General Project FAQ
Mississippi Avenue Widening Project
June 2020

After posting public feedback information about the Mississippi Avenue Widening Project, the project team received a variety of input, and some common questions emerged. Please see below for frequently asked questions.

Why does this roadway need to be widened? Can you explain the necessity in terms of projected vehicle traffic along East Mississippi Avenue?

The current traffic volumes, measured prior to the COVID-19 public health crisis and Stay-at-Home orders, show that there is an average of 10,380 vehicles travelling this corridor per day. By the year 2040, this number is anticipated to average 20,000 vehicles per day. This increase is due to the average 2% growth rate of the city of Aurora and Buckley Air Force Base. This widening project will revitalize the current roadway to provide a better, multi-modal-friendly roadway for the neighborhood for years to come.

How is this project going to be funded?

This project is one of about 25 transportation projects citywide that Council chose for funding in 2018. At the time, City Council was given several presentations on these projects, and they determined that infrastructure needs such as this one were important enough to fund. This project is funded through the excess Marijuana Sales Tax Revenue funding source.

How will traffic traveling to and from Buckley Air Force Base be managed during construction?

We are still working through the preliminary design for the Mississippi Avenue and Aspen Street intersection, which includes plans for managing traffic during construction. We are aware of the existing traffic backups at Buckley Air Force Base, particularly during the morning peak hours, and are keeping this top of mind as we develop roadway construction plans.

Will the stop light replacements include "smart" signaling devices?

The traffic signal will be upgraded at the Mississippi Avenue and Aspen Street intersection from the current traffic signal to the standard city of Aurora signal with overhead mast arms. Included in this upgrade will be the technology necessary to implement future "smart" signal control, but a larger scale communication network needs to be in place for the smart signals to "speak" with
other intersections along the corridor. These communication improvements are outside the scope of this project, but the city is working to implement a project focused on these signals in the future.

**Which intersections will get traffic signals?**

As part of this project, we will remove the existing signal and install a new traffic signal at the Mississippi Avenue and Aspen Street intersection. At the Mississippi Avenue and Louisiana Avenue and Mississippi Avenue and Ceylon Street intersections, the city performed traffic signal warrant analyses in preparation for this project. Both studies showed that traffic signals are not warranted, based on the traffic volumes, pedestrian volumes and crash histories.

**Will the new street lights omit light into the residents’ properties that back up to Mississippi Avenue?**

We will add shields onto the new street lights that are being installed along both sides of Mississippi Avenue.

**Why is xeriscaping planting the proposed landscaping option for this project?**

All city of Aurora projects are planned and designed to match the city of Aurora criteria based on the classification standards of roadway, which includes xeriscaping, as it is more sustainable by requiring less water and is drought tolerant.

**How is the project being designed to assist pedestrians once the roadway is widened to four lanes?**

The purpose of this project is to revitalize the current roadway to provide a better, multi-modal-friendly roadway for the neighborhood. As design continues, the project team will continue to evaluate ways to ensure safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. We may consider adding a flashing signal that is activated by pedestrians or bikers. We are going to work with our traffic division on additional safety measures.

**Will the speed limit change as part of this roadway widening project?**

For this project, the speed limit will be increased from 30 mph to 35 mph to match the speed limit along Dunkirk Street. During construction, the speed limit will lower, to enforce cautious driving through the active construction work zone.

**Will the existing fence be replaced on the south side of Mississippi Avenue when the sidewalk is extended to 10 feet? Will the existing street lights be replaced with new street lights?**

The existing fences along the south/west side of Mississippi Avenue will not be replaced when the sidewalk is extended to 10 feet. The location of the existing back
of sidewalk on the south/west side will be approximately the location of the proposed back of sidewalk. The four existing street lights along the south/west side of the project will be removed and replaced with new city of Aurora-owned LED energy efficient street lights.

**What traffic calming measures are being considered for this project? Is there the possibility of adding speed bumps along Louisiana Avenue or Mississippi Avenue?**

The possibility of installing speed bumps along Louisiana Avenue, is outside of the scope of this project. However, the city does sponsor the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program, which provides the funding for these installations to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Residents may review the program and apply at AuroraGov.org/TrafficCalming. If any applications for Louisiana Avenue are received, staff will evaluate the need for traffic calming installations and propose mitigations should traffic meet the program’s criteria, including the possibility of speed cushions (similar to speed humps) or other traffic calming measure.

Traffic calming features are reserved for application on local and collector roadways. Because Mississippi Avenue is an arterial roadway, installing traffic calming features would introduce concerns for safety for all roadway users, including bicyclists and pedestrians.