

### Community Comment and Response Summary

Approximately 40 written comments were received during or following the two Public Information Meetings held for this study. Following is a summary of comments received or discussed verbally during the meetings, and responses prepared by the City. All comments and this FAQ have become part of the public record and will be included in the study's final documentation.

- **A majority of comments are in support of the proposed improvement plan, particularly for expanding the bike network and making bike travel safer.**
  - This feedback is appreciated. The City is investing in a more connected and safer network for cyclists and pedestrians to make active transportation a more attractive choice for everyone. The main goal of this project is to improve safety and connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians of the greatest range of ages and abilities. It is hoped that this improvement will be an attractive alternative to motorized vehicle use.
  
- **Some comments to improve the bike network connectivity to the west across the Church Street bridge over the North Shore Channel (outside current project limits).**
  - While this project's western limit is at McDaniel Avenue, previous bicycle planning efforts by the City of Evanston have identified the Church Street bridge over the North Shore Channel as a high-stress area for cyclists. Improving this bridge to provide a connection to McCormick Boulevard is listed as a priority corridor in the City's Bike Plan Update. The City will consider a study of this improvement as it develops future capital improvement programs. This will need to be coordinated with IDOT, MWRD, and the Village of Skokie.
  
- **Some requests to provide further bike connections and infrastructure improvements outside of the current project limits.**
  - While this project's eastern terminus is at the west leg of Church and Dodge, the City is completing an adjacent study which is contemplating further improvements at this intersection and in the nearby areas which will improve access to the east. Please see the Mason Park Expansion and Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements web page on the City's website for more information.
  - The City is planning a path connection to the north. Please visit the City's website to view plans for the Beck Park Expansion. In most areas along the corridor, widening the sidewalk is not feasible without removing parkway trees or obtaining right-of-way from adjacent property. However, the proposed plan does include sidewalk widening on the north side of Church Street between McDaniel Avenue and Lemar Avenue to bring that segment up to current design standards.

- **Some suggestions to consider removing parking spaces at the east end of the project to keep bike lanes on-street west of Dodge.**
  - Public roadway infrastructure projects such as this must strike an appropriate balance between the removal of on-street parking space and the provision of on-street bicycle facilities. The balance on this project largely favors the bicycle facility as 32 total spaces throughout the project corridor are being reallocated to dedicated bicycle use, while only these eight spaces adjacent to the institutional/business area near Church Street and Dodge Avenue were identified as important to remain at this time. These concerns are however noted, and once constructed, the safety and operation will be evaluated for potential further improvements in the future.
  
- **Some suggestions for more corner bumpout locations, crosswalk locations, elevated crosswalks, and/or enhanced crosswalks throughout the corridor. Also, a comment suggesting the crossing on the west McDaniel leg looks challenging. And, a request for LED-bordered pedestrian warning signs at proposed crosswalks.**
  - Bumpouts have been shown in the design concept at all pedestrian crossings to the greatest extent feasible while meeting IDOT's standards for vehicles turning to and from the side streets.
  - At this time, additional crosswalks beyond those shown in the concept plan are not proposed, however safety and circulation will continue to be evaluated, and future improvements can be considered as appropriate.
  - Church Street is an IDOT jurisdictional route and a local truck route, and as such, elevated crosswalks are not permissible.
  - Church Street is an IDOT jurisdictional route and as such, options for pavement markings are limited to those in IDOT's standard details. While unique or colored pavement markings are not permitted for crosswalks, the crosswalk style proposed throughout this project is the "higher visibility" style of the two options provided by IDOT.
  - The existing crosswalk on the west leg of the Church Street/McDaniel Avenue intersection will be maintained and improved. A new bump-out on the south side of this crossing will shorten the crossing distance by approximately 8 feet, which will reduce vehicle exposure to bicyclists and pedestrians making this crossing.
  - During the detailed design phase, the City will coordinate with IDOT to seek approval for push-button LED-bordered pedestrian crossing warning signs at other uncontrolled pedestrian crossings within the project limits.
  
