

August 27, 2019

City of Youngstown Announces Downtown SMART² Project in Mahoning County

Date: Thursday, September 26, 2019

Time: 4:00pm - 7:00pm

Location: Eastgate Regional Council of Governments, 100 E. Federal Street, Suite 1000, Youngstown, Ohio

Beginning in the summer of 2020, the City of Youngstown plans to reconstruct Park Avenue, 5th Avenue, Rayen Avenue, Commerce Street, Federal Street, Front Street, and Phelps Street as part of the SMART² Network. Many streets will experience a reduction in lanes (road diet). As a result of the lane reductions, a substantial amount of vacant area will become available to support additional transportation modes through the addition of bus stops, a multi-use path, new and repaired sidewalk, seating areas, bike racks, new landscaping and new lighting.

The SMART² Network will connect Strategic & Sustainable, Medical & Manufacturing, Academic & Arts, Residential & Recreational, and Technology & Training centers in the heart of Eastern Ohio Appalachia's largest metropolitan area - the City of Youngstown. The project will provide autonomous transit shuttles, transit waiting environments, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, green infrastructure, streetscaping, and wayfinding linking major regional anchor institutions impacting economic resurgence across the Mahoning Valley, including Youngstown State University, Mercy Health, Youngstown Business Incubator, and Eastern Gateway Community College.

An open house public involvement meeting is scheduled on Thursday, September 26, 2019, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm at the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments (Eastgate) office located at 100 E. Federal Street, Suite 1000, Youngstown, Ohio. The purpose of this public involvement meeting is to present the project to the general public, property owners and stakeholders and to solicit public comment regarding the social, economic and environmental impacts.

This meeting will be an open house format. The project team will be available to address any questions you may have about the projects. Throughout the public meeting, exhibits illustrating the planned improvements will be available, as well as renderings depicting the proposed design. Additional materials available for public review will be the environmental reports. Throughout the open house meeting, representatives from the City of Youngstown, ODOT District 4, Eastgate and the project consultants (GPD Group) will be available to discuss the planned improvements, maintenance of traffic, and the environmental impacts.

Persons attending the meeting who require special assistance or accommodations should contact the GPD Group representative below at least 15 calendar days prior to the meeting.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies (and in this case ODOT) to consider the effect of their actions on historic properties. The Section 106 process seeks to incorporate historic values into project planning through consultation among agencies, and other parties, with an interest in the effects of an undertaking on historic properties. Individuals or organizations with a demonstrated interest in the effects of an undertaking on historic properties, including the Wick Park Historic District, can become a Section 106 consulting party. The various consulting parties work together to discuss options, provide multiple viewpoints, and strive to seek common agreement on the incorporation of historic preservation values into a project. If you are interested in becoming a Section 106 consulting party or you have general questions/comments concerning the environmental process, please contact Sean Carpenter, Environmental Specialist at (330) 786-2274 or by electronic mail at sean.carpenter@dot.ohio.gov by the end of the comment period listed below.

Written and/or oral comments may be submitted during the public involvement meeting. Comments may also be submitted to:

Josh Slaga, Project Manager
GPD Group
520 South Main Street, Suite 2531, Akron, OH 44311
Telephone: (330) 572-3515
Email: jslaga@gpdgroup.com

The final date to submit comments is October 28th, 2019.

If you are unable to attend the public involvement meeting, the meeting materials and additional project information will be available on the Eastgate's dedicated project website <https://www.eastgatecog.org/transportation/SMART2>. A summary of the public comments received during the comment period and responses to those comments will be available on the above referenced website within 30 days after the close of the public comment period.