

Hively Avenue Local Trax Project

DES. #: 1801933



Project Scope

What is the goal of the Hively Avenue Overpass Local Trax Project?

The need for this project stems from safety and mobility issues for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and trains at the railroad crossings. The proposed project will eliminate the existing Norfolk Southern RR (NS RR) at-grade crossing at Hively Avenue by creating a bridge that will carry Hively Avenue traffic over the NS RR and South Main Street.

Where is the study area?

The project limits extend from Bismark Avenue to Hazel Street and extend to crossing streets including Monger Avenue, Morton Avenue, Roosevelt Avenue, Homer Avenue, Main Street, Garden Boulevard, Norfolk Southern Railway, Sterling Avenue, Eddy Street, Hammond Avenue, Lowell Avenue and Warren Street.

Why is this project needed?

- Improve safety – NS RR trains regularly stop on the tracks, restricting traffic for extended periods of time, and delaying emergency vehicle access on either side of the tracks.
- Reduce delays – The trains typically run through these crossings 70 to 100 times a day.

What is the Local TRAX program?

The Local TRAX rail overpass program provides grants to cities, towns and counties to address high-priority railroad and local road intersections. The program's focus is providing grade separation, closing crossings and constructing other safety enhancement projects at rail-highway intersections.

Who will oversee this project?

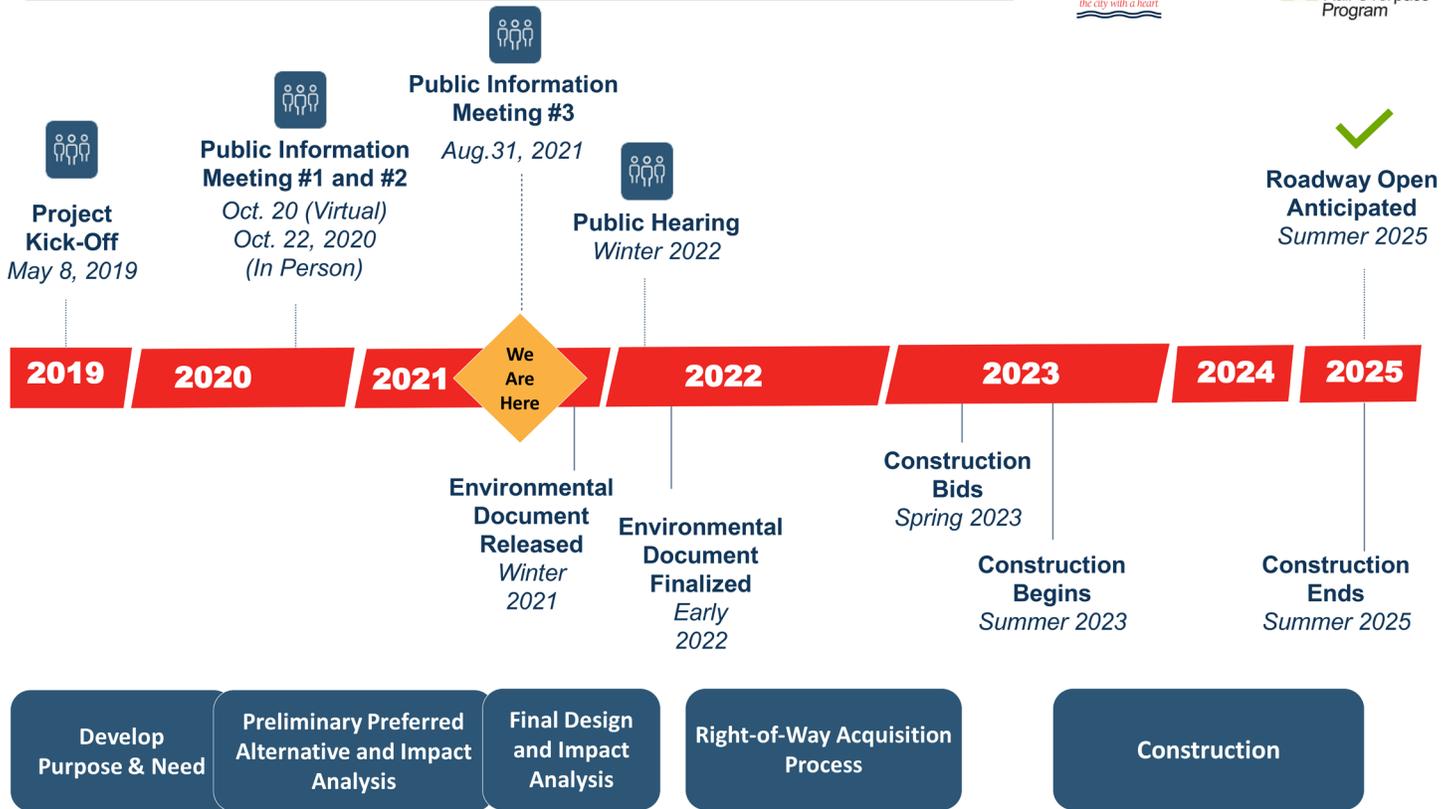
Local TRAX is a partnership with INDOT, local communities, businesses, industries and railroads to improve the quality of life for residents through large-scale rail related transportation projects. The City of Elkhart and INDOT are partnering on the Hively Avenue Local Trax project.

