



Ashworth Road Improvements Project | 19th Street to 23rd Street

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where can I learn more?

- Visit www.wdm.iowa.gov/ashworth for more information.

“Why is this project necessary?”

- The underlying pavement on Ashworth Road is deteriorating and approaching the end of its useful life. With reconstruction on the horizon, the new road will be built to current design standards and will address existing safety issues. This will improve the safety and function of the corridor for all roadway users.

“Why are we changing the current 4-lane street into a 3-lane street?”

- Research has indicated that converting from a 4-lane street to a 3-lane street significantly improves safety on the corridor. This is largely due to the addition of the center left-turn lane. Recent crash data for the 4-lane sections of Ashworth Road has shown that the lack of a left-turn lane contributed to 40-50% of reported crashes. Modifying to a 3-lane section would improve the sight lines for left-turning drivers and help them to see oncoming traffic and pedestrians, reducing the chances of a collision.
- The current lane widths on Ashworth Road (9'-10' for most of the project) is below the standard 12'. In addition to being uncomfortable for drivers, it creates issues when snow or rain in the gutter effectively shuts down the use of the outside lanes, reduces the capacity of the road as drivers tend to avoid passing other vehicles, and leads to potential sideswipe crashes. The narrower lanes and tighter corners were a contributor in 10-20% of reported crashes. Modifying to a 3-lane section would allow for the standard 12' lanes to fit within the existing roadway width.

“Will converting to 3-lanes allow for extra space for things like bike lanes?”

- In many locations where a roadway is being converted from 4-lanes to 3-lanes, there is extra space created that can be utilized for on-street parking, bike lanes, or medians/landscaping. However, due to the narrow width of the existing 4-lanes on Ashworth Road, there is no extra space available after converting to 3 standard-width lanes.

“Why is a shared use path recommended with this project?”

- A shared use path along Ashworth Road would significantly enhance walking, bicycling, and other non-motorized modes. Currently, there are no shared use paths near the project. A shared use path would help connect people to existing shared use paths and provide a critical trunk line that sidewalks, future trails, and on-street bicycle facilities could branch off from. It would also take up less space and have less of an impact to neighboring properties compared to widening both sides of the street for on-street bike lanes.



"Where are some similar examples that operate as 3-lane streets?"

- There are many 3-lane streets in West Des Moines and the rest of the metro area that currently operate with similar traffic volumes as Ashworth Road. Examples include:
 - University Ave east of 86th St (Clive/Windsor Heights)
 - Douglas Ave east of Merle Hay Rd (Des Moines)
 - Beaver Ave north of Urbandale Ave (Des Moines)
 - Grand Avenue from Glen Oaks to South 88th Street (West Des Moines)
 - Mills Civic Pkwy from South 81st Street to South 91st Street (West Des Moines)

What happens during construction adjacent to my property? Will I have access? Will the mail still be delivered? Will I get a new driveway?

- Access to your property will be maintained throughout construction. At times, a temporary roadway may be constructed from granular material in order to reach each driveway.
- Driveway sections within the right-of-way will be removed and replaced. In some cases, the driveway will require removal and replacement beyond the right-of-way to accommodate slight changes in elevation of the roadways. In this case a temporary construction easement will be required, see section on temporary construction easements below.
- Garbage service will be maintained throughout construction. In the case of garbage and recycling services you will put your garbage bin on the end of your driveway like normal and the contractor will facilitate moving the garbage bins to a location at the end of the construction project for pick up. They will then return the bins to your driveway.
- Mail delivery will be maintained. The mail will be delivered normally with the postal service utilizing temporary pedestrian access when necessary. In the case of a mailbox located along the curb of the roadway those mailboxes may be temporarily relocated to the end of the construction project.

Right-of-way Acquisition and Temporary Construction Easements

- The existing property/right-of-way line between the City owned right-of-way and private property is typically located approximately one foot behind the existing sidewalk furthest from the street.
- If the street, sidewalk, or trail needs to be installed beyond the existing property/right-of-way line the City will need to acquire/purchase the necessary area from you. In this case you would be contacted to discuss the area in detail, review the plans, and negotiate the purchase of the right-of-way.
- In many cases a temporary construction easement will be needed beyond the existing and/or purchased City property/right-of-way. Temporary construction easements allow the contractor space to work to properly install the street, utilities, sidewalks, and shared use paths. The contractor will restore and replace any disturbed grass/lawn in the area. The temporary construction easement does not allow the placement of permanent utilities, sidewalk, and/or shared use path on your property. Similarly, to cases of right-of-way acquisition you would be contacted to discuss the area in detail, review the plans, and negotiate the purchase of the temporary construction easement.



Whom do I contact if I have construction issues to report?

- Shortly before construction begins you will be given contact information for the appropriate City staff (and consultants if applicable) who will be in charge of construction. These individuals will be on the project site the majority of construction and thus are typically the quickest to respond to any issues. More broadly Jason Schlickbernd, Principal Engineer for the City, is responsible for all capital improvement projects such as Ashworth Road Reconfiguration. Jason can be reached at 515-222-3475 and emailed at jason.schlickbernd@wdm.iowa.gov.
- We understand construction adjacent to your property is an inconvenience, it is our goal to reduce that as much as possible while still being able to efficiently reconstruct the roadway.

Will I have to remove snow from the shared use path?

- No, the City is responsible for all maintenance, including snow removal, of the shared use paths within the City. Sidewalks are maintained by adjacent property owners.

What if I have landscaping or irrigation within the City right-of-way?

- Any private items such as irrigation lines, brick mailboxes, carriage walks, trees, landscaping, non-connected drive approaches, and other non-permitted structures and objects located in the City ROW between the street curb and the sidewalk within the construction limits will be at risk and may be removed as part of this street reconstruction. If private and non-permitted items within the City ROW are required to be removed due to the construction or City policy, they will not be replaced as part of the project per City policy. If property owners wish to salvage private and non-permitted items located within City ROW, they need to make their own arrangements to remove these items prior to the start of construction.

Project Financing

- The City currently intends for the projects included here to be financed through the City's Capital Improvement Program. City Staff are looking into options for alternative State and Federal funding sources.

City Elected Officials and Staff would like to thank all affected parties for their consideration and cooperation in completion of these projects. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact:

Jason Schlickbernd

Principal Engineer

City of West Des Moines

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