- **Some concerns regarding sidewalk conditions and requests for widening improvements.**
  - As part of this project, one section of sidewalk between McDaniel and Lemar on the north side of Church Street will be fully reconstructed and widened to bring it up to applicable standards. Throughout the rest of the project limits, spot

sidewalk repairs will be made where appropriate. All curb ramps at street crossings will be brought up to the latest ADA standards.

- Additional widening of some sidewalks would not be feasible without removing parkway trees or obtaining right-of-way from residential or High School property. However, the proposed plan does include sidewalk widening between McDaniel Avenue and Lemar Avenue to bring that segment up to current design standards.
- **Some concerns with impacts to traffic flow on Church Street.**
  - As one of the primary east-west travel corridors in the City, Church Street is a relatively heavily-traveled corridor for vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians, especially during high school arrival and dismissal periods. This is expected to continue. While the proposed project does not remove through-traffic lanes, it does narrow them slightly from 13 feet to 11 feet each. This, together with providing on-street bike lanes and separating bike traffic from pedestrian traffic should improve safety for all users.
- **Some comments suggesting the bike facility should be on Lake Street instead.**
  - Lake Street is already an existing signed bike route. Without significant infrastructure modifications, tree removals, and/or residential parking removal, Lake Street lacks the space within its existing cross-section to provide a bicycle facility such as a shared-use sidepath or dedicated bicycle lanes in the way that Church Street provides.
- **Some comments regarding reducing the speed limit and/or enforcing vehicle and bike laws along Church Street in both the existing and proposed conditions. Also, a concern regarding bicyclists using the sidewalks, and bike speed in general.**
  - Church Street is an IDOT jurisdictional route, and therefore the City has less control over posted speeds. The City will continue to monitor speed and crash data as it currently does and work with IDOT as appropriate. Concerns regarding bicycle law compliance and enforcement will be shared with the Evanston Police Department. This project will greatly reduce the likelihood of bikes riding on the sidewalks within the project area. The project includes green pavement marking within the proposed east-west bike facility on Church Street where it crosses intersecting pedestrian facilities and/or vehicular driveways. Signage indicating "Bikes Yield to Pedestrians" and additional bike facility pavement markings such as "Slow Zone" will be explored in the detailed design phase.
- **A concern regarding gaps in the proposed concrete bike lane separator.**
  - With Church Street being an IDOT jurisdictional route, the gaps shown are necessary in the concrete barrier to accommodate vehicles turning to and from side streets in accordance with IDOT design standards.
- **A question regarding the proposed traffic signal at Church Street/Pitner Avenue.**
  - A request for a traffic signal analysis was made by members of the public to IDOT prior to the start of this study. IDOT studied the intersection and determined

that a traffic signal is warranted based on national standards. The City elected to incorporate the installation of this traffic signal as part of this project. The traffic signal will improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists crossing Church Street at Pitner Avenue, which is also at the pedestrian entryway to the Evanston Township High School sports fields.

- **A concern regarding the length, height, and openings in the proposed fence along the proposed north-south trail.**
  - The specific details of the fence and openings along the north-south trail will be evaluated and finalized during the detailed design phase and will include coordination with District 65 representatives.
  
- **A concern regarding connectivity for ETHS bicyclists coming from the east and ability to reach the bike parking area at ETHS.**
  - A possible solution may be to instruct them, through signage, pavement markings, and education, to dismount and walk bikes the remainder of the way on the concrete sidewalks to the cage once they reach the western end of the short cycle track, at the east edge of the tennis courts. The City will further evaluate and coordinate with ETHS in the detailed design phase.
  
- **A concern suggesting the City should discontinue building bike lanes and paths.**
  - Consistent with the City's comprehensive planning efforts, the City's policy is to enhance biking infrastructure to promote the use of its bike network. The City is investing in a more connected and safer network for cyclists and pedestrians to make active transportation a more attractive choice for everyone.