What role does Norfolk Southern Railroad play in this plan?

Norfolk Southern Railroad is a key stakeholder and an overall supporter and program participant in INDOT's Local Trax Overpass Program. The project team will continue to work with NS RR as the project moves forward.

Schedule

PROJECT TIMELINE



What is the schedule for the environmental study?

- 2019- Current: Environmental study and early coordination
- October 2020: Public Information Meeting 1
- Winter 2021: Environmental document released
- Early 2022: Public Hearing, environmental document finalized
- Summer 2023: Construction begins
- Summer 2025: Roadway opens

When will right-of-way decisions be made?

Design will not be finalized until the environmental process is complete. Final design and impacts to specific properties could be identified in early 2022.

What is the design schedule?

Once the environmental document is approved, design will continue until early 2023.

What is the anticipated construction timeline?

Construction – which is expected to last two years – could begin as early as summer 2023.

Funding

What is the estimated budget?

Total project costs are currently estimated at \$24.4 million, which includes planning, design, right-of-way, utility relocation and construction.

Is all funding for design and construction secured?

Yes.

Will both State and local funds be used?

Yes.

Are federal funds being used for this project?

Using federal funds is not anticipated at this time.

Traffic Impacts

Are you sure the preliminary preferred alternative can handle all of the local traffic?

Yes, the project team has performed the necessary traffic analysis, including revisiting truck movements requiring access to Hammond and Sterling from Hively Avenue. The design team has accounted for all necessary turning movements and traffic requirements. As the project moves forward, additional minor modifications will be made as necessary, to address any issues identified by the public or identified as part of technical review.

Will more turn lanes be added as part of this project?

The design team has incorporated the necessary turning lanes and travel movements into the preliminary preferred alternative. Additional minor modifications will be made, as necessary, as the project progresses.

Will Hively Avenue be closed during construction?

Hively Avenue will be closed briefly to tie into the new construction. However, one of primary benefits of the preliminary preferred alternative is that Hively Avenue will mostly remain open during construction, minimizing temporary but important impacts to traffic, emergency services and businesses. Additional details on construction impacts and temporary detours will be provided at the public hearing.

Do you believe this project will reduce travel time through this area?

Yes, overall, travel times are expected to decrease due to the elimination of the at-grade railroad crossing.

Emergency Access and Safety

Are INDOT and the City of Elkhart coordinating with local emergency responders during the environmental study and design?

Yes, emergency responders are a major stakeholder and will be engaged throughout the project.

How will you ensure the grade of the overpass accommodates pedestrians and cyclists?

The ADA requires that a grade of less than 5% is used to ensure comfortable usage for all pedestrians, including those with disabilities.

How will this project impact emergency response time?

Removal of the at-grade intersection will provide emergency services with a route that has a “known” travel time that cannot be impacted by stopped trains on the tracks. As with any roadway, motorists will be expected to pull over/stagger to allow passage for emergency vehicles.

Public Involvement

Are the meeting presentations, exhibits and fact sheets available online? If so, where?

Yes, all project information is available at www.elkhartindiana.org.

Will a public hearing be held before design is finalized?

Yes. The environmental document is expected to be published in early 2022, with a public hearing around that time.

Where can I send my comments and questions?

All written inquiries and comments can be sent via email to:
ElkhartLocalTrax@mbakerintl.com

Mailed comments can be sent to:
3815 River Crossing Parkway, Suite 20
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240