as part of the Environmental Assessment component of the Noblesville East-West Corridor project. The Pleasant Street Corridor is one of the routes being considered for that project.

The Central Hub Sub-Area Plan is being developed with the basic understanding that the city is working to either alleviate or prevent traffic **congestion** by looking at **traffic volumes** and **traffic circulation** within the sub-area and beyond. It further recognizes that, while they are often used interchangeably, the terms “**traffic**” and “**congestion**” are separate and distinct terms. For the purposes of the Central Hub Sub-area Plan, **traffic (volume)** is defined as the number, movement and classification of pedestrians or motor vehicles using a **roadway** at a given location and during a given period of time, and expressed as the **level of service**. **Congestion**, by comparison, is the worsening of the **level of service**. **Congestion** can be the result of any number of conditions or combination of conditions. There can be obstacles (e.g. road work or an accident) in the way, traffic signals may be out of sync, or a greater number of pedestrians crossing streets can slow the rate at which cars can turn onto another street, and may or may not be the result of an increase in **traffic**.

It should be noted that, as it currently exists, Pleasant Street between 8th Street and 19th Street is considered by the city to be **congested** to the point of requiring longer-term **transportation improvements** to restore **traffic** flow.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

12. How many existing structures will be impacted to accommodate the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements? Which ones?

The final road **alignment** and **cross-sections** illustrating the extent of the full public **right-of-way**, such as the width of the roadway, the number and direction of travel lanes, landscape elements, trails, etc., will determine how many existing properties will be impacted by the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements. A key study of the overall process is the Environmental Assessment that is currently underway. For the most recent information about these and other major milestones related to the project, refer to the overall project timeline.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

13. When will the city be contacting property owners about the land needed for the public right-of-way?

The city does not currently have all of the information that it needs to begin reaching out to individual property owners. This is due in large part to the fact that the funding source(s) have not been identified. For the most recent information about these and other major milestones related to the project, refer to the overall project timeline.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

14. What is the difference between the Noblesville East-West Corridor project and the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements project?

For over 20 years, the City of Noblesville has conducted various studies and analyses to explore the all of the possible routes for alleviating and/or preventing **congestion**. And because the city is committed to ensuring that the **locally preferred alternative** is one that has the least impact on the local environment, all possible routes are being examined in greater detail and with even more coordination at the municipal, county, regional and state level. This is the Noblesville East-West Corridor project.

But because the Pleasant Street Corridor is one of the options being considered as part of the Noblesville East-West Corridor project, and because years of study and analysis have pointed towards the Pleasant Street Corridor as the route that is likely to have the least amount of impacts to the local community, the Central Hub Sub-Area Plan is what is needed to answer the questions, “If the Pleasant Street Corridor becomes the **locally preferred alternative** as determined by the East-West Corridor project, what is the economic development potential for the properties in the area?”, and “What are the policies that the city could use to guide future growth and (re)development in that area for the next 10-20 years?” This is the Planning and Economic Development Component of the Pleasant Street Corridor Improvements project.

There are a number of factors that suggest that the Pleasant Street Corridor could ultimately become the **locally preferred alternative**, including: the location of environmental features (e.g. **floodway**, **floodplain**, wetlands, quarry pits, and landfills); the ability to facilitate access and connectivity to the larger **roadway network**; optimization of travel times; capacity of intersecting **roadways** (existing and planned); the places people are coming from or going to; needed improvements to (existing) Pleasant Street; and project costs. Below is a summation of the routes that have been studied in the past, as well as a brief explanation as to why they may ultimately be eliminated from further consideration by way of the Environmental Assessment that is currently underway.

- **Logan Street** – no sufficient outlet to SR 37
- **Maple Street** – no sufficient outlet to SR 37 and limited connection to the west given the presence of the Riverside Cemetery
- **Cherry Street** – no sufficient outlet to SR 37 (given that the freeway upgrade is expected to eliminate access to SR 37 from Cherry Street) and limited connection to the west given the presence of the Riverside Cemetery
- **19th Street** – because it serves as a segment of the Cherry and Hannibal alternatives, the feasibility of the 19th Street alternative is directly tied to those two alternatives
- **Hannibal Street** – no sufficient outlet to SR 37 or sufficient route across the White River
- **Division Street** – no sufficient route across the White River
- **South/Irving Street** – constrained by the presence of wetlands, **floodplain**, and a landfill
- **Carbon Street** – would likely result in the highest level of impacts to wetlands, **floodway** and **floodplain**, and is likely too close to the gravel pits
- **SR 19** – Limited by the presence of wetlands and the **floodway**
- **Conner Street/SR 32** (a fall back to the **Blue Build Alternative**) – in addition to its inability to address any improvements that may need to be made to (existing) Pleasant Street and 8th Street, this route is believed to be limited in its ability to accommodate truck

turning. It is also likely that this option would require the removal of on-street parking downtown, and the potential to adversely impact properties on either side of the street.

- **No Build Alternative** – The no build alternative would consist of combining the (existing) Pleasant Street corridor and the 8th Street corridor between Pleasant Street and Conner Street/SR 32. Because of its configuration, the no build alternative would simply maintain things the way they are.

In addition, travel demand studies and models indicate that the further south the east-west corridor is routed, the less effective it is likely to be.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

15. Will eminent domain be used or will property owners receive fair market value for their land?

It must first be stated that the City of Noblesville recognizes that property has value and that property owners have rights. It is primarily for these reasons that eminent domain is considered by the City of Noblesville to be a “tool of last resort” when it comes to acquiring any remaining pieces, or segments, of public **right-of-way** to move forward with any **transportation improvement** project. And because “eminent domain” and “fair market value” are not mutually exclusive terms, all involuntary property acquisitions and transfers are done so based on the fair market value of the land area that is being conveyed to the public, and in accordance with federal and state statute.

Based on the information obtained thus far, all of the route options being studied by the Noblesville East-West Corridor project will have some sort of impact in this regard; however, it is far too early to discuss property acquisitions at this time.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

16. Will residents be able to find affordable housing options in the City of Noblesville should they need to relocate?

Through the city’s housing study, routine updates to the local land use and development regulations, and long-range planning and economic development efforts, city staff continue to develop findings and recommendations aimed at diversifying local housing options. For its part, the city is working to increase opportunities for private developers to build housing units at a lower price point.

Last revised: 03/27/2018

17. Does the city help homeowners and renters find new homes if they have to relocate?

It is not yet known if area homeowners or renters will need to be fully relocated. (*Refer also to questions #12 and #13.*)

Last revised: 03/27/2018