



Department Source: Public Works

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: April 15, 2024

Re: Public Hearing for the construction of the Forum Boulevard improvement project.

## Executive Summary

A Public Hearing for the construction of the Forum Boulevard improvements between Chapel Hill Road and Woodrail Avenue. The interested parties meeting for this project was held on November 30, 2023. The total project cost estimate for design, easement acquisition, and construction is \$12,300,000.

## Discussion

The Forum Boulevard corridor is an urban arterial which carries north/south traffic through Columbia. The corridor has many existing businesses, residential areas, a significant stream crossing, sensitive natural resources, and mature tree cover all of which adds to the variables to be addressed in the preliminary design features for the proposed improvements.

The City hired Engineering Surveys & Services, a Columbia-based engineering consulting firm, to provide planning and design for the Forum Boulevard improvement project. The design team includes a subconsultant, EFK Moen, to provide traffic and structural engineering design expertise for this project.

EFK Moen conducted traffic counts of the Forum Boulevard corridor on November 16, 2022. The traffic study included gathering video traffic count data at 13 intersection and driveway locations in the study area. The data collection occurred over a 13-hour period and was scheduled when both the University of Missouri and Columbia Public Schools were in session. The data was used to analyze the existing traffic movement along the corridor and to project future traffic patterns. This information was then used to make recommendations regarding the design of improvements for the corridor.

The preliminary design includes the following proposed improvements:

- Adding a driving lane in each direction to the current two-lane segment of the corridor. This matches the four-lane section to the north and south, not only providing for demand growth in the long-term, but as one of the few Hinkson Creek crossing on the City's west side, should offer a benefit of improved emergency vehicle response times.
- Constructing a new bridge over the Hinkson Creek bridge insuring that it will not result in a rise of potential flood elevation, and preferably will contribute to a lessening of high-water impacts.
- Constructing intersection upgrades at several locations to provide for better traffic operations and improved safety. These intersection improvements include



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roundabouts to provide traffic control and calming at Katy Lane and at Woodrail/Crestwood; and an upgrade of the existing signalized intersection at Chapel Hill Road including adding thru-lane capacity to allow simultaneous left turns for the east-west traffic movements and pedestrian refuge islands.

- Managing the access at various locations on the corridor that experience higher accident rates.
- Improved accessibility for non-motorized transportation modes (bicycle & pedestrian) along the entire corridor by including bike lanes, sidewalks, and pedways.
- Providing improved natural treatment of storm drainage runoff on the corridor, especially the “first-flush” discharges that are generated in the early stages of rain events.
- Extending the pedestrian tunnel for the MKT trail to accommodate the road improvements.
- Constructing retaining walls to minimize impacts to adjacent properties.

The interested parties meeting for this project was held on November 30, 2023. Eighty-six residents signed in at the meeting and 79 written comments have been received about the project. Most of the comments consisted of general recommendations or concerns to be considered. The preliminary design and right-of-way plans for the improvements are expected to be completed by the fall of 2024, with easement acquisition occurring during the winter and spring of 2025. Construction of the improvements are projected to be underway by the summer of 2026.

The total project cost estimate for design, easement acquisition, and construction is \$12,300,000. The project will be funded with the ¼ cent Capital Improvement Program (CIP) sales tax. Construction of the project is anticipated to begin in summer of 2026.

## Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total project estimate is \$12,300,000 and will be funded with the ¼-cent Capital Improvement Program (CIP) sales tax.

Long-Term Impact: Routine maintenance.

## Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Reliable Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Inclusive Community, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

## Legislative History



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Date	Action
03/18/2024	R56-23 Setting a public hearing for the construction of the Forum Boulevard improvement between Chapel Hill Road and Woodrail Avenue.
11/30/2023	Interested Parties Meeting
10/03/2022	B290-22 Authorizing an agreement for professional engineering services with Engineering Surveys & Services for design of improvements along Forum Boulevard between Chapel Hill Road and Woodrail Avenue.

## Suggested Council Action

Approve the construction of the Forum Boulevard improvements between Chapel Hill Road and Woodrail Avenue.