

Lincoln Avenue Reconstruction – What do we get when it's done?

We all got a taste of what the construction might be like because of the work that was done last Fall. With that in mind, CDOT and Scott Contracting have been working on a better plan to communicate with the public utilizing the radio stations, the newspaper, TV18, email and Twitter. If you would like to get on the communication list for updates, send an email to jody@pattencom.com

CDOT and the City have been planning coordination of two projects to take place simultaneously (what a GREAT idea – work together). CDOT will be working on the road surface while the City will be working on the bump-outs on the corners, the handicap ramps, the colored crosswalks at signalized intersections, fiber-optics installation to assist in the timing of the traffic lights for better traffic flow during peak traffic periods and installing another traffic signal at 11th Street.

Why bump-outs? Currently crossing Lincoln Ave is not pedestrian friendly. At the signalized intersections, if you have noticed, pedestrians only have between 18 and 22 seconds (depending on the intersection) to get across the street. Bump-outs should help to make the intersections a bit friendlier by helping to calm traffic and making the distance between curbs less. Additionally, these bump-outs onto Lincoln will only be at signalized intersections, encouraging pedestrians to cross with the lights. At all non-signalized intersections, the bump-outs will only go into the side streets and not out onto Lincoln.

Additionally, bus stops are being moved downstream of the traffic signals so that busses can get out into traffic more easily when the light turns red. Currently, even with the yield lights on the backs of the busses, drivers will often not let busses pull back into traffic. To be able to pull into a bus stop more easily, the bump-out is eliminated so less room is required for the bus to pull in and to preserve as many parking places as possible. Also, because of the increase in bus ridership, and the desire to make waiting for the bus more pleasant, 9 new bus shelters will be installed after the construction is completed.

You may have noticed that the handicapped ramps at the corners are all different. Some work better than others. Ask Routt County Commissioner Nancy Stahoviak about trying to negotiate some of the ramps in her motorized wheeled chair. She has to wear her seatbelt so that she doesn't get pitched out because of the steepness of some of them. The new ramps will all be the same and more negotiable, thank goodness. And, hopefully, the new ramps won't fill with water or ice the way the current ones do.

Colored crosswalks are being added across Lincoln at signalized intersections to make a bigger statement to drivers to watch for pedestrians in the crosswalks. At all intersections, side streets will have colored crosswalks.

And finally, the light at 11th. MainStreet has been advocating this light for years. Not only will it help the businesses in that area, but, again, it will make Lincoln Avenue more pedestrian friendly. Currently, both pedestrians and drivers take their lives in their hands

to cross the street at 11th. Drivers leaving the 9th Street light speed up to try to make it through the light at 13th. No longer will drivers have to backtrack to 9th to get to a traffic signal so that they are able to turn left onto Lincoln.

When the construction is finished, not only will we have a new concrete road surface that should last 30 or more years, our downtown will be more pedestrian friendly and will look more pulled together, instead of the mish-mash of installations that we are living with now. Yes, there will be some pain during the construction, but it will be GREAT when it is done.