



Executive Summary: Eaton Street Phase 2

Project Scope

This project will construct new curb, gutter, sidewalks, and ramps, install curb-bulb outs at certain intersections, install two sidewalk bridges at irrigation ditch sidewalk crossing, install stormwater drainage sumps where necessary, and plant boulevard trees on Eaton Street from S. 13th to Sussex Ave. The project includes a new 4-way stop at the intersection with North Avenue and is scheduled for asphalt maintenance work planned for the following year.

Purpose and Need

This project addresses a significant infrastructure gap in the Franklin to the Fort (F2F) Neighborhood, a historically underserved area. Key justifications include:

- Safety – Increased traffic volumes and crash history underscore the need for pedestrian and street infrastructure improvements. Missing infrastructure like sidewalks are often brought up in response to infill development in the F2F Neighborhood.
- Connectivity & Transit – Eaton Street is classified as a collector street as well as a designated transit route with several bus stop locations along the corridor.
- Equity – This project aligns with the Pedestrian Facilities Master Plan and supports safe routes to school and invest health initiatives.

Benefits

This project will provide safe, convenient, and accessible pedestrian facilities for people of all ages and abilities to utilize and will connect the west side of the F2F neighborhood to school, park, and transit facilities. Additional benefits include:

- Enhanced pedestrian safety and connectivity, fostering healthier, more equitable access to essential services.
- Improved traffic flow and reduced speeding through strategic design interventions.
- Long-term sustainability benefits from stormwater management and increased urban greenery.

Neighborhood Outreach

This project has been communicated to the neighborhood through the following:

- A public meeting was conducted on May 20, 2021, for the overall project (both Phases 1 and 2). Note: Phase 1 construction was completed in 2022.
- Phase 2 project updates were communicated with a July 2024 postcard and a recent letter (October 2024) to inform property owners of upcoming City Council meetings, where to view project plans, and to contact PWM staff with any questions/concerns.

Design Considerations

This project maximizes public benefits by:

- Installation of boulevard sidewalks where practicable. New sidewalks within the right-of-way are required to be boulevard sidewalks per MMC 12.10.120. Boulevard sidewalks have many benefits

and serve the greater community by providing a safer more enjoyable environment, allowing for snow storage, reducing stormwater runoff, having less conflicts with driveways, vegetation, and mailboxes, and creating a space for street trees, which helps mitigate climate change and constrain the visual environment to lower vehicular operating speeds to name a few.

- City staff strives to individualize the application of code to create boulevards, considering the locations of existing garages and configuration of approaches, while accommodating individual homeowner's requests where possible. These result in changes to the location of sidewalk and size of boulevard.
- There's often a need to move fences either with boulevard sidewalk or curbside sidewalk as some existing fences are encroaching into the right-of-way.
- This is not a traffic calming project per se, but there are elements within the project that will lead to slower vehicle speeds. Elements—such as bulb-outs, curbs, and parked vehicles closer to travel lanes, street trees—all narrow the physical environment and slow speeds. The bulb-outs will also lower speeds as vehicles turn onto side streets thus calming traffic onto the neighboring side streets.

Response to Neighborhood Concerns

Feedback to date has directly shaped project components, reflecting the City's commitment to addressing property owner needs.

- **Cost.** Property owners were concerned with the cost of assessments. Proposed changes to the sidewalk ordinance lower the thresholds for low-income and high assessment deferrals.
 - Qualified property owners meeting 120% AMI can defer the entire assessment until sale of the home.
 - Qualified property owners can defer the assessment amount greater than \$3,500 until sale of the home.
 - Benefits approximately 12 property owners with assessments greater than \$3,500 (total \$56,000 deferred assessment cost).
 - Approximately 16% of total cost of project is assessments. Remaining 84% is funded with Road District and Gas Taxes.
- **Curbside vs Boulevard Sidewalks.** Property owners were concerned with the impacts of boulevard sidewalks on their property. The design was modified to include curbside sidewalks in specific locations within the project to reduce the impact on the adjacent private property such as buildings close to property line/right-of-way, higher or lower elevations of land between right-of-way and private property, mature vegetation, and existing curbs, sidewalks, and driveways.
- **Safety and Speeds.** Property owners expressed concern that the project will not address safety concerns or speeding. While this is not a traffic calming project, there are elements that will lead to slower vehicle speeds, such as curbing, bulb-outs, on-street parking, and street trees that narrow the physical appearance of the street.
 - City Engineering also investigated crash reports at Eaton/North intersection and recommended a 4-way stop. To mitigate these crashes, we are moving forward NOW with the installation of a new 4-way stop at this intersection.
 - Additionally, City Engineering recommended eliminating some on-street parking to promote better sight visibility for pedestrians and reduce conflicts from vehicles backing into the street from 90-degree parking spaces.

Next Steps

- When the next assessment letter is mailed, it will include information from this Executive Summary.
- We will also add this information to the City's project website.
- We will offer to meet one-on-one with property owners to discuss the project.
- We will put out our speed trailers on Eaton Street to remind drivers of the posted speed and to collect data.
- We will ask Police Department to provide more enforcement for speeding on Eaton Street.
- Once the project is constructed, PWM will monitor speeds to determine if there's still a need for additional traffic calming, such as offset speed tables and median islands.