



**East Main Street Improvements  
From Willow Street to Horning Road  
Kent, Ohio  
(PID 112026)  
Public Comment Responses**



	Comments	Responses	Comment Subject
Respondent #1	Opposed to Roundabouts	Roundabouts are not always the solution and from the beginning, multiple options were considered. With a boulevard, it is necessary to provide some method for U-turns. Multiple options were considered including traffic signals and Loons/Michigan Lefts. A comprehensive Alternative Matrix was developed and utilized by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and other stakeholders to evaluate these options. In the end, roundabouts were overwhelmingly shown to be the preferred alternative based on numerous criteria. In addition, a similar layout of roundabouts was constructed on Summit Street and current speed and safety data has proven those to be successful.	Roundabouts
	Believes it will hurt the neighborhoods	We understand your concern and will continue to work with the neighborhood residents as part of the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) throughout the design process to ensure that the project goal to enhance adjacent neighborhoods is taken into consideration with each step of the project. We know there are various similar concerns from other residents in the neighborhoods adjacent to this area. While we'd like to address all of the neighborhood concerns, we are working to do as much as possible to enhance the neighborhoods within the project area and funding limits. The improvements along East Main and at the neighborhood entrances is intended to reduce the amount of cut-through traffic in the neighborhoods by A) Reducing congestion and improving safety on East Main so that traffic will stay on East Main, rather than cutting through neighborhoods; and B) Providing neighborhood entrances that deter people from cutting through, similar to the entrance to the Crain Ave. Neighborhood at Water Street. Through subsequent traffic counts, that entrance was shown to significantly reduce cut-through traffic at that time.	Neighborhoods
	Doesn't see how people will be able to get across town during construction	We know that this is a heavily traveled corridor and as we move into design, we will be developing detailed plans for maintaining vehicular and pedestrian traffic along East Main Street during construction. Information on how to get across town during construction will be widely shared / readily available for the public during each construction phase.	Construction Access
Respondent #2	The project is brilliant: engaged the university, the residents and attracted interested parties to all meetings. The project team listened carefully to the input from those around the table. The resulting attention to detail shows their dedication to the project, the university, the residents and the community.	Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.	Community Input
Respondent #3	Given that we are the Tree City, we can make it a source of pride to plant only Ohio native trees, shrubs and flowers. This would boost bird, bat, and pollinator populations, and can be marked with a placard. If cost is an issue, we could apply for grants and/or accept donations.	Thank you for these comments. We agree that Ohio native trees, shrubs and flowers would be preferable. As we move into design, we will certainly take this into consideration along with future maintenance of this landscaping.	Landscaping / Aesthetics
	Installation of art in the center of each of the roundabouts could also boost pride in the city and add to the beauty of the area. The City of Kent could host a competition with set parameters of art installations (height, width, materials) and a committee or the City could cast a winning vote.	We will take this idea into consideration as we continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process, including determination of landscaping or art within the roundabouts.	Landscaping / Aesthetics
	Although I completely support the approaches the city engineers are proposing, there is a general hands-off approach to dealing with the University Heights neighborhood. The engineers and consultants have made it clear their goal is to "enhance neighborhoods" through greater access and gateway structures at intersections with East Main. However, there is currently no plan in place to: a) quantify changes in traffic density and/or speed before-and-after the roundabout assembly on streets in University Heights, and b) address how to keep pedestrians safe on streets that lack sidewalks. Instead, the engineers seem to be taking a wait-and-see approach. As a resident of University Heights, my hope is that the engineers can seek a more proactive approach instead of waiting for residents to offer a critical mass of complaints regarding traffic issues, and more tragically, pedestrian crashes and/or fatalities.	We will quantify changes to traffic volumes in the area of the project after construction. Evaluating impacts to traffic volumes and safety after significant changes to the road network is a standard practice in Kent. These evaluations are essential for us to gain an understanding of drivers response to significant changes in the roadways. Examples of recent project evaluations that have shaped this improvement are: - The Fairchild Avenue Bridge project evaluation showed a 50% reduction of traffic volumes into the neighborhood served by Crain Avenue with the volume control traffic calming practices incorporated. - The North Water Street project evaluation showed a 15% reduction in vehicular speeds along the corridor. - The Summit Street project evaluation showed a 59% reduction in crash rate with over 3 years of data post construction.  We understand your concern and will continue to work with the neighborhood residents as part of the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) throughout the design process to ensure that the project goal to enhance adjacent neighborhoods is taken into consideration with each step of the project. We know there are various similar concerns from other residents in the neighborhoods adjacent to this area. While we'd like to address all of the neighborhood concerns, we are working to do as much as possible to enhance the neighborhoods within the project area and funding limits. The improvements along East Main and at the neighborhood entrances is intended to reduce the amount of cut-through traffic in the neighborhoods by A) Reducing congestion and improving safety on East Main so that traffic will stay on East Main, rather than cutting through neighborhoods; and B) Providing neighborhood entrances that deter people from cutting through, similar to the entrance to the Crain Ave. Neighborhood at Water Street. Through subsequent traffic counts, that entrance was shown to significantly reduce cut-through traffic at that time.	Neighborhoods
