

East Central Avenue Improvements

June 2019

Project Background

The last significant East Central Avenue improvements likely occurred more than 70 years ago, initiated by the then “State Highway Department” with City cooperation. Automobile and truck traffic would have been very light by today’s standard, and the project priority was likely replacing brick pavers with more modern concrete streets to improve ride. Today, Central Avenue carries on average 12,000 vehicles per day including a high percentage of semi-trucks that, together, exceed the roadway’s capability without experiencing significant deterioration. The City dedicates substantial resources to maintain the road in a passable condition; however a permanent solution is necessary.

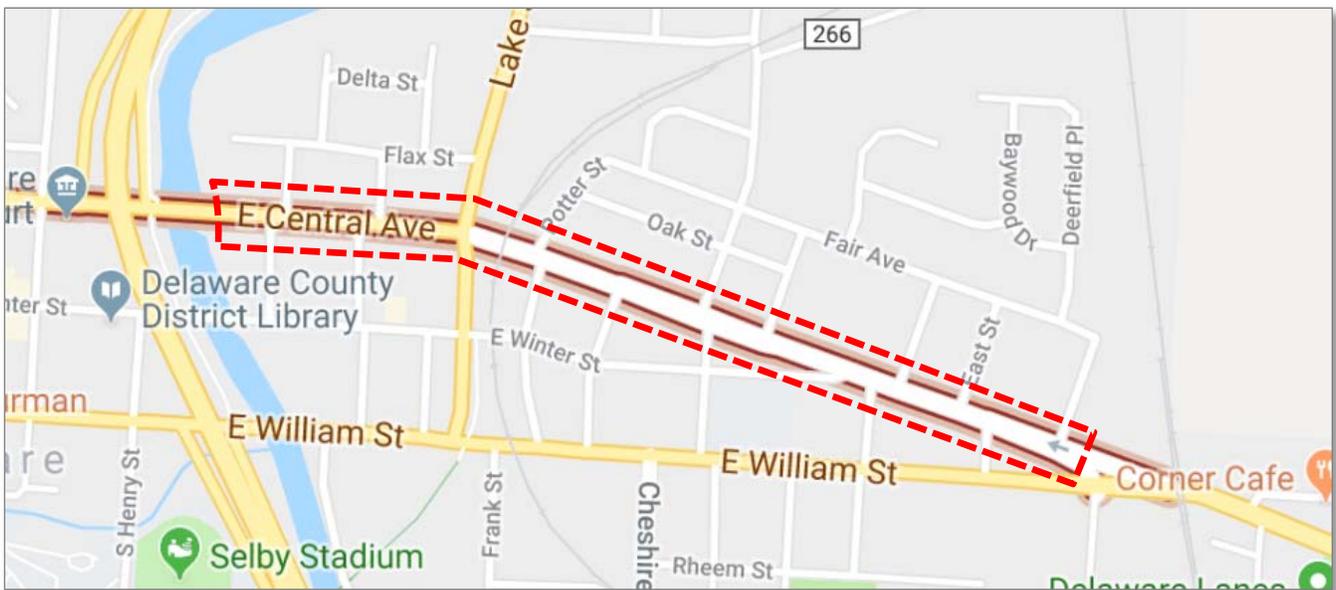


Temporary Improvements

The Ohio Department of Transportation has paid to resurface Central Avenue, most recently in 2010. Pavement failures began showing through the new asphalt in as little as three years, necessitating the City to complete pavement-patching repairs at significant cost. ODOT is again proposing to resurface Central Avenue in 2020. The short-term improvement to ride and safety, as well as accompanying reduction in traffic related noise from vehicles traversing asphalt patches and deteriorated pavement, is desirable and supported by the majority of residents. The alternative of not resurfacing Central would leave the City without guarantee for any short- or long-term improvements.

Permanent Improvements

The City recently completed a traffic study that evaluated traffic circulation on Central Ave., Lake Street, East Winter Street and East William Street. The purpose was to evaluate different road configurations and traffic routing to determine the most beneficial alternative to improving traffic flow today, and into the future. The conclusion was that maintaining two-way traffic on all eastside streets offered the highest level of benefit to traffic circulation. Details regarding this study can be reviewed in the separate Access Delaware article "East Side Traffic Circulation Study." Regardless of the final street configuration, Central Avenue must be reconstructed to a standard sufficient to hold up to heavy truck traffic.



It is anticipated that a major reconstruction project could cost several million dollars and include new pavement, storm drainage, curbs, sidewalk, and street lighting, along with sufficient widening at key intersections to accommodate turning vehicles and peak hour traffic. The majority of intersection work is required at Lake Street which may have to be designed as a separate initiative due to the limited funding to complete all improvements as a single project.

Project Funding & Schedule

A project of this magnitude requires substantial state and federal funds to advance. To obtain these funds, the City must prepare and submit funding applications identifying the justification and merits associated with the improvement project. It is the intent of the City to develop the first of several funding requests in Fall 2019. Both the East William Street and Point projects received safety funds through past applications. Obtaining funds could allow the project to advance to preliminary development and design as early as 2020. Additional applications for state and federal funds would be submitted in 2020 to cover property acquisition and construction. In all, a project of this magnitude is anticipated to take up to five years to advance to the point of construction.