

County Road C

In early 2009, the Department of Transportation (WisDOT) solicited street re-surfacing projects to fund with an American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) grant. They were looking for relatively small projects throughout the state, that could be accomplished with minimal engineering or preparatory work, could be done within existing rights-of-way, and were classified as a collector road or better.

In February, Evansville submitted the re-surfacing of County Road C (West Main Street and North Fourth Street) between First Street and the city limits. The road is a collector and had a pavement rating of “poor,” needing a non-structural surface overlay.

Our project made the first cut, which basically meant it met the eligibility criteria, but was later denied funding. However, since it met the criteria, we worked with Rock County to re-submit it in April when WisDOT solicited a second project list. In July the project was approved for ARRA funding.

After the contracts, reports, designs, and all the preparations, WisDOT opened bids for the project in February 2010. They awarded the project to Rock Road Companies, out of Janesville. Some people may remember Rock Road is the contractor the city hired for the County Road M construction in 2007.

Planning for the upcoming street construction by WisDOT, the city bid some utility work to complete in advance of the street work. The city awarded the utility work to G. Fox & Son, out of Janesville. Recent construction projects they’ve done in Evansville include the realignment of Exchange Street and the utility work under downtown Main Street.

The city’s utility work consists of replacing four sanitary sewer manholes, six water valve boxes, and a fire hydrant. Vehicle access will be inconvenienced during construction. Fox started Friday, April 23, and should be finished the week of May 10.

Construction you may have seen prior to this was by WE Energies. They were pulling some gas lines, trying to stay ahead of both the city utility work and the WisDOT street work. They finished last week.

Rock Road expects to begin the WisDOT project around April 28, posting the construction limits and saw-cutting. The first stage of the street work will consist of storm sewer inlets at West Main and Third Streets, replacing about 1500 feet of curb and gutter scattered throughout the project, and installing pedestrian ramps at intersections. All work is within the existing right-of-way.

Although the road will be generally accessible to local traffic only; it is a construction project so please drive safely and attentively. Through traffic will be detoured along Fifth Street and Garfield Avenue.

The second stage of the project will consist of the actual street resurfacing. On Fourth Street from Main Street to the city limits, the existing asphalt pavement will be pulverized and new asphalt overlain; in the pulverized area the material will be graded to provide standard cross slopes. On West Main Street from First to Fourth Streets, the existing asphalt pavement will be milled and overlain; in the mill and overlay area the milling will achieve standard cross slopes. Storm sewer inlets at West Main and Second Streets will also be replaced.

Under the WisDOT contract, the County Road C (West Main and North Fourth Streets) project should be complete by July 1, weather and surprises permitting.

East Main Street Bridge

Records indicate the East Main Street Bridge over Allen Creek was constructed in 1930 and widened in 1960. Present deterioration of the bridge girders and deck is driving the need to reconstruct the entire bridge rather than replacing the deck only.

The city initially started planning for the reconstruction of the bridge following a routine inspection in December 2002. With the filing of a Concept Definition Report in late 2005, the city began the formal planning and scheduling of the project with WisDOT. Reconstruction of the East Main Street Bridge had been expected this summer, but it has been delayed until next year.

To provide an adequate foundation for the bridge, abutments need to be constructed. The project design call for these to be placed immediately outside the existing wing-wall abutments. And this widening necessitates the city's acquisition of property from adjacent land owners. This is all typical for bridge or highway construction projects, but a couple of absentee property interests have delayed the property acquisition. And this results in a delay to letting the project for bids. And, of course, it also means a delay in the construction schedule itself.

If you think automated phone menus with push button options are frustrating for routine business, just try getting through them with questions about someone else's property. I was eventually fortunate to get a mailing address; even though my letters went unanswered. Now I am presently finishing up the acquisition of the final piece of needed property, having finally made direct contact through the attorney (located in Milwaukee) for the mortgage holder (located in California).

Construction in 2011 does not address present concerns about the ability of the bridge to safely sustain typical maximum weights in the meantime. Fish & Associates, the WisDOT certified bridge inspector we use for routine inspections, proposed an investigation of the primary beams to develop a load rating for the bridge pending next year's construction.

The proposed investigation would have involved sawing and removal of a two by eight foot section of the bridge deck to reveal the interior girders. The Public Works

Committee decided to bypass the investigation and simply post special weight restrictions on the bridge as the safest and most appropriate plan. The investigation would likely have resulted in some weight rating anyway. Cutting the deck and exposing the girders would have further weakened the bridge structure. And cutting into the deck may have caused an irreparable problem, requiring immediate closure of the bridge to all traffic until next year.

This week, the bridge will be posted with a special weight limit of two tons per axle and ten tons gross weight. This will allow single-axle delivery trucks but not much of anything bigger. Public Works staff has been contacting some local businesses so they can plan for the weight limits and voluntarily detour their heavy traffic to avoid the bridge. And, despite the inconvenience, everyone has been quite understanding of the situation and the need for safety.

North Madison Street and Union Street provide one alternative for heavy traffic to avoid the bridge. South Madison Street and Water Street provide a second heavy traffic route to avoid the bridge.