	The Elmwood-Crain Avenue intersection is consistently dangerous as folks don't stop at the stop signs. This is a serious and ongoing issue, and is more stressful than the intersection of Summit and Franklin.	With the new neighborhood gateway treatment that will be constructed at the Elmwood-Crain intersection, we are hopeful this will assist in stopping at the stop signs and reducing speeds.	Neighborhoods
	People drive like bats out-of-hell on Franklin Avenue. This street requires a greater number of speed limit signs, and a greater presence by traffic police. Can the engineers of the City of Kent offer their civil engineering perspective to also contribute a potential solution to this problem?	Franklin Ave. is outside of the East Main project area but this issue will be considered by the City in the future.	Areas Outside Project Limits



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Respondent #4	I just don't see the need - especially at this cost. The Horning Road roundabout definitely is a waste. Tying together bike paths, better aesthetics, and the delays caused by the construction don't outweigh the costs. Is this COVID money we have to spend or lose it? If citizens were asked where they'd like to see this money spent, I think roundabouts would be towards the bottom. How about repairing our potholed roads or fix intersections where there are obvious problems, i.e. Crain Ave. & Rte. 43, or S. Water & 59. But it looks like there is no voice of the populace here. We are destined to suffer from the suspect judgment of our engineering dept. and backed by a city council, who for the most part, are clueless.	<p>Thank you for your comments. The need for this project begins with safety. At the project's inception, this corridor was listed as the worst crash corridor in the Akron Metropolitan Area (Summit, Portage, and portions of Wayne County), and continues to be one of the highest, including three intersections on the AMATS Intersection Crash List and over 12% of all crashes Citywide. This also includes 8 pedestrian crashes, which is over 15% of all pedestrian crashes citywide. This is due to many factors, including the numerous left turns along the corridor and volume of pedestrians. The construction of a tree-lined boulevard will limit left turns, improve pedestrian safety crossing the street and, along with narrowed lanes, will encourage traffic to reduce speeds. These are proven solutions that have been effective in numerous other locations to reduce both vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist crashes.</p> <p>The planning for this project over the last 2.5 years has not occurred in a vacuum but instead has included approximately 50 people from the community as part of a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC), which is open to anyone. Through numerous meetings, the CAC worked with the City, KSU, PARTA, ODOT, business owners, and others to carefully evaluate the project goals and to develop the current plan alternative.</p> <p>Regarding the intersection concerns, we agree that roundabouts are not always the solution and from the beginning, multiple options were considered. With a boulevard, it is necessary to provide some method for U-turns. Multiple options were considered including traffic signals and Loons/Michigan Lefts. A comprehensive Alternative Matrix was developed and utilized by the CAC and other stakeholders to evaluate these options. In the end, roundabouts were overwhelmingly shown to be the preferred alternative based on numerous criteria. In addition, a similar layout of roundabouts was constructed on Summit Street and current speed and safety data has proven those to be successful.</p>	Roundabouts
Respondent #5	I can turn left (East) out of Fairview now and will miss being able to do that.	We understand your concern. We know that the safety benefit that the boulevard median offers does affect the convenience of being able to turn left out of some of the neighborhood streets. We considered this carefully, with input from the neighborhood residents that are a part of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and have tried to offer some close options for being able to turn left. There will be a U-Turn phase at Luther, so that you don't have to travel all the way to the western roundabout to make that left. Or you will be able to travel north on Fairview to Woodhill and over to Overlook where you can go through the roundabout to head east on Main.	Access
	It may help traffic, but hopefully way better than the Fairchild-Crain Ave. bridge traffic issue being "solved," which is not solved at all.	Thank you for your concerns.	Areas Outside Project Limits
Respondent #6	I can see combining Terrace Dr. and Horning, but there is absolutely NO need for a roundabout there. Roundabouts are not a good idea when they have two lanes; one to exit / one to keep going - i.e. the one on Summit by the Wellness Center.	Roundabouts are not always the solution and from the beginning, multiple options were considered. With a boulevard, it is necessary to provide some method for U-turns. Multiple options were considered including traffic signals and Loons/Michigan Lefts. A comprehensive Alternative Matrix was developed and utilized by the CAC and other stakeholders to evaluate these options. In the end, roundabouts were overwhelmingly shown to be the preferred alternative based on numerous criteria. In addition, a similar layout of roundabouts, including a multilane roundabout, was constructed on Summit Street and current speed and safety data has proven those to be successful.	Roundabouts
