



CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

750 LAKESIDE DRIVE SE-EAST GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49506

March 1, 2024

Non-Motorized Transportation Infrastructure Information-Third Mailer/Notice/Update

Dear East Grand Rapids Resident/Property Owner:

The City of East Grand Rapids went through a multi-year public engagement process in 2021 and 2022 towards developing a community Mobility/Bike Action Plan in 2022. Since its adoption the city has implemented many of the noted facilities regarding bike lanes/routes, additional pavement markings and associated signage to improve non-motorized infrastructure for pedestrian experience and safety. One of the areas noted for desired infrastructure improvements is the Robinson and Cascade Road corridor. This same east/west corridor is also noted in City of Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids Township connections in their respective non-motorized community plans. For more information on the City of East Grand Rapids Mobility-Bike Action Plan, please visit www.eastgr.org and search "Mobility-Bike Action Plan."

With the infrastructure need identified by the East Grand Rapids community and neighboring jurisdictions, the city proposed a project for Federal grant funding consideration and was awarded ~\$780,000 in grant funds, with a local match requirement of ~\$360,000, covered by the City of East Grand Rapids, to fund a sidewalk/side path on the south side of Robinson and Cascade Road from Plymouth Road to Manhattan Park adjacent to the East Beltline. This means there is no direct cost for this infrastructure improvement project.

The Robinson and Cascade Road corridor from Plymouth Road to East Beltline is under the right-of-way (ROW) jurisdiction of the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC). The KCRC has indicated an intergovernmental agreement with the City of East Grand Rapids can be considered for the construction and maintenance of sidewalk or side path infrastructure in their ROW. After initial review of available ROW, it was determined that there is generally not sufficient ROW along the southside stretch of Cascade Road to provide for adequate separation distance from the roadway and sidewalk/side path infrastructure. Currently the KCRC ROW limit is generally located at the back of the Consumers Energy utility poles along Cascade Road, which only allows the ROW space between these poles to the roadway. In order to construct a sidewalk or side path with additional buffering from Cascade Road, the city respectfully requested adjacent property owners consider providing between 6 and 10-foot easements south of the existing Consumers Energy utility poles to construct a 5-foot wide, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant concrete sidewalk through the corridor that balanced buffering from Cascade Road and setbacks of homes. The city sent out several notices and for residents to meet with city staff in person to discuss the potential project and associated easements. Over a period of months city staff met with approximately half of residents who reside along Cascade Road. Unfortunately after multiple attempts to engage all residents with no response from half of the residents, the city transitioned to another approach.

Feedback received from in-person resident engagement from those who participated was supportive of pedestrian facilities and easements for pedestrian facilities, however a desire for improvements to Cascade Road were also almost universally common. With this feedback and the need for more easements, city staff re-engaged the KCRC to study, review, and discuss possible enhancements to the Cascade Road corridor as well to seek alternative solutions to address both the road concerns and pedestrian facilities. The conclusion of this process culminated in the KCRC agreeing to modifying Cascade Road with a road diet to accommodate fully constructing 5-foot wide, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant concrete sidewalk within the existing public KCRC ROW. This means that no private easements will be needed at this time for this section of the overall project. Additionally, and in conjunction with the sidewalk/side path project, Cascade Road will have a microseal treatment applied and reconfigured via pavement markings to transition from four lanes of traffic (two lanes in each direction) to a new configuration of wider shoulders (for separation distance for pedestrians and accommodate yard waste/leaf service) and two travel lanes, one in each direction, as well as a center turn lane. This will provide for the safe and appropriate pedestrian separation distance from the sidewalk/side path and address concerns heard regarding Cascade Road that were heard from the in-person engagement.

To view initial plans, please visit www.eastgr.org and click on the construction updates quick link or scan the QR code provided below.



This communication is being sent to East Grand Rapids residents/property owners along the southside of Cascade Road generally from the intersection of Robinson Road to Manhattan Park. City staff would like to engage with residents by visiting each property in-person if desired. To schedule a site visit or after reviewing initial plans have any questions comments or concerns, please send an email communication to publicworks@eastgr.org

Please respond with a request for a site visit or initial questions by March 22, 2024. After this in-person engagement, plan modifications will be made where feasible and additional communication provided to residents.

Respectfully-
East Grand Rapids Department of Public Works