	My thinking is ROAD REPAIR/RESURFACING is top priority since you have money to throw. If people are not following rules, why make it easy for them? = Bad Parenting 101. I like to AVOID main drags at certain times of the day. Don't make that less than comfortable. Why can't the citizens of Kent decide how to spend our money? A vote would be the most fair way to do things. People don't show up for your meetings because our opinions don't matter. Your minds are already made up.	<p>Thank you for your comments. The need for this project begins with safety. At the project's inception, this corridor was listed as the worst crash corridor in the Akron Metropolitan Area (Summit, Portage, and portions of Wayne County), and continues to be one of the highest, including three intersections on the AMATS Intersection Crash List and over 12% of all crashes Citywide. This also includes 8 pedestrian crashes, which is over 15% of all pedestrian crashes citywide. This is due to many factors, including the numerous left turns along the corridor and volume of pedestrians. The construction of a tree-lined boulevard will limit left turns, improve pedestrian safety crossing the street and, along with narrowed lanes, will encourage traffic to reduce speeds. These are proven solutions that have been effective in numerous other locations to reduce both vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist crashes.</p> <p>The planning for this project over the last 2.5 years has not occurred in a vacuum but instead has included approximately 50 people from the community as part of a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC), which is open to anyone. Through numerous meetings, the CAC worked with the City, KSU, PARTA, ODOT, business owners, and others to carefully evaluate the project goals and to develop the current plan alternative.</p>	Purpose & Need
	Whoever had the crazy idea that jutting out curbs on N. Water was a good idea, ought to look for a shelf stacking job or other no brainers job. I can hardly wait to see the # of broken down cars trying to gauge where the curbs are when the snow covers them. SMH!!	This area is outside of the East Main Project limits. The improvements on North Water Street have reduced traffic speeds by 15% and improved pedestrian facilities.	Areas Outside Project Limits
	Where a good spot for a roundabout would be is at the Haymaker/Rt. 43 intersection. Why wasn't that on your plan?	This area is outside of the East Main Project limits.	Areas Outside Project Limits
	Pedestrians need to pay attention. I learned that in Kindergarten. Those crosswalks are a safety hazard. Cars on the road are a priority, not walkers! Those things cause the pedestrians to think they have the right of way without a second thought of looking to see if cars are coming. These are NOT parking lots! Don't try to make cars do 20 mph or less just so people can randomly cross a main drag! All those signs in the middle of the roads makes it hard to get through. Just because you slow down traffic doesn't mean there will be less of it. Are there any roads where we can drive without fear of hitting something or someone? Ice rink?!? Seriously.	The Kent Community desires a more walkable community. In the 2004 City of Kent Bicentennial Plan that was developed through a series of 45 community meetings, it states "Kent residents arrived at a list of aspirational goals that reflect the values of the Kent community." Two of these goals include "Promote traffic management" and "Improve pedestrian orientation."	Multi-Modal
Respondent #7	Was impressed that residents in the neighborhood were involved in many planning meetings. I am very happy that sidewalks will be moved back from the roadway and will be level. Eliminating the many left turns is a plus. The cooperation with KSU was also a big plus. I hope I am still around to see the finished project!	Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.	Community Input



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Respondent #8	Great job! Great concise presentation.	Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.	Community Input
	Just wanted to tell you that my neighbor who was sitting next to me at yesterday's meeting thought that you were a very good speaker and your presentation was very clear and concise.	Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.	Community Input
	Will all the work that they are going to do to put in the roundabout at Horning Road and Main Street include putting sidewalks all the way down Horning Road, especially in front of the Newman Center?	Yes! When the project is complete there will be sidewalk in front of the Newman Center. There will be a continuous sidewalk on the west side of Horning Road from E Main Street to the existing 8' sidewalk that ends north of Loop Road. Also, there will be a sidewalk on the east side of Horning Road within the limits of our work.	Multi-Modal
Respondent #9	Overall, what a great project! The proposed solution is thoughtfully balanced for all modes of transportation. At the same time, the road and associated facilities will provide an improved city and campus plan. The tree lined road and the new sidewalks will help to reduce stress while traveling along this corridor.	Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.	Purpose & Need
Respondent #10	The project looks fabulous and addresses all the major issues - safety, aesthetics, and community preservation. The introduction of traffic circles, a treed boulevard, and generous walkways along the north side of East Main will improve this area as a gateway to the city. Love how the neighborhoods will be preserved (to the North). And how access to commercial properties will be made safe and logical. I LOVE roundabouts! The lack of lights will keep traffic flowing but at safe speeds. This is a great project for Kent to support in conjunction with the University. I look forward to its construction!	Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.	Purpose & Need
	I thought you did a fabulous job at the public meeting last night, presenting Kent's plan for the New Gateway. You were great! You led us all through the journey of the past 18 months of the plan: where we started and how we ended up with the plan that is being proposed for the East Main Street Project. And, you did a wonderful job addressing the questions asked of you by the community members who were present. You were respectful in how you responded to some of the less than positive comments made, too. Great job! It has been a privilege to have served on the East Main Committee with you. You are an exceptional leader in our community. Kent, Ohio is lucky to have you! Thanks again for including me in the discussions these past months.	Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.	Purpose & Need
Respondent #11	As a commercial land owner, we will incur damages to our property value, if we cannot continue to make left turns from University Drive onto E. Main Street and/or left hand turns from E. Main Street to University Drive. The ability to make a left turn played a major role in our company purchasing this property. We strongly request a traffic light be placed at this intersection with multi-directional turning permitted. As noticed in my extensive traveling through Europe, commercial businesses suffer and avoid areas with roundabouts. Please do not impede our access (ingress/egress), or we will have extensive damages.	The significant safety needs in the area are due to many factors, one of which is the current allowance of left turns along the corridor. The proposed alternate balances safety needs and reasonable access to all adjacent properties. This specific location was carefully considered, with input from the neighborhood property owners that are a part of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The proposed plan offers options for being able to turn left at University Drive, including a U-Turn phase at Luther and the roundabout at Willow Street.  The addition of a traffic signal at University Drive is not feasible due to the proximity with the existing signal at Lincoln Street.	Access
Respondent #12	I think that an island as was put at the west end of Crain to be placed at the Elmwood and Main Street Intersection would be useful. This seemed to be quite effective when Crain was rerouted from N Water through our neighborhood. It would also encourage/ensure left turns onto Main St. An island would also have the same effect as on Crain to notify drivers they are entering a residential area.	Thank you. We agree and the current project plan does include this type of monument/island at Elmwood and E. Main.	Neighborhoods
Respondent #13	While I see the proposed project alleviates a few congestion issue on main, it still leaves other congestion issues on main and university every morning with the dunkin donuts business that has traffic lined all the way to main, then students try to drive the wrong way down the street to pass all that traffic potentially causing an accident. The other areas I hope the city is looking at as well (although not part of the project) is Ashton Ln and Main (Raising Canes Chicken Fingers and Arby's) as this would be for the exact same reasons as well. Hopefully the city can work with these businesses the alleviate the traffic and potential safety issues they create.	Thank you for this concern. Regarding the issue at University / Dunkin, there may not be much that can be done by the City but we will take this into consideration as we move into final design to see if there are any improvements that can be made to improve this situation.  The other areas/ issues that are outside of this project will be taken into consideration by the City.	Traffic / Safety
	I am excited to see what new pedestrian crossing improvements the city has in store for Main as they are severely lacking and most drivers ignore them or don't see them at all which is both unfortunate and dangerous for the pedestrians crossing main...	We agree and there are many different ways that this project will promote both vehicular and pedestrian safety. The construction of a tree-lined boulevard will not only limit left turns, but along with narrowed lanes will also encourage traffic to reduce speeds. In addition, instead of crossing 4-5 lanes of traffic, pedestrians will cross two lanes, stop at the median, and cross two more lanes. The new mid-block crossings with signage similar to those on Water Street will grab the driver's and pedestrian's attention more than a crossing at an intersection. These are proven solutions that have been effective in numerous other locations to reduce both vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist crashes.	Multi-Modal



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<b>Respondent #14</b>	<p>The E. Main traffic project is vital to the short- and long-term health and well-being of the Kent community in and around the old front area of the university and nearby residential neighborhoods and the commercial developments which have squeezed onto the street since the early 1980s. Short-term, it's a matter of life and limb, physical and mental. It's the highest crash corridor in all of Portage, Summit and part of Stark County. Mentally, movement on the busy street is extraordinarily stressful for anyone walking north and south of the "street."</p> <p>Long-term, calming movement, returning some of what used to be a manageable boulevard into a modern thoroughfare that might the culture of movement in the area from disregard for anything but "speed for me," to less stressful and safe movement for everyone might result from all of the improvements.</p> <p>Kent's city engineering staff have been remarkable throughout project planning, intelligently keeping the university authorities, township and county transportation officials, citizens, and myriad private interests informed and engaged in the process. They should all get raises for the trust they have engendered in bringing people together in general support of the project. It's tough work when living in an environment when self interests of any one entity is the "rule of the road."</p>	<p>Thank you for this comment. The team will continue to engage the community, university and other interested parties throughout the design process.</p>	<p>Purpose &amp; Need</p>